Approaches to
Development Communication

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By Way of Introduction

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All those involved in the analysis and application of communication for development - or what can broadly be termed "development communication" - would probably agree that in essence development communication is the sharing of knowledge aimed at reaching a consensus for action that takes into account the interests, needs and capacities of all concerned. It is thus a social process. Communication media are important tools in achieving this process but their use is not an aim in itself—interpersonal communication too must play a fundamental role.

This basic consensus on development communication has been interpreted and applied in different ways throughout the past century. Both at theory and research levels, as well as at the levels of policy and planning-making and implementation, divergent perspectives are on offer.

At the research and theory level this could easily be illustrated as follows:

In her PhD-thesis Jo Ellen Fair (summarized in the journal *Gazette*, 1989) examined 224 studies of communication and development published between 1958 and 1986, and found that models predicting either powerful effects or limited effects informed the research.

Development communication in the 1958-1986 period was generally greeted with enthusiasm and optimism: "Communication

has been a key element in the West's project of developing the Third World. In the one-and-a-half decades after Lerner's influential 1958 study of communication and development in the Middle East, communication researchers assumed that the introduction of media and certain types of educational, political, and economic information into a social system could transform individuals and societies from traditional to modern. Conceived as having fairly direct and powerful effects on Third World audiences, the media were seen as magic multipliers, able to accelerate and magnify the benefits of development."

Three directions for future research were suggested: to examine the relevance of message content, to conduct more comparative research, and to conduct more policy research.

As a follow-up to this research, Jo Ellen Fair and Hemant Shah (1997) studied 140 journal articles, book chapters and books published in English between 1987 and 1996. Their findings are quite illuminating: "In the 1987-1996 period, Lerner's modernization model completely disappears. Instead, the most frequently used theoretical framework is participatory development, an optimist postmodern orientation, which is almost the polar opposite of Lerner who viewed mass communication as playing a top-down role in social change. Also vanishing from research in this latter period is the two-step flow model, which was drawn upon by modernization scholars … Both periods do make use of theories or approaches such as knowledge gap, indirect influence, and uses and gratifications. However, research appearing in the years from 1987-1996 can be characterized as much more theoretically diverse than that published between 1958-1986" (Fair & Shah, 1997:10).

In the 1987-1996 study, the most frequent suggestion was "the need to conduct more policy research, including institutional analysis of development agency coordination. This was followed by the need to research and develop indigenous models of communication and development through participatory research" (Fair & Shah, 1997:19).

Therefore, today almost nobody would dare to make the optimistic claims of the early years any longer. However, the implicit assumptions on which the so-called dominant modernization paradigm is built do still linger on and continue to influence the policy and planning-making discourse of major actors in the field of communication for development, both at theoretical and applied levels.

From Modernization, over Dependency, to Multiplicity

After the Second World War, the founding of the United Nations stimulated relations among sovereign states, especially the North Atlantic Nations and the developing nations, including the new states emerging out of a colonial past. During the cold war period the superpowers—the United States and the former Soviet Union—tried to expand their own interests to the developing countries. In fact, the USA was defining development and social change as the replica of its own political-economic system and opening the way for the transnational corporations. At the same time, the developing countries saw the 'welfare state' of the North Atlantic Nations as the ultimate goal of development. These nations were attracted by the new technology transfer and the model of a centralized state with careful economic planning and centrally directed development bureaucracies for agriculture, education and

health as the most effective strategies to catch up with those industrialized countries.

This mainly economic-oriented view, characterized by endogenism and evolutionism, ultimately resulted in the *modernization and growth* theory. It sees development as an unilinear, evolutionary process and defines the state of underdevelopment in terms of observable quantitative differences between so-called poor and rich countries on the one hand, and traditional and modern societies on the other hand (for more details on these paradigms, see Servaes 1999).

As a result of the general intellectual 'revolution' that took place in the mid 60s, this Euro- or ethnocentric perspective on development was challenged by Latin American social scientists, and a theory dealing with *dependency and underdevelopment* was born. This dependency approach formed part of a general structuralist re-orientation in the social sciences. The 'dependistas' were primarily concerned with the effects of dependency in peripheral countries, but implicit in their analysis was the idea that development and underdevelopment must be understood in the context of the world system.

This dependency paradigm played an important role in the movement for a New World Information and Communication Order from the late 1960s to the early 1980s. At that time, the new states in Africa, Asia and the success of socialist and popular movements in Cuba, China, Chile and other countries provided the goals for political, economic and cultural self-determination within the international community of nations. These new nations shared the ideas of being independent from the superpowers and moved to form the Non-Aligned Nations. The Non-Aligned Movement defined development as political struggle.

Since the demarcation of the First, Second and Third Worlds has broken down and the cross-over center-periphery can be found in every region, there is a need for a new concept of development which emphasizes *cultural identity and multidimensionality*. The present-day 'global' world, in general as well as in its distinct regional and national entities, is confronted with multifaceted crises. Apart from the obvious economic and financial crisis, one could also refer to social, ideological, moral, political, ethnic, ecological and security crises. In other words, the previously held dependency perspective has become more difficult to support because of the growing interdependency of regions, nations and communities in our so-called 'global' world.

From the criticism of the two paradigms above, particularly that of the dependency approach, a new viewpoint on development and social change has come to the forefront. The common starting point here is the examination of the changes from 'bottom-up', from the self-development of the local community. The basic assumption is that there are no countries or communities that function completely autonomously and that are completely self-sufficient, nor are there any nations whose development is exclusively determined by external factors. Every society is dependent in one way or another, both in form and in degree. Thus, a framework was sought within which both the Center and the Periphery could be studied separately and in their mutual relationship.

More attention is also being paid to the content of development, which implies a more normative approach. Another development questions whether 'developed' countries are in fact developed and whether this genre of progress is sustainable or desirable. It favors a multiplicity of approaches based on the context and the basic,

felt needs, and the empowerment of the most oppressed sectors of various societies at divergent levels. A main thesis is that change must be structural and occur at multiple levels in order to achieve these ends.

Therefore we start this book with three more general contributions which each from a multidimensional perspective set the stage for a more detailed analysis of the issue of communication for social change:

Pradip Thomas reminds us that there are about 1.3 billion people world-wide living in absolute poverty, that is to say people who cannot meet their basic needs. About a third of the population in the so-called developing countries are in this category, and even in the United States of America and the European Union, 15% of the population is living below nationally determined poverty levels.

At first sight, the problem of poverty might appear insolvable, but the World Bank has estimated that it would require only 1% of developing countries' consumption to abolish extreme poverty, which it defines as an income of less than US$275 per person per year. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO) it would need US$13 per person per year to solve the problem of poverty. Furthermore, it would require a transfer of just 3% of the total consumption in developing countries to eliminate poverty in general, defined as an income of less than US$370 per person per year. Poverty and its related social disintegration were key themes at the World Summit on Social Development held in Copenhagen in 1995, and of the World Food Summit held in Rome (at FAO) in 1997. At this World Food Summit the world leaders agreed to set the objective of reducing the number of hungry to around 400 million by the year 2015.

Cuban President Fidel Castro was one of the few dissident voices. He scorned "the modesty of this objective as shameful". He referred to the US 700 billion a year spent on arms, even after the end of the Cold War. He finished his statement as follows: "The bells that presently toll for those starving to death every day will tomorrow toll for the whole of humanity, which did not want to, know how to, or have the wisdom to save itself from itself."

Pradip Thomas argues that the worldwide poverty situation could be solved by participatory communication. The use of participatory communication education mechanisms could bring about social change and development through sustained improvements in agriculture, health, education, politics and economics over a sufficiently long enough time to make a considerable proportion of the population less poor, both in material as well as immaterial ways.

Also the recurrent themes of human rights, culture and development have to be addressed in a book like this. Jan Servaes and Chris Verschooten start by revising the often discussed 'dichotomies' of tradition versus modernity, universalism versus relativism, and individualism versus collectivism. They arrive at similar conclusions as those advocated by the World Commission on Culture and Development, chaired by the former UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar.

Local and Global Perspectives

Processes at local and global levels have further complicated the above developments. The vision of an era of global communications seems especially pertinent when changes in other spheres of human societies are taken into consideration. The 1990s, with the fall of the Berlin Wall and the explosive growth of

the World Wide Web as preludes, have been marked by the collapse of the physical, virtual and institutional barriers, which had kept people apart over the previous several decades. The ever closer trade relationships among nation-states, the growing number of transnational corporations, ICTs, internet and discussions on e-commerce and e-governance, the emergence of global health and environmental issues and a common style of consumption of material and cultural products have all helped to bring about what is described as the 'globalization' of our world. In general, globalization is considered as the widening, deepening and speeding up of worldwide interconnectedness in all aspects of contemporary social life.

But, beyond a general awareness and agreement of this global interconnectedness, there is substantial disagreement as to how globalization is best conceptualized, how one should think about its causal dynamics, how one should characterize its structural, socio-economic consequences, and which implications it has on poverty alleviation, culture and human rights, state power and governance.

The three different theses on globalization—a (hyper)globalist perspective, a sceptical or traditionalist perspective, and, a transformationalist perspective—outlined in the chapter by Servaes & Lie can all be found in several other chapters of this book.

Diffusion versus Participatory Communication

The above more general typology of the so-called development paradigms can also be found at the communications and culture level. The communication media are, in the context of development, generally used to support development initiatives by the dissemination of messages that encourage the public to support development-oriented projects. Although development

strategies in developing countries diverge widely, the usual pattern for broadcasting and the press has been predominantly the same: informing the population about projects, illustrating the advantages of these projects, and recommending that they be supported. A typical example of such a strategy is situated in the area of family planning, where communication means like posters, pamphlets, radio, and television attempt to persuade the public to accept birth control methods. Similar strategies are used on campaigns regarding health and nutrition, agricultural projects, education, and so on.

This model sees the communication process mainly as a message going from a sender to a receiver. This hierarchic view on communication can be summarized in Laswell's classic formula, -- 'Who says What through Which channel to Whom with What effect?' --, and dates back to (mainly American) research on campaigns and diffusions in the late 40s and 50s.

The American scholar Everett Rogers is said to be the person who introduced this diffusion theory in the context of development. Modernization is here conceived as a process of diffusion whereby individuals move from a traditional way of life to a different, more technically developed and more rapidly changing way of life. Building primarily on sociological research in agrarian societies, Rogers stressed the adoption and diffusion processes of cultural innovation. This approach is therefore concerned with the process of diffusion and adoption of innovations in a more systematic and planned way. Mass media are important in spreading awareness of new possibilities and practices, but at the stage where decisions are being made about whether to adopt or not to adopt, personal communication is far more likely to be influential. Therefore, the general conclusion of this line of thought is that mass

communication is less likely than personal influence to have a direct effect on social behavior.

Newer perspectives on development communication claim that this is still a limited view of development communication. They argue that this diffusion model is a vertical or one-way perspective on communication, and that active involvement in the process of the communication itself will accelerate development. Research has shown that, while groups of the public can obtain information from impersonal sources like radio and television, this information has relatively little effect on behavioral changes. And development envisions precisely such change. Similar research has led to the conclusion that more is learned from interpersonal contacts and from mass communication techniques that are based on them. On the lowest level, before people can discuss and resolve problems, they must be informed of the facts, information that the media provide nationally as well as regionally and locally. At the same time, the public, if the media are sufficiently accessible, can make its information needs known.

Communication theories such as the 'diffusion of innovations', the 'two-step-flow', or the 'extension' approaches are quite congruent with the modernization theory. The elitist, *vertical or top-down orientation* of the diffusion model is obvious.

The participatory model, on the other hand, incorporates the concepts in the framework of multiplicity. It stresses the importance of cultural identity of local communities and of *democratization and participation at all levels*—international, national, local and individual. It points to a strategy, not merely inclusive of, but largely emanating from, the traditional 'receivers'. Paulo Freire (1983:76) refers to this as the right of all people to individually and collectively speak their word: "This is not the

privilege of some few men, but the right of every man. Consequently, no one can say a true word alone—nor can he say it for another, in a prescriptive act which robs others of their words".

In order to share information, knowledge, trust, commitment, and a right attitude in development projects participation is very important in any decision-making process for development. Therefore, the International Commission for the Study of Communication Problems argues that "this calls for a new attitude for overcoming stereotyped thinking and to promote more understanding of diversity and plurality, with full respect for the dignity and equality of peoples living in different conditions and acting in different ways" (MacBride, 1980:254). This model stresses reciprocal collaboration throughout all levels of participation.

Therefore, these newer approaches argue, the point of departure must be the community. It is at the community level that the problems of living conditions are discussed, and interactions with other communities are elicited. The most developed form of participation is self-management. This principle implies the right to participation in the planning and production of media content. However, not everyone wants to or must be involved in its practical implementation. More important is that participation is made possible in the decision-making regarding the subjects treated in the messages and regarding the selection procedures. One of the fundamental hindrances to the decision to adopt the participation strategy is that it threatens existing hierarchies. Nevertheless, participation does not imply that there is no longer a role for development specialists, planners, and institutional leaders. It only means that the viewpoint of the local groups of the public is considered before the resources for development projects

are allocated and distributed, and that suggestions for changes in the policy are taken into consideration.

From Sender to Receiver

Also the perspective on communication has changed. It is more concerned with process and context, that is, on the exchange of 'meanings,' and on the importance of this process, namely, the social relational patterns and social institutions that are the result of and are determined by the process. 'Another' communication "favors multiplicity, smallness of scale, locality, de-institutionalization, interchange of sender-receiver roles (and) horizontality of communication links at all levels of society" (McQuail, 1983:97). As a result, the focus moves from a 'communicator-' to a more 'receiver-centric' orientation, with the resultant emphasis on meaning sought and ascribed rather than information transmitted.

With this shift in focus, one is no longer attempting to create a need for the information one is disseminating, but one is rather disseminating information for which there is a need. The emphasis is on information exchange rather than on the persuasion in the diffusion model. To illustrate this shift, Alfonso Gumucio Dragon presents us with an interesting selection of participatory projects.

The second part of the book further discusses and details the above typologies and findings:

Sujatha Sosale adopts a discourse approach to identify two strategies of power on communication and development. One is the power to survey, and the other is the power to remain invisible. She concludes that "a critical tension continues to exist between guided social change signified by policy, and alternate

possibilities that might fall outside the realm of policy or are at best located at its fringes".

Roy Colle traces the seven 'threads' or origins which have contributed to the complexity of the development communication field. He starts with an appreciation of the pioneering work on development support communication by Erskine Childers and his colleagues in the late sixties, and continues with the approaches of extension and diffusion, participatory communication, population and health communication, social mobilization, institution building, and information and communication technologies. Colle concludes that these threads convey a sense of evolving into a development communication fabric. He identifies eight characteristics which together help to define what development communication for the future is about: a focus on beneficiaries, the consideration of various stakeholders, participation, emphasis on outcomes, data gathering and analysis, systematic models, strategy, and a multi-channel versatility.

In similar ways and by way of summary of the most important arguments and findings of the first set of contributions, Jan Servaes and Patchanee Malikhao then present the main perspectives on development communication both at the general development levels, as well as at the more specific communication level.

Robert Huesca zooms in on the concept of participatory communication. He argues that, despite its widespread use, the concept is subject to loose interpretation. Therefore, by tracing the history of participatory communication approaches to development from a Latin American perspective, he aims to present a variety of directions for future research and practice.

Communication for Development

At a more applied level, several perspectives on communication for development could be identified, as presented in the third and fourth part of the book.

A first perspective could be of communication as a process, often seen in metaphor as the fabric of society. It is not confined to the media or to messages, but to their interaction in a network of social relationships. By extension, the reception, evaluation, and use of media messages, from whatever source, are as important as their means of production and transmission.

A second perspective is of communications media as a mixed system of mass communication and interpersonal channels, with mutual impact and reinforcement. In other words, the mass media should not be seen in isolation from other conduits.

One could, for instance, examine the role and benefits of radio versus the internet for development and democracy. Both the Internet and the radio are characterized by their interactivity. However, if, as many believe, better access to information, education, and knowledge would be the best stimulant for development, the internet's primary development potential is as a point of access to the global knowledge infrastructure. The danger, now widely recognized, is that access to knowledge increasingly requires a telecom infrastructure that is inaccessible to the poor. Therefore, the digital divide is not about technology, it is about the widening gaps between the developed and developing worlds and the info-rich and the info-poor.

While the benefits offered by the internet are many, its dependence on a telecom infrastructure means that they are only available to a few. Radio is much more pervasive, accessible and

affordable. Blending the two could be an ideal way of ensuring that the benefits accruing from the internet have wider reach.

Another perspective of communications in the development process is from an intersectoral and interagency concern. This view is not confined to information or broadcasting organizations and ministries, but extends to all sectors, and its success in influencing and sustaining development depends to a large extent on the adequacy of mechanisms for integration and co-ordination.

Therefore, different agencies have evolved distinct approaches and strategies for putting the principles into operation with differentiated policy bases, planning models and terminologies. As a result, it is often difficult for specialists within particular agencies to understand precisely what others are trying to express or to achieve, as presented in the chapter on governmental and non-governmental agencies by Jan Servaes.

FAO's Communication for Development Group has arguably been one of the foremost practitioners of applied communication for improving agriculture and related sectors in the developing world (e.g., forestry, environment, and nutrition), since its establishment in 1969. During these three decades the role of communication has undertaken a dramatic shift from a one-way, top-down transfer of messages by agricultural technicians to farmers, to a social process designed to bring together both groups in a two-way sharing of information among communication equals - in short, participatory communication. In recognizing that rural people are at the heart of development, by seeking their views and involving them from the start, participatory communication has become what many consider to be the key link between farmers, extension, and research for planning and implementing consensus-based

development initiatives. Too often, however, it has been a missing link and many projects have failed as a result.

Along with communication, it is also now widely accepted that a parallel investment in human resources through education and training of adults is essential for project success. Awareness raising, knowledge acquisition, attitude change, confidence building, participation in decision-making, and action, all require processes of education and communication. And all are essential for effective development—they are not just desirable options, some of which may be left out.

In this spirit, the chapter by Gary Coldevin and others traces the growth of participatory communication and adult learning in FAO's field programmes, along with examples drawn from other agencies, and provides snapshots of notable successes. With a view on the current push toward networking the developing world, a concluding section draws on the lessons emerging from the application of traditional and older electronic media formats, as guidelines for constructive use of the internet in rural settings.

Neill McKee, Erma Manoncourt, Chin Saik Yook and Rachel Carnegie summarize the UNICEF experience. They start from very basic questions such as 'Why are people's behaviors so difficult to change?, and 'Why do development communication interventions often fall short of their behavior altering goals?'. Basing themselves on an integrated approach towards involving people in evolving behavior, and an analysis of several cases, they conclude that many processes and factors must converge in order to facilitate behavior change. They also emphasize the importance of building effective and responsive communication elements into development programmes right from the start of all projects: "While communication on its own wil not bring about change and

development, neither will change happen without development communication. We need to integrate all our efforts".

Also Thomas Tufte addresses the changes in communication perspectives and strategies. He analyses the case of Soul City in order to discuss how an *entertainment-education based communication strategy* can contribute to a participatory development process. Soul City is the name of the media and health NGO behind the large, on-going goal-oriented, media driven information and training initiative that works for social change in the South African society. Firstly, he introduces the history and development of Soul City. Secondly, he provides a brief historical overview of the developments within entertainment-education in relation to the general discussions of communication for development. Finally Tufte explores how Soul City contributes to the further development of entertainment-education strategies in both theory and practice. As so often seen before, practice comes prior to theory, and he thus argues that what Soul City is de facto doing is anticipating the theoretical advancement he wishes to argue for entertainment-education (EE).

Furthermore, according to Ronny Adhikarya (in *The Journal of Development Communication*, 1997:22), there appears to be at least two main problems which limit development communicators' effectiveness in contributing successfully to achieving development objectives or goals: "The first problem is related to the main tasks normally assigned to communication specialists. Most of them are expected to produce mainly publicity, public relations, and/or multi-media materials without much involvement at the information needs assessment, communication strategy and planning, message positioning, treatment, and design, and/or multi-media mix selection processes. The second, and more

critical, problem is their lack of a holistic, integrated, multi-disciplinary and inter-sectoral approach in analyzing communication problems as well as in designing and planning communication strategies in support of the broader development objectives or goals".

As academic and professional training programmes in development communication emerge (they are already established in the Asia region, and are growing elsewhere), these frequently emphasize one set of approaches and vocabularies, without looking comparatively at alternatives. This inhibits cross-fertilization, comparative analysis and mutual learning, but the most significant obstacle that it creates is to collaborative, inter-agency working, at a time when integrated approaches to development are emphasized, and coordination is important for reasons of economy, efficiency, and maximization of impact.

Special Cases

Three special cases which need attention are the impact of new information technologies on community development, the role and place of the often overlooked community media, and the role of the mass media in ethnopolitical conflicts.

The first case is explored by Rico Lie. His contribution explores and structures the complex relations between community development and ICTs, especially the internet (including email-based communication). As the ICTs are said to offer new potentials— especially in the fields of networking and information supply—, the concept of 'community' has been pushed to the front again. This has led to an increase in interest in the different kinds of relationships between community development and the potentials of the internet. Building on two existing perspectives on the

internet in relation to community development (a technological-economic perspective and a culturalistic perspective), the chapter takes a closer look at the role of the internet within and between civil society communities and civil society organizations (CSOs). In addressing the construction, purposes and functioning of these 'cyberspace based communities' in civil society, different issues concerning on-line community dialogues and networking are discussed, evaluated and illustrated. Second, Lie reviews how the internet can serve existing 'geographically based communities' by making the internet and email available to these communities. Two UNESCO cases in Uganda and Sri Lanka are used to illustrate the internet's potentials for 'geographically based community development'.

In the second case Carpentier, Lie and Servaes argue that the multiplicity of media labelled 'community media' necessitates different approaches towards a definition of community media.

They start from the 'working definition' of community radio adopted by Amarc, the World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters. This organisation encompasses a wide range of radio practices, in the different continents. In Latin America the Amarc-members are termed popular radio, educational radio, miners' radio or peasants' radio. In Africa they refer to local rural radio. In Europe it is often called associative radio, free radio, neighbourhood radio or community radio. In Asia they speak of radio for development, and of community radio; in Oceania of aboriginal radio, public radio and of community radio. In Amarc's attempts to avoid a prescriptive definition, a community radio station is labelled 'a "non-profit" station, currently broadcasting, which offers a service to the community in which it is located, or to which it broadcasts, while

promoting the participation of this community in the radio' (Amarc, 1994: 4).

Finally, Georgios Terzis argues that, as a result of their ability to reach and participate in the opinion building process for large numbers of people, the media carry immense power in shaping the course of an ethno-political conflict. Although many past and present examples of the media's negative contribution to the escalation of violent conflicts exist, fair and accurate journalism and media programming that builds confidence and counteracts misperceptions have a significant positive role to play in both conflict prevention and transformation. He attempts to investigate the potentials of the media in situations of ethnopolitical conflict. He concentrates on the three different forms of projects: training, provision of media hardware, and production of peace oriented media programming.

Communication and Development for Whom and for What?

Colin Fraser and Sonia Restrepo-Estrada (1998) sum it all up: the successes and failures of most development projects are often determined by two crucial factors, i.e. communication and people's involvement. "Even though communication for development came into being in the 1960s, and has clearly shown its usefulness and impact in change and development actions, its role is still not understood and appreciated to the point that it is routinely included in development planning" (Fraser & Restrepo, 1998:39). Many well-intended projects are thought out in places far remote from the actual context in which they are supposed to be implemented. Consequently, they fail to understand the complex

power relationships and the cultural and communication processes existing at these local levels.

Therefore, most authors in this collection argue that authentic participation directly addresses power and its distribution in society. Participation involves the more equitable sharing of both political and economic power, which often decreases the advantage of certain groups. Structural change involves the redistribution of power. In mass communication areas, many communication experts agree that structural change should occur first in order to establish participatory communication policies.

Hopefully this collection offers interesting insights and examples to proof that the field of communication for development is still alive and kicking.

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Communication and the Persistence of Poverty: The Need for a Return to Basics

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Regular readers of the press in India will have noticed an alarming increase in suicides from among communities of traditional weavers and agriculturalists in India, especially from a particular state in Southern India, Andhra Pradesh. In fact, a recent report by India's leading 'poverty journalist', Sainath (2001:45) indicates that the problem is far more serious than what is officially admitted. "Recent government figures show that in Anantapur, just one district of Andhra, 1,826 people, mainly farmers with very small holdings of two acres or less, committed suicide between 1997 and 2000". The suicides do not normally make headline news, although it does, when the issue is occasionally raised in parliament. There seems to be a pattern to these suicides irrespective of the community. A combination of factors, rising costs of inputs, low returns, landlessness, increase in the prices of essential commodities, food grains in particular, the lack of subsidies, an increase in debt payments, the lack of back-up social services and the dismantling of the welfare economy – seem to be the key factors that have contributed to the suicides. In direct contrast to this image of pre-colonial penury, is the image of the new Andhra Pradesh on the move. It is an image of a technological paradise, of software engineers, of dot com companies, of the

stern, lap-top carrying Chief Minister, Chandra Babu Naidu, of e-commerce, software parks, Cyberabad – the new name for the capital city Hyderabad, and electronic democracy. Along with the two other South Indian states of Karnataka and Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh is in the vanguard of the information revolution in India.

While, it is imperative that countries like India maximise their investments in, and hopefully returns from, the IT revolution, such investments need to be seen in a macro perspective, from the point of view of returns to the majority rather than to any minority group. The analysis of the results of the recent state elections in South India, particularly from Tamil Nadu, seems to indicate that one reason for the resounding defeat of the incumbent party was their inability to speak in the language of the majority voters who care more about regular supplies of drinking water, employment opportunities and low prices than about investments in IT or the fibre optic cabling of the state.

The persistence of poverty is a reason for upheavel. The May 1, 2001 demonstrations in Manila, by the mostly poor supporters of the disgraced former President Estrada, was a clear reminder of the fact that the politics and economics of class can make a difference in a situation in which 4 out of every 10 Filipinos is classified as poor and in which in 1997, 20 per cent of the population accounted for 52 per cent of national income while 20 per cent had access to only 5 per cent of that income. Sheila Coronel (2001:13-14), while attempting to explain the reasons for the uprising by the poor in support of an ex-President who was notoriously corrupt, believes that his pro-poor stance and his perceived ill-treatment at the hands of his middle classes incarcerators, were the sparks that led to the mobilisations, that

were at times, in excess of EDSA 2 which was responsible for Estrada's fall from power. "Metro Manila's vast shanty towns, home to some four million people, provide the starkest evidence of the magnitude of poverty and the kind of vision, resources, and political will needed if the poor are to have immediate relief".

The obvious paradox of death, distress and the dot com is arguably also the paradox of communication in the 21st century. There have been tremendous advancements in the field of Information Technologies and the many advantages and applications of digital forms of information, have resulted in qualitative changes in the lives of many people around the world. The stories of IT applications in development are now legion and appear regularly in the media from a diverse range of countries and locations – from tiny villages in Brazil, to cities in Senegal to hamlets in Sri Lanka. There are other macro stories of IT derived applications including the potential medical benefits from the 'human genome' project to the actual benefits of electronic democracy experienced in some Scandinavian countries and the many, significant, public service aspects of the world wide web. It would seem that the cumulative growth of these technologies will result in many possibilities for using IT in the context of the democratisation of societies. From the romanticised, near-mythical, Zapatistas on the Net, to the recent avalanche of electronic mail messages that deluged and disabled the White House site – a global response to President Bush's recalcitrance to the Kyoto Agreement, global networks of ordinary people now have the means to leverage and make some difference.

The Persistence of Poverty

However, all things are not equal. Organising around the Net, although a growing activity, continues to remain marginal, when seen through macro eyes. One can argue that while there is, on the one hand, a surfeit of communication, there is also on the other, a massive, growing reservoir of people for whom the information glut and the content of that information are irrelevant, simply because it does not address their concerns and needs. As the annual UNDP Human Development Reports unfailingly remind us, poverty is a characteristic feature of the world in which we live. While poverty levels may have remained constant during the last five years, the percentage of people living in seriously vulnerable situations seems to be increasing rather than decreasing. In other words, the gaps between the very poor and the poor, let alone the gaps between the very poor and the relatively poor, are painfully visible in many parts of the world. Poverty is not limited by geography. In fact, the wealthiest country in the world, the USA, is also home to pockets of poverty, such as that experienced by poor blacks and hispanics living in the Bronx, New York. Every mega-metropolis, Mexico City, Sao Paulo, Calcutta and Mumbai, and almost every major city from Nairobi, to Manila to Johannesburg, is home to huge agglomerations of shanty-towns, like Dharavi in Mumbai which is the largest of its kind in the world. More than half of the population of Bombay live in similar environments.

In order to clarify the relationship between poverty and the use of communication in development, let us briefly deal with the meanings associated with both terms. Let us at first take on poverty and the dominant meanings associated with the term.

Poverty as a Mindset

This strongly psychologistic interpretation of poverty, responsible for the 'blaming the victim' syndrome, is no longer widely subscribed to. However, in the context of global development scenarios characterised by rapid change on the one hand, and little change on the other, there is a tendency to blame people rather than to query the models, priorities tools and technologies of change.

Poverty as a Lack of Resources

This remains the most widespread understanding of poverty. It affirms that people are poor relative to others because they do not have the means to develop themselves or to sustain their development over time because they do not have recourse to significant, sufficient, resources. The means are normally identified in economic or material terms, for example in terms of a person who lives on less than an average amount per year, in terms of a person's access to health resources, communication resources, physical resources, educational resources and so on. UNESCO traditionally defined deprivation in terms of ownership of radio sets and access to newspapers per hundred of any given population. While the absolutisation of this definition of poverty has been criticised, it nevertheless remains the dominant model and, irrespective of its critics and limitations, remains the most visible, vivid, readily communicative understanding of poverty. The image of a starving child somewhere in sub-Saharan Africa, a favela in Brazil or a peasant herdsmen in Mongolia does denote poverty, even if it is of a limited, fleeting, immediate kind. After all the materiality of food, regular supplies of it, access to it, purchasing power is what signifies a child that does not starve. In other words such snapshots of poverty and the correlational models used to

determine poverty, in spite of real limitations, do capture aspects of poverty. What these models do not account for are the structural reasons for poverty.

The solution to poverty then is inputs – food supplies, shelter, health-care centres, the creation of employment opportunities, and so on. This then is the favoured model of poverty alleviation adopted by international agencies, governments and NGOs.

Poverty as a Lack of Access

There is a growing body of literature on the potential benefits accruing from, and related to, the enabling of access to a variety of inputs in the context of alleviating poverty. Access is often linked to empowerment. The rationale for this approach is as follows. Poverty is not only an indication of a lack of resources it is also, rather fundamentally about the lack of awareness on the part of a people of their own role in the fight against poverty. For instance, the lack of access to legal advice or information on a country's land reform legislation or minimum wages, prevents vast numbers of rural farmers around the world from demanding what is rightfully theirs.

Access to information is of course the major reason for recent right to information legislations that are being debated in countries as far removed as the UK, Thailand and India. A key expressed concern is the need for transparency, so that ordinary people can read for themselves the details of public expenditures, and if there are anamolies, demand explanations from the concerned authorities. Admittedly, right to information legislations are still in their infancy. While governments are required to be transparent, corporations are not. Access to information is an important right for it is the basis for other related rights, in education, market

prices, shelter and employment opportunities. Similarly, for communities who have lived subsistence lives as hunter-gatherers, access to a forest's resources are necessary for survival. The lack of access to such traditional, life enhancing resources is one of the rallying calls for popular mobilisations in the context of the movements against the building of large dams, in Thailand, China, India, Malaysia and many other parts of our world.

In other words the notion of access suggests that when people are aware of their rights, they are empowered to deal with the many reasons that continue to keep them in the thrall of poverty. In contrast, in the poverty as lack of resources model, the poor are often seen as beneficiaries of government largesse or charity and are not given opportunities to use these resources in a meaningful manner, over the long-term. However there is a significant caveat in this model. The promise and delivery of 'access' is of course vital to the maintenance of political stability in the developed world. Access to essential services, to education, to employment opportunities, etc. is the main plank of government policy, democratic or otherwise. While in the developed world, the guaranteeing of enhanced access is the very reason for politics, in the developing world, given the circumstances of poverty, access continues to remain a luxury for large sectors of the population. Furthermore, while access to information services in theory ought to open doors to other services, this is not always a certainty, given that in the developing world, there are visible disjunctures between different sections of the development apparatus. Development policy, resource availability and implementation are often the outcome of political pressure and the state of the economy at any given time. To put it in starker terms, when a government makes welfare cuts to its rural health and education

budgets because of pressures from the World Bank, IMF and other proponents of economic liberalisation, access is a casualty. When, in response to such pressure, governments in the developing world affirm their commitment to technological solutions, the absurdity of development becomes even more pronounced.

Poverty as a Lack of Human Rights

While the access model is important, it can be argued that it is constrained by the particular state of poverty legislations available in any given country, by the political will demonstrated by the state and civil society actions related to reinforcing this will. In other words what can be questioned is not access per se but the nature of that access. While the efforts of the Bangladesh-based Grameen Telecommunications to subsidise the ownership of cellular phones by poor, rural women, who, in turn have used it for accessing market information and for extending public services, remains a sterling example of access and the democratisation of new technologies – it still remains to be seen whether access to information services has been complemented by other improvements in public services, in the success of land reforms, watershed conservation etc., that is critical to integrated development. In other words, the poverty as human rights model is conversant with the politics of 'entitlement', the legal, political and administrative arrangements that allows ordinary citizens to fulfil their immediate and long-term needs. These arrangements vary – from welfare models on one end of the spectrum, mixed-models to completely privatised models. Entitlement is all about political will, priorities, preferential options. Dreze and Sen (1989:9), in the context of their work on famine, define entitlement as follows, "What we can eat depends on what food we are able to acquire. The mere presence of food in the economy, or

in the market, does not *entitle* a person to consume it. In each social structure, given the prevailing legal, political, and economic arrangements, a person can establish command over alternative commodity bundles... These bundles could be extensive, or very limited, and what a person can consume will be directly dependent on what these bundles are". The nature of entitlement does impact on the realities of poverty and wealth in any given context. It becomes acute in the context of the developing world, where entitlements have been steadily whittled away for the majority of people as a consequence of structural adjustment policies, the privatisation of bio-diversity, the costs of mega-development projects, landlessness, the high costs of agricultural inputs and the low costs of outputs, low purchasing power and immiseration.

The notion of poverty as a lack of human rights is based on earlier models of development – on the development as transformation model that was popular, at least in the 1970s. The unpopularity of this model was linked to its rather radical understanding of the means of tackling global poverty. Its proponents were not happy with the piecemeal, incremental understandings of poverty alleviation but believed in transformative changes to a country's economic system and sense of priorities in light of the needs of their majority people. If access can be seen as working within the system, the human rights model is a radical model with no guarantees. The fact that there are relatively few takers for this model, except in the case of Cuba perhaps, and small scale initiatives around the world, is not surprising, given the many people who stand to loose from any changes to the existing order, with its priorities, values, certainties, economic interests. And yet, in spite of the limitations of the Cuban model of development, their attempt to create a level playing field against tremendous odds,

has elicited support from a most unlikely source – the President of the World Bank, James Wolfenson (Lobe:2001) who recently said that " Cuba has done a great job on education and health... They have done a good job, and it does not embarrass me to admit it".

Most civil society organisations work within the 'access' model, in spite of the fact that their rhetoric comes close to the 'human rights' model. This is a familiar constraint, not in the least because most organisations work within the parametres of the democratic consensus on social change. It is interesting to note that NGOs are rarely effective in the context of extreme poverty situations where people, because of their circumstances, opt for a more radical solution to their problems. Examples include the Maoist movements in Nepal and India.

Communications in Development

Communication interventions in poverty are undergirded by one or another understanding of poverty and the means to overcome it. The *communication resource model* has of course been the dominant model exemplified by the early UNESCO approaches, the diffusion model and the latter-day approaches to development communications that have been fed by notions of 'marketing' and 'communication inputs'. The latest in this line of thinking is the IT intervention in development model which continues the tradition of conceptualising information as an adequate and complete resource in development. It is not too difficult to understand the reasons for the world-wide dissemination of this model of development. Given the salience of IT in every aspect of human life and life processes, it is rationalised that it could become the very heart of development. Global economic and political projects including the Structural Adjustment Programme, economic liberalisation, de-

regulation and the global market economy, have to a large extent been executed within the broad parameters of a global economy in which IT-based processes have become pivotal to corporate profits and to the GNP's of nation states. The *psychologistic, behaviouristic model* best associated with the theories of Daniel Lerner and others, although not as widespread as in earlier years, is still very much a reality in many parts of the world. This model assumes that the refusal to adopt innovations or modify behaviour is a consequence of a traditional mind set, of a people's inability to empathise with or adopt modern sensibilities. It is assumed that such ways of thinking are an obstacle to modernisation. There is a huge corpus of literature on the subject especially in the context of agricultural extension, family planning and communication-based strategies in the context of health/nutritional change.

The models of *participatory communication* are closely related to both the access and the human rights approaches to development. Stemming from the theories of the Brazilian pedagogist Paulo Freire and the many experiments with alternative communications that appeared in the late 1960s and 1970s – this model explicitly affirms that people's participation in communication is vital to the success of any given project. It is based on a conscious effort to involve people in their own development. The success of this model is self-evident. There have been numerous attempts at documenting participatory communication projects in Latin America, Africa and Asia. The use of popular theatre in development, community radio and recently, IT-based projects witness to the success of this project.

However, the very success of 'participatory' approaches needs to be seen against the gradual institutionalisation of the NGO movement in large parts of the world and the many attempts by

governments to co-opt and dilute the notion of participatory change – from its original meaning rooted in the idea of people-led, inclusive, autonomous change to that of people-led change within the frameworks and perceptions of development and change of NGOs and governments. What is significant about the latter approach is the absence of a political agenda explicitly linked to the transformation of structures and practices responsible for poverty. In other words, this model privileges access within imposed models of development. For instance, rural radio stations in Cameroon, do provide space for local people in their programming and content – but these stations are not owned by any given community nor do they encourage the mobilisation of people in support of large-scale change. Similarly the many IT-based projects, in parts of Africa, Asia and the Pacific, supported by inter-governmental agencies are strong on access but weak on situating these interventions within the long-term, integrated development of communities. There is a sense in which 'access' does not affect the feudal constancy of socio-economic contexts around the world.

However, and in direct contrast to this restrained notion of participation, there are numerous community-based communication projects that are owned and run by local communities. Within these models, participation is the means to a larger end and that larger end is often linked to the achievement of justice, human rights, equitable development. A good example of this approach are the radio projects supported by the WACC in Haiti – Radio Inite, Radio Sel, Radio Flambeau and Radio Lakay. While the first three stations are networked through the Port-au-Prince based Centre for Development Research and Action (CRAD), Radio Lakay is part of a community radio network run by the Sosyete Animasyou Kominikasion Sisyal (SAKS). In both cases,

these stations are run by local communities who have placed radio at the heart of development. Not only is radio used for development in a traditional sense, it has become central to the preservation and dissemination of traditional culture and religion, it is also used as an early warning system to inform people of weather extremes, it is the basis for numerous attempts at investigative journalism aimed at exposing police/military brutality, government corruption, has helped reinforce local security, is used as an information kiosk, for 'lost and found' messaging and for community education. Most importantly, the local radio platform in each of the instances is run by local volunteers and managed by people who are representative of the local community.

While the foregoing introduction to communication-based interventions in poverty alleviation suggests diversity and universality, it is clear that many of these interventions, have not led to the desired outcomes. While delivery systems have undergone change – with IT being the preferred delivery system, the larger dimensions related to context still tend to be neglected. This neglect is part of a larger inability to ground anti-poverty projects in a clear and unambiguous understanding of the relationships between power, politics and social change. A neutral attitude to poverty alleviation, favoured by many governments and NGOs, merely results in incremental development. Such projects rarely if ever affect the constancy and continuity of existing power relationships. This neutrality is part of a larger political consensus that suggests that a combination of democracy in politics and a free market in economics is the ideal recipe for a global village.

The Politics of Common Sense

Let us briefly deal with some of the myths that have been generated by this politics of neutrality.

The Market as the Great Leveller

There is near universal belief in the primacy of the market in the context of development and growth. According to this notion, the more people get connected to the market, the better their chances of becoming part of the global consuming public. In other words there is an assumption that consumption will inevitably lead to prosperity, to a levelling and to a closing of existing economic gaps between the rich and poor.

While there is no denying the importance of, and the links between the market and development, it is structured in ways that make it both inclusive and exclusive. It is inclusive in the sense that it caters to every community that can afford to buy or sell something or the other. It is exclusive in the sense that it discriminates against people who live below the poverty threshold – the millions of people who cannot buy or sell in the market. While there is no denying the fact that in the recent past, the market has become a part of even the remotest of rural communities – it can still be argued that change to consumption habits and lifestyles is more a consequence of the profit-seeking habits of corporations rather than the change-seeking mentality of the rural poor. Take for instance Hindustan Lever, which in terms of earnings and profits is the largest company in India. Their vast consumer portfolio includes detergent soaps. While the company has expended time and energy branding their detergent soap bars for rural audiences, they have also at the same time, persuaded the same buying public to consider the virtues of the detergent powder – which is,

at least in terms of branding and status, one step higher from the detergent soap. Hindustan Lever's concerns however stop with the buying public. They are not concerned with the non-buying public for the obvious reason that that does not make economic sense to their share holders. This business attitude is affirmed by all sellers in rural markets. However, in the context of the growing populations of the poor, such exclusions merely contribute to the accentuation of the divides between the rich and the poor. But what has made it even worse, is the present moves by governments to back away from their public policy commitments. Take for instance, the liberalisation of telecommunications in India that has led to the privatisation of services. It has also resulted in the government handing over its public service commitments – for instance the provision of universal services, to the private sector. While, in the country's new telecommunications law, the private sector is, in return for a licence, required to also connect poorer communities in their operating areas, there is absolutely no way of guaranteeing that this will result. While the government of India has established an overseer – the Telecommunications Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) to monitor the role of the private sector in providing rural services, TRAI is not independent enough to enforce this clause.

In other words the market as a leveller is currently Gospel truth. While there is no denying that in an era of cable and satellite television, more and more people are being exposed to modern habits and lifestyles and are even changing their consumption behaviour, this again affects only those who have a ready surplus at hand. It would be difficult to find such change in some of the areas that the journalist Sainath has visited – in parts of Orissa, Bihar and other states in India.

The Neutrality of the Development Enterprise

There are, at any given moment, a slew of efforts oriented towards the development of peoples and nations. The contemporary effort by the UN to raise a global fund for AIDS relief is one such effort. There are many others in the areas of watershed development, bio-diversity conservation, animal husbandry, micro-credit, gender-based development, etc., that combine both macro and micro initiatives directed at the development of people. However, and this is the crux of the problem – many of these projects are based on the relativisation of poverty. Poverty is often seen as a macro phenomenon affecting people across the board. Those who then become the targets for development are those who are perceived to be poor, relatively speaking, but who also have access to land and resources and who are seen to be capable of rising above their circumstances. In other words, there is a typical gravitation towards families who will contribute towards the government's or agencies anti-poverty success statistics. This kind of an approach inevitably leads to the marginalisation of people living in remote areas or those who have no access to land and resources. In the context of South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa, those who rank among the absolute poor can be counted in the millions. In other words poverty schemes rarely affect those who are the most vulnerable. That is an axiom that has remained constant in spite of millions of aid dollars.

The sectorality of the development enterprise, which is a consequence of funding from specialist aid agencies and current thinking on development, is often an obstacle to planned, integrated development. While the issue of gender, that related to domestic violence, violence against women in society, and the inequitable gender-based distribution of resources in a family

environment – need to be seen as problems on their own right, they also need to be seen as symptoms of a larger violence in society. The lack of education, resources, access to land and employment, discriminatory religious and social customs, the reality of class and caste divides, the situation of institutionalised violence, the break down of local welfare schemes in the areas of health and education as a result of privatisation and debt repayments, the degradation of land and soil resources, natural calamities related to change in the climate and environment, the persistence of feudal environments and opportunistic, corrupt politics at local and national levels – all these factors contribute to that larger violence that creates victims from among women, children and men. The sectoralisation of development is an instance of neutrality. It is based on the belief that it is better to focus on a specific area rather than on the whole. It is based on the perspective that incremental change will lead on to change in other sectors – to a sort of domino effect. However such predictions rarely work in a macro sense. Poverty cannot be tinkered with. Its root causes are related to inequitable power flows, ownership of resources and access to services. This may seem like an unfashionable statement – but if one ignores this reality, what one is left with are schemes built on the edifice of neutrality.

The Information Technology Fix

While the debate about the usefulness of technology or otherwise, especially IT in development is an on-going one, it would seem that this debate does have a central blind-spot. The focus on the usefulness or otherwise of technology is I believe the wrong end of the stick. Satellite technology can be used to track hurricanes and map land areas belonging to indigenous populations but it can also

be used for military purposes. What is important and often neglected are engagements with the policy implications supportive of the use of IT in development, for instance the logic of cost-effectiveness and efficiency.

Take for instance the use of IT in education – through distance learning and in the contextof local learning initiatives. The logic that is frequently used to favour distance learning over conventional education is ease of delivery, universality and cost-effectiveness. Although this logic is impeccable in the context of remote areas and difficult terrains, in less difficult geographical contexts, policy decisions in favour of IT in education usually impact on the recruitment, training and prioritising of teachers in rural education. In most cases, while not openly acknowledged, IT becomes a substitute for teachers and part of a self-fulfilling circle – where the lack of teachers is weighed against the cost-effectiveness and availability of IT, leading to the edging out of the teaching fraternity. While in contexts characterised by wide employment opportunities, re-skilling and employment are a real possibility, such scenarios do not hold true for rural contexts in the South, where employment opportunities relate to a fixed number of professions. In other words, cost effectiveness related to the induction of IT and virtual learning environments can lead to the death of 'expendable' professions, like that of teachers, resulting in poorer learning environments bereft of face to face learning. Such policy initiatives are in turn, a consequence of the many pressures to centre IT at the heart of development efforts. There are hidden strings attached to such efforts as IT-based applications are a significant part of the mantra of globalisation. Current IT inductions in development fit perfectly in with current policies that are anti-subsidy, anti-welfare and pro-WTO. Such applications often fulfil

the free market conditonalities imposed by the World Bank and the IMF on indebted governments.

In the words of Adair Turner writing in *Prospect* (April 2001:25), this accent on IT is misplaced because it really does not deal with fundamentals. "Africa may lag 15 years or so behind US levels of PC and internet penetration, but it lags more like a century behind in basic literacy and health care. Anti-malaria programmes of, good schools, and the attainment of clean government are far higher priorities for the world's poor countries than avoiding a digital divide. Africa could be an economic disaster zone even with mobile phone and internet access as widely spread as in Europe today".

Tackling Poverty

So what can be done to bring poverty back into the agenda of communication specialists in particular those involved in using communications in development? The following suggestions are by no means exhaustive but merely point to the basis for another use of communications in development:

Training for Rural Journalists

What is perhaps significant from the point of view of journalism, is that in direct proportion to the commercialisation, specialisation and life style focus of modern journalism, there has been an equal decrease in the coverage of less exotic stories, for instance, the coverage of poverty, unless it is of a sufficient magnitude, and is predicted to lead to significant political repercussions. It is often the case that issues related to poverty are covered/reported by journalists who reside in the urban centres. The poverty beat is not a favoured one and as a result there are only a handful of journalists around the world who actively report on poverty related

issues. While their contributions have been important, it would also make sense to train local people in journalism. Local writers are best suited to report on local realities that they understand better than outsiders. Additionally, such training will allow their voices to be heard in contexts far away from their reality, in locations and environments where decisions are taken. Rural journalism was a theme of the late 70s. It needs to be revived but focused on the training of the most vulnerable people.

- **Focus on integrated, participatory communication projects**: There needs to be an accent on communication projects that are at the centre of community development and that address the critical issues facing the community in all its complexity and variety. Such projects are by their very nature grounded in a clear understanding of the political fall out of involvement in actions that are clearly pro-poor and pro-justice. The meaning of access, in this context, is related to the affirmation of this larger objective.

- **Investments in community-based communication projects**: Communication can no longer be seen as a luxury. It is central to development efforts. Governments need to invest in community media projects just as they support local development initiatives such as the Panchayat system in India. While in the Indian case, there have been recent initiatives aimed at locating information kiosks in rural centres – it is nevertheless necessary that such initiatives be open to and accessed by all people, rather than by the privileged few. Support for local cultural diversity, and right to language needs to be seen as integral parts of investments in communication for community.

- **Involvement of local people in local planning for communications**: This may look obvious but the fact remains that communication initiatives for the poor rarely are planned with input and participation from the poor. For example, the proposed information kiosks in India are state-based initiatives that have been planned and executed by technocrats and bureaucrats. While such initiatives will be of some benefit – for example to farmers who need regular information of prices of farm produce, it is bound to be less useful to the landless who may require other types of information needs.

- **The poor and their rights to information/communication**: With a few exceptions, most countries around the world are yet to enact significant, inclusive, right to information legislations. As has been the norm, the few countries that have attempted to legislate right to information policies in the recent past – for example Thailand and India, have framed exclusive policies with caveats that can be easily misused by governments and corporations. There is a need for specific right to information/communication legislations aimed at the poor and that relates to their special needs for information and communication support.

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2.

Hybrid Interactions. Human Rights and Development in Cultural Perspective

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"Human rights increasingly form part of a wider network of perspectives which are shared and exchanged between the North and South, centers and peripheries, in multiple, creative and sometimes conflict-ridden ways. Human rights have become 'universalized' as values subject to interpretation, negotiation, and accommodation. They have become 'culture'."

Ann-Belinda S. Preis, 1996

"The question of empowerment is central to both culture and development. It decides who has the means of imposing on a society the view of what constitutes culture and development."

Aung San Suu Kyi, 1995

A recent conference, held in November 1998 in Istanbul by a group of scholars, lawyers, development specialists and human rights activists, focused on "how compatible a universal normative approach to development is with respect to the right of peoples and communities to self-determination as well as with respect to organisations' autonomy" (Donders, 1999:1). We are obviously faced here with a complex matter. Therefore, this chapter attempts to provide an introductory overview of recent thoughts on human

rights, development and culture. We realise, however, that this complexity cannot be dealt with exhaustively within the scope of a single chapter.

Human rights, development and culture are continuously evolving concepts. For instance, the civil and political rights are often refered to as the first generation of human rights. A second generation of rights emerged at the turn of the century, emphasizing the economic, social and cultural rights of people. Among others, the right to work, education and cultural participation belong to this set of rights. Recently, the demand for collective, solidarity or third generation rights has been voiced by the South as the result of anti-colonial revolutions. These new rights emphasize national self-determination and non-discrimination.

Development and culture too are dynamic concepts. A complete historical survey, however, would carry us too far. In this chapter, we will limit ourselves to a revision of three conventional 'dichotomies': (a) tradition versus modernity, (b) universalism versus relativism, and (c) individualism versus collectivism.

Two basic assumptions are made. First, human rights, development and culture are interdependent phenomena, which should not be separated in practice. Second, individuals are not only objects of human rights or development, but active agents, participating in, and constituting these phenomena through their interactions with other individuals and institutions.

Tradition and Modernity

For a long time, cultures were seen as homogeneous and bounded entities. This view, perhaps epitomized in the description of

cultures as a list of traits, led to an instrumental and mechanical approach vis-à-vis human rights and development. If cultural traits were incompatible with human rights or modern ideas about development, then culture was seen as an obstacle. If the traits were compatible, then culture could be used as a surplus to development.

This chapter proposes a more integrated approach that views culture as a constructive and creative force which encompasses both development and human rights. The underlying idea is that cultures are not homogeneous and bounded entities, but rather dynamic, heterogeneous and open-ended. Some level of cultural coherence must always exist, but this has often been overstated. Deviance, inconsistency, contradiction and disagreement are parts of any culture. They move cultures forward from within, while intercultural contact moves cultures from without.

Apart from economic and political mechanisms, two basic human principles seem at work. On the one hand, people have an inward tendency to associate or identify with a specific culture or subculture (probably as a result of socialization processes). On the other hand, people tend to look to other cultures in order to establish alliances as well as to reinforce differences. In today's globalized context, intercultural contact has become particularly important (Servaes, 1989, 1999).

Modernization has introduced human rights and the conventional Western concept of development (as a linear, mainly economic, process) nearly everywhere. Colonialism and globalization are major forces that have made a large number of cultures 'creole' or 'hybrid'. In hybrid contexts, simple models such as *traditional versus modern* or *Western versus non-Western* are no longer valid. Western views on development and human rights often remain

caught in these dichotomies. But many cultures now overlap and blend into each other as never before due to new modes of communication, trade and transport.

In the contemporary world, cultures are not isolated. They interact and influence each other. The intercultural dynamics is set in motion by contemporary processes of globalization, which lead, not without tension, to the emergence, consolidation or reformulation of specific cultural and ethical values common to the various cultural areas. Any culture in relation and comparison with other cultures may find its own idiosyncrasies and peculiarities, its strong and its weak points.

The assumption has been made that as societies develop, they will loose their separate identities and cultural differences and tend to converge towards one common type of society. This is considered to be a result of industrialization and urbanization, which are identified as the main causes of this historical movement from diversity towards conformity, towards one global village. This global village is characterized by a secular culture and decline of religion, considerable geographic and social mobility, the predominance of the nuclear family, a high division of labor, with growing levels of formal education, economies based on industry, nowadays driven by the so-called 'knowledge' or e-economy, etc. However, many studies contradict these assumptions.

In the case of Thailand, for instance, Suntaree Komin (1988, 1991) found that certain so-called 'traditional' values and 'superstitious' behaviors like 'fortune-telling' and 'lucky numbers' are practiced more among Bangkokians than among farmers. No difference was observed in terms of educational level. "This casts some doubt on the theory that postulates a negative correlation between education and supernatural belief and behaviour. However, it is a

dominant value behaviour characteristic of the Thai" (Komin, 1988:171).

Therefore, the global village concept reflects an abstract and idealized image of a fully modern society. Several authors have come to the conclusion that modernization does not necessarily change cultural values. Modernization and indigenous culture can walk parallel, not simply convergent, paths. (e.g. Barbero, 1993; Barker, 2000; Hannerz, 1996; Howard, 1993; Miller, 1995; Servaes & Lie, 1997; Tomlinson, 1997, and; Werbner & Modood, 1997).

The way Islamic law and human rights discourses have met in recent years is a good example of how hybridization really works. In Afghanistan, women defend their right to education and health care by drawing on Western discourses about human rights. At the same time, however, many of them insist on being faithful to Muslim traditions at home (Ignatieff, 1998). Elsewhere, many young Islamic women insist on wearing veils because it makes them less vulnerable to reproaches of Westernization and allows them to go out for work or study (Postel-Coster, 1994). They are not necessarily on their way to a complete assimilation of Western ideas.

The norms, worldviews, institutions and behavioral patterns that they face –and others in other cultures– are not simply given, but construed. Geertz (1973) and others have shown that cultures are symbolic constructions created within social contexts. Foucault (e.g. 1980) pointed out that power is at play here. Different cultural discourses are in competition with each other at various levels.

The debate in India about the practice of *sati* is a good example. Sati, originally the Sanskrit word for 'virtuous woman', is the practice whereby women burn themselves on their husband's funeral pyre. *Sati* was abolished by the British Raj in 1829 after numerous cases had been recorded, particularly in the state of Bengal. Lati Mani (1987), who analyzed the debate preceding this decision, shows that *sati*, as a cultural practice, was interpreted in three different ways by three different groups. She distinguishes between (1) the British colonial discourse, (2) a conservative indigenous discourse, and (3) a progressive indigenous discourse. Mani demonstrates how each position represented a particular construction of *sati*. Each construction was based on different parts of Brahman scriptures and ignored particular Hindu customs, thus creating an illusionary sense of coherence. The point here is that women were used as a "site on which tradition is debated and reformulated" (Mani, 1987:153), while they themselves were completely absent from the debate. In the eighties, a number of cases of *sati* in the North of India brought the old debate back. Feminists pointed out that *sati* was now encouraged by some for economic reasons: to acquire the widow's dowry and to gain profit by turning it into a tourist attraction (Narayan, 1997). The example shows how a single cultural practice can be used for different purposes and can have different meanings for different people across time.

There are numerous other examples. Many discourses constructed by the tourism industry, governments, elites and Western activists alike –for moral, idealistic, commercial or other reasons– reduce people to uni-dimensional cardboard figures. If these people belong to minorities, whose voice is suppressed, they have a hard

time resisting these constructions. The rights of individuals have often been violated that way. For instance:

> "It is a least ironic to see largely Westernized elites warning against the values and practices they have adopted. At their best, such arguments tend to be dangerously paternalistic. For example, "villagization", which was supposed to reflect traditional African conceptions, was accomplished in Tanzania only by force, against the vocal and occasionally even violent opposition of much of the population" (Donnelly, 1989:119).

The antidote to such harmful views begins with a critical look at one's own cultural constructions and at conventional views of 'us' and 'them':

> "What is needed is a willingness to interrogate, politically and historically, the apparent "given" of a world in the first place divided into "ourselves" and "others". A first step on this road is to move beyond naturalized conceptions of spatialized "cultures" and to explore instead a production of difference within common, shared, and connected spaces" (Gupta & Ferguson, 1997:45).

We first of all have to come to grips with our past. Edward Said's (1985) captivating overview of the way in which Asian societies and philosophies throughout the ages were perceived by the West starts from the thesis: "That the essential aspects of modern Orientalist theory and praxis (from which present-day Orientalism derives) can be understood, not as a sudden access of objective knowledge about the Orient, but as a set of structures inherited from the past, secularized, redisposed, and re-formed by such disciplines as philology, which in turn were naturalized, modernized, and laicized substitutes for (or versions of) Christian

supernaturalism. In the form of new texts and ideas, the East was accommodated to these structures" (Said, 1985:122). Therefore, academics and the people they study "construct stylized images of the occident and orient in the context of complex social, political, and economic conflicts and relationships. … these stylized images are not inert products. Rather, they have social, political, and economic uses of their own, for they shape people's perceptions, justify policies, and so influence people's actions" (Carrier, 1995:11).

Those participating in a culture are often not aware of the discourses surrounding them, of how they have been constructed, and of how these discourses operate within a power structure. This relates to the difference between participants and observers. Observers can take a critical distance from their own cultural practices. This need not imply that they have to become outsiders. They can remain participants in their own culture, but will be more aware of what is happening around them, and more capable of determining their own path to development. Harmful cultural practices, such as female circumcision, can probably only be countered successfully by turning *participants* into *observers.* Note that "the increase of this kind of social reflexivity and the growth of criticism which allows members of a society and culture to challenge these practices in the name of some normative standards is one of the sociological constants of the transition from tradition to modernity. Modern societies allow their members to be at once observers of and participants in their normative orders" (Benhabib, 1996).

Universality and Relativism

Human rights emerged in the West when the modern state and capitalist economy started to develop. They represent a particular vision on human needs and human potential, based on early 'natural rights' and later on the 'rights of man' which reflected the rationalism, humanism and individualism of the European Enlightenment. The so-called first generation of rights, reflected in the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, can be directly related to a Western bourgeoisie liberating itself from feudal and aristocratic powers. In the nineteenth century, Western socialist thinkers inspired a second generation, reflected in the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. (e.g. Galtung, 1994, Donnelly, 1989). Given these roots, human rights have always been under attack from cultural relativists. Relativists see the Universal Declaration and the Covenants as Western, ethnocentric lists of rights and freedoms, with limited value for the Majority World.

The debate between relativists and universalists, largely a philosophical and ethical issue, continues till today. East-Asian countries, which did not contribute significantly to the Universal Declaration, currently take what is probably the most critical view on human rights. The introduction of Asian Values has been one of the most important issues fueling the universalist-relativist debate in recent years. Asian Values are put forward as a cultural alternative to human rights. They emphasize tolerance, harmony, consensus, collective rights and the right to development. However, Asian Values seem to serve other considerations. It should not come as a surprise that these are mainly economic and political, since the Asian Values critique largely comes from government officials. This critique should not lead, however, to a

complete rejection of the concept of Asian Values, or worse imply that Asian people have no values. As Tommy Koh (1999), the executive director of the Asia-Europe Foundation, explains

> "Some of East Asia's political leaders have given Asian values a bad name by seeking to justify their abuses of power and the inequities of their societies in the name of Asian values. For example, corruption, collusion and nepotism should be condemned by all Asians. They have nothing to do with Asian values. To put it more accurately, they have everything to do with bad Asian values but nothing with good Asian values. This leads me to my point that it is essential to distinguish between good Asian values and bad Asian values. Not all Asian values are good values just as not all Western values are good values. There are good Asian values and bad Asian values, just as there are good Western values and bad Western values" (Koh, 1999:10).

Various attempts are made to reconcile universalism and cultural relativism. If the radical positions of either side are conceptualized as two extremes of a single continuum, then intermediate positions can be found somewhere in between.

Cultural relativism is based on the empirical fact of cultural and historical variability. In its most radical form, cultural relativism opposes all absolutes, considers cultures to be unique and therefore to be the only valid source of values, rights and duties. This position is no longer held by many. According to Janusz Symonides (2000), director of the Human Rights Division at UNESCO, the results of the Vienna Conference confirm that this kind of cultural relativism is in retreat on many fronts. In more moderate forms, cultural relativism remains a valuable correction of the seemingly natural tendency towards ethnocentrism, evaluating one's culture as superior to others, or taking one's own values for universal values. Moderate relativism seems compatible with moderate universalism, but not with radical universalism.

Radical universalists deny the historical and cultural specificity of human rights. They claim that human rights are grounded in human nature and that we are all alike. Thus, human rights are moral rights of the highest order, applicable to all at all times. Universalist theories state that human rights are:

> "…held by all human beings, irrespective of any rights or duties one may or may not have as citizens, members of families, workers, or parts of any public or private organization or association… If all human beings have them simply because they are human, human rights are held equally by all. And because being human cannot be renounced, lost or forfeited, human rights are inalienable" (Donnelly, 1993:19).

In its most extreme form, universalism can easily lead to imperialism. In more moderate forms, however, it emphasizes a global ethics of people "being bound and motivated by shared commitments" (Peres de Cuéllar, 1995:34) who draw on a variety of cultural resources. This position comes close to moderate relativism.

Radical relativism, which excludes this possibility, is hard to except today, if not from a moral or philosophical perspective, then certainly for pragmatic and functional reasons. There is a nearly worldwide consensus on many of the values that the Universal Declaration wants to protect. Almost all states have adopted the declaration —at least rhetorically— thus giving its rights in practice a substantial and nearly universal basis. Many countries have used them in anti-colonial struggles. The Western origin of human rights does not mean that they are irrelevant elsewhere or cannot have universal value. It does not imply that Westernization is needed to

realize human rights, or that the West is at some advanced stage, or has some universal moral authority.

Although the particular notion of human rights may be said to be Western in origin, basic human needs and various concepts of human dignity around the world can serve as a valuable basis for defending and promoting human rights (for a discussion on needs and rights, see Galtung, 1994). But we do need to acknowledge that 'rights' as instruments for development are an alien concept to many cultures. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is often unknown and perceived as highly abstract. According to Bell, translating human rights into local cultural contexts has five important advantages. First, it leads to long term commitments. Second, it helps to find the social groups that are most capable of bringing about social and political changes. Third, human rights are easier to justify. For instance, "if it can be demonstrated that according to traditional Confucian conceptions of political rule governments have an obligation to alleviate suffering and avoid cruelty, this may help to persuade self-identified 'Confucian' rulers to avoid committing torture" (Bell, 1996:655). Fourth, it helps activists to find the right attitude. Finally, it increases sensitivity to local mechanisms appropriate for the protection of human rights.

The concern to make human rights more applicable across different cultures has led to such notions as 'critical universalism', 'inclusive universalism' and 'weak cultural relativism'. Theories based on these concepts accept universals at a general level, but simultaneously recognize the need for cultural accommodation. Cultural diversity is seen as a positive factor contributing to the universality of human rights. For some scholars this implies a transformation of the system itself, for others cultural

accommodation should mainly be seen in terms of a flexibility of the current standards.

Donnelly, who coined the term weak cultural relativism, distinguishes between three levels of cultural variation: variation in (1) the substance of the list of human rights, (2) the interpretation of individual rights, and (3) the form in which rights are implemented. For Donnelly, the three concepts represent hierarchical levels. His proposal allows for variations primarily at the lowest level of the form. For instance, whether the right to equal protection of the laws requires free legal assistance is a formal matter about which no universal claims can be made (particularly in developing countries it is often a matter of available resources). Cultural variations in form, however, are limited by the levels of interpretation and substance. At the level of interpretation, Donnelly accepts that "culture provides one plausible and defensible mechanism for selecting interpretations" but adds that "there are strong limits on the acceptable range of variation":

> "The meaning of the "right to political participation," for example, is controversial, but the range of controversy is limited by the substance of the concept: an election in which a people were allowed to choose an absolute dictator for life ("one man, one vote, once," as a West African quip put it) is simply an indefensible interpretation" (Donnelly, 1989:117).

Substantive differences lead to changes to the list itself. According to Donnelly, these should only rarely be made. Essentially, there are no reasons not to allow changes to the list of human rights. Since human rights address needs and these needs may vary across time and culture, new human rights may be desirable and

improve the human rights system. There is little to be gained, however, by introducing new rights that remain insignificant at the operational level. In practice, a proliferation of rights may ultimately reduce the value and legitimacy of the human rights discourse.

A truly cross-cultural approach should not only be concerned with the *content* of rights, but also focus on the *construction*. Galtung notes that human rights are also Western in their construction. Among others, he points to "the ultimate, universal normative emission in one sender (UNGA), and the delicate balance between enacting rights and cashing in on duties in one receiver only (the state)" (Galtung, 1994:19). Galtung suggests "not to let the state off the hook of accountability, but to extend accountability to other world actors" such as international organizations and corporations, and "to spin a dense normative web of norms by and large pointing in the same (basic human needs) direction, dispersing both authority and credit" (Galtung, 1994:20).

This has become a very important issue since states are rapidly loosing power due to globalization. Multinational corporations increasingly control the economic and everyday life of an individual, but are hardly accountable. They can easily turn their back on human rights. NGO's can pressure these groups to implement human right standards. This is not an easy thing to do as economists and other professionals in these organizations, tend to separate human rights and economic considerations. "That approach is very deeply rooted not only in the institutional mythology of most, if not all, of the international agencies, but is also strongly reinforced by the philosophical underpinnings of many economic theories and by the methodological approaches used by the great majority of economists" (Alston, 1988:18). This critique

has also been voiced by Amartya Sen. The problem can be countered by bringing together economists, lawyers and cultural specialists in multidisciplinary teams.

Individualism and Collectivism

A discussion on culture inevitably leads to the traditional debate on individualism and collectivism. The premise is well known: While the Western cultural position is said to be based on "the sacredness of the individual body, and spirit of the individual" (Galtung, 1994:15), non-Western societies are supposed to emphasize the loyalties and responsibilities towards the community. Many scholars agree with Kagitçibasi who suggests that there is "an individualistic ethos in the Western world" while "the majority of humankind share at least some aspects of collectivism" (1997:4, 5).

In recent years, collectivism has been put forward as one of the Asian Values. The general assumption is that Asian societies tend to favor the interests of the community, while the West emphasizes the individual. This relativist position was reflected in the Bangkok Declaration of April 1993, adopted at the Asian regional preparatory meeting for the World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna. The Vienna Declaration, however, adopted by consensus by the World Conference, confirmed the universality of human rights and rejected the notion of cultural relativism.

The individualism-collectivism dichotomy can be linked to another set of presumed 'opposites': first versus second generation rights. The separation of these two types of rights – in a nutshell, food versus freedom– has been the cause of many heated debates, first between the East and the West, now between the South and the North. Liberal-capitalist ideologies traditionally emphasized civil

and political rights, while Marxist thinking tended to focus on second-generation rights. The current insistence on free elections by Western donor countries and the introduction of Asian Values has revived the debate. Western countries are criticized for giving priority to civil and political rights over social, economic and cultural rights. Asian countries in particular have argued that the West now uses civil and political rights to cut aid and undermine development. But Asian governments are said to contest universal human rights "as a bargaining tool vis a vis the West" and "to pursue globalization without internally democratising their societies" (Ravindran, 1998:54).

African nations have emphasized collectivism too. The African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights includes collective rights and points towards the duties of individuals towards the community (Ama Ankumah, 1992). But the demand from many non-Western countries for universal solidarity rights has not fared well so far. The demand for these rights emerged through anti-colonialist revolutions and is concerned with self-determination and non-discrimination. Solidarity rights pertain primarily to certain collective concerns, such as peace, culture, development and ecological balance. So far, with the exception of the right of peoples to self-determination, the International Bill of Human Rights includes only individual rights.

There are two important reasons why, apart from the right to self-determination, no collective rights have been adopted at the international level. First, states fear that giving rights to groups may foster secessionist movements (this is also the reason why they limit self-determination). In this age of globalization, where states are loosing power to higher levels already, groups with collective rights within their borders might weaken their strengths

even more. Second, group rights are a potential threat to current human rights. Collective freedoms may easily be claimed against, or over, individuals. It is a very serious problem:

"Appeals to the rights of the people collectively are most often used by oppressive, paternalistic regimes to ignore or repress the desires, or to deny the rights of, real, concrete people. The rhetoric of the rights of peoples or the masses too often seems to have little purpose other than to justify the denial of most specific (human and other) rights of most people. The dangers of political abuse are especially strong when the collective body held to possess these third generation human rights is the state" (Donnelly, 1989:145-146)

The Forum for Human Rights and Development, a NGO network based in Bangkok, defends a more grassroots position. They argue that supporting community rights against individual rights is in practice used against Asian communities by denying them their rights.

Nevertheless, we need to take the demands for collective rights seriously. Concerns, such as peace, culture, development and a healthy environment are important enough. Many countries in the world have minority groups that are seriously threatened. Due to globalization, an increasing number of immigrant groups are demanding the right to freely express their cultural particularities within nations dominated by another culture (Lukes, 1993). One might argue that most of their demands are already covered by existing individual human rights, which is true to some extent. But not always. For instance, the individual right to education does not give a group the right to institutionalize its own educational system. In addition, collective rights might help to correct structural injustices. As Tomasevski points out:

> "Access to remedy for human rights violations is still - and likely to remain so - exclusively individualistic: remedies can be sought by the individuals whose individual rights have been (allegedly) violated. This is obviously insufficient to challenge structural and policy problems in development" (Tomasevski, 1993:191).

Ultimately, the question is whether rights of a group can be human rights (since groups are not human, but a collection of human beings), and whether they can be compatible with existing human rights. Jones (1999) proposes a distinction between 'collective groups' and 'corporate groups'. A collective group has no moral standing of its own. The attribution of a right to the group is motivated only by the separate but identical interest of the individuals which form the group. A corporate group is a single, integral entity with a moral standing of its own. Jones argues that corporate group rights cannot be accepted as human rights because the moral unit is a group and not a human being. Nations or 'peoples' therefore cannot have human rights. Groups based on a collective conception, however, might enjoy human rights because these rights can be traced back to individuals. These rights of the collective group cannot write:

> "…individuals out of the moral calculation. If we adopt the collective theory, the claims of the few may have to yield to those of the many, but at least the claims of the few will be heard and counted. (…) Thus, morally, there is no group that has an existence independently of, and that can hold rights against, its own members. There are only individuals who hold rights jointly, and, by common consent, right holders cannot hold rights against themselves. Rights held by individuals jointly, like those held individually, must be rights directed 'outward' at other individuals or groups of individuals rather

than 'inward' to the right holders themselves" (Jones, 1999:93-94).

Jones' proposal is largely to see groups and individuals not in opposition to each other, but rather as complementary. Lukes (1993) agrees:

> "To defend human rights is to protect individuals from utilitarian sacrifices, communitarian impositions, and from injury, degradation, and arbitrariness, but doing so cannot be viewed independently of economic, legal, political, and cultural conditions and may well involve the protection and even fostering of collective goods... For to defend human rights is not merely to protect individuals. It is also to protect the activities and relations that make their lifes more valuable, activities and relations that cannot be conceived reductively as merely individual goods" (Lukes, 1993:30).

It is a fact that we are all individuals within *groups*, and that many groups need protection because they are seriously threatened. Whether solidarity rights are really needed, remains to be seen. At the conference in Istanbul on human rights (Donders, 1999) most participants questioned the inclusion of collective rights into the human rights canon. Galtung (1994) looks at the future from an historical perspective:

> "In the Western countries human rights have generally first been articulated by civil society, and the state has received the norms only when they can be seen as being sent from above, and usually without any enthusiasm. The civil-political rights were promoted by powerful individuals and civil groups from the emerging bourgeoisie who then became majorities in the national assemblies, transforming monarchies into presidential systems or constitutional monarchies. The economic-social-cultural rights were promoted by working-

class parties before the ruling classes could accept them from a national assembly. In the same vein the most articulate and meaningful civil society organizations today are probably in the fields of development, environment, and peace, promoting norms about goals and processes that sooner or later will be accepted by the state system" (Galtung, 1996:150).

Conclusion

Some of the issues discussed above, it is hoped, can help to establish a cautious but more effective approach in the field of human rights and development. Five major issues are thought to be essential to any human rights and development policy. It is suggested that:

1. Cultures are increasingly hybrid. This forces us to deal with conventional dichotomies, such as traditional versus modern, in a more creative –and hopefully more productive– way.

2. Culture is a multidimensional discourse with a power structure. To understand oppressive discourses, people need to become observers of their own culture. Observation leads to more knowledgeable participation.

3. Human rights should be translated into local cultural contexts. This is not in opposition with universality, provided one accepts a moderate universalism.

4. There is little to support a division of rights. Limited resources and cultural particularities require choices to be made, but these should ideally be made at the level of the form or interpretation of a right, not by cutting rights from the list.

5. There are a number of reasons *not* to support collective human rights. At least at the level of a corporate group, collective rights are a potential threat to existing human rights.

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3.

Media Globalization through Localization

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In recent years we have come to witness interesting, albeit somewhat puzzling, developments in the world of media communications: the transnationalization of national, and even local, television in several parts of the world, local appeal as a success formula for television but not for cinema, the digitalization and convergence of both old and new information and communication technologies (ICT), and media globalization and localization as concurring phenomena (see for a recent account Wang, Servaes & Goonasekera, 2000).

These developments have painted a communications landscape that is quite different from what we were familiar with. They pointed to new directions for changes and exposed significant inadequacies in the framework of analysis that was employed in the past. It is only with a good look at the industry, the audience, the product and the policies that we may be able to demystify some of the clouds surrounding media globalization and to assess its impacts.

What is New?

As an idea, globalization is not a product of the 1990s, or even the 20th century, as some researchers have pointed out (Hall, 1995;

Gardels, 1997). Held, McGrew, Goldblatt & Perraton (1999:414) conclude that "globalization is neither a wholly novel, nor primarily modern, social phenomenon. Its form has changed over time and across the key domains of human interaction, from the political to the ecological. Moreover … globalization as a historical process cannot be characterized by an evolutionary logic or an emergent telos".

Over the years the word has increasingly been used to refer to a process through which the entire human population is bonded into a "single system" (Wallerstein, 1990, 1997), a "single society" (Albrow, 1990), or "the structuration of world as a whole," as defined by Robertson (1990). This "single system," then forms the framework for individual activities and nation-state operations. It is conceived both as a journey and a destination—with arrival at the globalized state a finality (Giddens, 1990; Featherstone, 1990; Ferguson, 1992) which constitutes a unit of analysis in its own right.

This vision of an era of global communications seems especially pertinent when changes in other spheres of human societies are taken into consideration. The 1990s, with the fall of the Berlin Wall and the explosive growth of the World Wide Web as preludes, have been marked by the collapse of the physical, virtual and institutional barriers which had kept people apart over the previous several decades. The ever closer trade relationships among nation-states, the growing number of transnational corporations, ICTs, internet and discussions on e-commerce and e-governance, the emergence of global health and environmental issues and a common style of consumption of material and cultural products have all helped to bring about what is described as the "globalization" of our world. In other words, this perspective

considered globalization as the widening, deepening and speeding up of worldwide interconnectedness in all aspects of contemporary social life.

Globalists, Traditionalists or Transformationalists?

But beyond a general awareness and agreement of this global interconnectedness, there is substantial disagreement as to how globalization is best conceptualized, how one should think about its causal dynamics, how one should characterize its structural, socio-economic consequences, and which implications it has on state power and governance. This debate, which has been summarised in a number of books edited by Held and others (1999, 2000), has developed three different theses on globalization: a (hyper)globalist perspective, a sceptical or traditionalist perspective, and, a transformationalist perspective.

These perspectives could be summarised as follows (Cochrane & Pain, 2000:22-23):

(1)   *Globalists* see globalization as an inevitable development which cannot be resisted or significantly influenced by human intervention, particularly through traditional political institutions, such as nation-states.

(2)   *Traditionalists* argue that the significance of globalization as a new phase has been exaggerated. They believe that most economic and social activity is regional, rather than global, and still see a significant role for nation-states.

(3)   *Transformationalists* believe that globalization represents a significant shift, but question the inevitability of its impacts. They argue that there is still significant scope for national, local and other agencies.

The globalists could be divided in optimists and pessimists. The optimists, with neoliberal arguments, welcome the triumph of individual autonomy, and the market principle over state power. They emphasize the benefits of new technologies, global communications and increased cultural contacts. Neo-Marxists tend to be more pessimistic in their globalist discourse. They emphasize the dominance of major economic and political interests and point mainly to the uneven consequences of globalization. However, both groups share the belief that globalization is primarily an economic phenomenon.

Traditionalists believe that globalization is a myth and emphasize continuities between the past and present. There is nothing really new. Whatever the driving forces for globalization, they contend that the North-South "gaps" increase. All we are witnessing is simply a continuation and progression of evolutionary change.

The transformationalists can be found somewhere in-between. They recognize the complexity of the phenomena and try to move beyond the sometimes arid debate between the globalists and the traditionalists.

Our interpretation of this classification is that the globalist and the traditionalist perspectives are both very extreme in their views. The globalists advocate that the world changes towards a more homogenous global culture and towards all kinds of new global structures. The traditionalists take the other extreme stance and advocate that nothing really revolutionary is happening. Still in our opinion, the transformationalist perspective is not so much a compromise between the two as it is a less extreme and more modest interpretation of what is happening. Transformationalists

argue that the world does go through changes—in a sense as she has always gone through changes—but they do believe that some of these changes form a conglomerate of changes that does account for something to be interpreted as new.

Elsewhere, Lie (1998) made an inventory of such a conglomerate of changes in a cultural atmosphere and identified the following components: (1) the interrelated processes of the emergence of interdisciplinarity, (2) the increasing role of the power of culture, (3) the birth of a new form of modernization, (4) the changing role of the nation-state, and, (5) the emerging attempts to address the link between the global and the local. The total conglomerate of changes accounts for something new, but especially the last issue of linking the global with the local was identified as a central point of change. But how can this conglomerate of global changes be linked to development and political-economic and social change at local levels and from within local levels?

Homogenization, Polarization, or Hybridization?

This more general typology can also be found at the communications and culture level. The globalist perspective assumes a unified, homogeneous global culture. From a neo-Marxist and functionalist point of view (Wallerstein, 1990; Chew & Denemark, 1996; Hirst & Thompson, 1996), globalization, a product of capitalists' drive to expand markets and maximize profits, only serves to perpetuate the hegemony of the few Western powers. The world of communications has become a perfect stage for the workings of capitalism. Once a single system, there will be no longer a need for every nation to maintain its own communications industry (Mittelman, 1996).

Others, especially those with a sociology and cultural studies background (Featherstone, 1995; Hall, 1992; Robertson, 1992; Said, 1993; Waters, 1995), have emphasized the plurality of cultural development as a result of the anti-colonialism movement. Instead of losing one's "sense of place" because of increasing global influences, the importance of locality was underlined in the constructing and deconstructing, embedding and disembedding of social forces.

As pointed out by Featherstone (1995:6), globalization suggests simultaneously two views of culture. The first, taking a monoculturalist point of view, treats globalization as the "extension outward of a particular culture to its limits, the globe," through a process of conquest, homogenization and unification brought about by the consumption of the same cultural and material products. The second one, adopting a multiculturalist stand, perceived globalization as the "compression of cultures."

The monoculturalists' interpretation of globalization is often noted for its resemblance to the modernization and media imperialism theories (Servaes, 1999). Both focused on the economic and technological forces in change, and suggested a one-way unilinear impact of Western—or American to be specific—media on their audiences.

Economic incentives and technological developments have also been believed to be the major driving forces for globalization (Featherstone, 1995:7; Robertson, 1990:22). For the communications industry, the purported globalization process was fueled by yet another factor: policy deregulation. Although many would argue that nation-states are still capable of keeping things under control, this control is undeniably much less than it used to be (Servaes & Wang, 1997; Wang, 1997).

Globalization, Localization or Something Else?

While the meaning of globalization remains ambiguous, "media globalization" or "global media" have quickly become cliches in communications studies. Two questions can be raised about the use of such terms, however. First, what is meant by a globalized communications industry, and secondly, can we assume that a genuine globalization of the industry has already taken place? More precisely, what is the direction of changes that we can observe now—globalization, localization, or something else?

All too frequently when the term "global" is used in conjunction with the communications media or industry, it refers primarily to the extent of coverage, with the popularity of satellite television and computer networks serving as evidence of the globalization of communications.

Indeed never before in human history has a single television channel been available in over 150 nations, nor has there been any communications medium which managed to attract hundreds of million of users. However, as Ferguson has pointed out, the linkages brought about by the so-called globalization process are largely confined to OECD and G7 member countries, which constitute one-third of the world population. And even when a medium, e.g., CNN, can put over 150 countries on its map, the rate of penetration and actual consumption can present rather a different picture. As Street (1997:77) has said, the fact that a product is available everywhere is no guarantee that it achieves the same level of popularity, let alone acquires the same significance, meaning or response (Featherstone, 1990:10). It is no secret that CNN's audiences normally account for only a small fragment of a nation's population.

However, the meaning of a globalized industry would be seriously distorted if other dimensions were left out of the discussion. These dimensions, including the dynamics of the market, modes of production, the contents and messages transmitted, are closely related to the perception of the role and function of communications in the globalization process, the direction of change in the industry, and ultimately, the cultural images presented by the theories of globalization.

There is no denying that competitive pricing is a major reason for the availability of American and Japanese programs in most parts of the world. However if prices were the single most important factor at work, those companies which produce the cheapest and most attractive products, with the most extensive global distribution networks and best promotional skills would have become the sole suppliers for the global market, leaving very little to the smaller, less competitive national and local players.

To critical theorists, communications media can be viewed as industries which commercialize and standardize the production of culture (Kellner, 1989). This definition highlights an important property of the media: a business that produces, distributes and sells marketable products. But the recognition of this property is not to overlook the media's other equally important characteristic: its being cultural.

Cultural products, more than any others, reflect the cultural values of their producers and the social reality in which they were produced. Viewing a television program or listening to the radio, therefore, cannot be seen as a simple act of consumption; these acts involve a rather complex process of decoding cultural meanings. Although competing prices may contribute to the wide availability of certain cultural products, the purchase of cultural

products differs from the purchase of typical consumer goods in that considerations such as product quality may bear little significance in the decision to watch, or not to watch, a television program.

The cultural products market, therefore, does not operate on economic forces alone. Following a similar logic, communications technologies, the other purported major force for globalization, also have their blind spots in explaining all changes—a conclusion which we can derive, without too much difficulty, from the discussion of the significance of "place" and "local cultures" in the literature on globalization.

Some neo-Marxists view globalization as a process where the feeling of belonging is no longer connected to different places; they argue that the sense of belonging is to one single global society Therefore it is fair to say that the local culture and the local "place" is still more important to most people than the global. "Even if cultural globalization, as Giddens pointed out, is an important part of globalization and even if local culture is constantly challenged, there are few signs of one homogenous global culture" (Lie, 1998:144).

Therefore, most scholars today see globalization as interlinked with localization. But although scholars agree *that* globalization and localization are linked, sometimes referred to as glocalization, there still remains a lot of uncertainty and discussion around the question on *how* these two concepts are linked.

Viundal (2000:6) describes this linkage by using the analogy of a tree: "As the tree grows stretches out and widens its horizon, its roots at the other end also need to grow stronger. In my case, going to Australia, stretching out my branches, as a way of

globalising, my awareness of my cultural background and roots as a Norwegian have at the same time grown stronger, as a sign of localising. Consciously or unconsciously my culture might have been challenged or changed due to my exposure to other cultures, but in this process my Norwegianness also tends to be confirmed".

This coincides with what Giddens (1995) pointed out about human nature. He suggested that humans want, or maybe need, a place to belong to, but that humans at the same time want to reach out to what is found outside this "place".

Cultural Identity

What globalization really is and what it means to human beings with regard to (cultural, national, ethnic …) identity is a matter of discussion. Thomas Eriksen (1993:150) starts from the assumption that identity is locally constructed, and that "people still live in places". This indicates that the connected world is a stage where people with different cultures and identities meet.

Therefore, cultural identity has become a crucial concept in the debate on globalization. If we adopt Lull's (1995:66) definition of culture—"a particular way of life shaped by values, traditions, beliefs, material objects and territory"—and Anderson's (1983) idea of imagined communities, wehave to accept culture and identity are an evolving process positioning the individual as an active participant in the consumption of information. The subconscious references and choices that we make on a daily basis that attach meaning to the information we receive, which is related to our concept of self and other. This view emphasizes the exchange of meaning taking place in the local consumption of global messages. As Katz (1980) notes, context and the individual reading of the message become the focus with a shift from "what

the media do to the people to what the people do to the media."
Globalization is thus restricted to describing the expansion and
coverage of the means of communication, not its consumption.

For Example: Pokemon

In the case of Pokemon, aspects of Japanese culture could be
transmitted to other countries where the game has been
introduced. However, cultural transmission is seldom prominent in
such exchanges. Pokemon has undergone a cleansing of its cultural
aspects to make the game more appealing (marketable) to its
overseas recipients, an attempt to hide its "Japan-ness". "We tried
not to have violence or sexual discrimination or religious scenes in
the U.S.," says Kubo of Kubo Publishing (on the Pokemon website).
"Some graphic sequences involving punching were taken out. The
names of the characters and monsters were westernised." The
production of popular culture and cultural mixing makes the
original source of consumer goods irrelevant (Iwabuchi, 2000).

This demonstrates the trend of globalization through localization.
The global market is an aggregation of local markets and
maximization of market share is obtained by penetrating as many
local markets as possible. This is done by the merger of, or
cooperation among, transnational corporations of different
countries of origin (Iwabuchi, 2000). Local subsidiaries often
specialize in giving transnational products a "local" feel.

Thus, though the potential for cultural enrichment through
globalization is great, in reality most products are stripped of their
cultural values in order to make the product more marketable. This
"cultural striptease" makes products in potential more appealing to
more cultures. But, this does not necessarily mean that the
product is simplified. The product is differently encoded by the

producer (or better sub-producer) and is encoded in such a way that it becomes more multi-cultural interpretable. It offers the possibility for multi-cultural interpretations. Such a process leads of course to the loss of national or cultural identity of the original product, and in this way simplifies processes of intercultural communication. But, taking the other end of the communication process into consideration, it does not mean that the phenomena is part of a homogenous world wide pop culture. The active process of cultural localization includes a process of interpretation that accounts for local cultural embedding of multi-cultural products.

Advertising is everywhere, cultivating particular attitudes to problems or creating problems where none existed previously (Young, 1990:2). When advertising is aimed at children, the emotional and irrational drives of young children can be exploited. Minors are not capable of defending themselves against such an onslaught. In this case, the advertiser is seen as the seducer and the child is cast in the role of the innocent (ibid:18).

In the case of Pokemon advertising, transnational communication could be considered exploitative. Pokemon has steadily maintained its popularity through its television series and movies. This is especially true of the after-show section of its TV series called 'Who's that Pokemon?' which is used to advertise new monsters for children to add in their collection.

Even in the case of the official Pokemon web site, it is used for advertise new products and as a place for children to purchase or auction Pokemon products.

Pokemon is the latest in a series of fad toy preferences for children. These fads are the result of transnational communication through advertising, the linking of cultures through globalization,

the penetration of local markets through localization, and the targeting of children by advertising. These fad toy preferences probably have little long-term effects on culture or society. Though many problems have arisen around the Pokemon craze, these are generally viewed as symptoms of general cultural troubles, not the cause.

Future Research Directions

The theories of globalization have been challenged, criticized and modified, but few would deny that they do offer a fertile ground for research. In Lie and Servaes (2000) we adopted a convergent and integrated approach in studying the complex and intricate relations between globalization, consumption and identity. Such an approach would allow problems to converge at key crossings or nodal points. Researchers then are rid of the burden of studying linear processes in totality, e.g., production and consumption of global products, and instead are allowed to focus on the nodal points where processes intersect.

Several such nodal points were identified, including production, regulation, representation, consumption, action and local points of entry into the communications flow. The nodal points approach highlights the richness of globalization as an area of research, however it is also important to note that all these dimensions do rest on certain axial principles. They do point out important features of the world cultural industries and converge on several points.

In this purported era of global communications, culture remains an important factor, either facilitating the transnationalization of national or local cultural industries, or impeding further growth of global media. Global media may be largest in terms of coverage,

however their size shrinks significantly if measured in terms of viewing rate. In many regions of the world the most important development in the communications industry has not been the further dominance of global media, but the emerging of cultural-linguistic media (mainly television) markets. As the influence of transnational television tends to rest on a quite superficial level of cultures; no global culture or global identity—not in the fullest sense of the words—has been fostered.

As Hall indicated, it is human nature to want a place to which one feels he or she belongs; however, it is perhaps also human nature to want to reach out to the strange unknown world outside of this "place." Audiences may prefer home programs, but these are not all they watch. While some national programs are successful because of their distinct cultural characteristics, others may achieve similar success by promoting foreign values. It is the capitalist nature of the industry that made American products available everywhere. But this capitalist character failed to make them accepted everywhere.

It is difficult still to determine if communications has helped to offer a "place," as suggested by Featherstone, where cultures meet and clash, or has in fact enhanced the cultural context in which individuals find the "place" that they feel attached to. Perhaps a closer analysis will show that here again, communications serves as a double-edged sword; and which of the two roles becomes more prominent will be extremely variable, from situation to situation.

The danger here is treating culture and language as another set of powerful, determining factors in communications studies, thus undermining the importance of others. In fact, no single factor, nor a group of factors, can fully explain what has, is, or will, take

place. Globalization may be inadequate to describe the current process of change, but neither would localization nor regionalization suffice. As co-production further blurs distinctions between the global and the local, it is important to note that the two are dialectically opposed conceptually, but not necessarily in reality.

During a dynamic process of change, it is the interaction of factors that brings about endless possibilities.

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4.

Vertical Minds versus Horizontal Cultures. An Overview of Participatory Processes and Experiences

Alfonso Gumucio Dagron

Introduction

It happened at a very small village west of Koudougou, in Burkina Faso. The name of the village is not very relevant. Not even the name of the country. It could have been any other country in Africa. We were visiting a small radio station, one of the six "local radios" that President Thomas Sankara had set up when he was Minister of Information during the early eighties. Outside the mud-brick small room that housed the station we found lying on the bare floor, under the rain, long rows of post office boxes, several hundreds. Our local contact saw a big question mark on our face and immediately provided an explanation: "Oh, these are for the new post office building, which will be built here. It's a donation from Germany". Rust was already taking care of the donation. We inquired: "How long ago did you get them?" He replied: "Last year. But you know, the government has not yet started to build the post office, I'm not sure they will ever do it".

Certainly, we thought, if we were the government we would never do it either. What kind of brain can conceive a post office building, with hundreds of luxurious PO boxes "Made in Germany", in a

small village with no more than 300 families, mostly illiterate peasants? We couldn't imagine any of them keeping a key for the PO box, and visiting the post office once a week to retrieve non-existent letters. We couldn't see many of them writing any letters either. The whole concept seemed to us imported and imposed by people who don't know much about how communication flows in rural areas of developing countries.

On the other hand, we could imagine the role that the local community radio could play. Besides its typical role of airing music. If by any chance a letter came to the community, it will go straight to the radio station, and a short message would alert the family to whom the letter has been addressed. Actually, many community radio stations in the world started to build their constituency by providing precisely this kind of services to the community.

We've seen too many of these grotesque perversions of development in countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America. Mostly the result of imposed projects, by irresponsible donors that care more about an annual report on development cooperation that looks good and glossy, rather than caring about people. Very few governments in the Third World will say no to funds from cooperation agencies. Some of them, better prepared for negotiations with international or bilateral development agencies, will put the country priorities forward, but these are only a few. Many other governments will just take anything they offer them, because of corruption or because they themselves are not aware of national priorities in development.

What does this have to do with communication? Actually everything.

Vertical Minds, Horizontal Cultures

During the past twenty years, the whole discourse of development has began to experiment deep changes, from a very vertically imposed and rigid model of "assistance" from international and bilateral development agencies, to more flexible alternatives, that take into account what people really need, or at least, what governments say that their people need (which often is not the same).

The real needs of the so-called "beneficiaries" have seldom been taken into account. International and bilateral cooperation agencies offer ready-made packages and summon developing countries: "Take it or leave it". They have learnt to identify many of the bilateral cooperation agencies by their agenda. These agendas correspond seldom with the priorities of developing countries. For example, one of USAID priorities has been to control AIDS and STDs in developing countries. Many millions have been spent in many programmes of reproductive health and family planning (birth control), even in countries where the number-one health priority is diarrhoea or malaria. Take it or leave it.

As communication is building its own personality as a discipline for development, its influence is being noticed by cooperation agencies, at least in the discourse, though the practice is yet to change. Even World Bank documents in recent years show much concern about development models that were embarrassing failures mainly because they failed to identify what people really wanted, let alone what they really needed (which often is not the same thing).

The whole concept of development and international cooperation is in crisis and is being reviewed, while more democratic

governments displace the authoritarian regimes and civil society empowers itself to put an end or at least to denounce corruption.

The vertical minds that guided international cooperation were shaped during colonial times. They just "knew" what was best for countries in Africa, Asia or Latin America, until they found some countries that had their own ideas about development.

There is no room for vertical minds in a world of horizontal cultures. This was actually well understood as new pressures came on developing countries with the force of a tidal wave: globalisation. In spite of being pervasive in the economic and trade arena, it has encountered great resistance in culture and civil society. Numerous cultures in the world are not ready to let it go. People hold to their mother tongue, they hold to their dress, to their music, to their religious practices. Still, the tidal wave can be powerful enough to wipe many off the globe in the long term, if there is no reaction to it now. Here again, communication in development and participation could be of great help. It is a resource with a potential that hasn't been fully uncovered yet.

The problem of communication, as it has been conceived through so many decades, is that it was not meant to communicate, just to inform, conform and deform. Inform as a one-way flow of content towards the passive receiver (the old paradigm is still very much alive); conform as a way of adjusting the behaviour of people to the needs of expanding markets and/or for political purposes; and deform as distorting history, memory, truth and culture, for the purpose of domination either by local privileged classes or by multinational conglomerates (the former "banana republics" of central America did learn a lot from those years).

Still today, the English language doesn't clearly differentiate information (one way) from communication (multiple ways), let alone communications (the technology) from communication (the human factor). This is very annoying as most of the literature on communication is written in English. Mass information media is often referred to as "mass communication". The horizontal and dialogic components in content flows, which are essential to the act of "communicating", are simply not taken into consideration. The whole concept of participation, which etymologically is in the core of the word communication, has been ignored for many years.

Communication was until very recently the fifth wheel in the car of development. Seldom it formed part of the essence of the development process. Maybe, because development was not even perceived as a process itself. The lack of communication and its basic principle, dialogue, has prevented many projects from succeeding. That is, if we understand "success" as people democratically guiding the process of change for their own community, for the benefit of the majority.

So why is the relationship between development and communication beginning to change? Why is the car of development now starting to use the spare wheel to redress its direction? It is not because the discourse is changing within the international cooperation, and even less because some scholars started writing about it. Actually, both have come to represent, digest and popularise what has been already happening at the community level for many years.

Participation in development has finally shattered institutional barriers, and participatory communication is helping to make of it a clear expression by communities. Better late than never. International or bilateral cooperation agencies can no longer ignore

what the subjects of development have to say. Moreover, they need them if they want to claim any sustainability in their programmes. Without people's participation, no project can be successful and last long enough to support social change. This may sound as an obvious truth, but it was amazingly ignored for decades, and still is in many development projects where donor's agendas are imposed over people's needs.

Imperfect, difficult to label (which makes scholars feel uneasy), culturally diverse and often escaping from institutional control, participatory communication is feeding a new approach to communication and to development as well. Participatory communication is fragile, it is often contradictory -which conspires against the ready-to-replicate model exercises, but in the end it is as alive as the communities that use it as a means to promote dialogue and networking on issues that are important for the community life: development, yes, but also culture, power and democracy.

Process of Participation

We hold tight to words and concepts; that is what most of us do for a living. Maybe it's time to be more flexible, to imagine that definitions can also be a burden when trying to define something that we don't fully understand. Let's take, for example, "participatory project", which already encapsulates a contradiction. A "project" is something that has to be designed in advance, with a clear understanding of all its phases and results. It's actually a very academic and intellectual exercise, maybe that is why we like to use the word: research project, development project, and even sentimental project. Participation, on the other hand, is a wide-open window towards a collective goal that we can only imagine

over the horizon. By its very nature, participation is a process and when we refer to a participation project we are actually thinking of a participatory process.

It is true that often a participation process starts with a project that aims to encourage participation. Actually, this is more likely to happen when dealing with development communication. The very fact of implicating communication with a participatory purpose can make a development project different. If a communication initiative is seeking for participation with the aim of involving the community of beneficiaries to the point of them becoming the owners of a project, then a communication process has to unwind over the time to make it possible. The "ownership" of the development project –and first, of the communication component-, is what helps to establish the difference from the typical interventions in development communication projects, which reproduce the sender and receiver paradigm, just with a more progressive content.

Unfortunately, research on participatory communication has often very little "sync" with what is actually happening on the ground. Research comes late or never. It is partial and tends to generalize based on very few examples. There are several reasons for that:

Most of the research is done in Europe and the United States/Canada, while the subjects of research, the participatory communication experiences, are located in developing countries.

- Researchers can only spend short periods of time visiting developing countries, so they tend to pick only very few experiences for their case studies.
- Many researchers work on information readily available on the Web or in other published case studies and information, which limits enormously the scope of their research, and also highlights excessively only a handful of experiences, in detriment of many others.

- Most researchers speak only English, which limits their research to sources in English and/or to countries where English is spoken. And even in those countries the researcher may find many difficulties to communicate with the local population, which is only fluent in the local language.

- Researches from the North (Europe and North America) have a whole system of values that prevents many of them from understanding local culture and local values of the South, thus reflecting a limited comprehension in the resulting research documents.

- Many local participatory communication experiences remain invisible because they are not promoted, funded or anyhow related to the mainstream international cooperation agencies.

- Very few research projects involve local researchers who can provide valuable insights on the social, political, economic and cultural contexts.

While preparing a report on participatory communication[1] we came in touch with many experiences that were unknown and neglected by researchers. We are convinced that every developing country is rich in community based participatory experiences where communication is an important factor, but very little of this is acknowledged by researchers in North America and Europe, who too often prefer to recycle in their writings the same few case studies that a few have prepared. We believe that the only way to report and to understand these experiences is being there and trying to capture at least some of the context and culture.

The analysis on participatory communication, more than any other analysis, has to deal with the context as much as with the media or communication tools being utilized. Project documents and success stories do not provide that insight. Those very academic attempts

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[1] *Making Waves: Participatory Communication for Social Change*, (2001). New York: The Rockefeller Foundation.

to systematize or theorize based on what others have written can only contribute to transvestite the original experience into an intellectual and speculative exercise that has little to do with reality. Often, enthusiasm for the novelty eclipses the description of the complexities that are found at the level where the communication process is actually taking place.

Waves of Change

If we had never been to *Radio Kwizera*, we would have had difficulties understanding the importance of this development communication experience in the context of a refugee situation. The small station located at Ngara, near the Tanzanian border to Rwanda and Burundi, is the most important media for half a million of refugees that can't go back to their countries, and can't go out of the refugee camps to join the Tanzanian or any other African society. Nobody wants them. The radio station, which was set up by the Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS), gives at least a sense of identity to the refugees, besides supporting very concrete activities related to environment, health, education, human rights, water and sanitation, etc. Considering the number of refugees, this is by any standards a "big" communication project in terms of the captive audience. But even if it were smaller, such as *La Voz de la Comunidad* in Guatemala or the *Community Audio Towers* in The Philippines, it would still be the most important communication tool for the community, and from their perspective that is what is needed.

Only a few thousand people are reached by a *Community Audio Tower* (CAT), just as many as can be reached by the sound that travels from the cone speakers mounted on a high mat, to the homes that are scattered over a 4 or 5 kilometre radio. Many in

the success-oriented world of international cooperation would tend to minimize the importance of this type of local media, considering it "too small" to invest any funds in it. But if they would listen to what the community has to say, maybe their perspective might change. For example, people at the *Community Audio Tower* at Tacunan, in Davao del Norte, told us they were certain that without their cone speakers they could have never progressed as they did in a few years. They got potable water, electricity and a new road. And we could add: pride and a voice to express their culture and identity.

La Voz de la Comunidad basically airs music and short messages for its constituency, the poor neighbourhood of San José Buenavista, hanging on the slopes of a ravine under the Incienso Bridge, not far from the very center of Guatemala City. As other community radio stations, *La Voz de la Comunidad* has been under government pressure to "legalize" its status, which really means paying the equivalent of several thousands of US$ dollars to buy a FM licence. Instead, the station decided to place the transmission antennae in the lowest spot of the ravine, so to avoid the signal to reach further than the communities for whom the transmission is intended.

During the struggle against the Apartheid, radio was instrumental to defend local culture and to build a sense of democracy in South Africa. *Bush Radio*, *Radio Zibonele* and the multi-media programme *Soul City* had to fight their way towards legal recognition. Both *Bush Radio* and *Radio Zibonele* were shut down as "illegal" and only surfaced again only in 1995. Women of Mouse Mpumalanga Province organised, often against the will of men, to create *Moutse Community Radio Station*, a rural enterprise also contributing to the peace and reconciliation process. Many other

radio stations have joined since, making of South Africa one of the most fertile grounds for participatory communication experiences.

Radio is generally the most successful communication tool in developing countries and usually the first to be experimented by communities that are in search of their own "voice". Before 1998, for example, there was no radio station at all in Kiritimati, one of the islands of the Republic of Kiribati, deep in the Pacific Ocean. A water and sanitation project supported by the Australian cooperation allowed the community to build a small radio station in just a couple of months. The *Tambuli Radio Network* in The Philippines represents a cluster of 20 small stations scattered throughout remote islands of the archipelago, all of them serving the social and cultural interests of small communities.

Images of Identity

Similar "isolated" experiences are using video or theatre or Internet as the communication tool. We are yet to see participatory television experiences in developing countries, but it may happen when the current video experiences develop their broadcast capacity. Take for example *TV Maxambomba* in Brazil and *TV Serrana* in Cuba. These are two communication experiences that in spite of including "television" in their name, are not broadcasters. Which doesn't mean at all that they don't reach people. Yes they do, and certainly with much more quality than many broadcast channels. Quality, because people participate in the video exhibitions with a sense of community, a very different type of access than having a TV control in their hands that allows them to zap and forget. The two experiences have in common, along with *TV Viva*, also in Brazil, that their communication action is not limited to documenting reality or producing educational videos, but

mainly reaching people and interacting with communities, offering poor neighbourhoods (*TV Viva*, *TV Maxambomba*) or rural areas (*TV Serrana*) a programming that deals with their problems, their culture and their daily lives, which are never portrayed or taken into account by commercial broadcasters, and not even by the public service networks, forced to broadcast for a "general" public, thus ignoring the particularities of the various cultural and social settings of communities.

Video is also cleverly used as an instrument of community research, revealing internal problems and seeking solutions through community participation. The example of *Maneno Mengi* in Tanzania is better known, because it has supported several peasants or fisher folks communities to improve their living conditions by strengthening their organisations and their capacity to deal with authorities. Similarly, poor women in India (*Video SEWA*) and Egypt (*Video and Community Dreams*) use video as an organisation tool. Video has also been an important communication tool for peasant communities in Chiapas, in the South of Mexico, the scenario of confrontation between the government and the Zapatista Army, and for some indian tribes of Brazil (*Kayapo Video*) to re-invent their culture and face the challenges of modernisation and the risks of loosing their territory to multi-national and government developers.

More related with an institutional framework, several video "projects" with a participatory component have been successful in engaging a long-term process of education and communication. *Action Health* (Nigeria), uses video for AIDS prevention and reproductive health, training groups of youth to interact with their peers through video. Video supports other activities, like drama and inter-personal communication, allowing young Nigerians to

openly discuss issues related to their sexuality. In Bolivia, the *Lilac Tent* project has also been dealing with reproductive health and sexuality through video and a series of other interpersonal communication activities, which include games, quizzes, and entertainment. A huge lilac circus tent travels from one community to the next offering a wide range of communication activities involving the villagers as well as the local authorities, teachers, health staff and even police and army officials.

For at least four decades, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), has supported long term video projects aimed to support community mobilisation around development projects. Three are notable experiences: the *Centro de Servicios de Pedagogía Audiovisual para la Capacitación* (CESPAC) in Perú, which started in 1975; the *Programa de Desarrollo Integrado del Trópico Húmedo* (PRODERITH) in México, which started in 1978, and the *Centre de Services de Production Audiovisuelle* (CESPA), in Mali, which was set up in 1989 and had less impact than the other two. The three projects are a similar mix of video training and video production of "pedagogic packages" meant to facilitate exchanges of knowledge between grassroots communities and project managers and technicians. Hundreds of videos dealing with agricultural problems and solutions were produced by these projects, whereas the participatory aspects were not fully developed.

The video shows organised to mobilize communities are interesting examples of community-based dialogue facilitated by a new technology. In this case video has little to do with broadcast television and is in fact closer to community theatre, which is another important communication tool in Third World countries.

Often, drama representation is already part of the local culture and part of the internal communication processes.

Drama in the Roots of Culture

There is hardly a community, rural or urban, that doesn't already have a form of participation and communication through music, dance or drama. Even the poorest do. They will have to be much less than poor to have lost the last mark of identity and culture. Unfortunately there are, of course, some of those that have been cut away from their roots, forced to migrate to urban areas for work or because of war, deprived of their language and customs, and their culture gone flat under the pervasive effect of globalisation. This is what happened in the seventies to small indigenous tribes from the Eastern tropical lowlands of Bolivia, which were left without land and migrated to the capital city, Santa Cruz, to become in only few years prey of alcoholism and prostitution.

In Colombia, *Teatro Kerigma* has found a way to strengthen cultural identity –or maybe even re-invent it-, in poor barrios of Bogotá, made mostly of migrants that arrived from rural areas since the early sixties. Since 1978 the Kerigma association has been using street theatre to mobilize the local population around cultural and human values. *Teatro La Fragua* in Honduras, and *Teatro Trono* in the outskirts of La Paz, Bolivia do something similar, just to mention three examples of community theatre groups in Latin America that have organised their work around the needs of marginalized populations consisting of migrants to the capital cities. The three projects include not only theatrical activities, but also a wide range of social and cultural manifestations.

The long tradition of performing arts in Asia and the Pacific has enormously facilitated the establishment of drama groups that go deep into historical memory and tradition in search of cultural values that relate with today's social problems. *Nalamdana*, a drama group operating in poor neighbourhoods of Chennai, has developed intense activity that goes far beyond researching, scripting and performing community drama to create awareness on health and social issues. The group is also involved in conducting workshops and developing educational materials and television dramas on STDs and HIV, especially for illiterate men and women.

In the high plains of Nepal, the *Aarohan Street Theatre* has developed a network of community based drama groups that use local traditions and modern contents to promote dialogue and discussion about voting rights and democracy, environmental and sanitation issues, as well as other health related problems.

With only "one small bag" to carry props and costumes, *Wan Smolbag* is a theatre group in Vanuatu, Solomon Islands, that has also been dealing with issues of governance, representing, among other plays, a few related with voting rights and child rights. The environment is no less important for *Wan Smolbag* and several drama groups that have been trained during the past decade to create awareness on marine life under threat. Their influence now extends over numerous islands through more than fifty different plays that have been created to tackle the topics mentioned above, as well as AIDS/STDs and other health related issues. In recent years *Wan Smolbag* has diversified its activity, including books, radio programmes and videos.

Theatre groups tend to multiply at the community level, as they represent a genuine form of local participatory communication. The concept of community theatre or popular theatre —as it is called in

Latin America-, has as little to do with conventional theatre as video with broadcast television. In a country like Nigeria, where even radio and television doesn't effectively reach the majority of the population, local drama group have been instrumental in supporting health programmes of immunisation and prevention. In the early nineties, UNICEF supported the training of local drama groups and the development of plays, based on "Facts for Life", dealing with safe motherhood, malaria, sanitation, AIDS, nutrition, and other health-related issues. Each play was locally adapted not only in terms of language or dialect, but it also took the culture, rites and practices into account. Around 46 local drama groups were active, touring from one rural community to the next.

Gadgets or Tools for Development?

It is clear that the participatory communication process can adapt any tool or technology to support the process of community participation. Although several decades ago there was a tendency to refuse new technologies based on the assumption that they would have a pervasive influence on local cultures, reality shows that any technology can be appropriate to a social change and development process if used to articulate local needs and local contents. One of the most powerful examples is the use that Bolivian miners made of community radio for fifty years, since 1948. But there are many other examples to support the idea that technology can be adapted and "appropriated" by local communities. Video in the hands of market women in India or the Kayapo indians in Brazil, are also encouraging examples.

A powerful new trend has been developing in recent years under the worldwide impact of the new information and communication technologies (ICTs). Agitating the banners of "e-mail for all" or

"Internet for all", many governments, multinational corporations and international development agencies have teamed to provide "access" to computers and Internet to every community in the world. The chant of sirens of technology saving the world from poverty has been heard in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Millions are been invested in strengthening national networks and setting telecentres or "information shops" in the most remote rural areas, where there is no electricity or telephone available. ICTs have become the latest fashion in the development jargon.

Unfortunately, the large majority of ICTs projects are not being set up for the benefit of intended communities. An important part of the trend is just "business as usual", meaning, companies selling by thousands pieces of hardware and software, and other intermediaries benefiting from the transfer of technology: consulting firms from Europe and the US, Third World government bureaucrats and a few universities. The ICTs "instant remedy" to underdevelopment and social exclusion sounds too much like the trendy "diffusion of innovations" of the seventies. Again, transfer of technology is seen as the panacea, the ultimate solution, regardless of social, economic and political causes, and also regardless of the cultural implications of introducing new technologies that carry within, as a Trojan horse, the culture of globalisation.

In the frenzy of competing to provide computers and connectivity, most of ICTs projects are overlooking obvious facts. It is almost boring to repeat what we all now know, but it is still worth to do it because many are just reluctant to be confronted by the evidence: of the huge mass of information known as the World Wide Web that can be accessed through the Internet protocols, 90% is in English and 99% is irrelevant to 99% of the population of the

world; 80% of the world's population never made a phone call; only 6% uses Internet; 90% of all Internet users are in industrialized countries; Internet users in Africa & the Middle East together account for only 1% of global Internet users; 52% of Internet world users are non-English speakers; while 40% of households in the US have access to Internet only 0,005 % of the population of Bangladesh uses it. Do we need to continue with more examples?

In the name of "digital divide" lots of money are being invested – and the so-called divide is widening. As long as the "digital divide" is reduced to a technological gap, we will witness the widening of the social divide, the economic divide, the political divide, etc., thanks to new technologies.

Fortunately, parallel to the expanding wave of mercantilism that uses ICTs as the point the lance, new critical voices are joining both in developing and industrialized countries, seriously warning about the consequences of pushing new technologies over Third World countries irrespective of priorities, needs and the local capacity to make a good use of them. Today, we can clearly draw the line between those projects that are part of the technological frenzy and the ones that understand ICTs as one more instrument to be put in use for the benefit of development and social change. It is increasingly clear that Internet connectivity projects that do not include as a mainstream force the creation of local contents, are vowed to failure. Ironically enough, the future of Internet for development is not the World Wide Web, but the infinite Local Community Networks that should be created in tune with language, culture and society. Only the development of local databases and appropriate local contents can meet the needs of those thousands of poor rural and urban communities that have

been graced by ICTs and do not exactly know what to do with it. As many reports indicate, users are more interested in making phone calls or photocopies than in any other feature offered by a given Internet shop.

Other than the voices that are drawing the line in the debate around the "digital divide", recent experiences are showing the way for an appropriate use of ICTs in development and social change. It is true that there is only one of these projects for every one hundred that are set up with no regards for community needs and culture; however, the experience of well-planned community based initiatives may positively influence the communities where computers were dumped by ICT pushers or ICT naïve promoters who thought something magic could happen in "poverty reduction" when people would access Internet. Unfortunately, by the time communities realize there is a different way of dealing with Internet, it is likely that thousands of computers that have been parachuted over rural and urban communities will be obsolete.

Internet based development communication experiences are rather new and mostly unknown, in spite of a large number of reports that have been issued. Two or three years of development are usually not enough to evaluate the social impact of a communication tool. However, the eagerness of some researchers to immediately assess the operation of ICTs at the community level is bringing enormous benefits. We see this research trend as "research with a purpose". Meaning, a purpose that defies the academic exercise and contributes to redress the evolution of ICTs experiences as they develop, by the immediate devolution of a critical mass of information obtained at the community level. The research that grows and modifies itself in parallel with the experience that is being acquired by Internet-based development

projects, can only benefit the course of action. India and South Africa are two countries that are outstanding in terms of the use of ICTs for social development, and the two have benefited from early research "with a purpose" of looking at each experience with the eyes of the community.

One of the most outstanding programs is undoubtedly, the one known as *Village Knowledge Centers*, in Chennai, India, implemented by the M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation (MSSRF). Formerly called "information shops", the *Village Knowledge Centres* - operated by individuals on a semi-voluntary basis, were established to take advantage of new technologies to provide information to the rural population on agricultural issues such as: health (availability of vaccines and medicines in the nearest health centre, preventive measures); relief information (issue of loans, availability of officials); inputs for agriculture (prices and availability, costs, risks and returns, local market price for the rural produce); transport information; micro-meteorological information (relating to the local area); surface and ground water related data, pest surveillance and on agronomic practices for all seasons and crops (based on queries from the rural families); maintenance and update of data on entitlements of the rural families (vis-a-vis public sector welfare and infrastructural funds). The training and materials are in Tamil, the local language. The *Village Knowledge Centre* enables farming families not only to produce more without associated ecological harm, but helps everyone in the village to create a hunger free area. The villagers themselves identify who the hungry amidst them are; 12 to 15 percent of the families fall under this category.

Similar projects have been promoted in other parts of Asia, as well as in Africa and Latin America, with mixed results. At least, they

aim to be established as community development tools and instead of simply seeing the community as potential user, they also see it as provider of information and cultural parameters. The telecentres in Gasaleka and Mamelodi in South Africa, the *Nakaseke Telecentre* in Uganda, the *InfoDes* project in Peru, the experience of *El Limón* in Domenican Republic, are only a handful of growing community based experiences that are signalling the way for new technologies of information and communication.

Taking Further the Good Intentions

The changing discourse of international development agencies should evolve parallel to changing development practices in relation to communication. If communication is not understood as the oil that will allow the new discourse to effectively move the machinery of development and social change, little will actually change in the development practices.

How does the new development discourse of international cooperation agencies affect the programs and projects supported? Are things really changing or is it always "business as usual"? There are some requisites and conditions to make changes happen. Are donors, development agencies and governments ready to make changes that go beyond the discourse and the good intentions?

One of the indicators of real changes, for example, would be the allocation of budget lines to communication activities in every programme or project. What we generally see in development projects, is that communication is absent from the budget. What we may find is insufficient, to say the least. We may find a small budget for "promotion" of the overall project, which is more related with public relations than with development communication. Often,

budget lines of "information" are used to organize press conferences or to support journalists or media houses. None of these really has any influence in changing they way things are done inside each project. A neat line needs to be drawn between information activities that aim to build the external "image" of a program or project, and the communication activities that should be inseparable of program activities at the community level. We are of course referring to programmes of health, agriculture, human rights, poverty reduction, water and sanitation, or any other that includes activities directly involving beneficiaries. A communication budget should ideally represent a minimum established percentage of the overall budget, and should allow communication activities to take place from the inception of the project, and all along the implementation phases.

A logic consequence of budgeting communication in a development programme would lead cooperation agencies to reflect on their human resources, particularly those in charge of administrating the fund allocated to communication activities. In recent years, some development organizations, such as the World Health organization (WHO), have increased their allocations to communication activities, but without changing the profile of the staff in charge. Doctors and other health personnel are improvised as development communicators and given the responsibility to follow-up on communication activities. As a result, very often these communication activities do not correspond to a coherent communication strategy. They are just a sum of improvised activities aimed to spend the funds allocated. Such a mechanical implementation of communication resources may not contribute to any deep changes, until cooperation agencies fully understand that communication is a specialized field of development. Some

organizations, acknowledging their lack of expertise, have turned towards external consultants, with mixed results. Too often, advertising agencies are hired to conduct information activities that are more in line with social marketing and image making, than with community participation. It is obvious: advertising agencies do not have the experience and the skills to do otherwise.

Only very few international development organizations have an understanding of the profile of communicators that are needed to deal with development issues. At different levels, these organizations have placed people that are in a better position to contribute to participatory development. UNICEF, for example, besides having an important cluster of information and communication specialists in its headquarters in New York, also has communication officers in the field, in every single country where the organization is present. The communication staff at the field level is known under various names (at one point, UNICEF identified around fifty variant titles): information officers, communication officers, social mobilization officers, social marketing officers, community mobilization officers, and so on. These are a clear indication of the lack of definition that exists. But names and titles are only the tip of the iceberg. Job descriptions tend to be even more confusing, and the whole recruitment process depends usually on people that are not sufficiently knowledgeable about communication. The result: among the hundreds of information and communication officers that UNICEF has in the field, the large majority has no development communication background and experience. Many of them are journalists, media oriented, which partly explains UNICEF's strength in working with media houses, and its weakness in working with communities.

Other development organisations have no tradition of having communication staff at the field level, but they are supportive of development communication from their headquarters and regional bureaus. Just to mention two other United Nations agencies, FAO and UNESCO have made important contributions in terms of training and setting up projects where participatory communication is the mainstream driving force. We have already mentioned the video centres that FAO has supported during long periods in Peru, Mexico and Mali. The organization has also promoted important "think tanks" and publications. UNESCO is exceptional in terms of having communication at the same level as culture, science and education. In spite of its limited budget and overgrown bureaucracy, UNESCO has made the difference supporting development communication activities worldwide, including many community radio initiatives, but not only.

A look at the main players in international development, both the funding institutions and the development agencies, bilateral and multilateral, show little improvement in terms of providing enough room in their programmes for the growth of development communication initiatives. Many have attempted to frog leap from nothing to "ICTs for development", with very mixed results. Once more, improvising ICT managers that may know a lot about technology, but little about knowledge and culture does not contribute to change the usual practices at the community level. Communication, which should be central to the introduction of new information and communication technologies, is actually grossly overlooked. The sudden abundance of ICT projects is obscuring the problematic of communication for social change. Just by sowing computers and connectivity doesn't mean these projects will

harvest anything else but old and outdated machines in three or four years.

Participation is Dialogue

The bottom line is that development organizations should look closer to what has been already happening during the past decades at the field level, in terms of communication and participation. At one point we thought their discourse was changing because of their acknowledgment that the place where development really happens is the community. However, the new discourse seems to be already getting stiff due to the lack of exposure to reality.

If there is only one thing that we can all learn from participatory communication experiences and their mixed results, is that dialogue is the key for development. If civil society is to take a larger role in conceiving and working for development, then dialogue is unavoidable. If development organizations are ready to change their practices and their relation with governments and the civil society, then dialogue is essential at the community level. Participatory communication movements are an invitation to dialogue, which ought not to be refused.

5.

The Panoptic View: A Discourse Approach to Communication and Development

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A great deal of scholarly inquiry has addressed the ways in which development would enable worldwide democratic communications. Conversely, many modern communications media were, in themselves, considered to be indicators of development. Communication and development have been viewed as closely intertwined phenomena, where one is believed to guarantee the other. In this chapter, I explore the constructed nature of communication and development from a discourse perspective that encompasses democratic communications as both cause and effect of development. Here, "communication and development" is treated as a discourse that dominated (and in altered but still-recognizable ways continues to dominate) the global space today.

Specifically in this study, I examine the strategy of framing employed by agents and institutions historically in a position to establish the dominant meanings of communication and development. By agents and institutions of power I refer to two sets of actors—first, there are the critical policy-making groups, media owners, and others from the developed world invested in the advancement of the development project. Secondly, the decision-making élite and other supporters of the mainstream

notions of development in developing regions also participated in the construction of the dominant discourse of communication and development. These groups, from their vantage points of power, "enframed" regions that were seen to be needy of developmental aid (Escobar, 1995). Framing involves creation of a defined space and placement of objects within for full visibility and scrutiny by the viewer positioned outside the frame. Fundamental to this inside/outside relationship is the naturalizing of the objects within the enframed space and the viewer on the outside.

This notion of the frame, or the politics of the gaze, translates to the viewing position of those in power and the object position of the (relatively) powerless who are viewed. In the context of the recent history of communication and development, the agents and institutions involved in defining dominant meanings of the idea of development use discursive devices (or strategies) to make the object of study - the developing regions - transparent. The argument is that full knowledge of such regions is required to be able to aid them along certain paths towards certain definitions of material and cultural progress. Exercising this strategy of power that shapes the relations between developed and developing nations is not necessarily intentional (this is the naturalizing power of the ideology); however, a particular ideological bent is evident in the language, meanings, institutions, and social practices that constituted the discourse of communication and development.

From the standpoint of the present era of high globalization, international development constitutes a period of time in recent world history. International hierarchies that emerged from this period endure. The study of communication and development is important in that globalization, for many regions of the world, has exacerbated the economic differences that obtained during a

period when concerns about world development occupied center stage in national and supranational deliberations. A study of the historical legacy of communication and development from a discourse perspective provides insights into the knowledge and power nexus that facilitated the establishment of a powerful signifier such as development, a signifier that continues to mark differences in the global arena.

Two caveats need to be made. First, it is acknowledged that any discursive construction is not an assemblage of events and instances that come together to assert certain meanings of phenomena like development. Rather, contestation of the dominant meanings and practices is equally constitutive of the discourse. The dominant signifier of communication and development has been amply challenged and continues to be challenged by scholars and activists worldwide (refer, for example, Hamelink's contributions, particularly in the 1980s; the publications of Nordenstreng in the 1970s when debates about democracy and development were at their peak; the corpus of works by Schiller; the Third World Journalists' Seminar Report, 1975. Contemporary cases in point include the emerging robust literature on participatory communication, gender issues in development and social change, and more recently, human rights and new social movements in relation to development communication). Negotiations of meanings about implications for media practices have also taken place (as documents on the NWICO debate suggest). Given this larger configuration of the discourse, to impose some scope on the chapter, the focus is retained mainly on strategies of visibility used to construct dominant meanings in the international arena. Secondly, the discourse of communication and development does possess a

genealogy of at least half a century, starting in the 1950s. This chapter does not offer a survey of the entire period; rather, it focuses on the 1970s and early 1980s when the debates about democracy and development were pursued most seriously by several nations and a key supranational institution - the UNESCO - in a quest for a new world communication order. The debates demonstrate the configuration of the discourse of communication and development from dominant, contestatory and negotiating viewpoints and this decade is being examined in a larger research project from which this chapter is an excerpt.

I begin with an explanation of a discourse approach to communication and development, followed by two sections that examine the panoptic view, or the politics of the gaze, at work. I conclude with a note on resistant and negotiating moves in the critical responses to communication and development and the status of communication and development in relation to globalization.

A Discourse Approach to Communication and Development

The modern idea of "development" is not an innocent term, condition, or state of society (Banuri, 1990; Escobar, 1995; Mohanty, 1991; Shohat & Stam, 1994). It entails a relatively narrow geo-history of construction and contestation. That "developmentized democracy" (Escobar, 1995) is a product of the European and the Euro-colonial historical experience is widely acknowledged now. A discourse approach to studying communication and development would allow us to see the constructed nature of what has come to be considered a "natural," universally applied historical and social evolution and its

consequences for democracy in the international sphere. The workings of power become evident in discursive strategies used by those providing dominant definitions of communication and development. The aim here is to examine, in albeit a limited way, the mechanics of such power.

When referring to a discourse of communication and development, I refer to the larger and more visible reality that has been constructed in an overarching discourse, to the meanings and practices that define communication and development and the links between the two concepts in the context of this study. As Doty, in her work on representation in international relations, explains it, "[A discourse] is a structured, relational totality.... A discourse delineates the terms of intelligibility whereby a particular reality can be known and acted upon" (1996:6). Discursive formations are effectively understood by examining the strategies that enable this formation in the first place.

The chapter rests on the premise that the ideological hold of communication and development is expressed in discourse. A dominant discourse labors continuously to suppress the "other" (or multiple others) (Hall, 1985). In the process, a center emerges from which power is exercised through various means (Beechey & Donald, 1985). I refer to these means as discursive strategies, intelligible in the process of articulating an ideology. A dominant discourse emerges from the power to define meanings, create institutions to reproduce and sustain these meanings (and practices) and create a "corpus of...statements" which would be "already formulated" for the Third World (Ferguson, 1994). This corpus of already formulated statements would chart a certain path for social change for all regions of the world to pursue.

Recently, scholars have drawn on Foucault's analysis of the metaphor and the politics of the gaze to understand what Escobar has termed as "the production of the social." Foucault employs the concept of the panopticon to explain uneven social power relations. A type of architecture used for institutions of discipline and correction, the panopticon is conceived of as a technology of power, and as Spurr (1993:16) explains it, "has bearing on any occasion where the superior and invulnerable position of the observer coincides with the role of affirming the political order that makes that position possible" (also Foucault, 1980). Originally the eighteenth century legal scholar Jeremy Bentham's creation, the panopticon was designed for penal institutions where inmates housed in cells along the inner perimeter of the construction were "visible" to the supervisor located in the central watch tower, but were denied the right to return the supervisor's gaze due to the architectural design. The individual occupying the position of power thus remained "invisible" to the inmates. Thus the "exercise of power and, simultaneously, *the registration of knowledge" of the prison inmates' actions occurred through the gaze (Foucault 1972:148)--literal in the case of Bentham's panopticon; metaphorical in its adaptation to critically analyze other domains such as colonialism or development. With the aid of this metaphor, we see that in the domain of communication and development, developing nations are rendered transparent on many fronts—economic, social, cultural and so on-through the deployment of media, technologies, and the production of certain types of knowledge through certain strains of communication research. Simultaneously, those who assess or devise modes and methods of assessment reserve for themselves the privilege of invisibility from the occupants of the lower spaces in the international/global

arrangement by naturalizing the discourse of communication and development and hence rendering their presence and actions as a given.

The panoptic view enables scrutiny of regions and nations within a "field of visibility" (Escobar, 1995:196). Communications media, at times, are used as tools for surveillance, and at other times, media technologies constitute an index of "development." Thus, communications media become both the object of the gaze as well as the instruments facilitating the gaze. At the same time, the panoptic view is designed to ensure that the viewer is placed beyond the gaze of the observed, thus reducing or denying opportunities to return the gaze. A history of self-placement outside the enframed space has rendered the viewer's position as "natural." The panoptic view demonstrates the vertical arrangement of nations, economies, and cultures in the world system. An examination of communication and development through this lens would yield some insights into how a certain broad "mainstream" idea of development through communication came to be inscribed in the social imaginary (Tomlinson, 1991) of various publics.

To demonstrate the shaping of the discourse through the panoptic view, I provide a critical and interpretive reading of a few texts as detailed examples. This chapter is an excerpt from a larger study; texts for the larger study were selected from the following sources: (a) an extensive bibliography on the contributions to the NWICO debate from multiple perspectives published by the Dag Hammarskjöld Library (1984), (b) the reports compiled by the MacBride Commission report and related studies, and (c) the NAMEDIA conference reports (1983). Specific texts were selected on the basis of their relationship to the themes of communication

and development, such as social development, culture and development, communications technology for development, and so on.

Two strategies of power are apparent in the panoptic view. One is the power to survey, and the other is the power to remain invisible. The two have been artificially separated for analysis purposes and are termed as surveillance and invisibility. The themes most apparent in the strategy of surveillance pertained to the production of knowledge of a certain kind about Third World communications, knowledge yielded by satellite technology and specific types of communication research. The strategy of invisibility manifested itself in the economically powerful nations' efforts to "guide" development through communication, in their self-appointed role as parent, and as having reached a stage of maturity in modern communication. Additionally, it must be acknowledged that the First World's historical role in the colonial economies of the developing world has also contributed to naturalizing its presence outside the frame imposed by the panoptic view.

Surveillance

The use of satellite technologies to survey geographical areas and national resources and compile databanks from these surveys is one manifestation of the panoptic view at work. Rhetoric on satellite communication and its uses for development worked to make Third World economies appear transparent. Discussions on satellite technology and communications focused on making geographical terrain in the Third World as completely visible as the technology would allow it, for determining natural resources.

Prominent among the discussions of satellite technology are the reports on the UN seminars held in Addis Ababa and Buenos Aires. In the seminar in Addis Ababa, scientists and development specialists from both developed and developing regions detailed the ways in which satellites would aid in detecting natural resources because "space platforms… [can] provide us with a unique capability to see and interact with large parts of the earth simultaneously" (United Nations, 1981, Addis Ababa, A/AC.105/290:4). Remote sensing for targeted surveillance areas of the economy such as agriculture, rural demography, economic geology, forestry, livestock, and water resources would prove beneficial.

Forms of visual communication such as air photos, radar imagery, and satellite pictures produced by various technologies were compared for costs, versatility, accuracy, and extent of information they could yield about resources of a given nation/region/continent. Superior technology for image enhancement and expertise in reading the subtler shades of images procured by such technology were pivotal to surveillance through remote sensing. To enable the use of satellite imagery in cartographic surveys and thematic maps, strategic pieces of visual communication on a nation's natural resources that have profound influences on its economy are first secured and then converted to data; the data then constitute a type of "manufactured" resource. Since this type of resource production requires large investments (possible, for the most part, for economically advanced countries), the poorer countries found themselves in the position of purchasing knowledge about their own resources from foreign sources. The confluence of power and visibility (Escobar, 1987) is evident in the

conversion of such images to strategic knowledge made available for sale.

Two remote-sensing centers were established for agricultural (in Rome) and non-agricultural satellite data (in New York). These centers were intended to serve as archives for collecting, storing, and dispensing (selling) data. Thus, full visibility of many strategic resources would be available to the centers located in areas of the globe designated as developed. The centers would catalogue, store and interpret remote sensing data, circulate information, provide advice and assistance to projects, and organize special training courses for users and decision-makers in developing regions. The costs incurred by many Third World countries in purchasing this data have been a thorny issue with client nations and in the NWICO debates.

The vocabulary used in relation to modern satellite communication apparatuses in general was also extended to traditional media by the state in developing regions. Traditional media are transformed from cultural practices (which may serve functional or aesthetic/creative purposes, or both, something determined by the practitioners as well as the local communities using the media) into vehicles of development. In one instance, traditional folk songs with newly inserted development themes intended for rural populations were scrutinized, evaluated, and checked by the central government wing that was devoted to maintaining the cultural heritage of such media and simultaneously, in this case, utilizing them for development purposes (Malik, 1982).

Similarly, in the case of Egypt, a study commissioned by the UNESCO generated a report describing the entry points available with traditional media for promoting development (Hussein, 1980).

Parallels were drawn between traditional and modern media to enable understanding of the use of traditional media also for development purposes. Source credibility (for example, religious leaders presiding over numerous folk and rural media programs) and opportunities for inserting subliminal messages in certain traditional folk forms capable of inducing mind-altering states in group situations were identified. Traditional media thus constituted a field of visibility where their functional value for development purposes could be examined.

The question may arise as to what other means one would use to address the information needs of rural populations. The discursive strategy of surveillance operates largely under the assumption that rural populations and communities do not possess the capacity to survey and commandeer their own cultural expressions for needs they might consider a priority. The urgency apparent in documents that address the powerful role of traditional media in mainstream development tend to marginalize the possibility of other modes of and reasons for existence of these indigenous media.

A plethora of research projects and initiatives for development were generated to aid or hasten development in the Third World. Evaluations of project successes and failures, and recommendations to create stronger projects in the future have also been offered (for example, Hornik, 1988; Stevenson, 1988). Knowledge about communications in the developing world-infrastructure, capabilities, potential, target populations-have been discovered, measured, analyzed, and evaluated through systematic research. This vein of research contributed substantially to constructions of "development" and a frame within which to compare various regions using external standardized criteria that could not necessarily produce an accurate description of a

particular socio-cultural communication system. Empirical criteria derived from the social scientific method served as accurate devices for evaluating social systems. The contributory value of the knowledge and insights about diverse social systems gained from these criteria and method are not in question. However, elevating these criteria to international benchmarks for measuring the degree of development of a given nation legitimated the production of certain types of knowledge about that society. In the process, the discursive effects of such tools on constructing an image of world imbalances were not considered; the mainstream notions of development that emerged out of such practices have been questioned (see for example Jacobson, 1996). Communications capacities in developing regions thus constituted a field of visibility. Research activities and execution of these projects designed to generate knowledge about developing regions find an analogy in Spurr's explanation of "non-corporeal" power in the panoptic principle.

An example would be the communication indicators of socio-economic development developed in the late nineteen seventies (O'Brien et al, 1979). About 103 indicators of development were identified, including communications, education, urbanization, income distribution, industrialization, technology, growth potential, and demography.

Measurements of communications included newspaper circulation per capita, newsprint consumption per capita, telephones per 100,000 population, radio receivers and television sets per 1000 population, and so on. While such data indeed contribute to understanding the communications picture of various nations and regions, the underlying universal nature of communications as a developmental resource, and secondly, the assumption of

comparability of regions within these established categories reflecting the Eurocentric history of industrialization serve to mainstream certain notions of communication and development. Comparability of indices of development was constructed in two ways. First, the construction pertained to the criteria set by the developed countries against which the degree of development would be measured. Secondly, such criteria not only set a universal standard for comparison, but they also served to make countries within developing regions comparable with one another. Thus, communications research projects carried out by development agencies enabled constructions of frames within which communications resources of developing regions were rendered visible to subsequently allow mapping, planning, monitoring, and mobilizing prescribed types of social change.

Other recommendations to integrate communications into the development project included the treatment of communications as a resource, thereby integrating communications with economics (Jussawalla & Lamberton, 1980).[1] A call for "a better conceptualization and measurement of the communications sector as a macro input for development" indicates that communication was primarily an economic resource rather than a practice. As with all resources, full knowledge of communications capacities, technologies, and output was required. This knowledge constitutes a field of visibility, particularly in the context of the development project in the global system.

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[1] For the parallels between economics and development, and indeed, one substituting for the other, see Sachs, 1992.

Invisibility: Outside the Frame

Leaders and other members of the development machinery acquired a "parent" mentality from their positions as administrators, experts and other power-conferring roles. In this family analogy, the parents are naturalized into positions of power and they exert authority over the children. The parents possessed the privilege of inspecting and examining various dimensions of communications in developing regions, for development and development policy purposes.

Extending Spurr's analysis of the politics of the gaze in colonial discourse to the discourse of communication and development, we see that looking without being looked back creates an "economy of uneven exchange" with the object of the gaze (Spurr, 1993:13). Critics of the mainstream idea of development have pointed out that the treatment of the developing countries as children in this forced economy of uneven exchange has perpetuated the idea that an ideal developed society signifies adulthood; in this stage, people and institutions are facile users of modern media and new technologies. Whatever the combination of elements respective countries could select to "arrive," a need was seen to naturalize and orchestrate the efforts for helping nations enter adulthood. The collective social agreement prevalent in most cultures that parents know best and that they possess the authority to check, scrutinize and admonish is extended to the domain of communication and development.

A conference report on satellite communications emphasized the need for space education by pointing out that this was the "ongoing practice in all the countries that are developing any measure of capability in the area of space science and technology"

(United Nations, 1981, Addis Ababa, A/AC.105/289:5) and that Africa should follow. The problem of capital outlay for such operations was not the main concern; instead, African countries were warned that it was not a question of not being able to afford the technology, but not being able to afford going without it. Skills for survival in the technological (world) order were needed to be taught. In such instances, other knowledges that might have had their own beneficial outcomes for non-western societies were denied existence; pre-modern knowledge also was rendered obsolete by this discourse.

Another factor illustrating the discursive strategy of invisibility is the mystique surrounding the idea of a "developed" society for the large rural and poor populations in developing regions. Hints at unlimited progress characteristic of the tone and aspirations of modernity suggested infinite advancement towards a relatively unknown end, and the idea that progress breeds further progress also formed a subtext. For example, Pelton (1983) described a futuristic picture of the global telnet, the telecity. Attractive though this idea may seem, for national policy-makers in the developing countries a global telecity on a large scale benefiting their vast populations and ensuring appropriate literacy and access to participate in the telecity lifestyle painted a destination that is yet to be reached with full success even in the technologically advanced nations.

As a strategy, invisibility serves to "[embed] the universals of the discourse" of communication and development (Escobar, 1995:160). Capturing a vantage point to see and maintain a shielded presence while scrutinizing, at the same time escaping scrutiny in return enables the viewer to map the terrain of

communications in the Third World, a space and place that constitutes the object of that scrutiny.

Conclusion

It has been argued that to figure in the discourse itself is a form of visibility. Deconstructing frames of visibility is a step that enables us to see the construction of a discourse. Here the chapter has not addressed the negotiation/resistance side of the equation in the construction of the discourse of communication and development. However, through the tropes of both surveillance and invisibility we can see that communication and development, in the form of research and intervention projects, policy debates, seminars, and studies renders communications in all its dimensions a field of visibility in the dominant discourse. Both tropes work together to create a global space where the dependent status of Third World countries was reiterated and the role of the economically powerful nations as providers, adults and/or guides acquired a natural authority.

Communication and development has constituted a composite running theme in the history of international communications until the recent past, when the contours of this theme changed to one of globalization and the culture industries. Noticeable was a new extension of concerns that went beyond many aspects of the materiality evident in the discourse of communication and development to the symbolic aspects of what Appadurai (1993) has termed a global cultural economy. Critical reactions to the exacerbated chasm between developed and developing regions because of globalization include assertions of identity in symbolic arenas. The work on new social movements and the increasing dominance of the local, the popular, the everyday (Escobar, 1992;

Huesca, 1994; Melucci, 1990) are cases in point. However, questions pertaining to communication and development have not disappeared; instead, they have dispersed into various domains, but continue their interplay. For example, questions about intellectual property rights over software constitute part of the agenda for the World Trade Organization meetings and policies (Braman, 1990). Such questions tacitly assume the existence of certain types of development-primarily technological and economic-among all participants of the debate (with the premise "all else being equal" driving the information market), or speak primarily to those nations in full possession and significant control of such developments.

A critical tension continues to exist between guided social change through policy, and alternate possibilities that might fall outside the realm of policy or are at best located at its fringes. Increasingly, an emergent alternate literature and documentation at both the theoretical and activist levels bring to our attention the workings of such alternate communications situations, with a focus on the local and the popular.[2] Alternate visions continue to grapple with problems related to democracy and development raised in the last few decades in international communication.

Economics and technology, once part of the overall practice of conducting social life, have acquired a centrality around which meanings and practices of development revolve (Sachs, 1992). Critiques of development are often addressed to this centrality of technology or economics or a combination of both as the dominant definitions of "development". Social change is planned, interpreted,

and intervened upon from the perspectives of technology and/or economics. The dominant discourse in the domain of communication also reflects this centrality. Alternate "development" discourses suggested by scholars and activists such as authors of the Development Dictionary Collective (1992) and Marglin and others (1990, 1996) do not preclude the possibility of social change. A complete return to the pre-modern is neither realistic, nor in most instances, possible, nor even desirable. Rather, the source from which an articulation of the need for change emerges becomes central. Transformed definitions of development and change within local contexts and histories, and ecologically sympathetic and compatible processes and types of social change are pointed out as the more fruitful paths to consider.

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[2] Huesca's (1994) research on Bolivian tin miners and participatory radio, and a film (Drishti, 1996) documenting the successful outcome of a state-wide rural women's movement in the state of Andhra Pradesh in India are examples.

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6.

Threads of Development Communication

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In this Chapter we concentrate heavily on the patterns of actions that reflect how development communication has evolved over the last half century. As we explore communication in the real life context of agricultural, health and community development we skirt the many excellent discussions by theorists and academicians who present a more abstract picture of this evolution (see for example, the works of various scholars in Casmir, 1991). We will trace seven threads that have contributed to that fabric we call "development communication."

Government officials, academics, practitioners and others working in the development field may have different perceptions of what the defining characteristics of development communication are. Early in its history, some spoke of it as "development support communication" suggesting that the communication function was a sub-component of various development sectors. Today some argue that development communication should itself be a sector.

The suggestion has also been made that development communication is interpersonal communication and that mass communication is something else. Others would argue that a "development communication" approach dominated by face-to-face communication has inherent limitations if one measure of success

is widespread change of behavior in short periods of time, a goal that might be highly appropriate in some circumstances.

Framing the discussion as mediated communication *versus* face-to-face communication is probably not the best approach. After weighing empirical data and considering the conventional wisdom about the effectiveness of communication channels, Robert Hornik concludes:

> "Both data and complementary arguments suggest that the allocation of resources among channels should reflect not only relative effects but also reach, cost, managerial feasibility, and sustainability. In many contexts those considerations will lead away from an emphasis on interpersonal channels and toward increasing reliance on mass media channels.
>
> So long as the truism—media for awareness, field agents for practice change—is accepted, and so long as communication planners fail to admit the difficulty of organizing and sustaining such agent networks, communication programs are unlikely to succeed as motivators of behavior change" (Hornik, 1989:329).

A group of communication professionals, including representatives from the UN Specialized Agencies and academics who met periodically during the past decade as a Roundtable on Development Communication, concluded that its domain is best described by the phrase "communication and development." This suggests that both mediated and non-mediated forms of communication are relevant to the development issue. This compromise is especially useful with the growing importance for development of the new information and communication technologies—led by computers, the Internet and the World Wide Web—which cannot easily be classified exclusively as mass or interpersonal communication.

When one looks at development communication as *communication-and-development* there are significant examples of successes. Some of these have been documented on the Communication Initiative web page (www.comminit.com). Examples include:

1. Capital Doctor - Uganda - A call-in radio show that reaches a general audience of 5 million, physically covering approximately 75% of the population, and 65% of these are believed to be outside of Kampala. As of March 1998, 2,200 questions had been answered on-air. 70% of respondents at an STD clinic had listened to Capital Doctor. 91% of reported condom users were listeners to the programme, 71% of those who reported to 'always' use condoms were listeners. Those who listened to Capital Doctor were more likely than non-listeners to use condoms. http://www.comminit.com/id01-7of99/sld-485.html

2. Sanjeevani - Nepal - Attitudinal changes occurred due to this TV drama on child health issues and gender equality in education. 57.6% of respondents said that they learnt that female education is of primary importance for the development of the community. 22.5% learnt that health education is necessary, 12.5% learnt that there should be no gender discrimination and that daughters and sons should have equal rights. 5.8% learnt that knowledge should be shared with others in the community. http://www.comminit.com/idmay15/sld-2307.html

3. Mass Media Family Planning - Turkey - A national multi-media project. 10% of married women visited a clinic as a result of the programme, 20% said they intended to. Modern contraceptive use increased from 38.6 to 42.8%. IUD use increased from 16 - 22%, condom use decreased by 2%, oral contraceptive decreased by 3%, withdrawal method decreased by 3%. http://www.comminit.com/idmay15/sld-2296.html

4. Measles Communication Programme - Philippines - A national multi-media project. Proportion of fully vaccinated children of ages 12-23 months increased from 54% to 65%. Average number of vaccinations that a child under 2 years received increased from 4.32 to 5.10. 64% of mothers who knew of the campaign had their children immunized, 42% of mothers who did not have the knowledge of the campaign had their children vaccinated. http://www.comminit.com/idmay15/sld-2293.html

5. Accessing Mass Media on Reproductive Behavior - Africa:

   NAMIBIA: 61% of married women regularly exposed to radio, TV and print media are currently using contraception; compared

with 25% exposed to 2 of those media, 20% exposed to 1 of the media and 12% exposed to no media.

KENYA: 53% of rural married women regularly exposed to radio, TV and print media are currently using contraception; compared with 42% exposed to 2 of those media, 33% exposed to 1 of the media and 22% exposed to no media.

ZAMBIA: 15% of married women with no education regularly exposed to radio and TV are currently using contraception compared with 9% exposed to 1 of those media and 7 per cent exposed to no media.

BURKINA FASO: All women regularly exposed to radio, television and print media desire a mean number of children of 3.7; compared with 4.2 for women having regular exposure to 2 of those media, 5.7 for 1 of the media, and 6.3 for no exposure to any media.

GHANA: Rural women regularly exposed to radio, television and print media desire a mean number of children of 3.9; compared with 4.2 for women having regular exposure to 2 of those media, 4.6 for 1 of the media, and 5.3 for no exposure to any media.

6. Social Marketing of Vitamin A in West Sumatra - Indonesia - Daily consumption of dark green leafy vegetables increased: 19% to 32% among pregnant mothers; 14% to 33% among nursing mothers; 10% to 21% among 5- 12 month olds; 17% to 27% among 13- 60 month olds.
http://www.comminit.com/usaidimpact/sld-1931.html

7. Music Project - Nigeria - Included the production and commercial launch of 2 family planning songs, 6 TV PSAs and 6 radio PSAs. Respondents who were highly exposed to the campaign were 3 times more likely to communicate with their spouses about family planning, 5 times more likely to have positive family planning attitudes, and almost twice as likely to use family planning when compared to those who were unexposed. Rural respondents with high exposure were 7 times more likely to have positive family planning attitudes when compared to those who were unexposed.
http://www.comminit.com/idmay15/sld-2358.html

Obviously communication has become an important aspect of development initiatives in health, nutrition, agriculture, family

planning, education, and community economics. We now turn to an exploration of the threads that have gone into the make-up of this communication-and-development fabric (for which we will, incidentally, use the term "development communication").

1. The UNDP Thread and Erskine Childers

Among the earliest pioneers in the field we now call development communication was a United Nations unit called the Development Support Communications Service (DSCS) which operated under the aegis of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). DSCS was based in Bangkok (although its successor organization, the Development Training and Communication Planning Programme shifted to Manila). It was in DSCS where the ideas began to come together to form a distinctively new approach to communication as part of development interventions and Erskine Childers was the key person in the UNDP operation.

Childers died in August 1996 leaving behind him almost 30 years of service to the United Nations; 22 as a UN staff member and seven more with the World Federation of UN Organisations. He dedicated effort, energy, enthusiasm and his life to the ideals of the UN. Many knew him best for the pioneering work he did in advocating communication as an integral component of development projects. An example of this is the paper he and his wife Mallica Vajrathan directed at UN organisations in 1968 which is reproduced below.

While Childers wrote no books directly elated to development communication like those of Lerner, Schramm and others prominent in the field, he wrote the papers and made presentations that foreshadowed some of the concepts, principles and methods that have emerged in the past several decades.

FAO's Silvia Balit summed it up well: "He was not only the founding father of development support communication, but also a true master and an example for us all."

Perhaps the strength of his leadership in development communication is demonstrated best in Childers' own words. In *Sharing Knowledge*, FAO's video program on communication for sustainable development, Childers said:

> "If you want development to be rooted in the human beings who have to become the agents of it as well as the beneficiaries, who will alone decide on the kind of development they can sustain after the foreign aid has gone away, then you have got to communicate with them, you have got to enable them to communicate with each other and back to the planners in the capital city. You have got to communicate the techniques that they need in order that they will decide on their own development. If you do not do that you will continue to have weak or failing development programmes. It's as simple as that."

Childers spent his early career as a writer, doing scripts for radio and television, especially on topics related to international affairs and the United Nations. Former UNICEF communication specialist Jack Ling says that Childers was a conceptualizer and a prolific writer who should be 'fully recognized' for his pioneering role in development communication.

Between 1967 and 1975, Childers was based in Bangkok where, with wife Mallica Vajrathan and others, he developed the ideas and processes that became development support communication. From his post as Director of the UNDP/UNICEF Regional Development Support Communication Service (Asia-Pacific), he urged the UN Specialized Agencies and national governments to put more

resources into communication, for, as he wrote in 1968, "No innovation, however brilliantly designed and set down in a project Plan of Operations, becomes development until it has been communicated."

One side of Childers' character was reflected by Brian Urquhart, who worked with Childers toward the welfare and reform of the United Nations. Urquhart wrote in *The Independent* soon after Childers' death: "His biting humor and his strong opinions were splendidly stimulating to those he worked with."

Many who had the opportunity to interact with Childers' during the past decade on the Development Communication Roundtable would echo those observations, remembering the challenges he issued and the wisdom he provided in these discussions. One Roundtable member and long-time UNFPA communication expert, O.J. Sikes, says:

> "Erskine was a true champion of the people. He didn't invent the concept of participation, but he and Mallica breathed life into it. He drew global attention to the importance of women's rights. Today, these concepts, unpopular when he first espoused them in the 1960s, have become widely perceived as keys to development."

Urquhart well sums up this side of Childers' character:

> "He was, by nature and by inheritance, a champion of the oppressed and the less fortunate. He stood up for the developing countries and their peoples. He fought for their place on the international scene and for the programmes and activities that would help them attain it."

Childers and Vajrathan wrote the following text in June 1968 while they were at DSCS in Bangkok. Entitled *Development Support Communications for Project Support*, it was one of a collection of papers Childers was to write in the next few years advocating communication as a vital component of development planning. A major value of this piece is that it reflects lessons he and his wife learned from the field. Strikingly, with only an update of the technology mentioned, the paper is as important and relevant today as it was almost three decades ago. For example, the authors anticipated D.C. Korten and N.T. Uphoff's "bureaucratic reorientation for participatory rural development" of the 1980s, the importance of planning and strategy, and the imperative often found in social marketing to start with a firm foundation of social science research and analysis. Significantly many of the measures he proposed have found their ways into the practices of some UN agencies. Although the unpublished paper was principally addressed to the UN-Family in 1968, it deserves and can serve a much wider audience today.

Childers and Vajrathon begin their paper by noting a variety of circumstances in development that call for systematic communication support, such as the following:

- "the need for far greater involvement of the local people in the project"
- "confusion among farmers arising from conflicting and inaccurate information"
- "resistance from the public due to traditional attitudes and suspicion of authority it has proven difficult to convince key officials in other departments of the success of the pilot projects and the need to budget for its expansion"
- "a widespread popular view that these [communication] occupations are of inferior status compared to white-collar jobs."

We shift now to the text of the paper (which was unpublished).

Development Support Communications for Project Support
Erskine Childers & Mallica Vajrathan, 1968

For the past ten years and more, references like those set down [above] have been appearing with increasing frequency in project reports from developing countries assisted by the UN-Family; or the difficulties epitomised in such phrases have been the coinage of countless discussions among UN development personnel. Each type of obstacle to project implementation encompassed by such familiar phrases is an obstacle of communication. It would be hopelessly optimistic to state that greater attention to the use of communication techniques in development projects would eliminate these recurring reports altogether. But it can be no exaggeration on the accumulated evidence to state that perhaps no other instrument in the development process has been so grossly neglected.

There are, of course, UN-assisted projects in which there is no need for special, supporting information and communications work. But when these and a few other limited categories of projects are set apart, it must be said that virtually all others contain a very large element of communication. They are, after all, planned efforts to introduce and diffuse innovations among communities or cadres - and to do so intensively and economically in order to telescope time-spans of growth and change that would otherwise encompass entire generations, with limited funds.

No innovation, however, brilliantly designed and set down in a project Plan of Operations [PlanOps], becomes development until it has been communicated. No input or construction of material resources for development can be successful unless and until the innovations—the new techniques and surrounding changed attitudes which people will need to use those resources—have been communicated to them.

Once thus stated, the point appears to be crushingly obvious. Yet it has not been obvious in project formulation. Every project of the kind under discussion here carries a number of built-in assumptions or requirements for its success. When one or more agencies of the UN-Family assists in the design and construction of

a material input - for example, a hydroelectric dam, or complex of irrigation canals - the objective is not to build a dam or canals. It is to provide new material resources which people, as rapidly as possible after physical completion, can begin to use and benefit from. The project PlanOps may be strictly for the design and construction; the terms of reference may not in any way call for UN-Family effort to ensure the diffusion of the necessary accompanying innovations to use the input. Yet even in such cases, and even assuming that it could be argued that we should not seek to ensure that others—i.e. national authorities—will plan and phase in the diffusion of these innovations, even so, we are involved in communications.

From the moment a stranger appears in someone's field bearing government authority, a theodolite, and some stakes, and drives the stakes into that ground, a long chain-reaction of communication has been launched. It begins with the first villager who sees the stake, wonders about it, speculates with a neighbour, begins asking questions that ripple out to a rapidly increasing community of profoundly concerned people. Is "Government" going to take their land? Will they get any compensation? Is it something to do with water? will an ancestral burial ground be flooded? Is the new water for the landlord, or for us? When will "it" happen? The Agricultural Extension Officer has been telling us to start a cooperative. Is it worth it now? "They" want us to build a new school house: will we be here, on our land, in five years' time; and if not, why put energy into a new school?

The engineers who drew up the design and specifications, the time schedule and materials-logistics for this UN-assisted project were not asked—and should not have been asked—to contemplate such immediate consequences from the first act of construction. But was anyone else asked to contemplate, to draw up an accompanying information plan - a plan for purposive support communications both to explain "the stake" and all that would follow to the surrounding community, in time, and to begin the diffusion of needed innovations among them in time?

In another entire category of projects, communication is their very raison d'etre: planned efforts to diffuse innovations among the largest possible number of ordinary people, or by training new cadres both in historically very short periods of time. The whole web of health, agricultural, vocational and other training, adult and out-of-school education, and in-school education development projects falls within this definition. All of these projects consist, first and foremost, of bodies of new information or techniques, in the hands of a relatively small number of UN and counterpart

personnel, that are to be communicated to people who need them. The fundamental premise of all this assistance is that innovations can be introduced and that people will adopt them through special and accelerated effort—rather than leaving the process to "several generations of wider and better schooling," etc.

Yet the corollary of this premise in all such development work is, surely, that special and accelerative means of diffusing the innovations will be needed—every possible means that can be devised. Many, indeed most, of the innovations have been designed from experience in more developed societies. In those societies, no self-respecting planner of a training programme for a cadre of people automatically more capable of absorbing a given innovation would dream of ignoring, say, the question of advance-planning of suitable films / slides / charts and other aids to the communication process. Yet, the plain fact is that to date, we in the UN-Family have been engaged again and again in the exercise of launching training projects for diffusion of breathtakingly "big" innovations to people far less ready to absorb them, with only the most rudimentary aids to the communication process. To put this neglect in a nutshell: the developing countries are now strewn with cine and slide projectors supplied by UN and bilateral aid agencies—but with miserably few films or slides remotely relevant to the intended audiences. As in so many respects, the "nuts and bolts" have been furnished, but not the innovations that can make them usable.

One crucial time-factor in the communication process of development has already been mentioned—that we are trying to telescope the time-span of innovation and change from a matter of generations to a matter of years. Within this, there is a second vital time-factor—the actual phasing of a project. Whether the project-audience is a whole community or selected trainee-cadres, the innovations to be diffused are supposed to be phased over a period of perhaps five years, at most, either absolutely or per diffusion-cycle. The nature of a great many such projects leaves no margin for delay in any of the logistics. Experts are phased in by project years; newly-trained cadres from one year are supposed to begin their innovation-diffusion the next; a new irrigation canal is filled with water at a date when the surrounding farmers are supposed to be ready to begin using it, first for one new kind of cultivation, then for a second crop, and so on.

By the nature of what all such development projects are trying to achieve, therefore, there can be no more margin for delay in the communications-logistics than in any other, nowadays automatically, programmed element of the PlanOps. Yet this very

day, all over the developing regions, there are irrigation canals filled with water and not yet being used; experts and instructors for Phase-Year X of projects who can only begin to discover what communications aids they ought to have when their phase is nearly ended; and newly trained cadres of project-implementation personnel going out to their diffusion-points with no more to help them than the (quite unsuitable) texts and charts they acquired in their courses. The authors of this paper witness these problems every day of the year, in every sector of development now under UN (as other) external assistance.

In short, a great many UN-assisted projects contain, as a very precondition of efficient and effective use of the investment mode, information or communications "components" that ought to be advance-planned as carefully as all the other, now automatic logistics. The PlanOps of such projects should specify such a component, itemising the resources that will be required; when they will be needed relative to project phases; who will provide the resources, as between UN and Government; what kinds of information materials (they may range from flip-cards and flannel graphs to films in the relevant language); and of course, the already familiar item, what communication equipment is to be supplied.

The range of Development Support Communications in which project planners and then field executors ought to be concerned is very wide—far, far wider than is covered by considering what are called 'the mass media' in the western region. Media of Development Support Communications must be seen to include, potentially, every channel along which bodies of needed new information and ideas can be transmitted to the particular project audience. The hierarchies of government personnel in the functional or development ministries themselves are vital media. So may be a simple traditional village fair; a traditional midwife; a folk performance that may contain a potential for adaptation to a development innovation, far more powerful than a loudspeaker address by a technician from the city.

The technique of communication that may be vital in a given project need not be costly or require complicated modern equipment. We have seen communication obstacles—visibly vitiating an entire development-aid investment—that are as simple as public health education personnel not knowing how to speak to an audience. They have been well trained in the content of the health innovations they are supposed to diffuse to the people: they know the technology perfectly but they simply do not know how to address audiences of thirty or forty village women.

It is equally important for project planners and for the new teams of specialists in Development Support Communications which the UN-Family desperately needs to realise that the "project-audience" for a given act of communications support varies enormously. It is by no means only "the people" en masse, whether on a national or district scale. Nor is it only the actual trainees in training projects. Echelons of government personnel who are, or who ought to be, involved in project implementation, may also need purposive, planned support communication for a variety of reasons. The moment we get away from thinking in purely Western terms, of "mass media" (publishing, radio, film, television, etc.), and consider the total network of communication that needs to be activated for a development project, the point becomes obvious. The network will certainly include the mass media: the infrastructures of such mass communications need to be developed as rapidly as possible and used for Development Support even while being expanded with UN assistance or encouragement. But in this kind of communication, for example, it may be far more important for a given project to reach, motivate, and orient a precisely defined echelon of civil servants as a first phase of communications; then to devise communications programmes and materials addressed to "the people."

It will be apparent from the above that for professionals in Development Support Communications, 'media' or channels are also audience. While this is in reality true for information-communication anywhere, the traditional concepts and practices of Western mass communications tend to create a distinction that may have helped produce the terrible neglect of this element in development work.

It is also an axiom of this work that every act of development support communication, and the materials selected and produced for it, have to be tailored very carefully to the intended audience. Development is the deliberate introduction of a (relatively) massive disturbance in the lives, attitudes, work patterns, and socio-economic relationships of given groups of people—a disturbance deliberately telescoped, too, into unusually short periods of time. Precisely what and how much, and how quickly, and on what mental and material-incentive premises workers can ask a defined group of human beings to do is the very essence of the entire process. Consider a dairy farming film presenting electric milking machines to farmers who do not have them and have not the remotest prospect of having them. Yet the communication act of screening such a film for those farmers could involve the act of "asking" them to contemplate electric milking as an innovation. In a real case, the farmers were in fact profoundly angry about this

film: they felt they were being insulted and humiliated. Development came to an angry halt at that moment.

Certain fundamental premises of development support communications follow from this. "Know your audience", a concept familiar in Western commercial advertising and public relations, but less so in the Press or Broadcasting or Films, is a first precept of this development work. The need to know the "stretch potential", or the innovation-absorption capacity of given groups of people within any one phase of a project, is absolutely vital. In a great many cases, above all for support communications directly addressed to whole communities, prior socio-economic research and field testing of assumptions is very important indeed.

Another crucial premise is that development support communications programmes and aids (i.e. a film, or poster, or radio broadcast) should propose only those innovations that are feasible for the audience in terms of their present actual resources (and those that a project may be injecting). Having said this, it needs hardly to be mentioned that information- communication materials made on the other side of the world, in industrialised countries for those countries depicting totally alien people doing totally alien things within alien cultures and at wholly fantastic economic and technological levels, are not only of little relevance - they may, as in the dairy film case, be counter-innovatory. And it follows inexorably from this that UN-Family development projects need to have communication support materials made afresh, indigenously or within comparable situations in other (and culturally acceptable) developing countries. This is not an absolute rule: there are certain kinds of materials, on certain subjects, that can be usefully imported from advanced-technology countries; and films and other materials from such countries may be extremely useful at later phases of a project. But it may be stated as an excellent general rule of thumb that the early acts of innovation-communications in UN-assisted development projects ought to be with materials depicting the innovation in the country concerned, carried out by fellow-countrymen.

Types of Development Support Communications

A broad assembly of the experience of development in the field indicates many categories of repeatedly needed support communication efforts. The following outline list is not presented in order of priority nor of action, nor are all these types of communication necessarily needed for every project. The priorities, the chronology of communication efforts within a project's timespan, and the combinations of programmes will vary with each project.

1. Broad Public Motivation

Every UN project is attempted, with national counterpart, in a general "reservoir" of public attitudes towards development in general, or the particular sector involved. The UN-Family should automatically seek to assist in and encourage development support communication programmes that will motivate the public more effectively. In sectoral terms, a project may be launched at a time when, by sheer coincidence, public attention to that sector of development may be low - the national information media may never, nor not for several years, have presented the need for development in the sector concerned. It is often true that the first support communications requirement for project implementation is simply (not necessarily easily) to "get people thinking about" the sector concerned.

2. Motivation-orientation of Project Implementers

To date, it has almost invariably been assumed in project planning and implementation that if a given national ministry has requested the project and signed a PlanOps, all civil servants concerned will implement it automatically. Once so stated, the assumption is obviously nonsense: yet the neglect of support communications for national project-implementing personnel amounts to such an assumption.

We should assess every project to determine what help—by idea and/or material aid—the national authorities may need to ensure that the relevant echelons of civil servants, from capital city outwards, are properly informed and motivated about the project. In very many cases, all that presently happens is that one more flood of crudely stenciled paper is distributed through the echelons, plus such word-of-mouth briefing as the specialists within the department may be able to provide.

In our experience, for projects of any size in investment, in geographical scope, and in project-community, one of the earliest needs may be a complete information-communications programme designed for these levels—quite possibly an orientation-motivation film for government personnel; a pamphlet; a basic PlanOps chart; perhaps a radio or TV programme. UN-Family field personnel presently have to spend grossly wasteful amounts of time simply trying to ensure that even a small number of over-burdened, under-paid civil servants know even the elementary facts about a project—who is running it; what the chain of command and trouble-shooting is; where supplies come from; what the roles of possibly two or three UN agencies are; what needs to be accomplished in Year One, and then and only then in Year Two,

and so on. All of this is development support communications for project implementation. At present, we leave the whole crucial process, in the overwhelming majority of projects, to the word-of-mouth and formal-correspondence efforts of a tiny handful of UN project field officers who do have a few other things to do as well.

3. Specific Elite and Government-level Information

There are other often absolutely vital kinds of support locations at these levels - without proper attention to which, as the authors have witnessed in countless instances, an entire project runs into trouble. Among many, we would cite here:

Inter-departmental awareness of a given project and of its needs now and in the phased future is immensely important. More and more UN-assisted projects are bi- or multi-sectoral, requiring for their very functioning the coordination of several ministries at national and field levels. This simply does not happen because it is stipulated in a PlanOps. It happens only as a result of consistent, advance-planned, purposive communication - inevitably requiring special materials in one or more media. It is almost in the nature of sectorally organised government authorities everywhere not to coordinate. The idea that lack of coordination occurs only in developing countries is among many myths. But in efficient and cost-effective project implementation, it is in such countries that we and they can least afford uncoordinated effort. UN field personnel talk themselves hoarse on this subject day after day because, to date, we have furnished them with nothing except their voices and formal-correspondence office capacity to try to communicate this need of inter-departmental coordination.

Motivation for expansion and follow-up is another problem that is sheer communication in development Project Implementation at elite and government-service levels. It follows from the above needs and actions, but it ought to be planned in advance. At certain fairly precise dates in the forward "history" of a project, decision-makers and financial controllers in Government have to authorise further steps without which the original project-investment may become largely a nonsense. More counterpart personnel must be authorised, budget-allocated, and recruited and trained; Government has to take over [technical assistance] costs; physical and human-resource investments of other kinds have to be implemented by Government. All of this may have been foreseen and set down in the PlanOps. That does not mean that it will happen when it should happen. Once again, the first requirement is communication to the relevant decision-makers (and decision-influencers, even outside Government, through press

and other media) of the approaching needed actions, and of the progress of the project that justifies those actions.

Anyone in the UN-Family who has worked in development in the field will be all too familiar with this problem and how, invariably too late because it was never advance-planned, the need is perceived for some decent press reporting on the project - a set of good slides, at the least, that can be used by the fully committed government officers to persuade and convince their key associates to authorise the necessary budget in time. It is [characteristic] of this problem, like so many others in development support communications, that the people who need to be reached cannot be physically brought to a place where the purpose and progress of the project can be seen by them with their own eyes. The project has to be brought to them - again, an exercise in planned communications using modern techniques and materials.

4. Project Cadre-training Communication Needs

The project-field where perhaps the greatest awareness of the role of planned, purposive support communications has been evident is, of course, in training. But here again, as (by now) literally thousands of UN-recruited training instructors and their counterparts could relate, we can perceive neglect in quality and quantity that is far, far more serious for training in developing countries than in industrialised ones. We have referred earlier, in the introduction, to this special phenomenon of the diffusion of innovations in developing countries inherently needing more systematic exploitation of modern techniques of communication than in the countries from which the innovations derive. Our instructors are in need of every conceivable kind of aid - films, slides, better charts and other printed aids—designed for their trainees.

Many UN-recruited instructors have experience in making audio-visual aids: but all too often we learn of such personnel imploring headquarters, from their field posts, for possibly quite minute extra sums of money to finance production of better teaching aids—and of months passing during which the very training course itself expires before authorisation is given, if it is given at all.

We believe that it can be stated categorically that no training project should be formulated without, there and then, its locally-attuned training-aids component having been assessed, budgeted, and production-planned. This will in many cases (as with virtually every other element of this new [approach] of Development Support Communications) require prior survey and appraisal in the project-country concerned by experts in communication

techniques. Only by such local assessment can any realistic appraisal be made of the extent to which the national media can produce the aids needed in time and the extent to which the UN agency concerned will have to supplement national-resources. Such prior survey will cost money (less if the experts already stationed at regional level to serve all such project-appraisal and implementation needs). But any clinical assessment of the effectiveness of existing training projects will quickly show that the aid-investment in them has in very many cases been vitiated by neglect of this element. We believe it is entirely legitimate to assert that in training, as in all other kinds of projects under discussion in this paper, the time has come for decision to invest in communication in order to save UN assistance funds.

Communication support for training projects embraces many needs beyond the actual aids in the class of demonstration site. Among these we would mention trainee recruitment: without planned communication, no training project can possibly select the best candidates from the optimum number and level of applicants drawn from the geographical base actually envisaged for the project. We and our national partners repeatedly face the element of urbanisation in this field - the problem of training people who will stay (or at least are more likely to stay) in rural areas or at least provincial towns. Formulation of training projects should include a planned programme, worked out with Government in advance, for the widest possible dissemination of the opportunities offered.

Occupation-status improvement is another widespread need in such projects, and is again a problem of communication. More especially in ex-colonial countries, generally throughout developing regions, the status-image of needed occupations by no means conforms to known manpower requirements. The topsy-turvy ratio of doctors to nurses in countries where nursing is frowned upon for girls is a well-known example. We know of a vocational training scheme that is finding it extremely difficult to recruit trainees for carpentry because wood-working has become a lesser-status occupation. A planned and country-tailored communications programme may not, by itself, resolve these very complex problems.

What is quite certain is that nothing else will even begin to apply the effort to resolve them, for in most such cases it is not economic incentive that is missing; if the job opportunity were known and the social stigma were removed or lessened, potential recruits would learn that the pay or reward was superior to their otherwise likely income. In whatever project, a problem of the

social status of a given occupation is, in part if not in whole, a problem of communications.

(Even with UN-assisted projects that do not include an overt PlanOps stipulated component of training, effective implementation may call for systematic and advance-planned effort in this field of occupation-status. In a given country at a given period, a UN agency may only be involved, let us say, in expanding one element of health services. But if that element actually depends upon the availability of more nurses, assistance to or at least stimulus of Government in a communications effort to enhance the status of nurses may be vital for project implementation).

5. Applied Research Dissemination

Another and widespread example of the factor immediately above-referred may be seen in the case of the numerous UN-assisted institutes for applied research in a given development sector. The PlanOps may have been only for the establishment and development of the institute itself, with the implicit assumption that Government (and educational establishments) would separately see to the dissemination of the practical technology produced in the Institute. In some cases, such institutes do carry a project-element of industrial-use dissemination but not, for example, extension-dissemination.

The field observations of the authors of this paper compel two suggestions about such projects. At the very least, the UN-Family should plan to ensure that the work of the institute and the innovations it develops be made generally known to the public and elite through a communications document (film, brochure, as may be judged best) that can also be used in schools and colleges.

At the most, we are bound to put forward the question whether, in the appraisal of all requests for such institute projects, the Family ought not to adopt the standard discipline and criterion-question to Government: "Precisely how will the technology to be developed be disseminated for urgent practical use for development?" If once this question is asked as an automatic exercise, we believe that in many cases the judgment and the shaping of the project itself may alter. Accumulating practical experience indicates that it is from many such institutes themselves that the best chain of innovation-diffusion (possibly the very organisation and cadre-training of extension personnel, for example) will flow, if so planned and agreed. At the least, we believe that experience shows that it is in the early life of such institute projects, before the UN element is phased out, that concrete programming of innovation-diffusion located somewhere in very close nexus with the institute should

begin. It is extremely likely that if the whole UN investment is to be maximally effective, the UN agency concerned should be prepared to assist in this innovation-diffusion as well.

In all such cases it will be obvious by now that the same kind of advance-researched, advance-planned Support Communications Programme should be built into the project PlanOps as an outright component—the experts' permanent counterpart personnel, the materials to be produced, and the appropriate share of financing needed. Institutes are ivory towers without planned communications.

6. Close Project-Support Communications

Finally, in this necessarily broad summary of types of support needs, there is what we call "close-support" work for projects of all kinds. In virtually all UN-assisted projects under discussion here, there are fairly specific "project-communities" and implementing cadres. A project may be nation-wide in scope, but it usually has defined sectors, and often operates either phased by expansion-phase or in one specific district or region entirely (i.e., a dam, a river-valley development, etc.). Assuming that the communications work at Government-services level is in hand, and that there are broad national awareness and receptivity, the project still needs very considerable close-in communications support.

At this as at other levels, we and our partners in national development service have scarcely begun to use the potential of planned, project-attuned communications techniques. At very little extra cost per project-year, we could be helping to equip each such project with a properly researched and phased schedule of information-communication aids, first, to prepare the project-community for the very "arrival" of the project (for example, that matter of the "surveyors" stakes); second, to explain to the people what the project seeks to achieve for them, in their terms of reference at that time, and to answer both the easily anticipated questions they will have and (by proper prior socio-economic research) the deeper worries which the project-disturbance will unleash; third, to motivate the people to participate for reasons that are tangible to them, and to demonstrate to them what resources of their own they can bring to bear on the effort; fourth, in careful phasing with the actual forward history of the project, to introduce to the community the specific innovations—in production, work methods, environment-exploitation and management, hygiene, whatever the sector—their adoption of which can alone make the project successful.

It needs to be heavily emphasised that, at present, the over-all picture of project implementation at this level is extremely deficient in the above methods and in communication aids that are fashioned from them.

National Capability for Development Support Communications

It is, of course, fundamental in UN-Family project policy that we do not, and could not, ourselves and alone undertake development support communications in member-countries. But against the overall neglect of these instruments to date, and the size of the problem even strictly in terms of UN-assisted projects, the present capabilities of national media should not be overestimated. Very much more could usefully be done to provide support communications from existing national resources, given an effective communications discipline in project appraisal and formulation. But we should be under no illusions whatever as to the magnitude of extra, external assistance that ought to be brought to bear as well.

A detailed, country-by-country study of the present role and capability of national media in what we mean by Development Support Communications is quite beyond the scope of this paper. From the aggregate experience of the authors in the several regions, however, we believe that we can make a number of legitimate general observations.

1. Project Level Support.[1] In the majority of countries receiving UN development assistance, the national authorities are constantly seeking to create a broad climate of opinion in support of development to motivate the people to participate in and contribute to economic and social progress. We have cited this kind of broad, national motivation as very important even for project implementation. But the "even" is crucial. Broad, national support communication does not by itself provide support communication at project-implementation level; it may even lose its impact if not complemented by project-level support.

A man can be generally motivated for just so long, and just so far—and then he needs help that is tangible to him in his particular area, for his particular occupation and need, and feasible within his particular resources. A "Grow More Food Campaign," conducted across the length and breadth of a nation becomes real only when farmers in specific crop and climate and soil areas then receive the inputs and innovations they need.

We must emphasise as crucial to the entire subject of this paper that this is one of the hidden "flaws" in much of the work done by

national authorities today in the field of development support communications. Again and again, in discussion with our national counterparts in development—whether in planning commissions or functional ministries, or even information media themselves—we find a lack of understanding of the distinction we have drawn above. The development process is intimate, local and particularistic at the point of action, which is the point of project implementation. This is now widely recognised in respect of all the other logistics of projects. It is by no means yet recognised in respect of support communications, as we shall illustrate further.

2. Reaching Villages. Among national officials who actually administer development programmes, including those receiving UN assistance, there is not only the universal tendency to neglect the power of communications techniques. There is a widespread assumption that, since their own ministries possess infrastructures of civil servants reaching down to district and even village level, "we are in very close touch with the people already."

This view is in no way unique to the civil services of developing countries, but the reality behind the view is far more severe in them. The senior civil servant in the capital city has a picture of a nation-wide network of "outlets to the people" in serried echelons below him. Those "outlets" are in fact underpaid and often over-worked junior officers, usually reluctant to be working in rural or lower-status areas; operating in poor working conditions and with indifferent transport; and showered with unending and often barely legible stenciled directives about one programme and administrative problem after another.

We have studied the lines of communication of merely basic, factual information about new development projects down through these networks in many different sectors. The usual picture is that the information about the new project forms only one small element in that week's routine administrative problems, to be transmitted further down the hierarchy towards "the people." By the time transmission has experienced heat or cold, rain or dust, vehicle breakdowns or rotten overnight accommodation; and by the time the lower field echelons have coped with all the other merely routine administrative data, the new project has lost a good deal of its capital-city glory. When the news then has to be filtered through local community leadership—for example, through the village elders or council chairman, also beset by his level of "red tape" —the new project may be lucky to enjoy two minutes of attention en passant. Not least of the problems is that from the first moment of word-of-mouth communication, inaccuracies and

omissions of vital facts that may affect community response are all too common.

3. Development Communication Specialists. The assumption described above—that there are built-in communications for development in a country's civil service—combines in many places with a lack of awareness that modern communications techniques can be instruments of development. The view is still prevalent among many decision-makers and budget controllers that media like radio, films, and television are "consumer amenities that must wait for adequate economic growth" —not instruments that can virtually contribute to growth. With relatively few exceptions, what we may call the technical information arms of national governments are the cinderellas [beneficiaries] of budgeting—both as to expansion and as to annual operating funds.

Apart from the deficiencies in basic infrastructure and equipment that this view perpetuates, it also produces poor morale and often indifferent calibre among government information personnel. In any country where there is any kind of private or commercial communications industry—radio, TV, feature films, privately owned newspapers—the result is that the best talent seeks the highest pay outside of Government. By definition, this talent is almost entirely lost to communications for development.

The process is, of course, a vicious circle. Poorly paid and second-level information personnel, working with meagre budgets, are not very likely to stimulate new interest and respect for their development roles among decision-makers and purse-controllers in Government.

4. Skills for Development Communication. These factors mesh, in turn, with another very powerful influence currently working against the kind of development support communications we have described as so urgently needed. Existing national information personnel are still overwhelmingly urban, middle-class (or above), and Western-oriented in their concepts of communication. We discern a whole series of practical consequences that flow from this:

a. The dominant assumption is that the job is one of disseminating "news" and/or "publicity"; and usually in Press terms, since most information people have either come from the Press world to Government or have received journalism training that has remained print-oriented. Production of information material is widely based on the concepts of the duplicated release "for the Press," as often as not with photographs of a Minister or other high

dignitary. The same approach still dominates in radio and in newsreel styles of film for cinemas and/or television.

Again, there is a vicious circle. This is what most national information personnel do and are seen to do; this is what most national authorities think they are paid to do; this is what they are consequently expected to go on doing if they want next year's budget This is all the information workers have the incentive, or often the equipment, or the time, to do. It is not at all uncommon, for example, to find a film unit with only two cameramen expected to produce up to 20 newsreel-style "documentaries on development" per year, along with a weekly newsreel proper.

b. Urban (or urbanised) themselves, working in cities, under the constant administrative influence and pressure of like people, and working in a technology that is infused with the inevitably urban outlook of Western society where it originated, these national information practitioners inevitably tend to produce for urban audiences. Running through all their work is the inchoate feeling that "the people who count" must see their production, and the people who count are also in the cities. It is, for example, extremely significant that, with very rare exceptions, the film equipment of national information media is almost entirely at 35 mm dimension. The films produced have as their first objective screening in cinemas - overwhelmingly urban, in countries where the overwhelming majority of the population (the people needing to be involved in development) are rural.

c. Further consequences flow from all this. The "news release" orientation makes the content of materials very broad and generalised. The dominant notion of "national propaganda" - of needing to speak to an entire nation in a given document - has the same effect. But since the people producing the material have little real or deep contact with the overwhelming, rural majority of the nation, the generalisation becomes, in fact, urban. If a film is produced with a cinema audience in mind, it has to be very short if on a "non-entertainment" subject. If the audience in the cinemas is predominantly urban, it has to speak to them in the first instance. If the producers are not only urban but middle-class oriented, their depiction even of rural life will tend to be fleeting and somewhat romanticised, even if quite possibly infused with genuine and patriotic motives of sympathy for the rural poor.

Anyone who has the opportunity frequently to view films made in such conditions—in fact, to view the films that might not be considered those available nationally for "development support" —will be struck by these tendencies. Both visually and in narration the film "goes out to" the rural areas—from a city, of course. Yet

again, the villages of developing countries are filled with born, natural actors for purposes of development support communications. It is, however, very common indeed to find a film producer transporting out to a village from the city an entire cast of actors and actresses to play not "features" but documentary roles.

d. Development Support Communications, we have stated earlier as a categorical premise, must be carefully audience-attuned; it requires quite scrupulous, and optimally researched attention to the socio-economic and socio-psychological environment of the people to whom it must speak, and to their level of absorptive capacity for innovations. The "Western" training, or Westernised social background and continuing technological orientation of information personnel is almost bound to militate against this perspective and this creative priority.

A journalist turned government information officer who has this kind of 'Western' background is trained to report "facts": not to try to motivate readers, change their attitudes, encourage them to adopt new techniques - indeed any such practices are traditionally frowned upon, and said to be the thin edge of the wedge towards "1984." Yet the skilled practice of Development Support Communications calls for unceasing attention to how to reach, interest, and very purposively motivate and inform people.

A documentary film producer with a "Western" orientation sees his craft as at its best when he is "expressing himself" on film and sound—his own response to a situation or subject, presented to the cinematic equivalent of Robert Frost's "unknown everybody." We would be the first to insist that artistry and imaginative use of the film medium remains vital in Development Support Communications. But we would also insist that the very last desideratum is the self-expression of the producer or director in the usual "Western" sense. It is in no way encouraging—in terms of the massive needs we have been describing—to ask film-makers in developing countries what they would most like to produce, and to receive quite invariably descriptions of film ideas suitable for the audience-equivalent in their countries of avant-garde enthusiasts in Paris, London, New York and Montreal.

e. Scrupulous authenticity of detail and carefully thought out choice of accurate technical information are further requirements of Development Support Communications. It needs little elaboration that the great majority of present information workers, in whatever medium, have not had any training enabling them to translate development technology effectively into their media. Nor are they given the time or the sheer morale to have the very

considerable patience that such detailed communications work requires. The reader who has had practical experience in educational television or radio, including the production of scientific or technical programmes, will appreciate these problems most readily. A film is being made about farming and requires shots of a particular kind of seed and its cultivation. That is so written in the script, with a location prescribed thirty miles outside the city. But the film unit is tired; it is underpaid; it is thoroughly over-worked; and there is a college demonstration plot almost inside the city. The shot is taken there. The villagers to whom the film is screened can spot the fake at once. The utility of the film has been almost destroyed.

Among the countless examples of such problems known to us, we can discern a further cause which is the present very wide "communications gap" between national information personnel and the functional development implementers. Just as inside the UN-Family programme and technical personnel have not always taken Public Information Officers very seriously, so too there is this attitude within national ministries and related development agencies. The development technicians often take the view that information people are largely nuisances and inaccurate, "never available when we do need them and bothering us when we don't", or "preoccupied with taking pictures of politicians." Again the causation in a vicious circle is apparent. To date, no one has asked, encouraged, and equipped such information workers to reach that level of professional expertise in development support that would make development technicians regard them as serious co-professionals with skills badly needed to help programmes.

f. If the above factors militate strongly against any great optimism about national capability for support communication in project-implementation, we believe we must recognise certain other very practical problems. A key one is quite simply the size of the technical resources available within a given country receiving UN development assistance. In our experience, the existing equipment and potentially usable talent is very heavily taxed in producing what we have called broad, national development support materials, most especially in the medium of the film. In countries were there are governmental film units (and there are not in many countries), they are hard pressed to complete their annual quota of films required by different ministries, plus the inevitable emergency demands (a head of State visiting; a disaster; a war). As we have described, most of these films are very broad in content and can contribute to project implementation only in general climate-of-opinion improvement.

A further common difficulty is that the equipment and personnel resources which we need for project-level support communications are very severely diffused and dissipated within government structures. In many countries, there has been a historical tendency for each functional ministry to create its own information or Public Relations Division—but for it to be starved of just that extra input of funds that might make it really viable. In the usual way within human authority-structures, if a central information service is then created, it may never quite get the resources it needs because the functional ministries are reluctant to support it at the expense of their own Public Information. For UN-Family project implementation, which so often proceeds through specific sectoral ministries, this is a further difficulty.

Conclusions from the Above Appraisal

In the foregoing survey of national capabilities for this kind of communication work, we have been as realistic as our practical experience, now over many years and encompassing all regions, compels us to be. But we must emphasise that a great many of the problems we have described within national levels could be overcome—some quite quickly, others over a forward period of planned assistance. Broadly, there are four categories of need in improving the national resources available for Development Support Communications as earlier defined:

1. *Expansion and improvement of communication infrastructures* is an obvious need in many countries and has, of course, been the subject of great attention by UNESCO and ITU in particular. While stressing the need for this kind of assistance to continue and increase, we would add that there will be many instances where proper advance appraisal of the support communications needs of a given UN-Family project would suggest a specific assistance input of equipment and possibly short-term on-job training personnel. This has been done, generally and to date, only in terms of supplying such basic items an cine-projectors, slide-projectors, darkroom gear and tape recorders. In specific instances, for projects with a large and relatively long-term communications element, we can envisage far more comprehensive inputs (and, as explained earlier, far more cost effective since a cine-projector without anything to project on it is not very useful).

2. *Orientation of national authorities towards DSC* is a second surely vital need, even for the effective implementation simply of UN-assisted projects (and we are assuming throughout this paper that we are also collectively concerned with helping to make all development more effective). From our own concrete experience,

we cannot over-emphasise the importance of outside, UN-Family assistance in this respect. For the reasons outlined earlier, and for many others which space prevents us, including the voices of the relatively few national information professionals who do not understand this kind of development communications work will have to be supplemented from outside.

3. *Training or retraining of national information personnel* in all the media in Development Support Communications is desperately needed in almost every country. What is required is nothing less than the development of a whole new discipline and professional expertise in this kind of information work with status, standards, methodology, and rational use of resources.

4. *Application of system and resources by the UN-Family* to this new instrument of Development Support Communications will be essential, in each region, if we are to begin to move towards better project implementation. Within the UN-Family we must create a body of professional expertise in these particular communications techniques, a counterpart to the (obviously numerically much larger) national resources cited earlier. We must stress that nothing in our experience in this work gives any grounds for believing that the hundreds of specific, project-tailored support communication components at this moment missing from UN-assisted projects will be supplied by national resources alone. A major UN assistance effort is required.

In earlier pages we have pointed towards the new system, methods and deployed resources which this effort will require. Work on it has already begun, both at Headquarters level and through the Development Support Communications Service in Asia now being expanded. In section E we offer a very compressed outline of the total system and method that are needed.

Methods and Systems for UN Development Support Communications Aid

It may be best to outline our UN-Family needs by describing what ought to happen over a sample UN-assisted development project. For breadth of illustration let us suppose the project in question to be one with a large and comprehensive communications component encompassing many of the categories described earlier in this paper. Obviously, for projects with less communications complexities, there may not be need for all of the elements cited in this example. But the need of the specific approach will be there regardless.

1. At the stage of appraisal of a project request, it will automatically be examined for its support communications

requirement. At the relevant Headquarters, this standard practice will be instituted by Programme chiefs. They should be able to draw on the resident advice of one Information Officer who has begun to specialise in Development Support Communications. In the region in which the requesting country is situated, the project papers will be studied by a staff member of the Development Support Communications Service based in that region, and already familiar with support communications problems and available national resources in the country concerned.

It is quite essential to work from regional level in this field, and if we in the UN-Family are serious about this enormous neglected gap in the development process, we will as rapidly as possible develop this kind of DSC Service for each major region.

2. Research in the "project community" will be indicated and carried out, as necessary, before final project formulation. The first "act" of communication in a development project is in fact such research in the community of human beings among whom the innovations are to be diffused. The socio-economic information a DSC specialist needs about the community (or cadres to be formed) is also, in our opinion, essential to the proper formulation of the entire project. We know of very many cases of poorly formulated projects where, simply by having conducted DSC community research in advance of formulation, the project would quite certainly have been better designed and in some cases saved from virtual fiasco.

Properly staffed regional DSC Services for the UN-Family will include on their strengths one specialist in social science research as it relates to development and the diffusion of innovations to work with national social scientists.

Depending on the size, the overall complexity, and the communications complexity of the project, DSC Service staff would make a field appraisal from their regional base, in the country concerned, in order to tailor their recommendations for the DSC component as closely as possible. In many such cases, staff would probably make the field survey together with the overall project consultant mission or other appraiser for the agency involved. At the earliest practicable stage, DSC staff would work with counterparts in the country concerned so that the communications component was planned from the outset as closely with the country's information specialists as with its project-sector specialists.

3. From the above appraisal and survey, a complete and detailed communications component would be evolved and negotiated with

the national authorities and included in the PlanOps. This component would fully specify and stipulate responsibilities within the Government's various information media for the production or co-production of a detailed schedule of support communications materials (publication, lecture audio-visual aids, slides, films, radio and/or TV programmes, etc.). The materials would be specified, and planned relative to project phases and to communications media within the project infrastructure as well as the mass media. Due care would be given to support communications aids for project-cadre training and to the aids those cadres would in turn need for diffusion of the innovations involved.

Having negotiated the best possible use of available national resources for the DSC programme required, the component in the PlanOps would further specify what assistance the UN would provide - which would vary from ancillary funds and some basic equipment, possibly to the complete shooting of a given complex film or films, and it would include short-term or resident communications experts, with on-job training counterparts as necessary. "Second-phase" inputs of foreign made communications materials, for example, slides or films, or publications that would be useful at later stages would also be specified.

The DSC component in the PlanOps would be properly budgeted for, stipulating UN and counterpart contributions, project phase by phase.

We are merely outlining the actual, highly technical details that ought to go into such component-preparation. In many cases already known to us, for example, they would include written agreement as to the actual information to be disseminated since one of the serious troubles is that unless this is foreseen what may be several ministries simply never do agree on what they want to tell the project community.

4. The regional UN-Family DSC Service, working with the appropriate UN Resident Representative and Agency Chief of Mission, and the agreed national counterparts, would then follow through on implementation of the project's DSC component. Advisory and production resources, based in the regional DSC Service would be brought to bear as planned—one of the Service's film units, for example, might have to assist with preparation of the scheduled film for a given project phase. By proper advance planning of all such DSC components, production resources based outside the region would be used to help the Service and the project where national resources would not be adequate.

5. It may be of interest, here, to mention that we envisage that feedback on a project to Headquarters and for donor countries, should also be serviced through the same regional base. We are in fact engaged, in Asia, on what we call "double yield" operations, in which, for example, the still photography, sound recordings, and film footage prepared for direct project-support use are also used for this reportage function.

6. In many instances, support communications materials prepared for implementations of one project in one country can be of great value in another similarly placed country. One of the further responsibilities of the regional DSC Services would be to watch for such opportunities of "intra-project support communications" —and indeed to plan in advance for them against the known schedule of such types of projects.

The above thumbnail sketch of a new system and approach for this aspect of UN development assistance clearly presupposes UN-Family collective effort. We are openly envisaging a Development Support Communications Service—in Asia to begin with—to which specialised agencies will allocate resident communication specialists to appraise, plan, and follow up on DSC components in their projects in the region. By this approach, we would build up a highly professional group of communications experts, each doubly specialist in a given sector of development, and serving the various Agencies accordingly.

[1] The italicized leads in these paragraphs have been added to the original text for formatting purposes.

Many ideas in the papers of Childers and Vajrathan have relevance to us today, but two especially stand out. First, there was the emphasis on planning. The authors noted the need to give communication support to civil servants, change agents, and to rural communities and that these communication efforts needed to be orchestrated. They also stressed the importance of research, especially for matching communication materials to communities. "This may require," they said, "organized socio-economic research harnessing (practical, development-oriented) social scientists to assemble data about attitudes, motivational factors, etc." And

further, Childers and Vajrathan emphasized the difference between publicity and development support communication. Worth noting is their emphatic plea for "the mobilization of properly trained communication personnel."

2. The Extension Thread

Extension as a Development Communication Approach
The extension approach to development was used before either the concepts "development" or "development communication" appeared in the language of many of us. Perhaps the extreme example are the hieroglyphs on Egyptian columns giving advice on how to avoid crop damage and loss of life from the flooding of the Nile (Jones & Garforth, 1997). Along with the establishment of agricultural societies and agricultural schools in Europe in the early 1800s, "itinerant agriculturalists" emerged to give farmers information, advice and encouragement. This was predominantly a private sector initiative. The potato blight in Europe in 1845 led to the first "official" extension system. The British Viceroy to Ireland, the Earl of Clarendon, wrote a letter to the Royal Agricultural Improvement Society of Ireland urging it to appoint itinerant lecturers to travel around to the peasant population, which relied heavily on potatoes in their diet, to show them how to improve their cultivation and to grow other nutritious crops. "Lord Carendon's practical instructors" were funded partly by landowners and charitable donations, but half from government-controlled funds (Jones & Garforth, 1997:5-6).

In contemporary times, extension refers to the process of linking researchers (or other producers of innovations) with potential users of research results. The idea has appeared prominently (though not exclusively) in the United States Land-Grant University

system where the Smith-Lever Act of 1914 combined national, state and local governments with agricultural colleges and universities for the establishment of the Cooperative Extension Service. It historically has placed great emphasis on extending research-based recommendations and skills to rural families, with the ultimate goal of their adopting the practices and the new technology. Thus extension has often been associated with the phrase "transfer of technology"—from the experts to the users.[1] For example, agricultural researchers breed a new high yielding variety seed and extension's role is to get farmers to adopt it and to train farmers in the appropriate agricultural techniques. Similarly, following researchers' discoveries in food technology, the extension staff persuades families to adopt a new way to preserve food.

Extension has long been a major strategy for information and technology transfer in development activities. It is estimated that the World Bank has provided more than USD3 billion in direct support for extension, more than all other international donors combined (Ameur, 1994). The U.S. system was "exported" to India in the second half of the 20th century largely through a U.S. Agency for International Development project that helped established agricultural universities in most of the India's states. Likewise, the World Bank and national governments have put large amounts of money into establishing "training and visit" (T&V) extension systems throughout the Third World. T&V has attempted

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[1] We are using agriculture as an example; similar situations exist in health, nutrition and other fields associated with community development.

to streamline the traditional extension system through three kinds of concentration: (1) concentrating on a few "contact farmers" in a service area, (2) concentrating on agriculture matters exclusively; and (3) concentrating on a few practices during each regular visit village extension worker.

In the contemporary USA, the scope of extension has broadened substantially both the kinds of subjects covered and the clientele served: Cornell University's extension program in New York City is not *rural* at all. Extension people associated with Cornell are involved in water quality, small business enterprise training, and environmental issues. However, the conventional idea of extension exists widely around the world. In India, for example, it is estimated that there are approximately 90,000 extension workers in the public sector, and officially their principal responsibility is agricultural development and technology transfer.

A dominant assumption in the extension approach has been that individuals will adopt new practices and technology "if only they understand what is advocated and know how to carry it out" (Andreasen, 1995:9)[2]. For the past 50 years, diffusion and adoption of innovations have been central concepts in the transfer of technology. Evolving out of research related to the adoption of corn varieties in the 1940s, the concepts have been applied to a wide range of innovations, from family planning to farming methods. According to Rogers, "No other field of behavior science research represents more effort by more scholars in more

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[2] The Health Belief Model is a parallel approach that is used in the health and medical fields.

disciplines in more nations [than diffusion research]" (Rogers, 1995:xv).

Recently some agencies, practitioners and scholars have moved away from the traditional extension approach to technology transfer by reconceptualizing the relationship between change agents (such as extension workers and health educators) and their target populations. This re-examination of the "top-down" flow of information and technology from researchers to farmers and families includes raising issues such as: (1) Are the farmers' perceptions of their needs the same as those presumed by the researcher? (2) Are the researcher's results appropriate for the farmers' needs? (3) Does the farmer have knowledge that would be useful to the researcher? (4) How should researchers' and farmers' agendas be set? And whose reality counts? (Chambers, 1997).

In some places re-evaluating extension is accelerating because in its conventional form, it has been a very labor intensive and a very expensive system. It is labor-intensive because the dominant pattern of interaction is person-to-person. We recently compiled a list of various other concerns about extension, and although most came from analysis of India's experience, our discussions with persons from other countries suggest that they apply to extension in many places. These issues include:

1. *Direction of information flow.* Information is supplied from the "top" (scientists and officials) to the "bottom" (farmers);

and from the center to the field. There is little "feed-forward" or feed-back.[3]

2. *Relevance of information.* Information often is not relevant because the scientists/researchers do not respond to farmers' needs. The extension system is driven by the assumption that relevant technical knowledge is available.

3. *Character of agricultural information.* The messages tend to be narrowly suited to production of a few particular commodities rather than to the issue of farmers' profitability which may come through mixed agricultural systems.

4. *Overall character of extension information.* Extension packages concentrate on technical and production aspects of agriculture ignoring the "whole" farmer who is likely to have other important concerns such as his and his family's health and education.

5. *Clientele.* Extension efforts ignore particular agricultural populations such as women, tribals, operators of very small holdings, and non-landed agricultural workers.

6. *Control of the system.* Managers and scientists control the agenda of the research and extension system to the exclusion of being farmer-centered.

7. *Methods used to reach farmers.* Emphasis is often on face-to-face contact, with relatively little attempt to integrate communication media and distance learning into the process.

8. *Cost of system.* Especially where extension is dominated by the Training and Visit (T&V) approach that was strongly advocated by the World Bank, a labor-intensive face-to-face contact system is very costly to sustain.

9. *Lack of results.* While there is evidence of better management in some extension operations as a result of T & V, evidence of consistent success of extension programs in increasing agricultural productivity is elusive.

10. *Inadequately trained extension agents.* Extension personnel tend to be trained in technical areas but have not been effectively trained in communication.

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[3] "Feed-forward" refers to a process which information obtained from population targets shapes or influences the information that is subsequently directed to the population.

11. *Incentives for extension personnel.* Extension agents ("village extension workers" - VEWs) are generally poorly paid and are given few incentives to perform at the level expected by the system. "Professionalization" has sometimes removed the VEW from providing input supplies (an income producing activity), and, consequently, from status and earning power.

12. *Evaluation and monitoring of extension.* Better training, planning and computerization are necessary to effect better monitoring.

13. *Extension funding.* Extension is under-funded, and that results in unfilled extension lines which results in inadequate coverage of farm populations.

14. *Linkage to research.* The link itself is weak, and, where it exists at all, the relationship tends to be dominated by scientists. Their higher status results in putting their priorities first which may not reflect the needs in the field.

Extension systems have been adjusting to some of these criticisms, including the privatization of some extension organizations and the use of new information and communication technologies to increase efficiency and impact.

3.   The Community Participation Thread

The idea of participation as an important approach in development communication stretches back to the late 1940s (as we shall see later in this section). However, it has been FAO, at least among the Special Agencies of the UN, that has been among the most active in pushing the concept into field practice. Likewise, FAO has taken a very active leadership role in exploring and testing ways of systematically using communication in development programs. In 1989, the organization developed some useful suggestions that helped define development communication. They appear in the following text from the FAO document *Guidelines on Communication for Rural Development* from 1989 (pp. 1-8).

What is the idea behind development communication and what is it?

Development communication rests on the premise that successful rural development calls for the conscious and active participation of the intended beneficiaries at every stage of the development process; for in the final analysis, rural development can not take place without changes in attitudes and behaviour among the people concerned.

To this end, Development Communication is the planned and systematic use of communication through interpersonal channels, and audio-visual and mass media:

- to collect and exchange information among all those concerned in planning a development initiative, with the aim of reaching a consensus on the development problems being faced and the options for their solution.

- to mobilize people for development action, and to assist in solving problems and misunderstandings that may arise during project implementation.

- to enhance the pedagogical and communication skills of development agents (at all levels) so that they may dialogue more effectively with their audiences.

- and last but, by no means least, to apply communication technology to training and extension programs, particularly at the grassroots level, in order to improve their quality and impact.

What are the problems that development communication can help to overcome?

1. Problems of designing projects that take properly into account the perceptions and capacities of the intended beneficiaries.

Development communication can help to ensure that the design and action plan of a development project take into account the attitudes, perceived needs and capacities of the people which the project is trying to help. Many projects have failed in the past because assumptions were made about the willingness and capacity of rural people to absorb new technology and development infrastructures into their way of living and working. Abandoned irrigation schemes and settlement programs, broken down equipment, and the slow adoption of improved crop varieties

are examples that bear witness to this failure to bring about attitudinal and behavioral change.

As an adjunct and complement to the usual situation analysis that is done for project formulation, development communication helps to identify attitudes, felt needs, capacities, and constraints to the adoption of change. And through the dialogue and consultation process it employs, it naturally elicits the participation of the intended beneficiaries of a development action.

2. Problems of mobilizing rural people for development action and ensuring an information flow among all concerned with a development initiative.

If a rural development project has been planned with its beneficiaries, their participation and mobilization are almost certain to follow quite naturally. However, in any event, communication support during project implementation keeps people informed, helps to mobilize them, and to stimulate the more conservative to action. This is especially so when communication (in the form of audio-visual presentations, for example) is used to spread knowledge of successful development action taken by some communities and individuals to other communities and individuals that have not yet mobilized.

Furthermore, even the best project—designed with its beneficiaries—cannot be rigid. As it progresses, there will be need to review and refine its activities and introduce changes of emphasis. A good communication system can keep a dialogue open among those involved in a development project, thereby addressing problems as they arise. Such an ongoing information flow can also help to ensure coordination and proper orchestration of inputs and services to a development initiative.

Development communication spreads information about successful development experience as a stimulus to others, keeps a dialogue open among all concerned in a development project, and helps to smooth project implementation.

3. Problems of improving the reach and impact of rural training programs

Training at the grassroots level has become a major priority in recent years. At the same time, communication technology has been improving and becoming ever cheaper and easier to use in rural areas. Audio-visual media make it possible to:

- help overcome the barriers of illiteracy and incomprehension (by conveying ideas and practices in an audio and visual form);

- illustrate new ideas and techniques more effectively than by word-of-mouth alone, and thus improve the impact of extension and training;

- compress time (a whole crop cycle can be shown in a short presentation);

- compress space (events and practices in distant locations can be transferred to other places where they can be useful testimonials);

- standardize technical information (by creating audio-visual materials that illustrate the best available advice to farmers and having these materials used throughout the extension and farmer training chain, thereby ensuring that the technical information will not become distorted during its passage from its source to the smallest and most remote farmer).

Development communication applied to training and extension in rural areas increases their effectiveness and reach, and ensures that the best available technical information is standardized….

What types of development initiatives require communication inputs?

Any development initiative which that depends for its success on rural people modifying their attitudes and behavior and working with new knowledge and skills will normally benefit from communication support. So also will projects that have a multi-disciplinary nature, that is to say those which involve a number of subject-matter ministries and authorities, and which are therefore inherently difficult to manage. Communication can provide the linkages that will ensure coordinated management.

Are development communication activities always planned as part of a development project?

Not necessarily. There are also development communication projects per se. This is the case when, for example, assistance is being provided for institution building such as creating or strengthening an agricultural or rural development communication unit, or providing assistance to rural broadcasting. Such institutions can often provide communication support to a number of agricultural and rural development projects in a country.

What are the overall considerations when planning communication inputs?

Successful development communication calls for a well-defined strategy, systematic planning, and rigorous management. Experience has shown all too clearly that ad hoc communication

inputs such as the provision of some audio-visual equipment, or the stand-alone production of some audio-visual or printed material has seldom made any measurable impact. It has also become clear that communication activities require a certain critical mass—of resources, intensity, and duration—if they are to realize their full potential in mobilizing people for development action and become self-sustaining in this role. This explains the minimal results when symbolic attention has been paid to development communication by including of some token equipment and expertise in the project.

A communication plan should be tailored to the particular conditions being faced. There are so many variables of a human, cultural and physical nature that a communication plan that worked for irrigation development in an arid zone of one country cannot effectively be transferred in toto to another country. For even if the principles remain the same, the details will almost certainly call for differences.

Who should plan communication inputs?

Communication planning is a specialized field and calls for people who know communication processes and technology, and understand development issues and conditions in developing countries.

Development communication planners can often be made available by international development agencies, either from among their own staffs or by calling in consultants.

Communication planners may also be found locally in developing countries. There are increasing numbers of universities and institutions that are becoming involved in development communication and can provide expertise. Many NGOs in developing countries also have communication expertise that can be called upon.

(FAO (1989). *Guidelines on Communication for Rural Development*, Rome: FAO, pp. 1-8.)

FAO's approach forcefully inserts the idea of community participation into the development communication field. In component of the PRODERITH project in Mexico, one of FAO's most successful projects, the FAO approach could be described as follows:

"Any development programme should be a complete and integrated response to the peasants' situation....An integrated development programme could not be put into practice without the participation of the peasants in the process of identifying and analysing their problems, planning and implementing actions to resolve them, and monitoring and evaluating the results" (Fraser & Restrepo-Estrada, 1998).

FAO, of course, was not the first or only organization to promote participation of local people in development communication activities. During more than three decades beginning in the late 1940s, Puerto Rico's Division of Community Education was a significant pioneer in applying the concept systematically to development programs. The story has been largely overlooked in the literature on community participation and one episode, in the accompanying box (Hanson, 1960:265-280), helps explain the Division's approach.

Others have also been active in suggesting new approaches to the style of development communication. The late Paulo Freire gained international prominence with his 1968 manuscript *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* with its emphasis on community participation and a bottom-up scenario for development. In the mid-1990s the World Bank established a policy of building participation into programs where it was appropriate (World Bank, 1994). Nevertheless, participation as an operational principle diffused slowly through ministries and major development initiatives. However, by the turn of the 21st century the Rockefeller Foundation was able to publish a report called *Making Waves, Stories of Participatory Communication for Social Change* (Gumucio Dagron, 2001) which contained "50 experiments in empowering people—to seize control

of their own life stories and begin to change their circumstances of poverty, discrimination and exclusion" (from the Foreword, p 1.).

Building a Bridge or People?

In the late 1940s there was a river near the community of Barranquitas in Puerto Rico. Torrential rains and flash floods roaring down form the mountain threatened the lives of several persons attempting to cross though the river. A schoolboy had once been swept downstream and narrowly escaped drowning or being battered on the rocks. As a result, if it looked like rain, mothers would not let their children go to school because they would have to cross the treacherous stream. For the same reason, when weather threatened, men of some 60 families stayed at home and lost wages. For decades, the people affected had asked, unsuccessfully, for the government to do something.

The Division of Community Education, created by Luis Munoz Marin, Puerto Rico's first popularly elected governor, agreed to help but not in the conventional "we'll do it for you" way. The Division selected a respected man in the district and trained him as a Group Organizer. He began to discuss community problems with the people and to share with them simply-written booklets on life in Puerto Rico, on health, on new ways of doing things—*but not specifically on building a bridge across an unpredictable stream*.

For months he visited homes, showed films, and distributed posters and booklets. In December 1950, a group of neighbors raised the question as to why a government would spend a lot of money on movies, but nothing on helping provide people safe passage across the river. Between January and July 1951, the Group Organizer discussed a staggering idea with the people: they might do it themselves. And they did. They collected a small amount of money, recruited volunteers, arranged for donations of materials, and in 22 days had a bridge. At the official opening, it wasn't a government official who made the principal speech; it was the boy who had been swept down the river.

There was another outcome. The Division made a short documentary film called *El Puente* (The Bridge) and it was shot on location using the community's people, not a professional actors, as the cast.

(Adapted from HANSON, E.P. (1960). **Puerto Rico, Land of Wonders**, New York: Alfred Knopf, pp. 265-280.)

4. The Population IEC and Health Communication Threads

The significance of IEC

Along with agricultural development, population issues have had a large influence in the evolution of development communication. The acronym IEC—Information, Education and Communication—has achieved greatest prominence in programs designed to influence knowledge, motivation and behavior related to contraception and family planning. National governments, NGOs, multi-national agencies, and the private sector have conducted many studies and interventions in which communication and population issues have been central components. These programs, through their successes and failures, have enriched development communication through their practically-oriented explorations in message design, media use, incentives and other aspects of communication whose implications extend beyond population issues.

For several decades IEC has been associated with population and family planning programs around the world. UNFPA was among the first to use the term IEC when in 1969 it used the label for its communication activities. Specifically, IEC has referred most frequently to the use of information, education and communication to promote adoption of contraceptives or other practices to limit births.

Many will remember that the terms "birth control" and "family planning" frequently were used in regard to concerns about rapidly increasing populations. The challenge for communicators in public and private sector organizations was quite unambiguous: how can

we most effectively persuade people (particularly women) to adopt new birth control methods? The traditional approach to IEC campaigns and community mobilization used information to try to influence people's contraceptive behavior according to policies generated by governments and population authorities.

Changes affecting IEC

A variety of issues have influenced the IEC approach during the past two decades. Among them were concerns about gender equality and the conditions of women and children. These sometimes became linked with human rights issues. Population issues also were linked to the AIDS situation, to providing assistance to infertile couples, and to development in general. Along with these issues was the introduction of different approaches to reaching populations including social mobilization, social marketing, advocacy, and interventions emphasizing participation and empowerment. Woven into these approaches were the questions: whom should communication programs reach and (as Robert Chambers rhetorically suggested) "whose reality counts"? Within many agencies, the emphasis began shifting from agency-dictated goals to goals jointly determined by the agency (or government) and the broader health-related needs of the people.

Among the most dramatic social changes related to population are recent fertility data. In the developed nations, the fertility rate has fallen from 2.8 to 1.5 since the 1950s. In the less developed nations, the rate has fallen from about 6 to under 3. This has led to the prediction of a scenario in which the world population may stabilize in 40 years at 7.7 billion, and decline thereafter. In 1998, for the first time in history, the number of persons over 60 years of age in a country (Italy) exceeded the number of children under 20.

One of the most important chronological points in the changes taking place in IEC was "Cairo." In 1994, the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) which was held in Cairo helped broaden the scope of population programs. At the core is the concept of "reproductive health" (RH).

> "The ICPD defined reproductive health as a state of physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity in all matters relating to the reproductive system. Reproductive health therefore implies that people are able to have a satisfying and safe sex life and that they have the capability to reproduce and the freedom to decide if, when and how often to do so" (WHO, 1997:xi).

Thus, reproductive health is at least concerned with: family planning, prevention of maternal and newborn deaths and disabilities, prevention and management of sexually transmitted disease and AIDS, harmful traditional practices such as female genital mutilation (FGM), rape, domestic violence, forced prostitution and human trafficking, infertility, malnutrition and anaemia, osteoporosis, uterine prolapse, reproductive tract infections and cancers.

The new definition of "population programs" has a potentially profound influence on how one approaches IEC. The Programme of Action of ICPD reflects the convergence of many issues that have significance for a communication agenda. Obviously the task for communicators associated with reproductive health programs is substantially broader than generally perceived in IEC, including, once again, the question as to who the stakeholders are. The issue of reaching men has also broadened. Earlier, men were targets largely in the context of condom use; now men are being targeted

because of their "often dominant roles in decisions crucial to women's reproductive health" (Drennan, 1998).

This brings us to the process called advocacy which has become a key concept in developing reproductive health communication strategies and in other development communication contexts. The primary aim of advocacy, says Jan Servaes, is fostering public policies that support the solution of an issue or problem (Servaes, 2000:104). The stakeholders for advocacy include political, religious and community leaders as well as a wide range of institutions. Advocacy has become a key part of the activities of the Johns Hopkins University's Center for Communication Programs. The Hopkins people have built an "A-Frame" symbol representing a model of advocacy that includes a six-step process—Analysis, Strategy, Mobilization, Action, Evaluation, and Continuity. Phyllis Piotrow, long-time head of the Center, says that:

> "For reproductive health advocacy a vital need is giving voice to the silent majorioty that supports these programs, even in the face of sometimes vocal minority opposition....Policy-makers will support reproductive health programs adequately only if they feel a groundswell of demand from the grassroots. And grassroots organizations can demand this effectively only by making advocacy a top priority" (Piotrow, s.d.)

Piotrow and her colleagues at Johns Hopkins Center for Communication Programs suggest that the next decades will see continuing rapid demographic, political and technological change that will require family planning and reproductive health communication programs to adapt to a variety of dynamic situations. These include:

- changing audiences

- changing channels of communication

- changing behavioral science theory and research

- changing values and mandates

- changing organizational structures

- changing political environments and resources (Piotrow, Kincaid, Rimon II & Rinehart, 1997:187-188)

It is clear that RH and the related social and cultural issues demand a substantially more sophisticated and comprehensive approach to communication than occurred in IEC.

Reproductive Health and Communication in Ethiopia: An Example of Planning

These new approaches have begun to take root in countries that are building their capacity to deal with population matters. Ethiopia is a good example. Ethiopia is the third most populous country in Africa. Its fertility rate of 7.0 children per woman raises official concern about achieving a steady pace of economic development and social well-being for the population as a whole. In 1993 Ethiopia adopted a National Population Policy and in 1997 became the first country in Africa to draft a national IEC and Advocacy Strategy in support of a National Population Policy. A six day workshop, supported by UNFPA, was held in 1996 to draft the strategy.[4]

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[4] The following discussion is based on an unpublished document: *National Population Information, Education, and Communication and Advocacy Strategy of the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (Draft)*, National Office of Population and UNFPA, Addis Ababa, 1997.

The contents of the document illustrate vividly the scope of activities that confront communication people in the country's official National Office of Population. First, two "thematic areas" are identified: (1) reproductive health and (2) population and development. Each thematic area is sub-divided as follows:

Reproductive health:
- Safe motherhood
- Family planning
- STIs including HIV/AIDS
- Access and quality of RH services and care
- Gender issues

Population and development:
- Rapid population growth
- Implementation of the National Population Policy
- Gender and development
- Research/data collection and dissemination
- Youth and development
- Other Population Policy priorities (migration and urbanization, environment, and special population sub-groups)

For each of these items, there is a list of priority issues. And for each priority, there is a program goal, and for each goal there are IEC objectives and advocacy objectives. Here is an example.

Thematic area: Reproductive Health

Programme Component: Safe Motherhood

Issue #3: High prevalence of reproductive health related harmful practices: Women and girls are subjected to several harmful

practices which can affect their reproductive health in a negative way. Early marriage, female genital mutilation, and harmful practices done with an intention of assisting labor, birth and recovery during postnatal period are widely practiced in Ethiopia....

Programme goal: To reduce maternal and neonatal morbidity and mortality associated with harmful practices....

IEC Objectives: To increase awareness and knowledge about the health hazards of early marriage, female genital mutilation, and other malpractice, and bring about change in attitudes and behaviors among relevant segments of the population.

Advocacy objectives: (i) to mobilize the participation and support of religious and community leaders for actions leading to the elimination of FGM, early marriage, and other reproductive health related harmful practices; (ii) to increase the understanding on the need for data collection and research on harmful practices, and mobilize support for undertaking relevant data collection and analysis; (iii) to gain support for raising the age of marriage to at least 18 years through the revision of existing legislation and regulations, and to have declared supportive regulations to abolish reproductive health related harmful practices, and; (iv) to mobilize support to bring about changes in religious and customary laws, practices, and norms that foster early marriage, FGM, and other reproductive health related harmful practices.

The document goes on with charts identifying who the IEC audiences are and who the advocacy targets are, what the messages are for each and what channels need to be used for each population group identified. The document then proposes indicators of progress and impact.

The Ethiopian IEC and Advocacy Strategy illustrates a very complex communication enterprise that focuses on producing outcomes rather than outputs, includes a research effort that provides data for situational analysis and measures outcomes, involves a substantial variety of stakeholders (from adolescents to policy-makers) and media (to "reach the ultimate audiences directly"), and extends over a five year period. The Strategy is

especially distinguished by its attention to policy, laws, norms, advocacy and other matters that surround decisions and practices of people in relation to their reproductive behavior. The lesson is that RH behavior change involves far more changes than those of potential contraceptive users.

Dimensions of Communication in Reproductive Health

To put the discussion of communication and health into organizational terms, a health ministry or a health research organization concerned with behavior change in today's environment might consider a comprehensive communication program with at least the following ingredients.

(1)   Promote public understanding of the wide range of issues that make up RH.

(2)   Foster good public relations for the organization, particularly to gain and keep visibility and support from policy makers, funders and the community.

(3)   Conduct advocacy programs in support of social, political and cultural changes that will contribute to norms and policies favorable to RH.

(4)   Promote and sustain behavioral change among appropriate stakeholders including contraceptive users and influentials such as RH service administrators and front-line health workers.

(5)   Share technical knowledge with the RH and communication professions.

(6)   Build intra-organizational professional communications.

5.   The Social Marketing Thread

Social marketing is a process that assumes that what has made McDonald's and Coca-Cola world class successes can also have a dramatic impact on the problems of high blood pressure, AIDS, child mortality in developing nations, and other circumstances

related to patterns of behavior. Social marketing has greatly influenced the way communication and information are incorporated in development programs. For example, it has increased our sensitivity to the needs for research prior to developing and sending messages and it has shifted emphasis from the needs of the social change agent to the needs and perspectives of the beneficiary groups. Unfortunately social marketing has many detractors who equate social marketing with commercial marketing and especially with its excesses. However, when one gets away from the "marketing" label the value of the approach stands out.

The following, written by Alan Andreasen, gives a glimpse of the characteristics of social marketing that distinguish it from commercial marketing and from advertising with which it is sometimes confused.

Lessons for Development Communicators

The lessons gleaned from the oral rehydration projects in Honduras and The Gambia underscore the importance of comprehensive communications planning to the success of social marketing campaigns. The crucial importance of audience research and the integration of media, especially interpersonal interactions and community-oriented promotional activities, was borne out by the results of longitudinal studies in both countries. The knowledge gained from these two research sites concerning the complexity of behavior change, the importance of sustained communication efforts in maintaining new behaviors, and the challenge of institutionalizing systematic health (or, any other) communication strategy, has guided the expansion of such approaches in other countries.
Building upon their experiences in Honduras and The Gambia, AED and USAID expanded their health communication programs to different settings during the 1980s. The Communication for Child Survival Project, or HEALTHCOM, was designed to improve health practices (for example, diarrhoeal disease control, immunization, child nutrition, maternal health and birth spacing, and control of acute respiratory infections) in selected sites throughout the Third

World, and to refine further the practice of social marketing, as well as other development communication strategies. A five-step planning model was articulated, emphasizing the need for communication planners to remain in close contact with potential audiences through a variety of feedback mechanisms. Numerous assessment, planning, pretesting delivery and monitoring strategies were developed for this purpose.

The results obtained from a wide variety of HEALTHCOM sites in the past decade, as well as from other communication programs, have yielded many other useful lessons for development communicators. These lessons, synthesized from an analysis compiled by the Academy for Educational Development for USAID, are:

Sustained Behavior Change

Communication programs must identify and stress the favorable consequences of any new behavior. Furthermore, such consequences or benefits must be communicated in ways that are sensitive to the audience's needs and expectations. When the goal is to stimulate consumer demands, program planners must coordinate their efforts with the supply structure to ensure that such demands are not frustrated.

Improved Consumer Research

Research which provides an effective base for planning should focus on consumer attitudes toward perceived problems, as well as the explanation for current practices. While most governments have difficulty affording the in-depth market research conducted by donor-funded projects, communication planners may choose to employ user-friendly rapid assessment techniques and to locate appropriate local partners to conduct necessary consumer research.

Media Selection

The selection of communication channels should be determined according to the results of audience research, rather than perceived assumptions regarding their conventional usefulness. For effective design, communication planners must have knowledge of the channels available, their potential reach, and the intended result of the messages. As changes in communication technology become more prevalent, such as the use of videos and interactive audio- conferencing, the training of production staff and field workers should become more consistent and individualized.

Community Focus

For most people to adopt a new behavior, it must become an accepted cultural norm. For this reason, communication planners must pay attention to the role that communities play in determining and shaping health behaviors. For sustained long-term behavioral change to take place, the involvement of local community groups is often essential. The well-documented influence of community leaders and family members should also be considered through targeted program research and message design.

Narrowing Communication Gaps

Communication programs often produce dramatic initial effects, with subsequent levels of adoption presenting more of a challenge. Potential barriers such as physical access, adequacy of information, exposure to media, conflicting cultural beliefs, or lack of social support systems often stand in the way of behavior change. The success of qualitative research methods such as in-depth interviews and focus group discussions in identifying such barriers has been demonstrated throughout HEALTHCOM sites, with continual analysis of target audience information used to tailor messages and other program elements to specific audience needs.

Structured Interventions

Large scale, intensive communication campaigns which mobilize social and political support are often attractive to planners. However, such campaigns may have several disadvantages. They can often deplete the resources used to deliver important services on a regular basis. More successful are those communication efforts which are fully integrated with the existing structure and are sustainable.

Prevention Messages

As communication campaigns stressing health and safety achieve success, increasing emphasis is likely to be placed on preventive behaviors of all kinds. This presents a new set of challenges to communicators, as prevention behaviors are often more complicated and difficult to identify and teach. They often require a greater change in everyday routines, and have no direct, immediate payoff.

Institutional Capacity

The most basic, effective strategy for the institutionalization of development communicators involves training, especially in the

areas of formative research, strategy development, message design, and project monitoring. To be successful, however, this training must reach beyond the project counterparts to include groups in national and regional development institutions.

Long-term Planning

Many successful development communication programs have wasted away because of lack of government commitment once donor funding ends. The challenge of political and financial commitment must be met if the programs are to continue. Specific commitments to establishing personnel positions, budgets, and career tracks which will support future communication initiatives are critical. In planning for the long-term, project managers from donor agencies must discuss such issues with senior government officials during the project negotiation stage. Decision-makers may be persuaded by program results data which demonstrate the cost effectiveness of communication interventions. This difficult yet essential part of the institutionalization process will allow decision-makers to view communication programs as an investment with tangible payoffs, rather than a continuing drain on the country's strained resources.

(Adapted from: ANDREASEN, A (1995). *Marketing Social Change*, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.)

6. The Institution-Building Thread

The first five threads of development communication have dealt largely with various approaches that organizations have used in applying communication to development problems. Woven in and out among these is a thread one vital to them all. This is the institution building that has provided developing nations with organizations, skills and facilities to carry out development communication.

Institution building for communication in developing nations has taken different forms. For example, in the late 1960s the Ford Foundation was active in India supporting training and resource development for the nation's family planning campaigns. (The

Foundation supported the employment of elephants on whose flanks were painted the family planning logo.) The Ford Foundation also funded the creation of a modern agricultural communication center at what is now the G. B. Pant University of Agriculture and Technology in Uttar Pradesh state. Two decades later, FAO was to contribute additional funding to elevate the center into a Center of Excellence in Agricultural Communication. The Ford and FAO institution building consisted of both training abroad to upgrade the communication competence of the faculty and providing facilities for the university to produce radio programs and other resources for reaching the farm and rural population.

In Guatemala in the 1970s, the U. S. Agency for International Development provided assistance that enabled the Government to build two radio stations that were dedicated to supporting agricultural, nutrition, and health activities in rural communities. In Indonesia in the 1980s, the Canadian Government supported efforts to institutionalize special units in most major broadcast stations that were especially focused on development issues.

Other governments and foundations contributed to largely uncoordinated efforts to build the physical and human resources infrastructure that would allow developing nations to accelerate and broaden the reach and impact of communication media.

The UNESCO role
UNESCO has been one of the most consistent agencies supporting institution building for development communication. UNESCO's Third Medium Term Plan, adopted in 1989, set as one of its objectives "to strengthen communication capacities in the developing countries so that they may participate more actively in the communication process" (Hancock, 2000). Although it has

worked through other UN organizations such as the Population Fund (UNFPA) to provide communication training and technology, UNESCO's major contribution to development communication has been in enhancing the professional infrastructures in developing nations. Long time UNESCO official Alan Hancock explains it this way:

> "Some of the earliest UNESCO programmes emphasised professional training (initially in film, then in radio and television), following a model of basic training at local and national levels, intermediate skills training at regional levels, and advanced training through overseas attachments and study tours. The tradition is still very strong, although it has been modified over the years by a rising emphasis on community-based media practice, and the use of adapted, or appropriate media technologies" (Hancock, 2000:62)

UNESCO's leadership in building and strengthening communication infrastructures got an initial thrust from a 1958 declaration of the UN General Assembly calling "for a 'program of concrete action' to build up press, radio broadcasting, film and television facilities in countries in process of economic and social development" (Schramm, 1964). In 1962, UNESCO authorized the publication of a study that was designed to help give "practical effect" to the mass media development program that had been urged on all governments. The study was conducted by Stanford University's Wilbur Schramm and the study was published by the Stanford University Press as *Mass Media and National Development*, copyrighted by UNESCO. Schramm built the rationale for using mass media in the development of nations and in development projects. He offered 15 recommendations "to developing nations and their friends and aiders, concerning what they might do about

the mass media" (Schramm, 1964:253). It is noteworthy that Schramm included a section in the book on the necessity of communication research in developing nations. A UNESCO statement describing the book calls it "A useful guide to government and industrial planners, economists, educators, mass-media specialists and others concerned with the welfare of people in developing nations."

Wilbur Schramm entered the UNESCO picture again when, in 1965, its International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP) undertook a worldwide research project "to extract useful lessons from the accumulated experience of numerous countries which have been pioneering in the use of new educational media" (Schramm, et al., 1967). Schramm was drafted to be the project director, with financing to be provided by the U.S. Agency for International Development. The three volumes published by UNESCO included 16 case studies ranging from the use of airborne instructional television (foreshadowing satellite television) in the United States to radio clubs in Niger. A fourth volume contained a summary and conclusions, and, as reflected in its title, the volume served as a Memo to Educational Planners (Schramm, Coombs, Kahnert & Lyle, 1967).

In 1980, after years of international haggling over its mandate, UNESCO created the International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC) as its "main operational instrument" for upgrading the communications capacity of developing nations. According to Hancock, more than US$22 million have been committed to 375 projects in more than 80 developing countries. Initially, funding only passed through the governments of developing nations but more recently IPDC has extended support to non-governmental bodies and professional associations.

Examples of UNESCO's support for building infrastructure in developing nations include the creation of regional training institutes (such as the Asia Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Development in Malaysia and India's Film and Television Institute in Poona) and backing the creation of news agencies particularly in Africa and Asia. Hancock notes that UNESCO's current six year medium-term plan includes "some US25 million worth of projects, focusing primarily on the development of news agencies and rural newspapers in Africa, and on radio and communication training in Asia and the Pacific" (Hancock, 2000: 70).

UNESCO's interest in local institution-building is demonstrated by its contribution of US$50,000 in 1998 to help Sri Lanka's Kothmale community radio station add an Internet facility to its system, thereby combining a new information technology with traditional community radio. UNESCO provided computer equipment and training while the Sri Lankan Government provided the Internet connectivity. In one application of the system, listeners request information which station staff try to provide on the air using Internet searches.

This accounting of institution-building activities is only meant to illustrate some of the initiatives undertaken during the past half century. There are other actors including governments in Europe that have contributed consistently to the training of media people from developing nations, and, of course, there are developing nations themselves that have been instrumental in building the resources for doing development communication.

Paralleling (or a sub-component of) this thread is a strand that might be labeled ICT. Because of its prominence in the 21st century, we treat it in a separate section.

7. The ICT Thread

Information technologies have played a role in development for at least half a century. Rural radio forums, a product of the 1950s, continue today in some countries. Audio and video cassette technology, along with broadcasting, satellites and various audio-visual technologies, became part of the development communication tool kit in the last half of the 20th century.[5] Heavily influencing the communication technology initiatives was an interest in distance learning projects. Very early in this history was Radio Sutatenza which began educational and cultural programming in Colombia in 1947. One of the most dramatic events in the half-century was the use of a communication satellite in India to provide television programs to the six most under-developed areas of the country.

Although radio and television continue to be important "new technologies" for some parts of the world, computers and the Internet are attracting substantial interest in developing nations. For example, Don Richardson suggests that:

> "The time to act to support Internet knowledge and communication systems in developing countries is now. Today we truly live in a global village, but it is a village with elite information "haves" and many information "have-nots.""…Adopting a proactive strategy and acting to bring the Internet to rural and agricultural communities in developing

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[5] There is a vast literature on media but a convenient and concise treatment can be found in a pair of monographs issued by the Centre for the Study of Education in Developing Countries (CESO) in the Hague. These are BOEREN, A. (1994), *In Other Words…the Cultural Dimension of Communication for Development* and BOEREN, A. & EPSKAMP, K. (1992) (eds.), *The Empowerment of Culture: Development Communication and Popular Media.*

countries will help enable rural people to face the unprecedented challenges brought by the changing global economy, political changes, environmental degradation and demographic pressures" (Richardson, 1997:69-70).

The central and vital role communication and information play in the lives of people was officially recognized by the UN General Assembly in December 1997 when it endorsed a statement on the Universal Access to Basic Communication and Information Services. The statement concluded that the "introduction and use of information and communication technology must become a priority effort of the United Nations in order to secure sustainable human development." The statement also embraced the objective of establishing "universal access to basic communication and information services for all."

In mid-2000, the eight major industrial nations (the G-8) acknowledged that ICT "is one of the most potent forces in shaping the twenty-first century [and] its revolutionary impact affects the way people live, learn and work, and the way government interacts with civil society." Emerging from the discussion was the Okinawa Charter on the Global Information Society. Its framers announced that "this Charter represents a call to all, in both the public and private sectors, to bridge the international information and knowledge divide." The Charter also renewed a commitment of the G-8 nations "to the principle of inclusion: everyone, everywhere should be enabled to participate in and no one should be excluded from the benefits of the global information society." The G-8 launched a major effort to strengthen all nations' potential to be part of this Information Age starting with a Digital Opportunity Task Force which reported to the G-8 in mid-2001 (DOT Force, 2001). The DOT noted the relationship between high priority

international development goals and communication (see the accompanying box) and emphasized that

> "Harnessing the power of information and communication technologies (ICT) can contribute substantially to realizing *every one* of these goals; either directly (e.g. through greater availability of health and reproductive information, training of medical personnel and teachers, giving opportunity and voice to women, expanding access to education and training) or indirectly (through creating new economic opportunities that lift individuals, communities and nations out of poverty.) Creating digital opportunities is not something that happens *after* addressing the "core" development challenges; it is a key component of addressing those challenges in the 21st century" (DOT Force, 2001).

The International Development Goals

The international community has identified seven "International Development Goals" (IDGs) that are at the heart of the fight against poverty and the struggle to create opportunity, prosperity, health, safety and empowerment for all the world's people, especially the poorest and traditionally marginalized groups. The 7 IDGs are:

- Reduce the proportion of people living in extreme poverty by half between 1990 and 2015.

- Enroll all children in primary school by 2015.

- Make progress toward gender equality and empowering women by eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005.

- Reduce infant and child mortality rates by two-thirds between 1990 and 2015.

- Reduce maternal mortality ratios by three-quarters between 1990 and 2015.

- Provide access for all who need reproductive health services by 2015.

> - Implement national strategies for sustainable development by 2005 so as to reverse the loss of environmental resources by 2015.
>
> (DOT Force, 2001)

The report detailed four major thrusts for concerted international action:

1. Fostering Policy, Regulatory and Network Readiness—through establishing and supporting both developing country and emerging economy *National eStrategies* including *eGovernment*, and universal participation in new international policy and technical issues raised by ICT and the Internet.

2. Improving Connectivity, Increasing Access and Lowering Costs—through establishing and supporting a range of targeted interventions as well as dedicated initiatives for the ICT inclusion of the Least Developed Countries.

3. Building Human Capacity—through a range of targeted training, education, knowledge creation and sharing initiatives, as well as promote ICT for healthcare and in support against HIV/AIDS and other infectious and communicable diseases.

4. Encouraging Participation in Global e-Commerce and other e-Networks—through enterprise and entrepreneurship for sustainable economic development, including poverty alleviation, and promote national and international effort to support the creation of local content and applications.

A related effort prompted by the Okinawa meeting was a study and report by the Digital Opportunity Initiative (DOI) that lays out a framework for action that developing countries and their partners can follow to gain benefits from the new information technologies and the systems associated with them (DOI, 2001).

The report established a "strategic framework" to help guide stakeholders in investing in and implementing strategies that take advantage of the potential of ICT to accelerate social and economic

development. The report lists five interrelated areas for intervention. These include:

- Infrastructure—deploying a core ICT network infrastructure, achieving relative ubiquity of access, and investing in strategically-focused capacity to support high development priorities.

- Human capacity—building a critical mass of knowledge workers, increasing technical skills among users and strengthening local entrepreneurial and managerial capabilities.

- Policy—supporting a transparent and inclusive policy process, promoting fair and open competition, and strengthening institutional capacity to implement and enforce policies.

- Enterprise—improving access to financial capital, facilitating access to global and local markets, enforcing appropriate tax and property rights regimes, enabling efficient business processes and stimulating domestic demand for ICT.

- Content and applications—provide demand-driven information that is relevant to the needs and conditions experienced by local people.

The value of information can be seen in more personal terms at the community level with real people. There are many stories from around the world that illustrate how valuable information and the new information technologies can be for someone in the community. This anecdote comes from Latin America. The story starts:

> Until a brilliant sunny day when the Internet reached his Ashaninka Indian village in central Peru, tribal leader Oswaldo Rosas could think of few benefits modern life had brought to his people.

The story goes on to tell of how through grants from the Canadian government, the local telephone company and a nonprofit organization, things were changed by the introduction of a computer, portable generator, a satellite dish and a big screen monitor. Rosas and five other tribal leaders received eight weeks of computer training which led to developing their own Ashaninka web site (www.rcp.net.pe/ashaninka). With it they sold their organically grown oranges in Lima, 250 miles away, and boosted tribal revenue 10%. Now, Rosas' hut also doubles as a tribal cybercafe (Faiola & Buckley, 2000).

The World Bank and ICT in the New Century

In the mid-1960s the World Bank began supporting conventional telecommunications infrastructure development in various countries. In the 1990s, moved more decisively into ICT matters, including, for example, projects fostering a larger ICT role in education and in increasing the efficiency of government services. In recent years, according to Bank documents, total annual funding for ICT projects and for ICT-related project components averaged more than US$1.5 billion with a heavy concentration in Africa and Latin America. The bak's lead unit for this is infoDev, created in 1995 to promote "innovative projects that use ICTs for economic and social development, with special emphasis on the needs of the poor in developing economies" (Primo Barga, 2000). Averaging approximately US$200,000 each, *info*Dev has selected more than 200 projects in more than a hundred countries for funding.

Two programs of *info*Dev merit attention here because they are especially relevant to building a supportive environment for ICT development. These are "e-Readiness" and "Country Gateways."

E-readiness

E-readiness is an assessment of a country's status regarding several aspects ICT development: its ICT infrastructure, the accessibility of ICT to the population, the suitability of the policy environment for ICT effectiveness, and everyday use of ICT. The *info*Dev program has become a major funder of countries that want to do such assessments. By the end of 2001 more than 130 assessments had been undertaken (with various funding), with repetition as many as six times in some countries. The key actors in doing or supporting e-Readiness studies in addition to *info*Dev are the UNDP, the World Economic Forum (WEF), the International Telecommunications Union, USAID, and the U.K. Department for International Development. More than 15 e-Readiness assessment tools have been developed in recent years and these are compared on a web page whose URL is given at the end of this article. In late 2001, one key expert observed that there have been many e-Readiness assessments but virtually no action (Teresa Peters, Chairman of Bridges.org, at the *info*Dev Symposium 2001 in Washington.) Another challenge in the e-Readiness world is gathering reliable data at the local level and building appropriate programs there. The Global Network Readiness Project, a joint project of Harvard's Center for International Studies, the Markle Foundation, the WEF, IBM, the UNDP and the United Nations Foundation, formed a network of experts to provide advice to nations interested in moving into concrete strategies.

Country Gateways

In September 2001, *info*Dev announced a Country Gateways program and allocated US$1.8 million for fiscal year 2001. It is a partner to the World Bank's Development Gateway initiative which is directed by the Development Gateway Foundation, a public-

private partnership created in December 2001 and whose Board of Directors represents civil society and public and private donors. The Development Gateway is an Internet portal for information on sustainable development and poverty reduction and expects to help fill the knowledge and communication needs of government officials and promote government quality and efficiency by providing information on best practices, networks for sharing solutions and experiences, and tools for analysis and problem-solving. Its "search engine" is dedicated to helping public, civil society and private sector people navigate the Internet to find useful information and resources. For one example: officials in a community in a developing nation wants to attract investors to the community. They need to advertise the community's assets and provide legal information and data on infrastructure and the local labor market. The Gateway provides an international "platform" for diffusing this information widely.

When it was first introduced, the Gateway stirred up substantial controversies because some perceived it as a "super-site" and a *gatekeeper* on development information, and some thought its management and control might not be impartial and beneficial to all. "A measure of success of the Development Gateway Foundation," says a Bank official, "will be how much it helps connect existing Internet portals and networks and brings together more resources for government, civil society, and donor agency ICT initiatives."

The Country Gateways are independently owned and operated partners of the Development Gateway. Each gateway (32 have reached the planning stage) is designed to provide country-level information and resources, and promote local content development and knowledge sharing. In some cases, Country Gateways will

provide their nation with e-government, e-business, and e-learning, and, overall, contribute to better connectivity and use of ICT. *info*Dev provides funding for planning of gateways (an average of US$50,000, but up to US$100,000) and may also provide funding for start-up activity.

The Telecenter Movement

Emerging alongside the development of ICTs has been the telecenter movement.[6] International organizations have a keen interest in the digital revolution because of three related assumptions. These are:

1. Appropriate information can contribute significantly to development.
2. Information technologies provide an important and potentially economical way for people to access that information.
3. Telecenters are a viable way to link communities with the information and communication technologies.

Various international organizations have invested in the telecenter movement. These include: the International Telecommunications Union, Canada's International Development Research Centre, USAID, the Food and Agriculture Organization, the World Health Organization, UNESCO and the World Bank. Some national governments are also making large investments in telecenters, including Hungary, India, Egypt, Tunisia, South Africa, Canada, and

Australia. In late 2001, Mexico announced plans for a major ICT and telecenter project called Systema e-México.

The private sector has also seen promise in providing information technology services for the public. However theirs tend to be enterprises such as cybercafés whose principal goal is to make a profit. In the development field, we generally consider a telecenter to be a public place where the motive of the telecenter operator is largely to foster community development. Basically, telecenters are shared public facilities that provide telecommunication services to persons who, for various reasons, do not have them available individually. Because of the great diversity of initiatives, making sharp distinctions between cybercafés and telecenters is hazardous, and there may be many exceptions when one tries to do it. But we will take this step because they are different movements, and each can learn from the other.

Commercially-oriented cybercafés tend to be in the private sector and focus primarily on providing customers with the use of computers and especially connections with the Internet and the Worldwide Web. Their clients tend to be more urban, more educated, and more economically well off than the clients of telecenters. By their nature, at this period of the telecenter movement, telecenters tend to be in the public sector and focus on more isolated people (like villagers), and lower income and less educated people. Thus, for our characterization of telecenters, we

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[6] For a comprehensive picture of the status of telecenters in the early 21st century, see the Commonwealth of Learning publication: LATCHEM, C. & WALKER, D. (eds.) (2001), *Telecentres: Case Studies and Key Issues*, Vancouver, BC. The full document includes some excellent telecenter case studies and a guide to ICT hardware: http://www.col.org/Telecentres/telecentre_intro.htm.

adopt the multi-purpose community telecenter idea suggested by the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) and others. Basically, telecenters are shared public facilities that provide information and communication services to persons who, for various reasons, do not have them available individually. Typically, telecenters offer a broad range of services related to the needs of the community, some of which are free or subsidized by external bodies (such as governments or NGOs). These might include: desktop publishing, community newspapers, sales or rental of audio and videocasettes and DVDs, book lending, photocopying, faxing, and telephone services. While both cybercafés and telecenters might offer training in computer use, the telecenter is more likely to offer other kinds of training, non-formal education, and distance learning in agriculture, health, basic education and other fields. Their reason-for-being is consistent with the idea expressed by the Dot Force report noted above: "Creating digital opportunities is not something that happens *after* addressing the "core" development challenges; it is a key component of addressing those challenges in the 21st century."

With this we offer a brief historical note. The idea of a community sharing computer technology emerged in the 1980s with the introduction of the telecottage in Scandinavia. The initial purpose of those telecottages was to fight against marginalization of remote rural places in the information society. This was before the Internet. In the mid 1990s a new breed of telecottages appeared in Hungary. Supported initially by USAID, these were built around social and economic development, computers and the Internet. Hungarian telecottages were part of a more robust movement that marked the close of the 20th century, with a variety of international

organizations supporting the diffusion and adoption of ICTs and telecenters.

Cybercafés, however, are potentially relevant to the development communication enterprise. Francisco Proenza reminds us that there is much to learn from cybercafés even though they are not development-oriented. The small business cybercafés, he reports, have been expanding very rapidly worldwide. When we disregard cybercafés in the discussion of telecenters, we are ignoring the "most replicable and sustainable governance structure known—i.e., the privately-owned business" (Proenza, forthcoming) Telecenters, he asserts, could learn from cybercafés a business-like approach to telecenter management, a key issue in assessing their sustainability.

Furthermore, Proenza says, government and NGO-run telecenters that find it difficult to sustain themselves often have easy access to funds, and spend more than they can afford on staff and superfluous services. Their motivation to be economical or to run their centers to meet their customers' needs "is feeble." On the other hand, if the owner of a commercial cybercafé is not committed to sustainability through demand-driven entrepreneurship, he will surely fail while others take over his place. Thus a key lesson for the telecenter movement lies in careful assessment of the market.

Telecenters might also look at the culture of the cybercafé to see what features could be adopted by the telecenter. For example, in many places the ambiance of the cybercafé is social and enjoyment: the café aspect is an important attraction for the persons who frequent the places. Computer games are popular. Even in fulfilling their development communication objectives, telecenters will need to be demand-driven.

Despite its commercial and narrow interests, the cybercafés phenomenon is important in the context of telecenters because cybercafés may discover that some development-related services are, in fact, profitable, either directly or indirectly (attracting more traffic). Elsewhere we have explored this idea by suggesting that telecenters be viewed as "communication shops" (Colle, 1998). Ultimately, the sustainability of the telecenter system is likely to depend on this kind entrepreneurship.

We need also to note that there are major public sector initiatives around the world that have the unidimensional look of the cybercafé but without the coffee. We call them Information Access Points (IAP). Canada's Community Access Program that launched 10,000 CAP sites in rural and urban Canada is an example. We spoke with the head of a Community Access Program site that only provided use of computers and connectivity to the Internet in a sparse bare room. It was not until they changed the name of the site from Community Access Program to include a name with "cybercafé" in it that people started to use the place. These kinds government-sponsored information technology access points that have proliferated throughout Canada and are emerging in places as widespread as Mexico, Egypt and India are important for the telecenter movement because they already have the public service mandate, and potentially they can expand into the broader development areas and services characteristic of telecenters, similar to the adaptation that took place when Hungary reconstructed the telecottage concept.

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As one examines the trends in such sectors as health, agriculture, nutrition and the environment as well the approaches being used by major sponsors and stakeholders there appears to be some convergence of views as to how communication can be used most effectively to promote economic and social development and especially improve the well-being of people who live in various degrees of poverty. The threads we have followed covering the last five decades convey a sense of evolving into a development communication fabric. One can discern in this fabric characteristics than can be said to help define what development communication is in this early 21st century. Following is a list of those characteristics.

1. Focus on beneficiaries: instead of starting with an innovation or a behavior or an organization's priorities, increasingly communication interventions are emphasizing the individual or family or community as the center of the development process. Childers referred to this as "people-centered" as compared to agency or ministry-centered approaches.

2. Consideration of various stakeholders: in addition to focusing on those who are expected to be the primary targets for change-inducing communication, others are considered as targets because of their influence and their control over essential resources. These range from political and opinion leaders to clinic staffs and those in outreach systems such as the mass media and extension. Even those initiating a program/project may also be considered as stakeholders. Hence the concept of advocacy reflects the importance of looking beyond mass -oriented strategies.

3. Participation: the ideas of "targeting" and "receivers" are modified (but not eliminated) so that *interactivity* and *sharing of power* within and among stakeholders' groups is an operational model guiding communication planning.

4. Emphasis on outcomes: what and how many messages are sent out is less important than what is perceived by stakeholders and what changes take place in stakeholders' behavior relative to development objectives.

5. Data gathering and analysis: while intuition and creativity continue to be valued these are driven and inspired by systematic data collection and analysis. For example, an early step in a communication plan is to do a situational analysis that includes research on a variety of subjects related to behavioral change and communication resources. In the incubation of telecenters, we have already found that doing research on a community's information needs is vital to a telecenter's sustainability. Evaluation is another process that permeates the communication program, with information being collected for pre-testing materials, monitoring progress, and measuring impact.

6. Systematic models: The communication process involves specific and explicit sequential steps including situational analysis (research), planning, pre-testing, implementation and evaluation.[7] The sequence is iterative and dynamic: results of the evaluation are fed back into the situational analysis to register changes in conditions upon which the original planning was based so that adjustments can be made in the steps that follow.

7. Strategy: Most development programs deal with *voluntary* behavior of stakeholders: farmers *choose* to adopt different varieties of seeds; families choose to change diets or visit health clinics; couples choose to accept or reject family planning. These kinds of situations challenge communication people to design strategies for providing appropriate information, through appropriate channels, at appropriate times, for the appropriate people. Thus a quality professionally-driven development communication program is characterized by having a rational means for selecting communication objectives, content, channels and target groups that fit the voluntary nature of the behavior change being proposed.

8. Multi-channel versatility: As the examples in the opening section and the ICT thread at the end illustrate, development communication is equipped with a broad range of information

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[7] Evaluation is not a single step; it occurs in various forms throughout the process. To include evaluation in this context, it would be more precise to call it *summative* evaluation.

and communication techniques and technologies with which to attack poverty and underdevelopment.

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7.

Development Communication Approaches in an International Perspective

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In this chapter, we present the general concepts which are normally referred to in discussions on development communication. We will address the topic from a historical perspective.

Firstly, in theory, one observes a shift from modernization and dependency theories to more normative and holistic approaches. We have attempted to group these new insights as 'One World, Multiple Cultures' or 'Multiplicity'.

Secondly, also at the policy and planning level one can distinguish between different approaches which could be identified as the 'diffusion model' versus the 'participatory model'.

Thirdly, we will assess the changes which took place throughout the years.

Changing Theories of Development

Modernization

Historical Context

After the Second World War, the founding of the United Nations stimulated relations among sovereign states, especially the North

Atlantic Nations and the developing nations, including the new states emerging out of a colonial past. During the cold war period the superpowers—the United States and the former Soviet Union— tried to expand their own interests to the developing countries. In fact, the USA was defining development as the replica of its own political-economic system and opening the way for the transnational corporations. At the same time, the developing countries saw the 'welfare state' of the North Atlantic Nations as the ultimate goal of development. These nations were attracted by the new technology transfer and the model of a centralised state with careful economic planning and centrally directed development bureaucracies for agriculture, education and health as the most effective strategies to catch up with those industrialised countries.

Modernization and Development

The modernization paradigm, dominant in academic circles from around 1945 to 1965, supported the transferring of technology and the socio-political culture of the developed societies to the 'traditional' societies. Development was defined as economic *growth*. The central idea in the modernization perspective is the idea of evolution, which implies that development is conceived as firstly, directional and cumulative, secondly, predetermined and irreversible, thirdly, progressive, and fourthly, immanent with reference to the nation state. The developed western societies or modern societies seem to be the ultimate goals which the less developed societies strive to reach.

All societies would, passing through similar *stages,* evolve to a common point: the modern society. In order to be a modern society, the attitudes of 'backward' people—their traditionalism, bad taste, superstition, fatalism, etc.—which are obstacles and barriers in the traditional societies have to be removed. The

differences among nations are explained in terms of the degree of development rather than the fundamental nature of each. Hence, the central problem of development was thought to revolve around the question of 'bridging the gap' and 'catching up' by means of imitation processes between *traditional and modern sectors,* between retarded and advanced or between 'barbarian' and civilized sectors and groups to the advantage of the latter. These two sectors, the traditional and the modern, were conceived of as two stages of development, co-existing in time, and in due course the differences between them were to disappear because of a natural urge towards equilibrium. The problem was to remove the obstacles or barriers, which were only to be found in the traditional society. These 'barriers' can be 'removed' through at least five mechanisms: through 'demonstration', whereby the developing world tries to 'catch up' with the more developed by adopting more advanced methods and techniques; through 'fusion', which is the combination and integration of distinct modern methods; through 'compression', whereby the developing countries attempt to accomplish the task of development in less time than it took the developed world; through 'prevention', that is, by learning from the 'errors' made by the developed countries; and through the 'adaptation' of modern practices to the local environment and culture. Consequently, the *means of modernization* were the massive transfer of capital, ideology, technology, and know-how, a world-wide Marshall Plan, a green revolution. The measures of progress were G.N.P., literacy, industrial base, urbanization, and the like, all *quantifiable criteria*. Everett Rogers (1976:124) writes that although: "India, China, Persia, and Egypt were old, old centres of civilization … their rich cultures had in fact provided the basis for contemporary Western Cultures … their family life

displayed a warmer intimacy and their artistic triumphs were greater, that was not development. It could not be measured in dollars and cents".

Another characteristic of modernization thought is the emphasis on *mono-disciplinary explanatory factors*. The oldest is the *economic* variant, associated with Walt Rostow (1953). As each discipline within the social sciences approaches the modernization process from its own expert point of view, the scholarship on modernization has become increasingly specialized. Therefore, the orthodox modernization theories fall into one or a combination of the following four categories: *stage theories, index theories* (of mainly economic variables), *differentiation theories* (largely advanced by sociologists and political scientists), and *diffusion theories* (advanced primarily by social psychologists, suggesting that the development process starts with the diffusion of certain ideas, motivations, attitudes or behaviors). Nonetheless, the economic root has always remained the essence of the modernization theory.

In practice modernization accelerated the westernized elite structure or urbanization. With the help of foreign aid the rural backward areas needed to be developed in the area of agriculture, basic education, health, rural transportation, community development, etcetera. Therefore, the government service bureaucracies have been extended to the major urban centres. The broadcasting system was used mainly for entertainment and news. Radio was a channel for national campaigns to persuade the people in very specific health and agricultural practices. According to Robert White (1988:9): "The most significant communication dimension of the modernization design in the developing world has been the rapid improvement of the transportation, which linked

rural communities into market towns and regional cities. With improved transportation and sources of electric power, the opening of commercial consumer supply networks stretched out into towns and villages carrying with it the Western consumer culture and pop culture of films, radio and pop music. Although rural people in Bolivia or Sri Lanka may not have attained the consumption styles of American middle-class populations, their life did change profoundly. This was the real face of modernization".

Critique

Under the influence of the actual development in most Third World countries, which did not turn out to be so justified as the modernization theory predicted, the first *criticisms* began to be heard in the 1960s, particularly in *Latin America*. In a famous essay, the Mexican sociologist, Rodolfo Stavenhagen (1966) argued that the division into a traditional, agrarian sector and a modern, urban sector was the result of the same development process. In other words, growth and modernization had brought with them greater inequality and underdevelopment. Stavenhagen tested his theses against the situation in Mexico, while others came to similar conclusions for Brazil, and Chile.

The best known critic of the modernization theory is Gunder Frank (1969). His criticism is fundamental and three-fold: the progress paradigm is *empirically untenable*, has an *inadequate theoretical* foundation, and is, in practice, *incapable of generating a development* process in the Third World. Moreover, critics of the modernization paradigm charge that the complexity of the processes of change are too often ignored, that little attention is paid to the consequences of economic, political, and cultural macro-processes on the local level, and that the resistance against change and modernization cannot be explained only on the basis of

traditional value orientations and norms, as many seem to imply. The critique did not only concern modernization theory as such, but the whole (Western) tradition of evolutionism and functionalism of which it forms part.

Therefore, referring to the offered unilinear and evolutive perspectives, and the endogenous character of the suggested development solutions, these critics argue that the modernization concept is a veiled synonym for *'westernization,'* namely the copying or implantation of western mechanisms and institutions in a Third World context. Nowhere is this as clear as in the field of political science. Many western scholars start from the assumption that the US or West-European political systems are the touchstones for the rest of the world. The rationale for President J.F. Kennedy's Peace Corps Act, for instance, was totally ingrained in this belief.

Dependency

Historical Context
The dependency paradigm played an important role in the movement for a New World Information and Communication Order from the late 1960s to the early 1980s. At that time, the new states in Africa, Asia and the success of socialist and popular movements in Cuba, China, Chile and other countries provided the goals for political, economic and cultural self-determination within the international community of nations. These new nations shared the ideas of being independent from the superpowers and moved to form the Non-Aligned Nations. The Non-Aligned Movement defined development as *political struggle.*

Dependency and Development

At a theoretical level, the dependency approach emerged from the convergence of two intellectual traditions: one often called neo-Marxism or structuralism, and the other rooted in the extensive Latin American debate on development that ultimately formed the ECLA tradition (the United Nations' Economic Commission for Latin America). Therefore, in contrast to the modernization theory, the dependency perspective was given birth in Latin America. The so-called 'father' of the dependency theory, however, is considered to be the American, Paul Baran (1957), who is spokesperson for the North American Monthly Review group. He was one of the first to articulate the thesis that development and underdevelopment are *interrelated processes*, that is, they are two sides of the same coin. In Baran's view, continued imperialist dependence after the end of the colonial period is ensured first and foremost by the reproduction of socioeconomic and political structures at the Periphery in accordance with the interests of the Centre powers. This is the main cause of the chronic backwardness of the developing countries, since the main interest of Western monopoly capitalism was to prevent, or, if that was impossible, to slow down and to control the economic development of underdeveloped countries. As Baran uncompromisingly puts it, the irrationality of the present system will not be overcome so long as its basis, the capitalist system, continues to exist.

Some dependistas worked exclusively with economic variables, while others also took social and political factors into consideration in their research. Typically the scientific divisions of economics, political science, sociology, history and the like, which were being used in the West, were less rigidly distinguished in the Latin American division of scientific labour. Some stressed the sectoral

and regional oppositions within the dependency system (e.g., Sunkel); others (e.g., Cardoso) were more concerned with possible class oppositions. Opinions also differed about one of the central elements in dependency theory, that is, the specific relationship between development and underdevelopment. While Frank observes what he termed 'a development towards underdevelopment', Cardoso argued that a certain degree of (dependent) capitalist development is possible.

However, as varied their approaches may be, all dependistas will agree to the basic idea exemplified in the following definition by Dos Santos (1970:231): "*Dependence* is a conditioning situation in which the economies of one group of countries are conditioned by the development and expansion of others. A relationship of interdependence between two or more economies or between such economies and the world trading system becomes a dependent relationship when some countries can expand through self-impulsion while others, being in a dependent position, can only expand as a reflection of the expansion of the dominant countries, which may have positive or negative effects on their immediate development. In either case, the basic situation of dependence causes these countries to be both backward and exploited. Dominant countries are endowed with technological, commercial, capital and socio-political predominance over dependent countries—the form of this predominance varying according to the particular historical moment—and can therefore exploit them, and extract part of the locally produced surplus. Dependence, then, is based upon an international division of labour which allows industrial development to take place in some countries while restricting it in others, whose growth is conditioned by and subjected to the power centres of the world."

Critique

Hence, according to the dependency theory, the most important hindrances to development are not the shortage of capital or management, as the modernization theorists contend, but must be sought in the present international system. The obstacles are thus not internal but external. This also means that development in the Centre determines and maintains the underdevelopment in the Periphery. The two poles are structurally connected to each other. To remove these external obstacles, they argue, each peripheral country should dissociate itself from the world market and opt for a self-reliant development strategy. To make this happen, most scholars advocated that a more or less revolutionary political transformation will be necessary. Therefore, one may say that the dependency paradigm in general as well as in its subsector of communication is characterized by a global approach, an emphasis on external factors and regional contradictions, a polarization between development and underdevelopment, a subjectivist or voluntaristic interpretation of history, and a primarily economically oriented analytical method.

As a result, the only alternative for non-aligned nations was to *disassociate* themselves from the world market and achieve self-reliance, both economically and culturally. The *New International Economic Order* is one example of attempts toward this end. However, many non-aligned countries were simply too weak economically, and too indebted, to operate autonomously. As a result, attempts to legislate integral, coherent national communication policies failed because of the resistance of national and transnational media interests. As Friberg and Hettne (1985:212) point out, "Self-reliance is a difficult option in the context of the present world order." Because of this, McAnany

(1983:4) characterized dependency theory as "… good on diagnosis of the problem … but poor on prescription of the cure." Dependency addressed the causes of underdevelopment, but did not provide ways of addressing that underdevelopment.

Multiplicity/Another Development

Historical Context

Since the demarcation of the First, Second and Third Worlds is breaking down and the cross-over centre-periphery can be found in every region, there is a need for a new concept of development which emphasizes cultural identity and multidimensionality. For example, some countries may be dependent economically but have greater cultural 'power' in the region. Therefore, the previously held dependency perspective has become more difficult to support because of the growing interdependency of nations. The concept of *'another development'* was first articulated in the industrialized nations of northern Europe, particularly by the Dag Hammarskjold Foundation in Sweden and the Green political movement in Germany. This does not mean, however, that the 'another development' concepts and perspective is Western. It can also be traced back in Third World environments.

Multiplicity and Another Development

The Dag Hammarskjold Foundation established three foundations for another development: (1) Another Development is geared to the satisfaction of needs, beginning with the eradication of poverty; (2) Another development is endogenous and self-reliant; and (3) Another development is in harmony with the environment. Another development applies to all levels of all societies, not just the poor of the non-aligned world. It grew from a dissatisfaction in the 'consumer society,' with what is sometimes termed

'overdevelopment' or even 'maldevelopment', as well as the growing disillusionment with the modernization approach.

The central idea, which is pointed out by almost everybody who is searching for new approaches towards development, is that there is *no universal path to development*, that development must be conceived as an *integral, multidimensional, and dialectic process* which can differ from one society to another. This does not mean, however, that one cannot attempt to define the general principles and priorities on which such a strategy can be based. Indeed, several authors have been trying to gather the core components for another development. From the search of these authors, we would cite six criteria as essential for 'another' development.

Such development must be based on the following principles:

(a) *Basic needs*: being geared to meeting human, material and non-material, needs.

(b) *Endogenous*: stemming from the heart of each society, which defines in sovereignty its values and the vision of its future.

(c) *Self-reliance*: implying that each society relies primarily on its own strength and resources in terms of its members' energies and its natural and cultural environment.

(d) *Ecology*: utilizing rationally resources of the biosphere in full awareness of the potential of local ecosystems, as well as the global and outer limits imposed on present and future generations.

(e) *Participative democracy* as the true form of democracy: not merely government of the people and for the people, but also, and more fundamentally, 'by the people' at all levels of society.

(f) *Structural changes* to be required, more often than not, in social relations, in economic activities and in their spatial distribution, as well as in the power structure, so as to realize the conditions of self-managements and participation in decision-making by all those affected by it, from the rural or urban community to the world as a whole.

In practice, adopting some or all of the above principles, new forms of communication have been emerging. Decentralized media systems and democratic communication institutions, such as Mahaweli community radio in Sri Lanka and Radio Enriquillo in the Dominican Republic, emphasize self-management by local communities. New concepts of media professionalism bring a greater knowledge of and respect for forms of people's communication, and emphasize the recognition of and experience with new formats of journalism and broadcasting which are more consonant with the cultural identity of the community, and a greater awareness of the ways democratization of communication is taking place and can take place.

Mixed Approaches

This review of three perspectives on development reveals a number of *shifts in scientific thought*:

1- from a more positivistic, quantitative, and comparative approach to a normative, qualitative and structural approach;

2- from highly prescribed and predictable processes to less predictable and change-oriented processes;

3- from an ethnocentric view to an indigenistic view and then to a contextual and polycentric view;

4- from endogenism ('blame the victim') to exogenism ('blame the outsider') and then to globalism and holism;

5- from an economic interest to more universal and interdisciplinary interests;

6- from a primarily national frame of reference to an international perspective and then to combined levels of analysis;

7- from segmentary to holistic approaches and then to more problem-oriented approaches;

8- from an integrative and reformist strategy to revolutionary options and then to an integral vision of revolutionary and evolutionary change;

9- from technocratic/administrative views on development to more problem-posing and participatory perspectives.

Theoretical Approaches to Development Communication (Devcom)

Communication theories such as the 'diffusion of innovations', the 'two-step-flow', or the 'extension' approaches are quite congruent with the above modernization theory. According to Everett Rogers, one of the leading proponents of the diffusion theory, this perspective implies "that the role of communication was (1) to transfer technological innovations from development agencies to their clients, and (2) to create an appetite for change through raising a 'climate for modernization' among the members of the public" (Rogers, 1986:49).

The elitist, vertical or *top-down orientation of the diffusion model* is obvious. However, the reality often proves much more complex than the theory. Therefore, many authors and development workers point out that decision-making and planning cannot be done by bureaucrats and policymakers for the people but only by these 'experts' together with all concerned institutions and together with the people. In other words, in accordance with discussions on international political and academic forums like UNESCO, FAO or IAMCR, these people refer to newer insights on the role and place of communication for development which favours *two-way and horizontal communication:* "The systematic utilization of appropriate communication and techniques to increase peoples' participation in development and to inform, motivate, and train rural population, mainly at the grass-root level" (FAO, 1987:4). Though it can be argued that this approach still remains 'paternalistic' or a social marketing strategy, it at least

distinguishes between policy and planning-making at micro and macro levels.

Before we elaborate on the related changes in strategies and techniques, we summarize the major theoretical characteristics of both theoretical approaches to Development Communication: the Diffusion/Mechanistic Model and the Participatory/Organic Model.

The Diffusion Model

General

The 1950s was the *decade of the communication model.* Interestingly, one of the earliest and most influential of these came not from the social sciences or humanities, but from information engineering. Shannon and Weaver's linear "source-transmitter-channel-receiver-destination" model eclipsed the earlier, more organic, psychological and sociological approaches. Lasswell, Hofland, Newcomb, Schramm, Westley and Mclean, Berlo, and others each devised a model of communication as they conceived it. This profusion of communication models may be attributed to three reasons.

First, because they identified communication basically as the *transfer* of information (the stimulus), they were amenable to empirical methodology, thus establishing the basis for communication as a distinct and legitimate science.

Secondly, theorists focused on the efficiency, or *effects,* of communication (the response), thereby holding vast promise for manipulation or control of message 'receivers' by vested interests, or the 'sources'.

Finally, the communication models fit neatly into the nature and mechanics of mass or *mediated communication*, an emergent and powerful force at that time.

Therefore, in these years the discipline of communication was largely, and most importantly, its effects. The 'bullet' or 'hypodermic needle' effects of media were to be a quick and efficient answer to a myriad of social ills. Robert White (1982:30) writes "This narrow emphasis on media and media effects has also led to a premise … that media information is an all-powerful panacea for problems of human and socioeconomic development," not to mention dilemmas of marketing and propaganda. Falling short of exuberant claims, direct effects became limited effects, minimal effects, conditional effects, and the 'two-step flow'.

More Specific Communication Approaches
In these years, more sociological, psychological, political, and cultural factors were considered in the view of modernization. The place and role of the communication processes in the modernization perspective was also further examined, with the American presidential election campaigns functioning as the theoretical framework.

These models saw the communication process as a message going from a sender to a receiver. Out of a study in Erie County, Ohio, of the 1940 US presidential elections came the idea of the so-called *'two step flow of communication'* (Lazarsfeld et al., 1944). Although the researchers expected to find that the mass media (radio and press) had a great influence on the election, they concluded that voting decisions were chiefly influenced by personal contacts and face-to-face persuasion. The first formulation of the two-step-flow hypothesis was the following: "Ideas often flow from

radio and print to opinion leaders and from these to less active sections of the population" (Lazarsfeld, 1944:151). Thus, two elements are involved: (a) the notion of a population divided into 'active' and 'passive' participants, or 'opinion leaders' and 'followers'; and (b) the notion of a two-step-flow of influence rather than a direct contact between 'stimulus' and 'respondent' (or the so-called bullet or hypodermic needle theory). Since that time the concept and role of 'personal influence' has acquired a high status in research on campaigns and diffusions, especially in the US. The general conclusion of this line of thought is that mass communication is less likely than personal influence to have a direct effect on social behavior. Mass communication is important in spreading awareness of new possibilities and practices, but at the stage where decisions are being made about whether to adopt or not to adopt, personal communication was far more likely to be influential.

Therefore, we could characterize this era as *'sender- and media-centric'*. The new models, in conjunction with the obsession with the mass media, led to a conceptualization of communication as something one does to another. White (1984:2) argues this pro-media, pro-effects, and anti-egalitarian bias of communication theory "…has developed largely as an explanation of the power and effects of mass communication and does not provide adequate explanation of the factors of social change leading toward democratization."

Building primarily on sociological research in agrarian societies, Everett Rogers (1962, 1973) stressed the *adoption and diffusion processes of cultural innovation*. Modernization is here conceived as a process of diffusion whereby individuals move from a traditional way of life to a more complex, more technically

developed and more rapidly changing way of life. This approach is therefore concerned with the process of diffusion and adoption of innovations in a more systematic and planned way. He distinguishes between five phases in the diffusion process: awareness, interest, evaluation, trial and adoption. The role of the mass media is concentrated on the first stage of the process, whereas 'personal sources are most important at the evaluation stage in the adoption process' (Rogers, 1962:99). In a second edition of his work (Rogers,1973), there are only four crucial steps left in the process of diffusion and adoption: (a) the knowledge of the innovation itself (information), (b) the communication of the innovation (persuasion), (c) the decision to adopt or reject the innovation (adoption or rejection), and (d) the confirmation of the innovation by the individual.

Three more approaches contributed to the success of this diffusion model: that is, a psycho-sociological, institutional and technological interpretation of communication for modernization.

The *psycho-sociological or behavioristic perspective* on communication and modernization is particularly concerned with the individual value and attitude change. Rokeach (1966) defined *'attitude'* as "a relatively enduring organization of beliefs about an object or situation predisposing one to respond in some preferential manner". 'Attitude change' would then be "a change in predisposition, the change being either a change in the organization or structure of beliefs, or a change in the content of one or more of the beliefs entering into the attitude organization" (Rokeach, 1966:530). Central in the view of Daniel Lerner (1958), one of the main representatives of this communication for modernization paradigm, is the concept of *'empathy',* that is, "the capacity to see oneself in the other fellow's situation, … which is

an indispensable skill for people moving out of traditional settings'. The major hypothesis of his study was that 'high empathic is the predominant personal style only in modern society, which is distinctively industrial, urban, literate and participant" (Lerner, 1958:50). Central in his research design was the individual-psychological capacity of people to adjust themselves to modern environments. Empathic persons had a higher degree of mobility, meaning a high capacity for change, being future oriented and rational, more than so-called traditional people. Therefore, according to Lerner, mobility stimulates urbanization, which increases literacy and consequently also economic and political participation. Also the role and function of the mass media is carefully examined in this context: "He (that is, the modern man, JS) places his trust in the mass media rather than in personal media for world news, and prefers national and international news rather than sports, religious or hometown news" (Inkeles, 1972:112). In other words, the media stimulate, in direct and indirect ways, mobility and economic development; they are the 'motivators' and 'movers' for change and modernization.

Wilbur Schramm (1964), building on Lerner, took a closer look on this *connection between mass communication and modernizing practices and institutions*. The modern communication media supplement and complement as 'mobility multipliers' the oral channels of a traditional society. Their development runs parallel to the development of other institutions of modern society, such as schools and industry, and is closely related to some of the indices of general social and economic growth, such as literacy, per capita income, and urbanization. So he claimed that "a developing country should give special attention to combining mass media with interpersonal communication" (Schramm, 1964:263). In

Schramm's opinion, mass media perform at least three functions: they are the 'watchdogs', 'policymakers', and 'teachers' for change and modernization.

A third, *technologically deterministic approach*, sees technology to be a value-free and politically neutral asset that can be used in every social and historical context. Within this perspective at least four different points of view can be distinguished. A first rather optimistic view shares the conviction that the development and application of technology can resolve all the varied problems of mankind. The second view comes the previous one to the opposite extreme, namely the conception that technology is the source of all what goes wrong in societies. A third variant expresses the view of technology as the prepotent factor in development, it sees technology as the driving force to development. The fourth variant has become popular by Marshall McLuhan (1964). It views technology as an inexorable force in development, an irresistible as well as an overwhelming force. As McLuhan (1964:VIII) puts it: "Any technology gradually creates a totally new human environment," or, in other words: the medium is the message.

The 'Framework of Reference' of Modernization and Dependency
While supporters of the communication for modernization theory take the *nation state* as their main framework of reference, dependistas believe in a predominantly *international level of analysis*. They argue that the domination of the Periphery by the Centre occurs through a combination of power components, that is, military, economics, politics, culture, and so on. The specific components of the domination of any nation at a given point of time vary from those of another as a result of the variations in numerous factors, including the resources of the Centre powers, the nature or structure of the Periphery nation, and the degree of

resistance to domination. Nowadays the cultural and communication components have become of great importance in continuing the dependent relationships. Because, as many scholars argue, we stand within the rather paradoxical situation that, as the Third World begins to emancipate itself economically and politically, cultural dominance increases. While the former colonialist was largely out to plunder economically profitable areas and showed often only moderate interest in political administration, the technological evolution of the communication media have contributed to a cultural and ideological dependence.

In many ways dependency is the antithesis of modernization, but at the level of communication it is a continuation of it. Dependency theory argues that the prevailing conditions in the non-aligned world are not a stage in the evolution toward development, but rather the result of extant international structures. In other words, whereas the modernization perspective holds that the causes of underdevelopment lay mainly *within* the developing nation, dependency theory postulates the reasons for underdevelopment are primarily *external* to the dependant society.

The Participatory Model

General

The participatory model incorporates the concepts in the emerging framework of multiplicity/another development. It stresses the importance of *cultural identity* of local communities and of *democratization and participation* at all levels—international, national, local and individual. It points to a strategy, not merely inclusive of, but largely emanating from, the traditional 'receivers'. Paulo Freire (1983:76) refers to this as the right of all people to individually and collectively speak their word: "This is not the

privilege of some few men, but the right of every man. Consequently, no one can say a true word alone—nor can he say it for another, in a prescriptive act which robs others of their words".

In order to share information, knowledge, trust, commitment, and a right attitude in development projects participation is very important in any decision making process for development. "This calls for new attitude for overcoming stereotyped thinking and to promote more understanding of diversity and plurality, with full respect for the dignity and equality of peoples living in different conditions and acting in different ways". (International Commission for the Study of Communication Problems, 1980:254) This model stresses reciprocal collaboration throughout all levels of participation. Listening to what the others say, respecting the counterpart's attitude, and having mutual trust are needed.. Participation supporters do not underestimate the ability of the masses to develop themselves and their environment. "Development efforts should be anchored on faith in the people's capacity to discern what is best to be done as they seek their liberation, and how to participate actively in the task of transforming society. The people are intelligent and have centuries of experience. Draw out their strength. Listen to them." (Xavier Institute, 1980:11).

Cultural Identity, Empowerment, and Participatory Communication
According to many authors, authentic participation directly addresses *power* and its distribution in society. Participation "may not sit well with those who favor the status quo and thus they may be expected to resist such efforts of reallocation more power to the people." (Lozare, 1989:2). Therefore, development and participation are inextricably linked.

Participation involves the more equitable sharing of both political and economic power, which often decreases the advantage of certain groups. *Structural change* involves the redistribution of power. In mass communication areas, many communication experts agree that structural change should occur first in order to establish participatory communication policies. Mowlana and Wilson (1987:143), for instance, state: "Communications policies are basically derivatives of the political, cultural and economic conditions and institutions under which they operate. They tend to legitimize the existing power relations in society, and therefore, they cannot be substantially changed unless there are fundamental structural changes in society that can alter these power relationships themselves".

Since dialogue and face-to-face interaction is inherent in participation, the development communicator will find him/herself spending more time in the field. It will take some time to develop rapport and trust. Continued contact, meeting commitments, keeping promises, and follow up between visits, is important. Development of social trust precedes task trust. Both parties will need patience. It is important to note that when we treat people the way we ourselves would like to be treated, we learn to work as a team, and this brings about rural commitment and motivation too. Thus honesty, trust, and commitment from the higher ups brings honesty, trust, and commitment for the grass-roots as well. This brings about true participation. And true participation brings about appropriate policies and planning for developing a country within its cultural and environmental framework.

Consequently also the perspective on communication has changed. It is more concerned with *process and context,* that is, on the exchange of 'meanings,' and on the importance of this process,

namely, the social relational patterns and social institutions that are the result of and are determined by the process. 'Another' communication "favors multiplicity, smallness of scale, locality, de-institutionalization, interchange of sender-receiver roles (and) horizontality of communication links at all levels of society" (McQuail, 1983:97). As a result, the focus moves *from a 'communicator-' to a more 'receiver-centric' orientation, with the resultant emphasis on meaning sought and ascribed rather than information transmitted.*

With this shift in focus, one is no longer attempting to create a need for the information one is disseminating, but one is rather disseminating information for which there is a need. Experts and development workers rather respond than dictate, they choose what is relevant to the context in which they are working. The emphasis is on information exchange rather than on the persuasion in the diffusion model.

Two Major Approaches to Participatory Communication

There are two major approaches to participatory communication which everybody today accepts as common sense. The first is the dialogical pedagogy of Paulo Freire, and the second involves the ideas of access, participation and self-management articulated in the Unesco debates of the 1970s. Every communication project which calls itself participatory accepts these principles of democratic communication. Nonetheless there exists today a wide variety of practical experiences and intentions. Before moving on to explore these differences it is useful to briefly review the common ground.

The Freirian argument works by a dual theoretical strategy. He insists that subjugated peoples must be treated as fully human

subjects in any political process. This implies dialogical communication. Although inspired to some extent by Sartre's existentialism -- a respect for the autonomous personhood of each human being --, the more important source is a theology that demands respect for otherness—in this case that of another human being. The second strategy is a moment of utopian hope derived from the early Marx that the human species has a destiny which is more than life as a fulfillment of material needs. Also from Marx is an insistence on collective solutions. Individual opportunity, Freire stresses, is no solution to general situations of poverty and cultural subjugation.

These ideas are deeply unpopular with elites, including elites in the Third World, but there is nonetheless widespread acceptance of Freire's notion of dialogic communication as a normative theory of participatory communication. One problem with Freire is that his theory of dialogical communication is based on group dialogue rather than such amplifying media as radio, print and television. Freire also gives little attention to the language or form of communication, devoting most of his discussion to the intentions of communication actions.

The second discourse about participatory communication is the Unesco language about self-management, access and participation from the 1977 meeting in Belgrade, Yugoslavia. The final report of that meeting defines the terms in the following way:

Access refers to the use of media for public service. It may be defined in terms of the opportunities available to the public to choose varied and relevant programs and to have a means of feedback to transmit its reactions and demands to production organisations.

Participation implies a higher level of public involvement in communication systems. It includes the involvement of the public in the production process, and also in the management and planning of communication systems.

Participation may be no more than representation and consultation of the public in decision-making. On the other hand, *self-management* is the most advanced form of participation. In this case, the public exercises the power of decision-making within communication enterprises and is also fully involved in the formulation of communication policies and plans.

These ideas are important and widely accepted as a normative theory of alternative communication: it must involve access and participation. However, one should note some differences from Freire. The Unesco discourse includes the idea of a gradual progression. Some amount of access may be allowed, but self-management may be postponed until some time in the future. Freire's theory allows for no such compromise. One either respects the culture of the other or falls back into domination and the "banking" mode of imposed education. The Unesco discourse talks in neutral terms about "the public". Freire talked about the oppressed. Finally, the Unesco discourse puts the main focus on the institution. Participatory radio means a radio station that is self-managed by those participating in it.

Assessing the Changes

In his summary of the Asian development communication policies and planning, Peter Habermann reaches the following conclusions: "The difficulties for the adoption of a viable development communication policy are caused very much by the fact that the planning of such a policy has to take into account that there is a

horizontal and a vertical level which requires simultaneous approaches. The horizontal and vertical level consists of diversified institutions such as governmental developments, semi-governmental agencies (Rural extension Service etc.), independent development organizations, and private media, which are all active in communication in one way or the other. The coordination of these institutions, e.g. the problem of assigning them to communicative tasks they are able to perform best becomes thus a major item of a meaningful development communication policy. The vertical level is defined by the need for a mutual information flow between the population base and the decision-making bodies. On this level even more institutions are involved because of the local and supra-local administrations which of course are active in handing out directives and in feeding back reports to the government. Coordination of development communication becomes a more difficult task on this level because with the exception of the governmental extensions no institution is really prepared until now to pick up the information from the grass root levels and feeding them back meaningfully to the administration" (Habermann, 1978: 173).

Neville Jayaweera (1987), in the introduction of the follow-up on Habermann & de Fontgalland's publication, specifies that (a) the pursuit of the modernization model, as recommended by the modernization and diffusion theorists and policymakers, was neither practicable nor desirable; (b) Third World societies should aim instead to satisfy the 'basic needs' of their people; (c) fundamental reforms in the structures of international trade and monetary institutions were a necessary condition of development; (d) likewise, fundamental structural reforms within Third World societies themselves, such as land reform, opportunities for

political participation, decentralization etc., were a prerequisite for development; (e) reliance on foreign aid and capital intensive technology must give way to self-reliance and appropriate technology, and that the bias for industry must give way to a greater commitment to agriculture; and (f) development is unthinkable except within a framework of culture (Jayaweera, 1987: xvii).

In accordance with the findings of these and other scholars we perceive a number of changes in the field of communication for development which may have considerable *consequences for communication policy and planning-making:*

The Growth of a Deeper Understanding of the Nature of Communication Itself
Early models in the 50s and 60s saw the communication process simply as a message going from a sender to a receiver (that is, Laswell's classic S-M-R model). The emphasis was mainly sender- and media-centric; the stress laid on the freedom of the press, the absence of censorship, and so on. Since the 70s, however, communication has become more receiver- and message-centric. The emphasis is more on the process of communication (that is, the exchange of meaning) and on the significance of this process (that is, the social relationships created by communication and the social institutions and context which result from such relationships).

A New Understanding of Communication as a Two-Way Process
The 'oligarchic' view of communication implied that freedom of information was a one-way right from a higher to a lower level, from the Centre to the Periphery, from an institution to an individual, from a communication-rich nation to a communication-

poor one, and so on. Today, the interactive nature of communication is increasingly recognized. It is seen as fundamentally two-way rather than one-way, interactive and participatory rather than linear.

A New Understanding of Culture

The cultural perspective has become central to the debate on communication for development. Consequently, one has moved away from a more traditional mechanistic approach which emphasized economic and materialistic criteria to a more multiple appreciation of holistic and complex perspectives.

The Trend towards Participatory Democracy

The end of the colonial era has seen the rise of many independent states and the spread of democratic principles, even if only at the level of lip-service. Though often ignored in practice, democracy is honored in theory. The world's communication media are still largely controlled by governments or powerful private interests, but they are more attuned to and aware of the democratic ideals than previously. At the same time, literacy levels have increased, and there has been a remarkable improvement in people's ability to handle and use communication technology. As a consequence, more and more people can use mass media and can no longer be denied access to and participation in communication processes for the lack of communication and technical skills.

Recognition of the Imbalance in Communication Resources

The disparity in communication resources between different parts of the world is increasingly recognized as a cause of concern. As the Centre nations develop their resources, the gap between Centre and Periphery becomes greater. The plea for a more balanced and equal distribution of communication resources can

only be discussed in terms of power at national and international levels. The attempt by local power-elites to totally control the modern communication channels—press, broadcasting, education, and bureaucracy—does no longer ensure control of all the communication networks in a given society. Nor does control of the mass media ensure support for the controlling forces, nor for any mobilization around their objectives, nor for the effective repression of opposition.

The Growing Sense of Globalization and Cultural Hybridity

Perhaps the greatest impetus towards a new formulation of communication freedoms and the need for realistic communication policies and planning have come from the realization that the international flow of communication has become the main carrier of cultural globalization. This cultural hybridity can take place without perceptible dependent relationships.

A New Understanding of What is Happening Within the Boundaries of the Nation-State

One has to accept that "internal" and "external" factors inhibiting development do not exist independently of each other. Thus, in order to understand and develop a proper strategy one must have an understanding of the class relationships of any particular peripheral social formation and the ways in which these structures articulate with the Centre on the one hand, and the producing classes in the Third World on the other. To dismiss Third World ruling classes, for example, as mere puppets whose interests are always mechanically synonymous with those of the Centre is to ignore the realities of a much more complex relationship. The very unevenness and contradictory nature of the capitalist development process necessarily produces a constantly changing relationship.

Recognition of the 'Impact' of Communication Technology

Some communication systems (e.g., audio- and video-taping, copying, radio broadcasting) have become cheap and so simple that the rationale for regulating and controlling them centrally, as well as the ability to do so, is no longer relevant. However, other systems (for instance, satellites, remote sensing, transborder data flows) have become so expensive that they are beyond the means of smaller countries and may not be 'suitable' to local environments.

A New Understanding towards an Integration of Distinct Means of Communication

Modern mass media and alternate or parallel networks of folk media or interpersonal communication channels are not mutually exclusive by definition. Contrary to the beliefs of diffusion theorists, they are more effective if appropriately used in an integrated fashion, according to the needs and constraints of the local context. The modern mass media, having been mechanically transplanted from abroad into Third World societies, enjoy varying and limited rates of penetration. They are seldom truly integrated into institutional structures, as occurs in Western societies. However, they can be effectively combined, provided a functional division of labor is established between them, and provided the limits of the mass media are recognized.

The Recognition of Dualistic or Parallel Communication Structures

No longer governments or rulers are able to operate effectively, to control, censor, or to play the role of gatekeeper with regard to all communications networks at all times in a given society. Both alternate and parallel networks, which may not always be active, often function through political, socio-cultural, religious or class structures or can be based upon secular, cultural, artistic, or

folkloric channels. These networks feature a highly participatory character, high rates of credibility, and a strong organic integration with other institutions deeply rooted in a given society.

Conclusion

It should be obvious by now that no all-embracing view on development is on offer. No theory has achieved and maintained explanatory dominance. Each of the above three theoretical perspectives still does find support among academics, policy makers, international organizations, and the general public. In general, adopted and updated versions of the ideas upon which the modernization theory is built—economic growth, centralized planning, and the belief that underdevelopment is rooted in mainly internal causes which can be solved by external (technological) 'aid'—are still shared by many development agencies and governments. A *revitalised modernization perspective* in which some of the errors of the past are acknowledged and efforts are made to deal in new ways (as outlined in the multiplicity view) *remains the dominant perspective in practice but becomes increasingly more difficult to defend in theory.* On the other side, while the multiplicity theory is gaining ground in academic spheres, in practice it is still looked upon as a sympathetic though idealistic side show.

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8.

Tracing the History of Participatory Communication Approaches to Development: A Critical Appraisal

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The dominant paradigm of development underwent far-reaching interrogation and criticism in the 1970s by scholars and practitioners across disciplines and from around the globe. Perhaps the most significant challenge to the dominant paradigm of development communication came from Latin American scholars who deconstructed and rejected the premises, objectives, and methods of modernization and its attendant communication approaches. This early criticism stimulated a range of research projects that has resulted in a robust literature exploring participatory communication approaches to development. Participatory approaches gained momentum in the 1980s and 1990s and have evolved into a rich field standing in stark contrast to models and theories of the first development decades. In fact, scholars have noted that few contemporary development projects—regardless of theoretical orientation—are conducted without some sort of participatory component, even if this notion is honored more on paper than in practice (Ascroft & Masilela 1994; Fraser & Restrepo-Estrada, 1998; Mato, 1999; White S., 1994). Despite its widespread use, however, the concept of participatory communication is subject to loose interpretation that appears at

best to be variable and contested and at worst misused and distorted (Arnst, 1996; Jacobson & Servaes, 1999).

Indeed, the Latin American challenge for scholars to embrace more appropriate, ethical, and responsive theories of development communication remains unrealized to some extent, creating a sense of conceptual and practical stagnation. One way of reinvigorating this field of study is to review the key elements of the challenge from Latin America and of the subsequent research that has refined our sense of participatory approaches of development communication. Such a review is intended to illuminate the conceptual directions that have been emphasized, elaborated, neglected, and ignored over time. By reviewing the variety of directions that have been explored over time, future paths of research and practice will be suggested for the continued theoretical advance of this field.

This chapter will begin with an abbreviated history of the challenge to the dominant paradigm of development communication that emerged from Latin America in the 1970s.[1] It will then provide a thematic review of the participatory communication research that has emerged since then, identifying the various directions taken by scholars in this field. Placing this thematic review into relief with the Latin American critique will provide a historical map of ideas and interests that will point to future directions. The final section of the chapter will conclude by recovering specific themes that hold the promise of advancing participatory development communication.

Challenging the Dominant Paradigm

In the 1970s, scholars from Latin America began deconstructing the dominant paradigm of communication for development and pointing to new directions for research. This section briefly summarizes this deconstruction and reconstruction, beginning with an examination of the assertions that development efforts were ideologically and materially related to neocolonialism and the extension of capitalist relations. It continues by introducing key, alternative directions for development efforts, including notions of praxis, dialogue, and communication process.

Communication Domination

Prior to the 1970s, almost all of Latin American communication development theory and practice was based on concepts and models imported from the United States and Europe and used in ways that were both incommensurable with and detrimental to the region's social context (Beltrán, 1975). These concepts and models were guided philosophically by a combination of behaviorism and functionalism prevalent in the social sciences and by persuasion definitions of communication dating back to Aristotle in the humanities (Beltrán, 1980). The development programs and research projects falling out of this philosophical frame tended to focus on individual attitudes and effects, while ignoring social, political, and economic structures that frequently stood in contradiction to development goals. Development was often defined in terms of the adoption of new behaviors or technologies,

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[1] Although this history draws primarily from Latin American authors, readers should note that the dominant paradigm of development received criticisms across geographic boundaries. Flaws in the conceptualization and administration of diffusion of innovations projects, for example, were identified in both Africa and Asia (Röling, Ascroft & Chege, 1976; Shingi & Mody, 1976).

which were rarely, if ever, examined in terms of their social, political, and economic dimensions. Beltrán (1975) concluded, "the classic diffusion model was based on an ideological framework that contradicts the reality of this region" (p. 190). This persuasion, attitude focus of research not only reflected the culture and philosophy of the Western tradition, it resulted in theories that blamed individuals, not systems, for continued underdevelopment.

But more than merely reflecting the intellectual and cultural history of Western research, early development projects were criticized as a form of domination and manipulation. Freire (1973b) analyzed the term, "extension," used in agricultural projects, in terms of its "associative fields" and concluded that they invited "mechanistic," "transmission," and "invasion" models of communication development. The vertical structure of many extension projects paralleled the hierarchical organization of landlord-peasant relations preceding it in Latin American *latifundios*, resulting in an unintended continuity of inegalitarian relations. The sense that development projects frequently perpetuated the interests of dominant elites was echoed by numerous scholars at the "First Latin American Seminar on Participatory Communication" sponsored in 1978 by Ciespal (Center for Advanced Studies and Research for Latin America). Influenced by dependency theory that was prevalent at the time, scholars there concluded that uses of mass media in development imposed the interests of dominant classes on the majority of marginalized people, resulting in the

reinforcement, reproduction, and legitimation of social and material relations of production (O'Sullivan-Ryan & Kaplún, 1978).[2]

The Latin American critique of the dominant paradigm, then, moved from the level of specific and misguided models of communication to the level of historical and global theories of domination and inequity. Early on, Latin American scholars suggested that development communication be interpreted from within a global framework guided by dependency theory (O'Sullivan-Ryan & Kaplún, 1978). That is, development projects should be analyzed as integral elements in a global system that actually act to maintain asymmetrical relations. Freire (1973a) went as far as to label the various top-down, modernization projects as "assistentialism," or social and financial activities that attack symptoms, not causes, of social ills that function as disguised forms of colonial domination. These early suspicions have been confirmed by a more recent analysis of health and nutrition programs in Latin America, which concluded that development projects functioned as an extension of the geopolitical struggle between the capitalist West and the communist East (Escobar, 1995). Moreover, the categories of assistance constructed by donor nations allowed "institutions to distribute socially individuals and populations in ways consistent with the creation and reproduction of modern capitalist relations" (Escobar, 1995, p. 107). The deconstruction of the dominant paradigm of development, then, was a protest against the perpetuation of historical inequities and a

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[2] Dependency was school of thought emerging in Latin America in the 1960s that explained underdevelopment as the result or byproduct of capitalist expansion. Furthermore, the development of underdevelopment was interpreted as part of a process of continuous political economic relations occurring globally between the developed north and the impoverished south, or what has been termed "core-periphery" relations. Key authors include Cardoso & Faletto (1979) and Frank (1967).

call for the invention of humane, egalitarian, and responsive communication theories and practices.

Toward Dialogic Praxis

Embracing the notion of praxis—self-reflexive, theoretically guided practice—was an immediate and obvious outcome of the Latin American critique of the dominant paradigm. The modernization project and its concomitant theories of development themselves had been shown to illustrate the inextricable connection between theory and practice (Beltran, 1975, 1980; Escobar, 1995). Through its assumptions regarding the locus of social problems, models of communication as information transfer, methods that placed human objects under the antiseptic gaze of scientists, and findings that confirmed micro explanations of persistent underdevelopment, the modernization approach unconsciously demonstrated the reciprocal and self-confirming relationship between theory and practice. One of the earliest recommendations of the Latin American critics was to acknowledge consciously this relationship, to turn away from scientific positions of objectivity, and to embrace an orientation toward research as praxis.

Much of the inspiration for this shift came from the work of Freire (1970), whose experience in traditional pedagogy was seen as analogous to modernization approaches to development. In traditional pedagogy, teachers typically viewed students as objects characterized by some sort of deficiency and in need of knowledge that could be transferred to them in a linear fashion. Freire denounced this objectivist orientation as sadistic and oppressive, and claimed that humane practitioners could not view themselves as proprietors of knowledge and wisdom. In contrast to this oppressive pedagogy, Freire proposed a liberating approach that centered on praxis. Under this orientation, practitioners attempt to

close the distance between teacher and student, development agent and client, researcher and researched in order to enter into a co-learning relationship guided by action and reflection. In a praxis approach to teaching, development, or research, people serve as their own examples in the struggle for and conquest of improved life chances.

The turn toward research praxis was a radical epistemological move that has been adopted and refined by scholars since then (e.g. Fals Borda, 1988; Rahman, 1993). It posits that the combination of critical theory, situation analysis, and action create a fruitful dialectic for the construction of knowledge, which is systematically examined, altered, and expanded in practice. The elimination of the dichotomy between subject and object, combined with an action-reflection orientation toward inquiry resulted in a heightened moral awareness or *conscientização*. This liberating praxis generated "thinking which perceives reality as process, as transformation, rather than as a static entity—thinking which does not separate itself from action, but constantly immerses itself in temporality without fear of the risks involved" (Freire, 1970, p. 81). The turn toward praxis not only rejected dominant approaches to development as oppressive, it argued for integrating scholarship more directly with development practice.

While this turn provided both a philosophical and epistemological framework for scholarship, it also provided a practical, commensurate method in the form of dialogue. Dialogic communication was held in stark contrast to information transmission models emerging from Lasswell's (1964) 5-point question of who says what in what channel to whom with what effect. This required development researchers and practitioners to seek out the experiences, understandings, and aspirations of

others to jointly construct reality and formulate actions (Beltran, 1980). Freire (1970, 1973a) provided concrete exercises for initiating critical dialogues to, in effect, deconstruct social contexts, separate out their constituent parts, and reconstruct a thematic universe for pursuing social transformation. Such a process resulted in a "cultural synthesis" between development collaborators to arrive at mutually identified problems, needs, and guidelines for action.

Aside from its practical contribution, dialogue was promoted as an ethical communication choice within the development context. Freire (1970) argued that true humanization emerged from one's ability "to name the world" in dialogic encounters. This humanization was not only denied to marginalized or oppressed peoples, but something that leaders and elites were prevented from attaining, as well, in prevailing communication environments. Grounded in Buber's notion of "I-Thou" communication, Freire argued that subject-object distinctions were impossible to maintain in true dialogue because one's sense of self and the world is elicited in interaction with others. The resulting fusion of identities and communal naming of the world did not emerge merely from an exchange of information, however, it required a moral commitment among dialogue partners. "Being dialogic is not invading, not manipulating, not imposing orders. Being dialogic is pledging oneself to the constant transformation of reality" (Freire, 1973b, p. 46). This highly developed sense of dialogue—simultaneously practical and rarefied—pushed scholars to conceptualize the phenomena of their study away from states (attitudes) and entities (media) toward process.

Communication as Process

More than any other aspect of the Latin American critique, the observation that communication was frequently conceptualized in static, rather than process, terms constituted the greatest challenge for development practitioners. Scholars from the north had been struggling with process models of communication since Berlo's (1960) work so convincingly argued in their favor. Yet Berlo's construction of the Sender-Message-Channel-Receiver model of communication demonstrated the tenacity of static, linear models that identified components amenable to survey research and development program design. It also demonstrated the elusiveness of the dynamic, process nature of communication.

Latin American scholars introduced a phenomenological orientation, which radically altered the conceptualization, study, and practice of development communication.[3] Rather than focusing on the constituent parts of communication, Latin American scholars introduced more fluid and elastic concepts that centered on how-meaning-comes-to-be in its definition. These more fluid and meaning-centered conceptualizations of communication emphasized co-presence, intersubjectivity, phenomenological "being in the world," and openness of interlocutors (Pasquali, 1963). This view introduced a sophisticated epistemology arguing that the understanding of social reality is produced between people, in material contexts, and in communication. Freire (1973b)

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[3] Antonio Pasquali was fundamental in introducing Continental proponents of phenomenology to Latin American critics of the dominant paradigm of development communication. Relying most heavily on the work of Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty, Pasquali argued that knowledge of development needed to be generated phenomenologically, that is, through presuppositionless, intentional action in the world. This position undermined--on the most fundamental level--modernization approaches that assumed a separation between subject and object, researcher and development recipient.

captured the sense of the phenomenological orientation toward communication writing:

> "One's consciousness, "intentionality" toward the world, is always consciousness of, and in permanent movement toward reality…. This relationship constitutes, with this, a dialectical unity in which knowing-in-solidarity is generated in being and vice versa. For this reason, both objectivist and subjectivist explanations that break this dialectic, dichotomizing that which is not dichotomizable (subject-object), are not capable of understanding reality" (Freire, 1973b:85).

In other words, traditional development approaches of "understanding reality" through the unilateral definition of problems, objectives, and solutions were criticized as violating the very essence of communication.

Pasquali (1963) went as far as stating that the notion of "mass communication" was an oxymoron and that Latin American media constituted an "information oligarchy" that cultivated a social context characterized by "communicational atrophy." Though his analysis was aimed at issues of media and culture broadly, the kinds of development communication projects typical of the period were consistent with his analysis. This fundamental criticism of static models of communication led to calls in development to abandon the "vertical" approaches of information transmission and to adopt "horizontal" projects emphasizing access, dialogue, and participation (Beltran, 1980). The Latin American critique of the dominant paradigm as an extension of domination and the call for more egalitarian and responsive approaches to development were followed by a robust body of research into participatory development communication, which is thematically summarized in the next section.

The Rise of Participatory Communication

In the decades following the Latin American call for participatory approaches to development communication, a wide range of theoretical responses emerged. At one end of the participatory spectrum, scholars coming out of the behaviorist, mass media effects tradition acknowledged the critique and have incorporated participatory dimensions—albeit to a limited extent—into their research. On the other end of the spectrum, scholars critical of traditional development communication research embraced participation virtually as an utopian panacea for development. These distinct theoretical positions essentially mark ends on a continuum, where participation is conceptualized as either a means to an end, or as an end in and of itself. In this section I will present these two positions more fully before moving on to review a variety of other themes that reside somewhere between these two extremes.

Participation: Technical Means or Utopian End?

Almost as quickly as Latin American scholars articulated their objections to mainstream approaches to development communication, some of the leading figures of the dominant paradigm acknowledged the criticisms and reformed their projects (Lerner, 1976; Rogers, 1976; Schramm, 1976). They acknowledged that their conceptualization of development had been oversimplified by focusing narrowly on individuals as the locus for change, theorizing in a universal, evolutionary manner, ignoring cultural specificity, and emphasizing mass media. But this recognition did not lead to the wholesale rejection of their empiricist approach. In fact, Lerner (1976) defended social science's inviolable methodological assumptions of ontological continuity and social regularity, which were threatened by the Latin

American rejection of objectivism and promotion of communication-as-process. Rather, dominant paradigm scholars acknowledged the general value of popular participation in development, recognized new uses of media to "unlock local energies" (Lerner & Schramm, 1976, p. 343), and expanded research to include interpersonal networks in addition to opinion leaders. To an extent, the concept of participation served to reform the dominant paradigm, making it—in the words of its proponents—more expansive, flexible, and humane (Rogers, 1993).

Such reformist approaches to participation are used by major institutions such as the World Bank and Mexico's dominant Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) (White, K. 1999; Mato, 1999). Their top-down efforts are supported by theoretical arguments that participation be conceptualized in ways that disassociate it from any particular ideology (Chu, 1987; 1994). By ideologically neutralizing it, participation is seen as compatible with social marketing, capitalist expansion, and global trade (Moemeka, 1994). In fact, King and Cushman (1994) have argued that participation be conceptualized on highly abstract level where a "nation's people and its government" fashion themselves as global competitors participating in the arena of world trade. They discard the value of grass-roots participation, local knowledge, and cultural beliefs as "old myths" that are incompatible with the contemporary reality of globalization.

Less dismissive of grass-roots participation but still consistent with empiricist, top-down approaches to development is recent research in entertainment-education (Singhal & Rogers, 1988; Storey, 1999). Rather than neutralizing the ideological element of participation, entertainment-education draws on findings emerging

from cultural studies to advance predetermined objectives in areas such as "reproductive health." A sophisticated theoretical framework drawing from studies in reception and popular culture has been constructed to conceptualize texts as open systems activated by audience participants that render media products incapable of manipulation (Storey, 1999, 2000). Rather than using this assertion as the basis for promoting grass-roots communication broadly, the notion of "open texts" has functioned primarily as a justification for expert-produced, entertainment-education products. Coupled with the theoretical contributions of Mikhail Bakhtin, this approach uses the concept of participation both to guide the development of "pro-social content" through audience surveys and focus groups and more importantly to impute wide-ranging and long-term consequences via the "social dialogue" of individuals, institutions, and culture. More than any other research genre, entertainment-education has used the concept of participation to bolster the administrative position of the dominant paradigm.

The apparent contradictions of using participatory elements to enhance the status of traditional development practices has received intense attention by communication scholars. A recent, historical analysis focusing on the discourse of development suggests that the Latin American call for participation constituted a counter discourse to the dominant paradigm that was "easily co-opted by the established system and rendered ineffective or counter productive" (Escobar, 1999, p. 326). Indeed, the most pernicious instances of instrumental uses of participation appear to be attached to large agencies connected to the state or to transnational regimes such as the U.S. Agency for International Development or the World Bank (Mato, 1999; White, K., 1999).

The role of scholars who have integrated participation into essentially top-down development theories has been interpreted as akin to engaging in a "conspiracy theory" to redeem the dominant paradigm from the interrogation it experienced in the 1970s (Ascroft & Masilela, 1994; Lent, 1987). When put into practice, such uses of participatory communication exemplify, at best, passive collaboration, at worst, manipulative consultation done only to help advance a predetermined objective (Dudley, 1993; Díaz Bordenave, 1994). In fact, one development practitioner argues that any uses of participation will evolve into an "insidious domination tactic" if incorporated into the development discourse due to its historical association with Western political hegemony (White, K., 1999).

Few scholars would agree with this extreme position, especially those reviewed above who advocate administrative uses of participation. Moreover, a group of scholars conceptualizing participation as an end in and of itself has articulated utopian visions of the role of people in their own development. These visions are premised on a somewhat romantic belief that peasants, indians, and other marginalized persons possess local wisdom and a virtuous cultural ethos, and that participatory processes are inherently humanizing, liberating, and catalyzing (Dissanayake, 1985; Vargas, 1995; White, S., 1994). Beginning from such premises, scholars have prescribed totalizing processes of participatory communication where all interlocutors experience freedom and equal access to express feelings and experiences and to arrive at collective agendas for action (Díaz Bordenave, 1994; Kaplún, 1985; Nair & White, 1994a). Under these circumstances, all people are said to take ownership of communication and to experience empowering outcomes. These utopian visions of

development communication have been called "genuine" and "authentic" participation, as opposed to the manipulative, pseudo participation reviewed above.

The generalized premises and prescriptions of utopian scholars have been accompanied by equally optimistic renditions of participation by researchers who offer more concrete directions for development practice. For example, various phases in development—identifying problems, setting goals and objectives, planning procedures, assessing actions—have been identified, each one necessitating the full participation of intended beneficiaries (Kennedy, 1984; Midgley, 1986; Nair & White, 1994b). This has been accompanied by policy recommendations for the reorganization of major social institutions, such as the media system, in order to bring communication structures in line with participatory communication development approaches (Servaes, 1985). Placed on a continuum, these utopian, normative theories stand as polar opposites to the functional, administrative notions of participation advanced by scholars approaching development from a more conventional perspective.

The evolution of polarized conceptualizations of participatory development communication has been noted in a number scholarly reviews that have distinguished the two poles in slightly different ways. In fact, early research in this area suggested that participatory communication function as both a means and an end in development, thus foreshadowing the distinct conceptual paths that would be followed in the decades to come (O'Sullivan-Ryan & Kaplún, 1978). A number of scholars have interpreted this means-end division as a convenient and fruitful way of guiding communication decisions in development projects (Chu, 1994; Decker, 1988; Kaplún, 1989; Rodriguez, 1994). That is, a limited

role for communication—participation-as-means—may be appropriate in projects focused on teaching skills, carrying out prescribed objectives, or producing highly polished media products. Under such circumstances, social impacts are viewed as ephemeral, goals are immediate, and interaction is formal. In contrast, an expansive role for communication—participation-as-end—is appropriate in projects aimed at organizing movements, transforming social relations, and empowering individuals. Under such circumstances, social impacts are perpetual, goals are long-range, and interaction is fluid. Other scholars noting the means-end continuum in the research have been more critical of the distinction, arguing that participation-as-means is nothing more than a thinly veiled reincarnation of the dominant paradigm (Melkote, 1991; Vargas, 1995; White, S., 1994). They argue that this approach invokes participatory communication in an instrumental, manipulative, dominating manner that undercuts its theoretical legitimacy. While they recognize the existence of the gradations in the evolution of the concept of participation, they reject the means-to-an-end perspective as an illegitimate appropriation. Regardless of the subtle distinctions characterizing the ends of this continuum, these scholars have noted that most theory development of participation has not been predominately means or end, teaching or organizing, pseudo or genuine, but some version that resides between the poles. The remainder of this section reviews major concepts and issues that have emerged over the years but that defy convenient location at either end of the conceptual continuum.

From General Theories to Concrete Practices

The bulk of theoretical research into participatory communication does not claim an exclusive means or ends focus, but does vary in

terms of level of abstraction, issue of attention, or topic of interest. This section of the chapter briefly summarizes these various theoretical contributions moving from general and abstract scholarship to more applied and concrete research. This review will touch on the general notions of multiplicity, power, and popular mobilization, as well as specific attention to levels of participation, media applications, and concrete methods of inquiry. The purpose of doing this is to display the various degrees of participation that have emerged over the years and to stake out some of the dominant patterns of interest that this field has generated. Holding these general patterns in relief to the origins of interest in participatory communication will form the basis for making recommendations for future research.

One of the more general and fully articulated concepts to emerge from the participatory communication tradition is the notion of multiplicity in one world (Servaes, 1985, 1986, 1989). This approach recommends strong, grass-roots participation in development efforts, but explicitly rejects universal approaches to its application (Servaes, 1986, 1996a). Instead, it emphasizes the terms "diversity" and "pluralism," suggesting that nations and regions cultivate their own, responsive approaches to self-determined development goals that emerge out of participatory processes. The reluctance to advocate universal theorizing stems from the observation that even within fairly homogeneous cultures, competing political, social, and cultural interests and groups will be found (Servaes, 1985). The conflicts inherent in all social systems suggest that "rigid and general strategies for participation are neither possible nor desirable. It is a process that unfolds in each unique situation" (Servaes, 1996a, p. 23). Eschewing even "general strategies for participation" constitutes a naive faith in the

power of communication to negotiate stark political differences and casts multiplicity into a relativistic arena that has difficulty sustaining coherence within the larger discourse of development.

The strain on theoretical coherence is evident in the introduction of universal principles and totalizing concepts that accompany this relativized communication approach. The early multiplicity research, for example, claimed that a universal "right to communicate" formed the basis for all multiplicity approaches to development communication (Servaes, 1986). Later scholars adopting the multiplicity framework reiterated this position and added that "cultural processes" should be granted primacy in both the study and practice of development communication (White, R. 1994; Wildemeersch, 1999). Most recently, Servaes (1998) has suggested that a "global ethics" grounded in principles of democracy and respect for human rights be adopted unilaterally by development agencies. This tension between a rejection of universal approaches and the advocacy of global principles is a contradiction that permeates the development communication field generally in its attempts to reconcile subjectivity/agency and structure/political economy (Dervin & Huesca, 1997, 1999). Moreover it is emblematic of a widespread reluctance among scholars to establish normative standards of participatory communication on philosophical grounds (Deetz, 1992). While this contradiction does represent theoretical incoherence, it more significantly demonstrates the desire to honor differential forms of human agency that generate diverse cultural practices, while reckoning with the material constraints of an undemocratic, profit-driven communication environment.

Another area of general, theoretical attention in participatory communication has centered more closely on those material

constraints by focusing on the role of power in development. Early advocates of participatory approaches either ignored the issue of power or naively called for its general redistribution within and between nations. More recent research has focused explicitly on power and conceptualized it in a nuanced and problematic way. For the most part, power has been theorized as both multi-centered—not one dimensional—and asymmetrical (Servaes, 1996c; Tehranian, 1999). This role acknowledges the force of institutions and structures, but emphasizes the role of human agency in reproducing and transforming them (Tehranian, 1999). Within this generalized framework of power, participatory communication is seen by some as being a potential source of social transformation (Nair & White, 1994a; Riaño, 1994). By virtue of the differences—ethnic, gender, sexual, and the like—that multiple social actors bring development projects, participatory communication reveals how power functions to subordinate certain groups of people (Riaño, 1994). Furthermore, participation functions to cultivate "generative power" where individuals and groups develop the capacity for action, which can be harnessed to reshape and transform conditions of subordination (Nair & White, 1994a). While mindful of the asymmetrical characteristics of power in society, these positions are generally optimistic regarding the prospects of transformation via participatory communication.

Less optimistic are scholars who see participation as either insufficient or problematic in and of itself in terms of altering power relationships in society. For these scholars, participatory communication may be helpful in attaining structural transformations in the land tenure, political, or economic arrangements of society, which are viewed as the root sources of subordination (Hedebro, 1982; Lozare, 1994; Nerfin, 1977). As

such, participatory communication is necessary but not sufficient for engaging and altering power relationships. In fact, participatory communication that is not guided toward an a priori structural goal, such as building progressive institutions or deconstructing dominating discourses, runs the risk of dissolving into a self-indulgent exercise or being coopted by an established and elitist organization (Escobar, 1999; O'Connor, 1990). Worse yet, participatory communication by itself is capable of reproducing inegalitarian power structures, especially in regard to gender relations (Wilkins, 1999, 2000). For these authors, the relationship between participatory communication and dominant power structures is neither transparent nor unproblematic.

An approach to the issue of participatory communication and power that most explicitly bridges the agency-structure divide is the scholarship that focuses on the role of participation in relation to popular movements. One position in this research argues that popular movements are inherently linked to participatory communication projects because "liberation" is an axiomatic quality of participation (Riaño, 1994). That is, the openness required of participatory communication leads to awareness of differences that reveal inequalities and result in movements to address and transform them. A distinct but related perspective notes that participation emerges from popular movements that engage in structural reforms but rely on continual regeneration through broad social participation (Servaes, 1996b; White, R., 1994). Large-scale popular movements, therefore, serve as valuable laboratories for breaking through artificial boundaries that obscure the role of participatory communication in the transformation and reproduction of dominant relations. Some scholars have gone farther and suggested that development research actively align

itself with popular movements in order to yield insights that contribute directly to participatory, social change projects (Rahman, 1993; Servaes & Arnst, 1999). This nexus between participation and popular liberation movements constitutes and entry point for negotiating problematic issues of power.

Concrete Applications and Operationalizations

Research attending to abstract theoretical concerns of multiplicity, power, and mobilization demonstrates the negotiation of the means/end polarity in the participatory communication literature. But a range of scholarship focused on more specific issues and concerns defies simple means/end classification, as well. This section of the chapter briefly reviews scholarship focusing on more concrete issues such as levels of participation, media applications, and research methods.

A number of researchers have worked to identify differential levels and intensities of participation in development projects. These scholars have identified stages of participation, ranging from initial access to communication resources to active identification of development issues and goals to full authority in project governance (Fraser & Restrepo-Estrada, 1998; Krohling Peruzzo, 1996; Servaes, 1996a). These stages are usually conceptualized as being guided either by contextual qualities of the participants themselves or by organizational constraints of the supporting development institutions. For example, Thapalia (1996) suggested that development practitioners cultivate a stronger, more directive role for themselves—something she labeled "transformational leadership"—aimed at constructing a shared vision and commitment to action in a community. She argues for resurrecting the discredited notion of "leadership" because egalitarian participation is frequently incommensurable with the desires and

interests of local people. Like the constraints created by local cultural contexts, organizational characteristics impose limitations on participation, as well. Large development agencies most frequently implement participation on limited level, such as using focus groups in the initial phase of an information campaign, because of organizational goals and limitations on time and resources (McKee, 1994; Wilkins, 1999). The various levels identified by these researchers are conceptualized in a complex interaction with contextual and structural constraints that move beyond the binary means/end continuum suggested by other scholars. Furthermore, they are acutely concerned with concrete applications of participatory communication in development.

Another area of scholarship that has focused on communication applications concerns participatory uses of media in development. Soon after the Latin American challenge to the dominant paradigm of development, scholars began focusing on participatory applications in media. Fueled by a series of Unesco meetings that led to the declaration for a New World Information and Communication Order, these scholars identified the concepts of access (to communication resources), participation (in planning, decision-making, and production), and self-management (collective ownership and policy-making) in media development (O'Sullivan-Ryan & Kaplún, 1978; Berrigan, 1981). Since then, systematic attention has been given to various aspects of participatory media, including audience involvement in message creation (Mody, 1991; Nair & White, 1993a; 1993b; 1994b; Thomas, 1994), identity construction (Rodriguez, 1994), and institution building (Díaz Bordenave, 1985; Fadul, Lins da Silva & Santoro, 1982). In fact, an entire communication subfield of "alternative media" has spun off of the initial criticisms of the dominant paradigm and call for

participatory approaches to social change (see Atwood & McAnany, 1986; Huesca & Dervin, 1994; Reyes Matta, 1983; Simpson Grinberg, 1986).

While scholarly attention has been given to many abstract and concrete issues relevant to participatory communication, the area of research methods has been neglected to some extent (Ascroft & Masilela, 1994; Melkote, 1991). Recently this situation has begun to change, however, with scholars emphasizing the importance of advancing research methods that are commensurate with the philosophy and theory that underpins participatory communication for development (Dervin & Huesca, 1997, 1999; Jacobson, 1996; Servaes & Arnst, 1999; White, R., 1999). At the level of methodology, this requires thinking through the ontological and epistemological assumptions that mandate the dissolution of subject-object relations and lay the groundwork for participatory communication for development (Dervin & Huesca, 1999; Jacobson, 1993, 1996). It also requires the establishment of criteria of validity in order to fulfill the self-reflexive, evaluative dimension of research, as well as to advance comparative studies in the field. Such criteria might be imported from parallel communication theories, such as Habermas' ideal speech situation (Jacobson & Kolluri, 1999), or they might emerge from the practical outcomes of the research process itself (Escobar, 1999; Servaes & Arnst, 1999). At the level of method, an orientation toward participatory action research has been suggested as perhaps the most compatible approach to the study of participatory communication (Einsiedel, 1999; Escobar, 1999; Jacobson, 1993; White, R. 1999). Such methods are explicitly political, calling on researchers to align themselves with specific social actors and to embrace their goals and purposes. The recent attention to

methodology and method may foreshadow renewed interest in conducting empirical research into participatory communication for development.

This brief sketch of the multiple issues receiving scholarly attention was intended to identify the major patterns shaping our understanding of participatory communication for development. By examining these patterns against the issues raised in the Latin American challenge to the dominant paradigm, I intend to identify some fruitful directions for future research in the concluding section of this chapter.

Revisiting Key Concepts

The future of participatory communication for development is uncertain because of serious practical and conceptual impediments facing it. Practical impediments include a lack of institutional support as the approach's long-range, time-consuming, and symbolic (*conscientização*, empowerment) dimensions do not conform to the evaluative criteria of many development bureaucracies (Arnst, 1996; Fraser & Restrepo-Estrada, 1998; Servaes, 1998; Servaes & Arnst, 1999; Wilkins, 1999). These same scholars note that strong participatory projects transfer control from officials to beneficiaries and are often met with resistance from experts whose power is jeopardized. Conceptual impediments include definitional fuzziness, exemplified by the wide-ranging scholarship outlined above (Ascroft & Masilela, 1994; Jacobson, 1994; Vargas, 1995; White, S. 1994). Several scholars have noted that because of this definitional fuzziness, dominant communication patterns and oppressive social relationships can be and are reproduced under the guise of participation (Kaplún, 1985, 1989; Wilkins, 1999).

While the challenges to participatory communication for development appear formidable, reasons for optimism are provided by scholars who have documented renewed interest in this approach (Ascroft & Masilela, 1994; Fraser & Restrepo-Estrada, 1998; Melkote, 1993; Nair & White, 1993c; Vargas, 1995). Attention to participation as a component in development is being embraced by both small, non-governmental organizations as well as large institutions, albeit in problematic forms as documented above. The challenge before contemporary scholars is to continue advancing this area of theory and practice in light of the practical and conceptual impediments currently facing it. Such advancement can occur by revisiting key notions that have been pursued and neglected in the 30-year-old call to participatory communication.

On the conceptual level, scholars should redouble their efforts to base development practices and analyses on definitions of communication that emphasize its dynamic process nature. Much of the conceptual fuzziness in this field is due to instrumental adoptions and adaptations of participation in projects that are essentially attempts to improve information transfers and cloak them as communication. Furthermore, this fuzziness is compounded when participation is incorporated into applications clearly based on linear models of communication, such as "message development." Freezing communication action into static components effectively ignores the dynamic process roots of the Latin American challenge and slides back into the linear models that guided modernization and its top-down projects. Concerns about moving from state-entity concepts to process-dynamic models are evident not only in communication, but in other social science disciplines, as well (Dervin, 1993; Bruner, 1986; Fals Borda, 1991). Adopting process models as the foundation of theory

and practice will provide conceptual guidance for negotiating the means-end polarity and for distinguishing participatory communication from information transfer.

Other conceptual components worthy of recovering and reinforcing are the ethical and political mandates that underpinned the Latin American call for participatory communication. These mandates have become obscured, if not lost altogether, as scholars have emphasized multiplicity, the primacy of culture, and other notions that have effectively relativized the meaning of participation. Although the early denunciations of the dominant paradigm called for dialogue, democracy, and participation, they did so with a clear sense of moral commitment to strive for social justice. The claim to moral authority was grounded in the liberation theology movement popular at the time but never claiming a prominent place in the theoretical challenges to the dominant paradigm. Consequently, the liberation theology connection to the call for participatory communication has been lost in all but a few research projects conducted in subsequent years (Díaz Bordenave, 1994; Fals Borda, 1988; Tehranian, 1999; Vargas, 1995). Nevertheless, the work of Freire—whose adult education project in Recife was modeled on Catholic base community meetings—has been infused consistently with references to theologians and declarations of faith and commitment to oppressed groups in society (Freire 1970, 1973, 1997; Horton & Freire, 1990). The intensity of these dimensions were maintained in his most recent analyses of neoliberal Brazil in the 1990s, when he suggested, "It is urgent that the disowned unite and that we all fight in favor of liberation, transforming this offensive world into a more people-oriented one, from both a political and an ethical standpoint" (Freire, 1997, p. 46). Strengthening the ethical and political grounds of participatory

communication for development will function to enhance conceptual clarity and to reduce the likelihood that participatory projects will reproduce inegalitarian relationships.

One practical step that researchers can take to advance the agenda of participatory communication for development is to begin aligning themselves with new social movements that have emerged recently worldwide. New social movements constitute a nexus where concerns for communication process, social justice, and broad participation converge as natural laboratories for exploring participatory communication for development. A number of researchers noted above have already identified popular movements as an arena worthy of scholarly attention. Their suggestion is further strengthened by the recent attention given to method and methodology, particularly those that advocate an action orientation to scholarship of and for social change. The intensive study of new social movements will not only give scholars direction in their research, it might address some of the issues of efficacy raised by development bureaucracies that demand demonstrable evidence of broad, material consequences of specific projects.

The concept of participatory communication for development is the most resilient and useful notion that has emerged from the challenges to the dominant paradigm of modernization. It has generated a diverse body of scholarship that has issued new challenges, identified problems, documented achievements, and advanced theoretical understanding. The past 30 years of research demonstrates substantial progress, but more than that, it contains important traces for the continued advancement of scholarship in this area.

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9.

Communication for Development Approaches of Some Governmental and Non-Governmental Agencies

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In this chapter, we first briefly present two communication models: a 'diffusion/mechanistic' versus a 'participatory/organic' communication model. These models should be seen as extremes on a continuum.

Secondly, also at the policy and planning level one can distinguish between different approaches, which build on the 'diffusion model' versus the 'participatory model'.

Thirdly, we will analyse the policies of a number of national and international governmental and non-governmental agencies on the basis of the above made distinction.

Diffusion versus Participatory Model

The main characteristics of *the diffusion model* are:

1- Derived from a worldview of dominance over one's environment, the Western conception of communication is overwhelmingly oriented towards persuasion. Akin to the modernisation paradigm in both theory and ideology, the communication approach is unidirectional, from the informed 'source' to the uninformed 'receiver'.

2- Congruent with the modernisation philosophy, the diffusion and development support communication approaches tend to assign responsibility for the problem of underdevelopment to peoples residing in those societies.

3- Development as modernisation and communication as one-way persuasion reached their zenith through the diffusion of innovations, the two-step-flow, and other 'social marketing' strategies of attitude and behaviour change directed at 'underdeveloped' peoples.

4- Mass media play the pre-eminent role in the campaign of development through communication, and early predictions were of great effects. Bi-directional models and strategies such as feedback were added to render the initial message more effective.

5- Mass audiences were 'influenced' with predispositions toward development and social institutions. Such media technology has been taken either as the sole solution, the driving force, or simply a value-free tool in the process of development.

6- Research of the diffusion approach, like the modernisation theory, suffers from an overemphasis on quantitative criteria to the exclusion of social and cultural factors. As a result, the manner in which foreign media hardware and software interact within a cultural context is largely unexplored.

The main characteristics of *the participatory model* are:

1- The participatory model sees people as the controlling actors or participants for development. People will have self-appreciation instead of self-depreciation. Development is meant to liberate and emancipate people. Local culture is respected.

2- The participatory model sees people as the nucleus of development. Development means lifting up the spirits of a local community to take pride in its own culture, intellect and environment. Development aims to educate and stimulate people to be active in self and communal improvements while maintaining a balanced ecology. Authentic participation, though widely espoused in the literature, is not in everyone's interest. Such programmes are not easily implemented, highly predictable, or readily controlled.

3- The participatory model emphasises on the local community rather than the nation state, on monistic universalism rather than nationalism, on spiritualism rather than secular humanism, on dialogue rather than monologue, and on emancipation rather than alienation.

4- Participation involves the redistribution of power. Participation aims at redistributing the elites' power so that a community can become a full-fledged democratic one. As such, it directly threatens those whose position and/or very existence depends upon power and its exercise over others. Reactions to such threats are sometimes overt, but most often are manifested as less visible, yet steady and continuous resistance.

DevCom Approaches in Intergovernmental and Non-Governmental Agencies

The theoretical changes in the perspective on development communication, have also reached the level of policymakers. As a result, different methodologies and terminologies have evolved, which often make it difficult for agencies, even though they share a common commitment to the overall goals of development communication, to identify common ground, arrive at a full

understanding of each other's objectives, or to co-operate effectively in operational projects.

Communication theories such as the 'diffusion of innovations', the 'two-step-flow', or the 'extension' approaches are quite congruent with the elitist, vertical or top-down orientation of the diffusion model. However, the reality often proves much more complex than the theory.

During discussions on international political and academic forums new insights on the role and place of communication for development emerged which favour two-way and horizontal communication.

Therefore, in 1989, the Unesco started a UNFPA-financed project on *Integrated Approaches to Development Communication*. Its objectives were to review the various approaches and methodologies, to identify their differences and common features, and to create a framework for integrated and co-operative action.

The project analysed the following agencies and projects:

7 United Nations Agencies: the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO), International Labour Organisation (ILO), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (Unesco), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF), World Health Organisation (WHO);

3 Governmental agencies: Agence de Coopération Culturelle et Technique / Agency for Cultural and Technical Co-operation (ACCT), Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), United States Agency for International Development (USAID);

9 Non-governmental organisations: African Council for Communication Education / Conseil Africain d'Enseignement de

Communication (ACCE), Asian Mass Communication and Information Centre (AMIC), Association Mondiale des Radiodiffuseurs Communautaires / World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC), Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES), Instituto para America Latina (IPAL), Radio Nederland Training Centre (RNTC), Women's Feature Service (WFS), World Association for Christian Communication (WACC), Worldview International Foundation (WIF); and

9 Case studies: Elaborated case studies of development communication in action, presenting a range of strategies in different world regions: Brazilian Telenovelas, Expanded Programme on Immunisation (EPI) (Bangladesh), Inter Press Service (IPS), Kheda Communications Project (India), Mahaweli Community Radio (Sri Lanka), Radio Enriquillo (Dominican Republic), Rural Communication System for Development in Mexico's Tropical Wetlands (PRODERITH), Social Marketing Campaigns, West and Central Africa News Agencies Development/Developpement des Agences de Presse en Afrique de l'Ouest et Centrale (WANAD).

Table 1: Agencies and Cases by Devcom Approaches

	Diffusion of innovations	Network dev. & documentat	Social marketing	Social mobilization	DSC/Institut Development	Community media
UN AGENCIES						
FAO	xxxxxxxxxx				xxxxxxxxxx	xxxxxxxxxx
ILO					xxxxxxxxxx	
UNDP					xxxxxxxxxx	
UNESCO		xxxxxxxxxx			xxxxxxxxxx	xxxxxxxxxx
UNFPA	xxxxxxxxxx	xxxxxxxxxx	xxxxxxxxx			
UNICEF	xxxxxxxxxx	xxxxxxxxxx		xxxxxxxxxx	xxxxxxxxxx	xxxxxxxxxx
WHO	xxxxxxxxxx		xxxxxxxxx			

GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES

	1	2	3	4	5	6
ACCT		xxxxxxxxx			xxxxxxxxxx	
AID	xxxxxxxxx	xxxxxxxxx	xxxxxxxxx		xxxxxxxxxx	
CIDA		xxxxxxxxx			xxxxxxxxxx	xxxxxxxxxx
DANIDA					xxxxxxxxxx	xxxxxxxxxx

NON-GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES

	1	2	3	4	5	6
ACCE		xxxxxxxxx				
AMARC		xxxxxxxxx				xxxxxxxxx
AMIC	xxxxxxxxx	xxxxxxxxx			xxxxxxxxxx	
FES		xxxxxxxxx			xxxxxxxxxx	xxxxxxxxx
IPAL		xxxxxxxxx				xxxxxxxxx
RNTC					xxxxxxxxx	xxxxxxxxx
WACC		xxxxxxxxx			xxxxxxxxx	xxxxxxxxx
WFS		xxxxxxxxx				
WIF				xxxxxxxxx		xxxxxxxxx

CASE STUDIES

	1	2	3	4	5	6
AIDHealthAFR	xxxxxxxxx		xxxxxxxxxx		xxxxxxxxxx	
Brazil. telen	xxxxxxxxx		xxxxxxxxxx			
EPI BanglaD	xxxxxxxxx			xxxxxxxxx		xxxxxxxxx
IPS		xxxxxxxxx		xxxxxxxxx		
Kheda India	xxxxxxxxx			xxxxxxxxx		xxxxxxxxx
Mahaweli SL					xxxxxxxxx	xxxxxxxxx
Proderith M				xxxxxxxxx	xxxxxxxxx	xxxxxxxxx
REnriquillo				xxxxxxxxx	xxxxxxxxx	xxxxxxxxx
WANAD		xxxxxxxxx				

The distinct devcom approaches and media used have been summarised in the enclosed matrixes (in Table 1). Some of these approaches can be grouped together under the heading of the diffusion model, others under the participatory model.

The diffusion model mainly builds on Development Support Communication (DSC), delivery strategies and media approaches.

Organisations adopting this model stress the need for careful planning of communication and implementation, but also

emphasize the importance of creativity and flexibility in the planning process.

1- The DSC Process Model

Broken down to its essential elements, the systematic approach, which is thought to be particularly appropriate for multi-media campaigns, comprises the following four stages:

1. Needs Assessment / Information Gathering

Determine key development priorities through field surveys, community consensus, interviews with field specialists and subject matter specialists; assess media channels available to potential target groups; ascertain whether technology transfer inputs are readily available.

2. Decision Making / Strategy Development

Prioritize needs, select the most important and establish development or project objectives to be addressed; identify target groups, carry out baseline knowledge, attitudes, practices (KAP) survey, conduct focus group sessions, determine multi-media mix and message design strategies.

3. Implementation

Draw up an action plan, produce and field test samples of media materials, revise and finalize materials, train field staff in content and use of materials, distribute materials, and monitor campaign as it unfolds.

4. Evaluation

Carry out small-scale field evaluations at strategic points during campaign to suggest where "in course" changes may be warranted; conduct full-scale post-campaign impact evaluation survey and use as feed-forward for future campaigns.

2- Multi-Media Approaches

No single media is better than any other. Therefore, multi-media approaches are considered the most effective, and that behavioural change is seldom the result of exposure to media alone. Therefore, audience research, which amongst other things establishes a knowledge base regarding the type of media rural people have access to, those they like and those they would love to own, determines to a large extent the proposed choice of media.

At the regional level, already existing telecommunication systems can be modified, adapted and expanded to serve the needs of local and national groups. By using existing infrastructure, no new expensive technology is needed. Setting up regional television news exchange networks implies reaching consensus between authorities and TV corporations to make use of already existing satellite services and ground stations wherever possible. If additional infrastructure is necessary, it is important to implement the economically, socially and culturally most preferable hardware.

a) *Rural radio*: Radio is generally agreed to be the most useful mass medium in rural development projects. Although television is more prestigious, powerful and persuasive, radio is more widely available in rural areas, cheaper and easier in production and reception, quicker, simpler, less monopolized and can more easily facilitate localized information.

b) *Group media*: Among the group media, video is increasing its popularity. Though video is highly effective, it also calls for a careful strategy and skilled producers.

Audio-visual media in general make it possible to:

- help overcome barriers of illiteracy and incomprehension, by conveying ideas and practices in audio and visual formats;

- illustrate new ideas and techniques more effectively than by word-of-mouth alone, and thus improve the impact of extension and training;
- compress time, as for instance a whole crop cycle can be shown in a short presentation;
- compress space, as events and practices in distant locations can be transferred to other places where they can be useful testimonials;
- standardize technical information, by creating audio-visual materials that illustrate the best available advice to farmers and by having these materials used throughout the extension and farmer training chain, thereby ensuring that the technical information will not become distorted during its passage from its source to the smallest and most remote farmer.

c) *Interpersonal communication*: Interpersonal communication skills do also play a major role in rural communication programmes. Interpersonal communication moves beyond a good understanding of the technical subject matter. It also calls for knowledge and skills concerned with empathy, group and individual psychology, and group dynamics. It requires sensitivity to the needs and views of others, listening skills, and attitudes favourable to working with people as a trusted helper, rather than an agent of authority telling people what to do. Proper training of development staff in this area is therefore also stressed.

d) *Traditional and popular media*: Village and street theatre, puppets, songs, dances and storytelling have become familiar media used either in mass or group settings.

3- The Campaign Strategy

The multi-channel communication campaigns are seen as an effective strategy in the arsenal of DSC mechanisms, as they spur action in areas of high development priority. These campaigns usually involve broadcasting, village based group media, and

intensive use of interpersonal communication techniques through institutional channels such as extension workers, community workers, etc. The campaigns are usually carried out at a national or regional level over a short period of time, focus on a specific topic of high development priority and have a limited set of objectives, e.g. expanding rice production through increased cultivation of swamp farms in Sierra Leone, a two-month campaign.

Furthermore, one has to recognize, firstly, the importance of good project management, because studies indicated that many projects failed due to poor management, and, secondly, the training of trainers. Two additional components or sub-systems of the campaign approach are therefore: (1) the "Management Plan" aimed at coordinating people and events, and (2) the "Staff Training Plan" which is adapted from the UNDP model.

4- Training

In cooperation with local training and development centers, initial and follow-up training systems are developed, implemented and evaluated. This concerns training for broadcasting personnel and agency technicians, as well as the training of journalists. Within the central objective to improve the quality of output and bilateral communication flows, exchange programmes are set up. Communication manuals written by experts from First and Third World countries serve as a guideline for scriptwriters, journalists and educational radio workers. These handbooks often are the result of workshops and conferences held between local experts from different regions.

5- Research

In close cooperation with regional centres, and the more practically oriented broadcasting unions, communication systems are developed. This decentralized approach is regarded as essential for the development of socio-cultural autonomous and situation-specific methods and strategies. Apart from conveying modern methods of training in programme production and engineering, efforts are made to design blueprints for media laws and regulations.

Conferences held between different experts aim at projecting and forecasting consequences of local and international communication developments from an interdisciplinary point of view. The outcome of these meetings serve as a starting point for further research.

The participatory model calls for upward, transactive, open and radical forms of planning that encompass both grassroots collective actions (i.e., planning in the small), and large-scale processes (i.e., planning in the large). This kind of planning and research is centrally conceived with human growth, learning processes through mobilisation, and the basic aim is to involve the people under study co-operatively in the planning and research process, with the planner or researcher as a facilitator and participant.

Participation communication methods employed, include:

1- A Participatory Approach to Evaluation:
Participatory communication projects always emphasize democratic participation in its operations. Therefore, the project staff is inclined toward a participatory approach to evaluation. The assumption is that if staff is directly involved in the determination of evaluation results, they will also be more committed to carrying

out the recommendations. Thus the staff is involved at various stages of the evaluation process—selection of objectives, development of the methodology, data collection and analysis. However, the process attempts to balance the in-depth knowledge of the project's operations with the research experience and independent perspective of 'outside' facilitators of the evaluation.

2- A Participatory Approach to Research:
Data collection is carried out with the involvement of project staff and local people. Six methods are normally used to collect data: (a) surveys, (b) community meetings, (c) focus groups, (d) analysis of programming, (e) document analysis, and (f) participatory observation.

3- Quantitative and Qualitative Research Methods:
Research methods employed focus on a combination and interpretation of quantitative and qualitative data. For quantitative data, clear-cut conventions exist as to what can be done with data and how data should be collected. Sometimes some of these conventions (e.g. inter-coder reliability) cannot be met, due to the specific situations in which the research is executed (for instance, the 'inexperience' of the interviewers with the above conventions). However, most of these methodological problems in the quantitative part of the research can be corrected through the qualitative research findings. The collection of qualitative data assists in formulating the specific content of the questionnaires by identifying the most important key variables or sensitizing concepts under which more specific data can be explored. It also aids in controlling the quantitative data. And, even more significantly, qualitative data enlivens and makes more concrete the statistical pictures which come out of survey information.

Some standards of data collection, such as a high degree of statistical reliability, can sometimes not be met. Firstly, because most data are gathered by associates of the project, rather than by independent observers and, secondly, because many of them are inexperienced in the protocols of data collection, although there may be a provision of training. It is agreeable that problems with quantitative measurements can be corrected through more in-depth qualitative research, and careful data analysis and interpretation. Participatory researchers also believe that qualitative data broaden the findings suggested by the statistical data.

4- A Community Based Approach:
Why does the community have such trust and support for participatory projects? "Because the people that work with it are valuable resources." "Because they have the support and acceptance of the people." "Because they make continual efforts toward improvement, as in this evaluation." These are the three answers most frequently cited by respondents during a participatory evaluation. They are the three basic elements by which a democratic organization can transcend its limitations, redefine vision: a team that values people, works to revise its practice, and ensures that the people recognize this project as their own.

5- Community Participation:
The audience needs to express their needs and wishes. The organization of the project is democratic. This means that the population can cooperate in the development of programmes. Access for anyone to the microphones or other resources is all important. People express their feedback and their own ideas.

Access for farmers in remote villages is made easier through the "unidad movil" (a mobile recording unit).

Most important is to gain the trust of the people.

Therefore, one could call the conventional strategies 'diffusion/mechanistic' models, as the human being is considered as just a 'thing', while participatory strategies are more 'organic', spiritually oriented and 'human', they believe in the humanness, the importance of people (see Table 2: Mechanistic vs. Organic Model). Both models should be regarded as opposite positions on a continuum.

Table 2: Mechanistic vs. Organic Model

MECHANISTIC MODEL ORGANIC MODEL

OVERALL OBJECTIVES

MECHANISTIC MODEL	ORGANIC MODEL
Motive for co-operation:	
People need to be helped.	People are able to help themselves.
Charity.	Empowerment.
Assumption about target group:	
People lack abilities and resources to develop themselves. They are helpless.	People do have abilities to develop themselves. These can be mobilized.
Attitude towards problems:	
Problem solving.	Problem posing.
Attitude towards participation:	
Means to achieve ends.	A never-ending process.
Objective of policymakers or researchers:	
Implementation of project objectives.	Striving toward a common vision and understanding of self-development.
Learning relationship:	
Teacher-student; know-all versus know-nothing. Paternalistic.	Everybody is a teacher and student at the same time; everybody has something of interest to share.
Valuation of knowledge:	
Western knowledge is superior.	Traditional knowledge is equally relevant.
Agent of change:	
Policymaker or researcher.	People themselves.
People seen as:	
Targets, objects.	Subjects, actors.
'Leadership' position:	

Project leader.   Coordinator, animator, facilitator.

Selection of 'leaders':
Appointed by higher authority.   Preferable selected by people themselves.

'Leadership' qualifications:
Decision-making, management, authoritative.   Cooperation, delegation, receptive, adaptability to new circumstances.

Relationship with people and colleagues:
Expert-counterpart; authority centered.   Shared Leadership; shared responsibility.

POLICY AND PLANNING

Design criteria:
Productivity and economic growth.   Needs and criteria for well being formulated by people themselves.

Organizational structure:
Hierarchical, vertical.   Horizontal, two-way.

Type of work:
Technical-economic.   Educational-organizational.

Approach to work:
Executing tasks.   Listening to people. Facilitating.

Organization of work:
Formal, static.   Informal, dynamic.

Mode of communication:
Monologue, consultation.   Dialogue.

COMMUNICATION PROJECTS

Type of media used:
Mainly mass media.   Mixed and integrated media use; also interpersonal communication.

Direction of ideas and information:
Top-down, one-way.   Bottom-up, two-way.

IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION

Planning format:
Blueprint.   Open-ended.
Project approach.   Process approach.

Change seen as :
Improvement.   Transformation.

Time perspective:
Short term.   Long term.

Effect of absence of leader:
Project activities slow down.   Development process continues.

Initiative for evaluation:
By funding agency or higher authority.   Usually initiated by people themselves.

Type of solutions:
Symptom curing; evolutionary change.   Aimed at elimination of root causes; structural change.

Conclusion

It should be obvious by now that *no all-embracing view on development* is on offer. No theory has achieved and maintained explanatory dominance. Each of the above three theoretical perspectives still does find support among academics, policy makers, international organisations, and the general public.

In general, adopted and updated versions of the ideas upon which the modernisation theory is built—economic growth, centralised planning, and the belief that underdevelopment is rooted in mainly internal causes which can be solved by external (technological) 'aid'—are still shared by many development agencies and governments. A *revitalised modernisation perspective* in which some of the errors of the past are acknowledged and efforts are made to deal in new ways (as outlined in the multiplicity view) remains the dominant perspective in practice but becomes increasingly more difficult to defend in theory. On the other side, while the multiplicity theory is gaining ground in academic spheres, in practice it is still looked upon as a sympathetic though idealistic side-show.

At a more applied level, several perspectives on communication for development could be adopted and pursued.

A first perspective could be of *communication as a process*, often seen in metaphor as the fabric of society. It is not confined to the media or to messages, but to their interaction in a network of social relationships. By extension, the reception, evaluation, and use of media messages, from whatever source, are as important as their means of production and transmission.

A second perspective is of *communications media as a mixed system of mass communication and interpersonal channels*, with

mutual impact and reinforcement. In other words, the mass media should not be seen in isolation from other conduits.

Another perspective of communications in the development process is from an *intersectoral and interagency* concern. This view is not confined to information or broadcasting organisations and ministries, but extends to all sectors, and its success in influencing and sustaining development depends to a large extent on the adequacy of mechanisms for integration and co-ordination.

10.

UNESCO's Contributions to Cultural Diversity and Communication for Development

UNESCO

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has been concerned with communication since its inception in 1946, as reflected in Article 1.2 of the Constitution, which invites the Organization to 'collaborate in the work of advancing the mutual knowledge and understanding of peoples, through all means of mass communication, and to that end recommend such international agreements as may be necessary to promote the free flow of ideas by word and image'. UNESCO is also recognized by the United Nations General Assembly as possessing the lead mandate in the field of social communication (in parallel to the technical mandate of the International Telecommunication Union). Unlike many other organizations, therefore, UNESCO sees communication as a major programme in its own right, not only as a support to, or as a vector of the development process.

The main orientations of UNESCO's Sector for Communication and Information have, in recent years, been in line with the main policy development of other leading United Nations agencies dedicated to human development.

For UNESCO the challenge is to build a knowledge society based on the sharing of knowledge and incorporating all the socio-cultural and ethical dimensions of sustainable development. Beyond the technological aspects, the real challenge is to take account of the

human dimension of the digital divide. In this respect, education constitutes a priority objective because there can be no Information for All (IFA) without education for all. In order to meet this major challenges posed by the development of the new Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in the years to come, UNESCO provides a platform for international policy discussion and guidelines for action on the preservation of information and universal access to it, on the ethical, legal and societal consequences of ICT developments specially with the Information For All Programme, providing training, networking and supporting indigenous knowledge.

Policy Changes After 1989

The Third Medium Term Plan, adopted by UNESCO's General Conference in 1989, after the end of the Cold War, set priority and strategic objectives of the communication programme as: 'to render more operational the concern of the Organization to ensure a free flow of information at international as well as national levels, and its wider and better balanced dissemination, without any obstacle to the freedom of expression, and to strengthen communication capacities in the developing countries, so that they may participate more actively in the communication process'. Within the framework of communication in the service of humanity, UNESCO committed itself to programmes that promote and monitor the exercise of free expression, support media independence, pluralism and diversity, and emphasize professional training and development of human and infrastructure resources in communication. In an effort to strengthen the South-North dialogue, the strategy called for a better dialogue and equilibrium between and among regions, and a more regular flow of programmes and materials across economic and cultural frontiers.

The second area of commitment reinforced UNESCO's long-standing work in support of developing countries, primarily through infrastructure building and training, concentrated on the activities of the International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC).

The third focus of attention centered on the new communication technologies, their socio-cultural impact, development potential and relevance to UNESCO's spheres of competence, as well as on the need for users and audiences to become media-literate.

The Fourth Medium-Term Plan for 1996-2001 reinforced these objectives and added an agenda for peace: conflict prevention, emergency assistance and post-conflict peace building.

These are new fields of action for UNESCO. With regard to conflict prevention, UNESCO strengthened its clearing-house function for the exchange of information on current research and experience concerning the means of ensuring the early detection and peaceful settlement of conflicts.

With regard to emergency assistance, UNESCO has become a strong advocate in the international community of the idea that humanitarian assistance cannot be reduced merely to the supply of food, medicine and blankets; that there must be a close link between the concepts of 'relief', 'rehabilitation' and 'long-term development'; and that emergency operations must include from the beginning an assistance to independent media as well as an education component. This idea has gained ground: there is growing recognition of the principle that populations in conflict should have access to non-partisan information and should have an equally inalienable right to education as all other human beings. UNESCO's strategy therefore consists in endeavoring to set up temporary educational structures in emergency situations, particularly for displaced persons and refugees. The Organization's

role can only be as a catalyst: it is not so much to build schools or print school textbooks as to assess priority education needs, formulate strategies to meet them in conjunction with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), UNICEF and FAO and contribute to the formulation of consolidated appeals for international humanitarian assistance co-coordinated by the United Nations Department of Humanitarian Affairs (UNDHA).

While education is one of the high priorities in emergency situations, assistance to the independent media can prove to be fundamental to the reconciliation process. To counter warmongering propaganda and incitement to hatred in triggering and aggravating conflict, UNESCO continues, as it has done in the Balkans and elsewhere, to support, together with the United Nations and professional organizations, local media whose independence of the parties to the conflict is internationally acknowledged, which provide non-partisan information and which defend the values of peaceful coexistence and mutual understanding.

It is most of all during the reconstruction period following the conclusion of peace agreements, however, that vast fields of action open up to UNESCO: peace-building, especially the building of civil peace, can rest only on genuine national consensus, that is on the widespread desire to plan and construct peace together. That implies a considerable effort to sensitize and educate the main actors in civil society, and here education, science, culture and communication all have their part to play. It does not just mean rebuilding the institutions destroyed during a conflict - even if that is a priority objective; it means doing so in such a way that the foundations of a democratic, pluralist and participatory society are laid at the same time.

Pluralism and cultural diversity

A clear strategic objective is also promoting the expression of pluralism and cultural diversity in the media and world information networks. In pursuit of this objective, UNESCO will continue to encourage cultural and linguistic pluralism and the vitality of the various forms of cultural expression by giving support to the production and dissemination of media and information products at the local, national and regional levels. In the case of the media, as indeed for all communication and information techniques, the promotion of pluralism is a main challenge.

The production and dissemination at the local, national and subregional levels of educational, recreational and cultural products that meet the expectations of particular social groups constitute an important means of ensuring authentic diversity of expressions

Here again, education - in its broadest sense - has a key role to play, not only in building the bases of democratic citizenship and in alleviating the psychological after-effects of conflict for young people; but also in ensuring that all sections of the population who have been excluded because of their age or sex, their ethnic origin or religious beliefs, their political or economic situation or their geographical position are given a real opportunity to be brought back into social and working life.

Communication is therefore an essential tool for reconstructing civil societies torn apart by conflict: freedom of the press, pluralism and independence of the media, development of community newspapers and radio stations are crucial to the re-establishment of social bonds and to the reconciliation process.

UNESCO's 31st General Conference (Paris, October-November 2001), held only a few weeks after September 11, broke new ground with the adoption of a Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity. Adopted by acclamation, it is the first major international standard-setting instrument conceived to promote cultural diversity. Its adoption confirms the view that "intercultural dialogue is the best guarantee for peace, rejecting the ideas that conflicts between cultures and civilizations are inevitable", said UNESCO Director-General Koïchiro Matsuura at the closing session of the General Conference. "Our behavior has shown how much dialogue between cultures and civilizations is not only possible but fertile and can lead to consensus on questions of the highest importance".

"Creation draws on the roots of cultural tradition, but flourishes in contact with other cultures. For this reason, heritage in all its forms must be preserved, enhanced and handed on to future generations as a record of human experience and aspirations, so as to foster creativity in all its diversity to inspire genuine dialogue among cultures," the Declaration states in its 7th Article.

For the first time the international community has endowed itself with a comprehensive standard-setting instrument, which "elevates cultural diversity to the rank of common heritage of humanity, as necessary for the human race as is biodiversity in the natural world. This makes the protection of cultural diversity an ethical imperative inseparable from human dignity," Mr. Matsuura said.

Information and communication technologies (ICTs) were also at the heart of the General Conference debates and constitute a specific strategic objective in UNESCO Medium-Term Strategy for 2002-2007. It is expected to play a growing role in all of the Organization's fields of competence. The General Conference stressed that equitable access to cyberspace should enable better expression of cultural diversity in all

its forms, including multilingualism, and called on UNESCO to continue its work on a standard-setting instrument on cyber space.

UNESCO will respond to the challenge of the digital divide by supporting institutional and human capacity-building in developing countries, the last developed countries and countries in transition.

Looking Back and Forward: The Evolution of Development Communication

UNESCO has gradually moved from a technical assistance agency to a leading agency in the field of development communication. It has integrated and combined different traditions and approaches.

The Professional Tradition

The first study on the professional training of communicators (journalists) was undertaken in 1949. In the same year, UNESCO commissioned a filmmaker to train Chinese village educators in animation techniques for the preparation of cartoon films. Thus, the oldest tradition of UNESCO's communication involvement is the professional: focused on the development of communication infrastructures, especially in developing countries, and including not only press, broadcasting or film institutions, but also a range of training or research centers and networks. Some of the earliest UNESCO programmes emphasised professional training, (initially in film, then in radio and television), following a model of basic training at local and national levels, intermediate skills training at regional levels, and advanced training through overseas attachments and study tours. The tradition is still very strong, although it has been modified over the years by a rising emphasis on community-based media practices, and the use of adapted, or appropriate media technologies.

Professional Networks

UNESCO's action is based on partnerships and alliances within and outside the United Nations system. For example, the organization of the

United Nations Round Table on Communication for Development, which has been held every two years since 1988, sees a gathering of about 50 experts and colleagues for a unique occasion to exchange experiences and information. UNESCO programmes on communication and information benefit from collaboration with, and contributions from, a wide range of partners. These include other United Nations agencies, bilateral development partners, international, regional, non governmental and intergovernmental organizations, professional communities and the private sector. UNESCO is an active partner for international initiatives such as the United Nations ICT Task Force, preparations for the World Summit on the Information Society (Geneva, 2003 and Tunisia, 2005), the DOT Force process and the Global Knowledge Partnership.

Another strong feature of the UNESCO programme is its emphasis on varied professional networks, organized both at regional levels and by media. It is through such networks that it vocalizes its concerns, and identifies human resources for project development; it is also from such networks that its ideas are drawn in the first place. Even when international political divisions have been at their most acute, professional and academic contacts have generally been maintained.

It is also mostly through these networks that links with different theoretical and normative traditions have been maintained. For example, communication research in UNESCO has long been identified with the International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR), a body original created under UNESCO auspices. Similar associations exist, and enjoy a comparable relationship, in the various world regions (for example AMIC in Asia, ACCE in Africa, ALAIC in Latin America, ECCR in Europe); in the majority of cases these links have been acknowledged by the granting of a formal status of association. It is through this academic network that many of conceptual dimensions of dependency theory, participatory theory, or of critical research have been exercised and reinforced: the same

network has also been largely responsible for carrying out global research projects on information flow, or for providing contributions to such compendia as the World Communication Report (a reference guide for the first time produced in 1989).

Comparable relationships reinforce other traditions in the professional community (for example links with the IIC-International Institute of Communication, with CILECT - a non-governmental organization grouping film and television training schools, or JOURNET, a global network for professional education in journalism and media). There are similar networks for journalists (whose consultative regional meetings were assisted for many years by UNESCO), for press freedom and monitoring groups, or for documentalists (through the COMNET international communication documentation network). In this way, a variety of traditions can co-exist.

Mass Media Tradition

Another tradition, which concerns the role of mass media in development, is historically based upon modernization (and later upon diffusion of innovation) theories. Wilbur Schramm originally wrote his study 'Mass Media and National Development' for UNESCO's International Institute for Educational Planning, and it is as much concerned with the use of media within formal instructional processes as it is with informal mass media programmes: this pedagogical approach evolved into a further communication channel for UNESCO over the years, moving from televised instruction to patterns of distance education and educational technology.

Each of these strands is still retained in UNESCO's programme, whether of mediated instruction (at both formal and informal educational levels), or of applied communication in an orthodox development communication tradition (for health education, preventive education, functional literacy programmes, and above all, population

communication under UNFPA auspices). There have, however, been shifts of emphasis over the years.

The Communication Development Division participated in a large number of seminars and workshops in close cooperation with other United Nations agencies offering its communication expertise for preventive health information in Africa and Asia.

Instructional Media - Theoretical Tradition

UNESCO's work in instructional media followed US and European trends in instructional design as a whole; in its early days, it was based on the assumption that mass media might be used as fundamental educational tools, at times replacing the classroom or group teacher. This led to a debate on the relative merits of direct teaching by television, as compared with the use of media as enrichment (reflecting an ongoing pedagogical debate, in which the US and Europe were largely polarized). At a later stage, the accent was placed upon evolving patterns of distance learning, using a multi-media approach within a carefully structured package of teaching and learning aids, including correspondence, residential tuition, and self-instructional materials. This debate was, however, mostly outside the development communication context, apart from its tendency (when coming down to the specifics of media production) to follow a production formula based upon stepped message design strategies, similar to advertising or development campaigns.

The applied developmental programme has been reinforced by the conclusions of the Jomtien meeting on 'Education for All', and by the UNICEF-supported initiative on a Third Channel for education. Currently, there is a great deal of emphasis on models of distance learning, initially at the higher education level, but translated increasingly into other levels, especially technical and vocational.

The exponential growth of the Internet has evoked a renewed interest on the part of national authorities and the public in general, in the concept of distance learning and youth media education for their integration in formal and informal school curricula. UNESCO has therefore started a series of research studies on media literacy aiming to promote critical approaches of youth to the media. After lengthy consultations and a worldwide survey to identify the regional needs in a diversity of approaches to this issue, three main sets of actions were defined, aiming to: 1) a better cooperation between researchers and practitioners -teachers and radio/TV producers particularly in Asia and Africa; 2) develop regional educational methods, curriculum and learning tools; 3) and provide normative advice for new and updated national laws and regulations.

With a policy of continued development and a strong will to be more and more participative, UNESCO is inviting researchers and practitioners, journalists, civil servant or teacher to contribute actively to UNESCO orientations and programmes in particular through regional and decentralized approaches.

Communication Research
From the 1960's, there has been a substantial communication research tradition in UNESCO with topics ranging from rural radio and farm forums to satellites and Internet, and their application for educational media. In November 2001, this was articulated with greater clarity and some changes of direction at an expert meeting at Leicester's University. Members of the expert panel had in common their belief in a critical and qualitative research tradition, an interest in new development paradigms, and above all, a compelling interest in UNESCO's policy research.

Research has always fulfilled an important role in UNESCO's communication work, particularly now with the convergence and multiplicity of communication channels. But UNESCO is also interested

in researching communication as a social process, not merely as a technical imposition on society, an entertainment industry, means of ad campaigns nor as a mass media extension of the human voice or pen.

UNESCO therefore works closely with its partners, the International Association of Mass Media and Communication Research, the European Consortium for Communications Research, the International Clearinghouse on Children and Violence on the Screen, and various university scholars and research institutes.

The broad areas for UNESCO's support for research activities in communication and information include:

- Strengthening press freedom, independent and pluralistic media structures

- Promoting peace, tolerance, dialogue, mutual understanding and democratic governance through the media

- Community multi-media centres, multi-purpose telecentres and social participation

- Social and cultural impact of ICTs

- Cultural and linguistic diversity in the cyberspace

ICTs and distance education

- Media education

- Promoting access to information and knowledge

Community Media

The experience gained from many projects and studies has demonstrated the fact that community radio is one of the most effective means (and not very costly) of communication for development, especially in rural communities, as well as of social participation, of

information and advice on literacy, health, child care, improved agricultural methods, vocational training and protection on the environment.

UNESCO has been working since 1998 to promote Community Multimedia Centres (CMCs) that aim to integrate community radio and telecentres facilities to create grassroot information and communication platforms for development.

The CMC addresses the digital divide in Less Developed Countries (LDCs) seeking to ensure that information, communication and knowledge become the basic tools of the poor in improving their own lives through an approach that is cost-effective, country differentiated and empowerment-oriented.

The pilot CMC project, implemented in 1999-2000, with notable success, at Kothmale Community Radio in Sri-Lanka, has served as a model for further pilot projects now being launched in Latin America, Caribbean, Africa and Asia. The CMC concept was debated and endorsed at an international seminar in Sri Lanka.

Decentralisation

An accelerated process of decentralization also stressed the practical needs of communication development, with Advisers in Communication and Information posted to various field offices to help contextualise the new communication strategy. Those advisers work directly with regional organizations and the professional and non-governmental community.

The International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC)

UNESCO's main operational instrument for upgrading the communication capacity of developing countries is the International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC). Originally proposed by the United States as a mechanism for channeling both multilateral and bilateral aid, it was evaluated alongside a second, radically different proposal for a communication research, training and operational institute. What finally emerged was an Intergovernmental Council, having some autonomy from UNESCO, but ultimately dependent upon it for its staff, management resources and programme execution. Its special feature was a Special Account facility, which could receive voluntary contributions, thus providing an alternative funding source for communication projects in the Third World. Even though IPDC's resources remained limited, they were relatively secure. In the early nineties, for example, as other funding sources were drying up in the face of international recession, the Special Account remained constant, even if static. In the late eighties, the IPDC began a two-edged administrative reform process: on the one hand, seeking to expand its financial base through extra-budgetary arrangements, and on the other to streamline its working methods, leading to more effective selection and decision making mechanisms.

Most recently the IPDC has devoted considerable attention to widening its membership base, to increase the access of the non-governmental and professional communities (who can now apply more directly for project support, without a governmental filter), thus emphasising pluralism in project generation, management and financing. This new focus links the programme more directly with the emphasis of UNESCO as a whole on media pluralism and independence, and on the

development of the private media sector in the developing world, especially Africa. Following the Windhoek seminar on media independence and pluralism in Africa, a number of projects featuring private and non-governmental initiatives were developed for external financing, and a similar effort is anticipated following the 1992 Kazakhstan seminar, involving the Central Asian Republics, as well as a wider Asian community.

From its inception, UNESCO has been entrusted -as stated in its Constitution - with media issues. Freedom of expression, freedom of the press and the independence of the media have always been among its special fields of action. A series of regional declarations issued at seminars held during the last decade in Windhoek (1991), Alma Ata (1992), Santiago (1994), Sana'a (1996) and Sofia (1997) refocused attention on the importance of freedom of the press and a pluralistic media. The international conference on public broadcasting, held recently in Rabat (May 2000), is part of the same perspective.

Following the decisions and guidelines of the IPDC Intergovernmental Council and its Bureau, the Programme has made considerable efforts to improve its working methods and to refocus its 900 projects on the most urgent priorities in communication development in more than 130 developing countries. These efforts of the IPDC have had a remarkable impact on a broad range of fields covering, among others, the promotion of press freedom, media independence and pluralism; community media, development of human resources for the media, modernization of national and regional news agencies, radio as well as television organizations; and new information and communication technologies (ICT). About 50 countries have contributed 85 million US dollars to the IPDC activities through IPDC Special Account and under funds-in-trust arrangements. Denmark, Germany, Finland, France, India, Italy, Japan, Republic of Korea, Russia, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland have made the biggest voluntary contributions.

Projects and Activities

News Exchanges, Agencies and sources

UNESCO has since the early 80's and 90's launched programmes in support of international, regional and national news collection and distribution institutions. This has ranged from equipment procurement as well as the provision of relevant skills upgrading courses. UNESCO activities were particularly concentrated in Africa and included sub-regional initiatives such as WANAD (West Africa News Development Project), CANAD (Central Africa News Agency Development), SEANAD (South and East Africa News Agency Development Project). PANA (Pan African News Agency Development Project) was its continental flagship project. Other initiatives concerned CANA (Caribbean News Agency) and the computerisation of Arab, Asian and Pacific national news agencies.

Today the role of national news agencies has completely changed principally due to the new communication and information technologies. Apart from the technological implications, necessitating more and more powerful computers and other telecommunication equipment, (which the poor countries cannot afford) it is the very concept of the national news agency that today needs to be studied.

The issue is: what kind of news collection and distribution mechanisms should countries promote and encourage?

Should news be seen simply as a commercial commodity with the market determining what can be produced and sold?

A situation has arisen today whereby national news agencies must adapt to a changed news collection and distribution environment and explore other possibilities to enhance their roles in national media landscapes.

Several African news agencies have already been forced to close down their operations and others are in the throes of imminent demise

Internationally other news agencies in order to avoid their certain 'extinction' have veered towards governing authorities (providers of annual subventions) transforming themselves into propaganda instruments and thus further losing the little credibility they had nationally and internationally.

Some agencies are desperately trying to privatise without, however, questioning the nature of their operations and services and also being unsure about their future survival in an increasingly fierce competitive and commercial news distribution environment.

Major news distributors are gradually exploring solutions through mega-mergers with the hope that therein might lie possible solutions for information collection and dissemination in the future.

It is against this background that UNESCO decided to organise an International Seminar on News Agencies in the Era of the Internet (Amman, Jordan, January 2001).

- The aim was to develop a forward-looking strategy that would enable national news collection and dissemination institutions to anticipate the inevitable changes in their operations, to adapt to the changed news dissemination environment and to propose strategies for a more credible news collection and dissemination approach.

- Closely related to the foregoing was the understanding that without national news collection and distribution mechanisms large segments of the society –the non consumers – would be excluded from the national media landscapes; the 'small' independent and pluralistic media could not cope in an increasingly liberalised media environment thus endangering democracy itself.

At the end of the meeting the participants agreed that:

- UNESCO and multilateral agencies should assist with strategies to launch a rescue mission for news agencies in order to help or resuscitate them.

- National news agencies can and do provide important functions that benefit governments, media and nations, and these functions are not easily substitutable by other institutions.

- The traditional model of a developing country national news agency, one that is wholly owned and controlled by the State, may now be dated or inappropriate in some circumstances. In place of the traditional model, there are alternative models that need to be identified and considered. These would include agencies in which the government collaborates with public and private media and other client groups. They would include agencies that, though they might be heavily supported by governments, are protected by effective mechanisms that prevent direct government intervention in their operations.

- Agencies that combine effective public service functions with services that facilitate self-sustainability are well placed to achieve widespread credibility in a way that the traditional model of national news agency often has not.

- Many agencies have been constitutionally or legally inhibited from introducing commercial enhancements to existing services, or new commercial services, or simply from making a profit over and above operating requirements. Such impediments need to be reviewed and if possible removed, always provided that national news agencies continue to perform public service functions in the interests of the nation and the nation's media, to a high degree of excellence. In this context it is timely to review and possibly re-conceptualize the original mission of news agencies in a manner that fully acknowledges the wide range of activities that agencies already or may in the future undertake,

and with reference to the increasingly complex technological, business, political and global contexts in which national news agencies must today operate.

- There is still considerable scope for the enhancement of training provision to promote the technical, editorial and management skills of national news agencies. This is particularly important in the case of news agencies whose financial viability is threatened. Such training may be delivered in a variety of forms, including distance education.

Community Media and Internet

Community radio has taken on increased importance in the last decade, partly as a reaction to mainstream media and the need to reach dispersed regions, and partly because of new, low-cost technology now available, such as the UNESCO designed low-power FM transmitter. These transmitters are now serving community radio stations in Cape Verde, Ghana, Kenya, St Lucia, Jamaica, Bhutan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Tonga and Niue.

The Mahaweli Community Radio project in Sri Lanka has been particularly productive, not only in terms of setting up a permanent community radio unit, but also in institutionalising this under a new ministerial organ, the Rural Communication Centre, responsible for the development and expansion of community radio stations, including broadcasting licenses, training, research and experimentation with new technology. The project, which is further described as a case study, has served as inspiration for similar developments in other countries. Thus, in the Philippines, the Tambuli project was designed for implementation by the Foundation of Rural Broadcasters. Twelve FM Community stations were targeted over a four-year period. Although these will be linked to major city stations for news dissemination, they operate mainly at the community level under the management of community associations. Another project, for the development of

Bhutan Broadcasting Services, has included FM transmission as a service for the capital and its outlying regions, for outside broadcasting, and for experimentation prior to the installation of a microwave network to be coupled with an FM network in the major regions.

The Internet and associated technologies are pivotal to full and effective membership of the knowledge society. However, disparities of access, language barriers, the cost of the technologies and of connectivity, lack of awareness and motivation are creating a growing digital divide which hampers vital access to these important new resources for many.

Conclusion

UNESCO's interest in communication is holistic, encompassing all aspects of the discipline - technological, social, political, and cultural. Clearly, the majority of UN agencies have some interest in communication - whether in its technical aspects (like ITU), its industrial (like UNIDO), or in its potential contribution to specific fields - of agriculture, health, population, the workplace (FAO, WHO, UNFPA, ILO). But in the case of UNESCO, the interest is more in seeing how those individual dimensions come together, in communities and social systems, both local and international. That is UNESCO's strength - most probably also one reason for the controversies into which the Organisation has on occasions been drawn.

UNESCO's mandate is to promote the information society as a whole, not a single perspective. For this reason UNESCO has a special obligation to collaborate with all the other organizations - multilateral and bilateral, international and regional, intergovernmental and non-governmental - which have a specific mandate to pursue. UNESCO

contribution includes promoting South-North dialogue and reinforcing communication capacity in the developing countries.

But to make the free flow of information more than a catchphrase involves movement, information flow and networking in all directions, among many partners, traditional and modern. It also requires intersectorality and interdisciplinarity. UNESCO's role in education, science and culture is much stronger when it is underpinned by a thorough competence in communication and information skills. New technologies like the Internet can only realize their social applications through this kind of interdisciplinarity, as exemplified in UNESCO projects in Africa, India and Latin America employing satellite technologies to educate at a distance.

The links between the Programmes of the Communication and Information Sector, juxtaposing communication, information and informatics, need to be further consolidated, moving from a structural to a conceptual level that would mirror the emergence of a global information society.

11.

Participatory Communication and Adult Learning for Rural Development: Three Decades of FAO Experience

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Background

The past thirty years have witnessed unprecedented growth in the worldwide spread of electronic mass media, mainly due to the proliferation of communication satellites, along with lowered costs and increased sophistication of receiving equipment. Television as the dominant medium of the so-called "information explosion" during the 1970's and 1980's became one of the most powerful forces for stimulating social change and technological advancement. Much of the change was undirected, however, and largely due to the incidental effects of entertainment programming. Its global impact was mainly on people living in industrialised countries, and to a lesser extent those in urban centers of developing countries. By and large, the same pattern of distribution and access has been evident in the 1990's with the emergence of knowledge-based societies increasingly relying on Internet/Web access for information, communication, and entertainment.

Concurrently in the rural areas of developing countries, particularly Asia and Africa which together constitute almost three-quarters of the world's population and where nearly 70% live in the countryside, the idea of using communication for a variety of rural development projects, and agricultural improvement in particular, grew out of relatively consistent research findings that found that audience-oriented communication strategies could play a catalytic role in accelerating the rate of technology transfer through providing relevant information, changing negative attitudes, and skills training. "Small media" were mainly used (e.g., video, radio, flip-charts, illustrated pamphlets, village theatre) appropriate to a given community, province or region. Strategies ranged from multi-media campaigns to support for group meetings conducted by extension agents, and materials to strengthen interpersonal communication. Over time, participatory methods were refined to bring in the views of the intended beneficiaries from the start in designing project goals and selecting appropriate communication and adult learning approaches to support implementation. Today, as wireless infrastructures spread and bandwidth increases, telecommunications and Internet-based ICTs (information and communication technologies) portend a radical shift in moving information and experiences from global to rural networks and a potential boon to erasing pockets of world hunger.

The need for knowledge and improved skills to increase food production is clear and present. Current statistics note that more than 65 low-income developing countries (90% in Asia and sub-Saharan Africa) suffer from inadequate food security, with about 790 million people living in hunger (FAO, 1999a). Another 34 million under-nourished people have been identified in industrialized countries and those in transition, mainly in Eastern

Europe and the area of the former USSR. And looking further down the road, from a base of slightly over 6 billion people as the 20th century ends, using the high fertility path (PRB, 1999), the world's population may exceed 8 billion by 2025 and food needs in developing countries - which will account for 98% of the population increase - will double (Crowder, 2000).

The 1999 World Food Summit set a goal of reducing by half the number of hungry people in the developing world - about 400 million people - by the year 2015. The progress achieved during much of the 1990's though makes this goal appear to be a daunting task. In the 1990/92 period for example, out of a group of 96 developing countries, the number of undernourished was estimated at 830 million people; by 1995/97 this had dropped to 790 million or a decrease of 40 million overall, a seemingly positive result. A closer look at the data revealed, however, that only 37 countries, or 39% of the original 96, had actually reduced the number of undernourished by about 100 million people combined overall. Across the rest of almost two-thirds of the developing world, the aggregate number of undernourished actually increased by 60 million, resulting in a total net reduction of only 8 million per year for the five-year period. These sobering results dramatically suggest that unless more effective solutions are found for increasing food production among the hungry and most vulnerable, and better distribution of it, the goal of the 1999 World Food Summit may never be realised. As Sen (1998) wryly notes, "The contemporary age is not short of terrible and nasty happenings, but the persistence of extensive hunger in a world of unprecedented prosperity is surely the worst" (Sen, 1988:204).

A growing number of development specialists and agencies argue that appropriate use of ICTs for accelerating the dissemination of

research-based recommendations, blending them with indigenous practices, and rendering them locally useable though small media adaptation, may well provide part of the solution toward reducing the chronic food deficits (IDRC, 1999; Van der Stichele & Bie, 1998; Richardson, 1997; Woods, 1996). Put more succinctly by FAO, the challenge in assisting farmers to sustainably produce more food implies the need for new technologies, new skills, changed attitudes and practices, and new ways to collaborate. All of this requires that farmers have access to relevant information and knowledge (Crowder, 2000).[1]

The purpose of this chapter is to provide an overview of the FAO Communication for Development Group's work, arguably the foremost practitioner of applied communication for agricultural and other areas of rural development (e.g., forestry, environment, nutrition) over the past thirty years. During these three decades the role of communication has undergone a 180 degree shift from a one-way, top-down transfer of messages by extension agents to farmers, to a social process which starts with farmers and brings together both groups in a two-way sharing of information among communication equals - in short, participatory communication. Along with communication, it is also now widely accepted that a parallel investment in "human capital" through education and training of adults is essential for project success (Fraser & Villet, 1994). Awareness raising, knowledge acquisition, attitude change, confidence building, participation in decision-making, and action,

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[1] A significant achievement in this direction is the increasing attention given to Agricultural Knowledge and Information Systems for Rural Development (AKIS/RD) which link people and institutions to promote mutual learning and generate, share and utilize agriculture-related technology, knowledge and information. The system integrates farmers, agricultural educators, researchers and extensionists to harness knowledge and information from various sources for better farming and improved livelihoods (FAO/World Bank, 2000).

all require processes of education and communication. And all are essential for effective development—they are not just desirable options, some of which may be left out (Rogers, 1992). In this spirit, the chapter includes an overview of parallel movements in participatory adult learning, notably Farmer Field Schools developed by FAO, and the opportunities for combining participatory methods to refine both communication and learning as partners in supporting project implementation.[2]

Communication for Development at FAO – The 1970's and 80's

In carrying out its field work, much of FAO's early activities in applying communication for development were subsumed within two main areas (Coldevin, 1987; Fraser, 1983): 1) information dissemination and motivation, and 2) training for field workers and rural producers. The gathering movement toward participatory audience involvement was assumed to be a subset of each.

Information dissemination and motivation, as the most basic area of communication for development, is concerned with simply informing rural people of new ideas, services and technologies for improving their quality of life. Given that one-third of adults in the developing world are illiterate (PRB, 1999), and particularly those in Africa (44%), the broadcast media and principally radio have

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[2] A range of participatory methods and tools has been developed to help rural people diagnose problems, gather information, explore options, and commit themselves to action, often collective action. Education and training are no longer seen simply as processes of transferring knowledge or information, but rather as means to empower people to become critical thinkers and problem solvers who are better able to help themselves, and engage with others in order to learn, share information and address problems and priorities. This is very important for farmers whose ability to cope with the unpredictable is often the key to survival (FAO/World Bank, 2000).

performed a major service in this role.[3] Not surprisingly, with the advent of the transistor receiver, and lowering of prices, radio, either battery operated or wound-up by hand, became the ubiquitous medium for rural communication, a status that it is likely to retain well into the 21st century. But while much of the emphasis in the 1970's was on supporting open broadcasting within a national or regional reach, a number of disadvantages were noted. Typically it was carried out in isolation from direct involvement of farmers or extension in its programming, and was literally "open" in the sense that programmes were directed at unorganised audiences. In the face of the criticism that by "attempting to reach everyone, it reaches no one", open broadcasting for educational purposes, including agricultural programming, was given low priority, averaging less than 5% of total broadcasting hours (FAO, 1981). As a stand-alone medium, however, radio's main value was in reaching a lot of people quickly with fairly simple messages. With the current surge of community radio stations that invite audience participation, a rejuvenation appears to be under way. Particularly in Africa, "Radio remains the most popular, accessible, and cost-effective means of communication for rural people. Radio can overcome the barriers of distance, illiteracy and language diversity better than any other medium" (FAO, 1996:9).

Radio, whether national, regional or local in reach has also formed the main stay for many multi-media campaigns, the most powerful of strategies in disseminating information and building motivation.

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[3] Although there are some examples of open television broadcasting in rural development, e.g., India, generally its use has been limited because of high production costs and low access among rural populations (FAO, 1989). Video, on the other hand, has rapidly emerged as perhaps the most effective medium for a variety of information and training purposes.

Communication theory has tended to support the case for multi-media use based on the premise that having access to at least two channels allows a production team to present and reinforce the same points in different ways and with varied emphasis. Individuals also differ in their processing of information from different media; some learn better from and prefer visual media than audio and vice versa. In general, evidence from controlled classroom studies suggests that providing a variety of reinforcing channels caters to both learning styles and learning preferences (World Bank, 1983). Practical evidence from the field to reinforce the experimental classroom findings, however, especially in rural development, is rare.

Campaigns have been used in virtually every facet of rural development, and examples abound in agriculture. One of the better known case studies, "Masagana 99", was undertaken in the Philippines during 1974 (Sison, 1985). "Masagana" translates as "bountiful harvest" with the project objective being to increase rice production up to 99 sacks (50 kg) of unmilled rice per hectare. The channel mix included radio broadcasting, a variety of print materials (bulletins, posters), and intensively trained farm technologists. Radio was used in three ways: a) jingles and spot messages for motivation, b) information through a daily 30-minute farm programme, and c) instructional courses through the existing Farmers' University of the Air. Prior to the campaign the Philippines had to import a substantial part of its rice to meet national requirements. Following the campaign, 1974 rice yields had increased by 28% over the previous year and by 1976 a 40% rise was registered over 1973 pre-campaign levels. During 1977 national requirements were more than met and the country began exporting its excess harvest.

FAO has also accumulated a strong legacy in implementing and validating this powerful delivery strategy in a variety of topics ranging from stamping out rinderpest viruses in thirty-four countries across West, Central and East Africa (Villet, 1988) to increasing maize and sorghum production in Lesotho (Coldevin, 1990). One of its first campaigns, carried out during 1984 in Sierra Leone, was directed at increasing swamp-rice production (Coldevin, 1986). A baseline survey of knowledge, attitudes and practices (KAP), and media access and preferences was undertaken with a stratified sample drawn from both swamp-rice cultivators and uniquely upland farmers. A nation-wide two-month campaign was then designed and launched involving a mix of four 15-minute "farming magazine" radio broadcasts per week reinforced by posters, pamphlets, and sound-slide presentations led by extension workers in targeted villages near swamp areas. Post-campaign results showed that, on average, all farmers had increased their knowledge levels by 60% over baseline scores. The highest gains were made by upland or non-rice farmers whose after campaign scores were over three times higher (307%) than baseline levels. This group also indicated a significant positive shift in their intention to start swamp-rice farming. And farmers who tuned in regularly to the radio broadcasts gained almost twice the amount of information when compared with non-listeners.

Well documented campaigns have also been supported by FAO in Bangladesh and Malaysia (for rat control), for integrated weed management in Malaysia, and for pest surveillance in Thailand (Adhikarya, 1994). In each campaign KAP baseline surveys as well as focus group interviews for additional qualitative information were undertaken. An interesting variation in setting campaign objectives, which set a standard for future reference, was the use

of a targeted estimate of how much the campaign should accomplish in terms of shifts in each indicator included, e.g., post-campaign knowledge levels and practices. The rate of success of the campaign could then be judged by the gap between targeted and actual achievements.[4]

Training for Field Workers and Rural Producers

Communication for Development interventions for training extension workers have been mainly directed toward perfecting their interpersonal communications skills, and, more recently, in facilitating participatory involvement of farmers in defining their own problems, reaching consensus on actions to be taken, information and skills development required to carry out the actions, and mechanisms for seeking research assistance on technical problems for which there is no ready solution available locally. In this cycle extension workers have the prime responsibility for selecting and interpreting farmers' requests to research agencies and for disseminating the results back to farmers.

Training for rural producers, typical involving extension or subject matter specialists as the vital interpersonal link, has tended to rely on group media such as slides, film-strips, audio-cassettes, flip-charts, village theatre and video. In the hands of a trained facilitator these media add punch and authority to a presentation. Perhaps the most advantageous aspect of group media is the possibility for immediate feedback from the audience and

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[4] Overall, the results of all campaigns were impressive. For example, the rat control campaign in Bangladesh during 1983 raised the adoption of rat control practices among wheat farmers from 10 to 32%, resulting in an average harvest gain of 54 kg/hectare in treated fields. A follow-up campaign in 1984 with all types of farmers showed 47% practicing rat control before and 67% after the exercise with average harvest gains of 44 kg/hectare.

establishment of a two-way flow of information. Participants' level of understanding can be tested, central points can be repeated where necessary, and discussions can be started with a view toward initiating action on agreed upon development problems.

Cases abound where FAO has used film-strips and slides with sound commentaries in virtually all areas of its mandate (FAO, 1981). Normally the presentations are reinforced by booklets, which depict the visuals used in the script with accompanying dialogue. Routinely, the booklets become manuals in their own right. The pre-recorded audio-cassette is another low-cost medium, which FAO has promoted extensively. The cassette's chief advantage over radio is the control that a group facilitator has over the information flow and the ability to start and stop at will, and repeat messages. Cassette recordings are also an easy way to bring farmers' questions and information needs to the attention of extension and research. Folk media in the form of popular singers and musicians have also proven highly effective for focusing community attention on population issues (FAO, 1994).

Of all the group media, however, video has emerged as the medium of choice for supporting participatory farmer training in a variety of FAO rural development projects (Coldevin, 1988). Its many advantages are unequalled by any other medium, namely, its production "immediacy" with instant replay in the field to check on shooting details, its ability to add on commentary in local languages, its ease of editing, and its "show anywhere, anytime" flexibility using battery or generator operated playback equipment where electricity is lacking. During extensive long-term projects in Peru, Mexico and Mali, FAO has perfected a complete learning package that combines video with discussion, simple printed materials, and practical field work. Often referred to as a model for

international reference, the efficiency of the methodology has been successfully documented by World Bank studies in terms of both training costs (ranging from 1/3 to 1/5 the costs of traditional training; Balit, Rios and Masias, 1996) and internal rate of return (Fraser & Restrepo-Estrada, 1997). More recent examples include training for women farmers in Jamaica where video was combined with drama performances, oral testimonies and printed materials (Protz, 1998).

Communication for Development in the 1990's: Evolution of a Participatory Model

The importance of popular participation in planning and executing projects was largely postulated during the 1970's (see for example, Freire, 1972). In a ground-breaking article on development communication, Rogers (1976) suggested that the passing of the "dominant paradigm" of top-down planning would signal a shift toward self-development wherein villagers and urban poor would be the priority audiences, and self-reliance and building on local resources would be emphasized. The role of communication in this process would be "1) providing technical information about development problems and possibilities, and about appropriate innovations in answer to local requests, and 2) circulating information about the self-development accomplishments of local groups so that other such groups might profit from others' experience" (Rogers, 1976:141). Despite these early predictions, rural communication systems continued to service the transfer of technology or "TOT" model in which information passed from researchers to farmers though the extension system (Ramirez, 1995). At least a decade would pass before participatory methodologies began to gain acceptance. And where they were tentatively introduced, most projects up to end of the 1980' were

mainly concerned with having beneficiaries discuss how to implement projects.

The practice of full "interactive participation" (Pretty, 1995), started with beneficiaries deciding which development initiatives should be pursued, whether the initiatives were feasible and prioritising those that were, and only then deciding how to carry them out, all the while keeping in mind the requirements for sustainability and ultimately "self-mobilization" upon project completion.

From the Drawing Board to Implementation: Two Examples

Forerunner Trials in the Philippines
One of FAO's forerunner exercises in "interactive" participatory communication for development was carried out over a three-year period in the Philippines from 1991-1994 (Coldevin, 1995).[5] The UNDP funded project was implemented by the Applied Communication Division (ACD) of the Philippine Council for Agriculture, Forestry and Natural Resources Research and Development (PCARRD), and 5 of its 15 Regional Applied

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[5] Another advance made by FAO in the Philippines during this period was the undertaking of a modified version of RAAKS (rapid appraisal of agricultural knowledge systems) for visualizing farmers' communication networks in two barangays up to municipal level (Ramirez, 1995).

Communication Offices (RACOs).[6] Building on the mounting

literature in participatory rural appraisal (PRA), and refinement of

its methodology (e.g., Chambers, 1992), the over-riding goal of

the project was to take the ACD and each of the five RACOs

through prototype exercises in setting priorities for technology

transfer in carefully selected, isolated and economically depressed

pilot-communities (called barangays), one per region. This involved

bottom-up needs assessment through a number of PRA tools

(social and livelihood mapping, seasonal calendar, problem trees,

key informant panels, media access and preferences) and

quantitative baseline KAP surveys, which served as diagnostic

profiles for the framing of communication support objectives. A

variety of multi-channel communication approaches were then

implemented, spear-headed by a new lead-medium in the form of

community audio-tower systems or CATS[7], in each participating

barangay. "Broadcasting associations" were subsequently formed

to manage, produce and broadcast programmes created by

thematic sub-committees, e.g., agriculture, health, cooperatives

and youth, on a weekly schedule (Ramirez & Stuart, 1994). In one

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[6] Assistance to the project was also provided by the University of the Philippines,
Los Baños (UPLB). Development Communication (DC) as an academic discipline
was first introduced and has continued to flourish at UPLB since 1954. Currently,
its College of Development Communication (CDC) has an average twenty-
member faculty corps servicing campus-based undergraduate, Masters and
Ph.D. programmes. In addition, CDC offers an MPS (Master of Professional
Studies) at a distance through the University of the Philippines Open University
(UPOU). The College also serves as a DC training centre for the Southeast Asian
region. And since 1967, through its collaboration with Radio DZLB, the rural
educational radio station of UPLB, it has supported a variety of field projects
ranging from support for rural youth and 4H clubs to "schools on-the-air" with
topics spanning improved farming techniques to maternal health and child care.

[7] Each CATS consisted of a karaoke system, two microphones, and a 500-watt
amplifier housed in a studio and connected to four 100-watt loudspeakers
attached to a metal tower. Total cost: US$2000. Construction of studio housing
and towers was provided by the communities. "Broadcasts" can reach up to a
two kilometer radius.

typical example, a multi-media campaign was launched to promote increased rice production in a depressed barangay near Zamboanga, Mindanao. The campaign was built around a four-month School of the Air (SoA) with three half-hour CATS broadcasts per week, along with print support and field demonstrations by specialists covering all facets of rice farming, including integrated pest management. Knowledge level scores among the rice farmers rose from an average of 55% prior to the campaign to 92% following it, while practices of recommended technologies rose from a baseline level of 46% to a post-campaign high of 68%. As a consequence, in comparison with pre-campaign levels, rice harvest yields more than doubled where farmers had been exposed to the full campaign (Coldevin, 1995).[8]

The SADC (South African Development Community) Regional Centre of Communication for Development

The SADC Centre of Communication for Development based in Harare officially began operations during mid-1996, assisted by a 4-year FAO project. Its opening marked the first regional multi-purpose communication facility for rural development in Southern Africa, serving all 14 countries under the SADC mantle. The Centre's mandate is broad and encompasses providing communication advice, setting up linkages, clearinghouse documentation, production of information and discussion materials, and training for all development sectors with an emphasis thus far on agriculture, health, sanitation, and environment.

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[8] Detailed case studies describing the campaigns mentioned will be shortly forthcoming in: COLDEVIN, G. and the Communication for Development Group (2002). *Participatory Communication: A Key to Rural Learning Systems*, Rome: FAO.

The Centre has carved out its principal aim as "facilitating people's participation at all levels of the development effort to identify and implement appropriate policies, programmes and technologies to prevent and reduce poverty in order to improve people's livelihood in a sustainable way"(Anyaegbunam et al, 1998:10). In its operationalization a revitalized methodology, Participatory Rural Communication Appraisal or PRCA, has been developed as the basis for dialoguing with people using a mix of qualitative and quantitative research. Qualitative aspects of PRCA refer to developing a profile of a given community's needs, opportunities, problems and solutions, its key interaction groups, traditional and modern communication networks, and influential sources of information. This front-end portion of PRCA also provides basic indicators and sharpens the focus for framing quantitative baseline surveys of awareness, knowledge, attitudes and practices or AKAP of the development problem(s) to be addressed. Results of the full PRCA in turn make it possible to formulate specific AKAP objectives, segment key interaction groups, plan problem-solving communication strategies and approaches, design messages, select appropriate media and interpersonal channels, and develop and pre-test materials. PRCA also sets the basis for monitoring and adjusting a communication programme or campaign as it unfolds, and for measuring its immediate AKAP outcomes and longer-term impact after completion.

The Centre's main draw thus far has been a series of "Action Programme" or AP workshops, initially lasting ten weeks, but now reduced to seven following a market research survey. Each workshop presently comprises an initial two-week introductory session in Harare (theory of communication for development, preparation for field PRCA, and baseline AKAP surveys), two weeks

of field research at project sites in participating countries, and back
to Harare for a final three weeks of analysis of field research,
communication strategy design, setting objectives, message
content, media-mix, preparation of a sample of media materials,
budget and work plan to carry out an actual communication
programme or campaign for a given project. Eight such AP
workshops have been given thus far – for the most part focusing
on multi-media communication campaigns – each with an average
of about 25 middle-level communication and extension personnel
drawn from about 4 to five organizations (e.g., UN Agencies,
Government Ministries, NGOs). Following each AP workshop, the
Centre provides backstopping as the various field projects are
undertaken.[9]

As in the case of CESPA[10] in Bamako, Mali, the SADC Centre is also
working toward self-sufficiency and services are provided on a
cost-recovery basis. Based on recommendations of a business plan
commissioned in 1998, a cost recovery strategy was worked out in
which the "phase in" internal revenues of the Centre versus the
"phase out" of donor funding would start at a 30/70 ratio in the
first year (i.e., 30% internal revenues versus 70% external) to
about 75/25 in year three and thereafter. Assuming that training
and advisory services are charged at prevailing market rates, the
Centre would still require something in the neighbourhood of 25%

[9] Other popular one to two week workshops include Gender and Communication,
Participatory Research Techniques, Quantitative Baseline Surveys, Village
Theatre in Development, and Participatory Rural Radio.

[10] The Centre for Audio-Visual Production Services or CESPA was launched in
1988 through FAO assistance. It not only handles materials production and
farmer training in Mali but services clients across West Africa. CESPA was
granted parastatal status through national legislation in 1993 that allows it to
generate and retain income, and eventually to become self-sustaining. Starting
out at a 50/50 ratio between internal and external funding, by 1996 it had
moved into a 70 % internal versus 30% external funding formula (FAO, 1999b).

outside funding support to remain fully functional. One of the avenues to seek external support would be through contracts with development agencies, at the regional and national levels, that would appoint the Centre to act as a service agency under their yearly development programmes.[11]

Networking through Village Telecentres

While the call for "networking" has become the 1990's mantra, sub-Saharan Africa in particular has faced deepening marginalisation. According to current data provided by IDRC, in 1999, excluding South Africa, only one African in 9,000 has access to the Internet, while around the world the average is one person in 40 (IDRC, 1999). IDRC has responded with project "Acacia", designed to encourage access to ICTs by low-income groups in cities and the countryside, to provide tools and techniques that make it easier for low-income groups to use ICTs, and to adapt applications and services to meet community needs. The vehicle for doing this is though the establishment of information and communication service centers or "telecentres" accessible within an hour of home by foot.[12] Most of its emphasis has thus far been on urban telecentres - which have been mushrooming - with typical services offered consisting of telephone, fax, photocopying, e-mail, Internet, and small group training in ICT proficiencies (e.g., information data navigation, networking, Web site design). Pilot telecentres are also being tried out in a limited number of rural

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[11] Abstracted from e-mail correspondence with Philippe Van der Stichele, FAO Communication Officer, responsible for backstopping the SADC Centre.

[12] While a "telecentre" may be the common descriptor for such a facility, a variety of other terms is used such as Multi-Purpose Telecentre (MPTC), Multi-Purpose Community Telecentre (MPCT), and Multi-Purpose Communication Center (MPCC). IDRC has reduced it to Multipurpose Community Telecentre or MCT.

settings (e.g., two communities in Mozambique; one each in Mali and Uganda).

FAO has been actively supporting the use of ICTs for agricultural development (Richardson, 1997; Richardson & Paisley, 1998) through rural telecentres, and other means (such as cooperatives and farmer associations), although the pace has been much slower than the explosion in urban settings. Rural multipurpose community telecentres (RMCTs) have much or all of the capability of their urban counterparts as well as access to more traditional media such as audio and video playback equipment. Typically, they can also serve as venues for formal and non-formal distance education training for extension and subject matter specialists. As information "depots" or "hubs" they can place regional, national and international information at the fingertips of agricultural development workers - information on markets, weather, crops, livestock production and natural resource protection (Crowder et al, 1998). Undoubtedly, as they become more developed and wide-spread, PRA/PRCA principles will be applied to bring crystallised farmer group's technology information needs to telecentres, tapping the relevant data bases available through the net that provide useable recommendations, and then packaging the results to respond to local demands and disseminating it through a variety of conventional media, and especially radio for maximum reach.

Much of the debate revolving around the RMCTs has been in establishing the link from the global networks to national, town, and finally to village levels, the latter referred to by some as "the last mile" of connectivity (Van der Stichele & Bie, 1997) and others, "the first mile" (Moetsabi in Richardson & Paisley, 1998). Costs appear to be the main constraint. IDRC estimates that if a wired land-based network is to be put into place, the expense for

connecting rural subscribers in Africa will be five to ten times
higher than that of city dwellers. The cost of equipment, and
training of those to operate it, must also be factored in. But the
issues of connectivity, start-up costs and sustainability can be
solved, according to Woods (1996) through establishing rural
telecentres as a "Community Utility", accessible on a pay-to-use
basis. Based on IDRC's experience, however, the report card on
making RMTCs financially viable is still in the making. Others more
optimistically suggest that trend is clearly wireless, mobile, multi-
media and broadband ICTs, with costs dropping appreciable
(Crowder, 2000).[13]

FAOs initial experience with Internet-based ICTs started in Latin
America in the early 1990's when farmer-operated information
networks were established in Chile and Mexico. Linkages were
established with agricultural producers, farmer associations,
extension services and NGOs. The networks provided data on
seeds, inputs, markets, weather forecasts, and credit facilities,
among other essential topics. All told, the networks have proven
an effective way for farmers to access local, regional, national and
even global sources. By knowing market price information in larger
centers, they have also increased profitability in setting local crop
selling rates, and a base for better planning of quantities to plant
in the future (Crowder, 2000). Building on the experiences in Latin
America, FAO recently carried out a study to design a farmer-
operated network, or FarmNet, with the Uganda National
Farmers'Association (UNFA). The study found that the best
approach would be to enhance existing communication efforts

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[13] For example, "Radio" prototypes are being developed that will have a screen
capable of downloading e-mail and doing Web browsing using battery power
supply.

through face-to-face meetings, audio listening groups, local radio, publications and other media with the use of a simple e-mail-based communication system. UNFA members overwhelmingly indicated the need for information on markets, improved agricultural technologies and weather conditions.

Another more recent FAO development has been the Virtual Extension, Research and Communication network or VERCON, designed as an open network to improve communication between research and extension and for those with access including, farmers themselves. Prototype software is being developed which can be readily adapted locally to improve the flow of information between extension and research departments. A pilot VERCON project is currently under way in Egypt to test and refine the system (FAO, 2000a). And in an attempt to bridge the "digital gap", an FAO project is currently under development in Mali to link four rural radio stations to the Internet. The overall focus of the initiative will be to train radio producers to collect and package scientific and technical information available on the Internet for broadcasting to rural audiences in formats and languages they easily comprehend. At the same time, locally relevant agricultural information that is collected through radio reports and field interviews will be formatted and disseminated through the Internet.

Parallel Evolution of a Participatory Adult Learning Model

Hand in hand with the development of participatory theory and practice in communication has been a recognition of the importance of indigenous knowledge bases accumulated by farmers, and an examination of how new research

recommendations might best fit into them. This reversal of the uni-directional passing on of research findings through extension to farmers, long advocated under the training and visit system (Benor & Cleaver, 1989), now implies that "farmers are the ones who must control the learning and be able to access information according to specific needs, times and means (Ramirez & Stuart, 1994:4). Previously technologies were typically finalised in research institutions before farmers got to see them, essentially leaving them three choices: adoption, adaptation or rejection. When farmers make choices about what technologies are needed, and the knowledge and skills required to use them through what Rogers (1992; 1996) terms "a critical reflection on experience", the roles of research and extension are dramatically changed. Under the new paradigm, the "assertion of a knowledge gap, of a disparity between "experts" and local people is wrong – unless the "experts" through cooperation and learning from local people can apply their knowledge in the context and to the benefit of local "expertise"(Servaes & Arnst, 1992:18).

Along with the levelling of extension services to match farmer demands, the shift from teaching to learning with them through practical applications has assumed vital importance. Roling & Pretty (1997:183) put the case succinctly. "It is important to recognize that local people are always involved in active learning, in (re)inventing technologies, in adapting their farming systems and livelihood strategies. Understanding and supporting these processes of agricultural innovation and experimentation have become an important focus in facilitating more sustainable agriculture with its strong locality-specific nature". One of the more successful of these methodologies has been the Farmer Field

School or FFS pioneered by FAO (Gallagher, 2000; FAO, 2000b).

FFSs were first established in Indonesia in 1989 as part of an FAO Integrated Pest Management (IPM) project. Courses take place in the field, field conditions define the curriculum, and real field problems are observed from planting of a crop to harvesting. An FFS is usually initiated by someone who has had experience at growing the crop concerned. For this reason, most IPM programmes have begun with training extension field staff in basic technical skills for managing an IPM crop. Each school lasts for one cropping season, with a group of about 25 people meeting on a weekly basis to study and make decisions based on the cropping calendar (e.g., seeding, fertilizing, weeding, curbing pest encroachment). Instead of listening to lectures or watching demonstrations, farmers observe, record and discuss what is happening in the field. This discover-learning approach generates a deep understanding of ecological concepts and their practical application.

An FFS is always held in the community where the farmers live, with the extension officer traveling to the site on the day when the school meets. The field used for study is usually small, and either provided by the community or some other arrangement so that farmers can carry out risk-free management decisions that they might not otherwise attempt on their own farms. All field schools include field-based pre- and post-tests for the participants. Those with high attendance rates and who master the tests are awarded a certificate. Graduates routinely take over the job of extension facilitator by doing farmer-to farmer training or most of the functions of a follow-up season's training. The effects of IPM methods taught in FFSs are also compared with conventional

practices. In one notable example drawn from Indonesia in 1993, the inputs and outputs of 10 rice farmers who participated in an IPM field school during one wet season were compared with those of 10 rice farmers who had never been FFS trained. Overall, the IPM farmers achieved 21% more rice harvest yield on a per hectare basis (6.9 tons versus 5.7 tons), for 97% of production costs, when compared to their non-IPM farmer counterparts. The significantly lower "input" costs for IPM farmers were largely attributed to minimal usage of commercial pesticides. Labour costs were also slightly lower for IPM farmers, possibly because of better land management (FAO, 1993:72).

Hard Lessons Learned for the Road Ahead

1). The most obvious lesson from this review is that to be most effective a participatory communications and adult learning component should be built-in from the start of a project. The literature is now rife with confirmative statements to this effect. Two examples will suffice:

> "If the goal of the development effort is to assist the poor, the endeavor should begin in their context, not in the planning office, not in the research station, and not from theories and constructs of far-removed institutions. … The claim is not that rural farmers are the foremost experts in macro-level planning but they are often the most qualified to decide how, or if, a given project's planning and objectives applies at the local level. … Participation is not a supplementary mechanism "diffused" to expedite external agendas, or a means to an end. It is a legitimate goal in itself" (Servaes & Arnst, 1992:18).

> "Access to and control of information sources are essential for poor people to participate fully in decisions affecting their lives and communities. Sustained social change is impossible

without their full participation" (Rockefeller Foundation, 2000:2).

Unfortunately, all too often when communication is included, it is treated as an "add-on" type of materials production component to assist project objectives that may be well off the mark. Simply stated, communication with target groups in the planning stage gives a better project design and better chances of making it successful.

2). Associated with getting participatory communication and adult learning started early on in project formulation is the importance of incorporating indigenous knowledge and practice. The adage of "start with what people already know and build on what they have" subsumes the notion that "indigenous knowledge can provide a different understanding and analysis of a situation which was formulated in response to the environment and relevant cultural issues" (Servaes & Anrst, 1992:18). Further, "the location-specific nature of sustainable agriculture implies that extension must make use of farmers' knowledge and work together with farmers. (Roling & Pretty, 1997:186). And finally, "experiences from around the world have shown that new "scientific technologies" are not always the best strategy to adopt. Farmers' indigenous agricultural practices offer many answers and the best of both knowledge areas needs to be considered to meet local needs" (Protz, 1998:2).

3). A third lesson relates to providing adequate funding from the start for communication and learning components. A rule of thumb estimate is to budget 10% (Fraser & Villet, 1994) but large projects may require proportionately less and smaller ones more. And based on the limited evidence thus far, training and technical support for ICT related projects will need substantially more

funding than previously allotted for conventional media. Norrish (in Richardson & Paisley, 1998) for example, points out that an average of 24% of the funding for a World Bank information technology component was spent on training and technical support.

4). Fourthly, and although not a new theme, building human capacity takes time, usually much more than provided for in a typical five year project. Balit (1988) notes that the most successful of FAO's projects with a communication for development component have had a running time of seven to ten years. Benor & Cleaver (1989) go even further when suggesting that support to extension systems should be designed with a long-term perspective (15 years at least). As they skeptically conclude, "The continent of Africa is littered with five-year projects, abandoned on 'completion' by farmers" (Benor & Cleaver, 1989:2).

5). Given the location-specific nature of the PRA/PRCA process, a "small is beautiful" focus of projects should be at the community level. While a number of communities may be included in a given project, individual attention should be stressed such that each would build on its own strengths and unique opportunities. As Rolling & Pretty (1997) conclude from their review of extension's role in sustainable agricultural development, "Most successes are still localized. They are simply islands of success" (Rolling & Pretty, 1997:181). And undoubtedly, it is much easier to encourage and facilitate what we might call the four pillars of collaborative development at the individual village level, namely, multi-stakeholder involvement or pluralism, transparent negotiations,

representational participation, and accountability (Anderson et al, 1998; Ramirez, 1998).[14]

6). Planning for gender sensitivity in communication strategies and media content continues to be haphazardly applied, particularly with regard to rural women's concerns. As Balit (1999) points out, women farmers are responsible for half of the world's food production and in most developing countries produce from 60 to 80% of food destined for household food consumption. The "feminization of agriculture" means that rural women are key actors on the development agenda. PRCA applications should address social, economic, cultural, and time constraints faced by women in producing and preparing food and factor these into the design of communication messages, the choice of appropriate channels to use, and best timing and locations for delivery.

7). The issue of the lack of evaluation continues to undermine the perception of the value of participatory communication and learning project components. Assessing and taking credit for outcomes and longer-term impact which rightly accrue from communication and learning activities, such as changes in awareness, knowledge, attitudes, skills and behaviour, should be applied more frequently. Time and time again one reads that a true assessment of the value of communication and training was not possible due to the lack of pre-testing or a benchmark survey. Building in both qualitative and quantitative baseline measures such as those advocated in PRCA ensures that shifts in indicators can be measured during project implementation, upon its

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[14] Pretty's (1995) top levels in his typology of participation, namely, interactive participation and self-mobilization are also best initiated at the individual community level.

completion, and well after to probe longer-term impact. Inferences as to the effects of media and learning strategies on agricultural production levels - as a result of practice changes - can also be made (e.g., results of IPM-FFS on increases in rice production in Indonesia). In short, we need to consolidate a portfolio of validated best practices to better enable project decision-makers to harness the power of communication interventions.

One way to encourage more evaluation, and to curb the contention that PRCA is such a time consuming process, is to choose and apply only those PRA tools that will yield useful information; and the turn-around time for baseline quantitative surveys can be reduced by choosing smaller, but representative, samples and asking only what needs to be asked for formulating a communication strategy and media-mix.

The issue of evaluation is taking on mounting importance since the day is rapidly approaching when donors will want hard evidence of the results of their project investments. Anecdotal, narrative descriptions of outcomes and impacts will no longer do. Results-Based Management or RBM (CIDA, 1999) which sets specific inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes and impact performance indicators is already being applied by SIDA, CIDA, USAID and some UN Agencies, e.g., UNFPA. Assuredly other, if not most, development agencies will follow. Mainstreaming gender into RBM and factoring it into the evaluation grid of project indicators is another very positive step in this movement.

8). The question of how to best achieve sustainability following project completion remains a constant challenge but some answers are starting to emerge. Among these:

- a community focus with beneficiary participation is essential for setting achievable project objectives and creating local buy-in from the start;

- extension communication and learning approaches should build on indigenous know-how and consult research on technical problems for which there are no effective local solutions available;

- sufficient time should be allotted to routinise project objectives;

- follow-on activities should use local resources (staff, media equipment and facilities) and fall within the means of extension, and the community, to afford them.

In sum, perhaps the most instructive residue emerging from this paper is that researchers, educators, extensionists, communicators, and farmers must begin to act as a dynamic unit in synergizing and complementing each other toward getting the best out of methods and practices of participatory communication and learning. This implies each sector taking the lead at a given stage (e.g., communicators facilitating PRCA, farmers setting development priorities and their information and training needs, extension and media producers packaging research recommendations, skills training provided by educators and extension workers, and farmers training other farmers), but all working toward a common set of objectives. Finally, it should be kept in mind that most of the guidelines developed for participatory communication and adult learning thus far have been accumulated over three decades. The current rush to network the rural areas of the developing world, and to apply the inherent global resources available through the Internet toward meaningful

community progress, would be well served by observing the rather more slowly accrued hard-earned lessons from traditional and older electronic media applications.

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12.

Involving People, Evolving Behaviour: The UNICEF experience[1]

Neill McKee, Erma Manoncourt, Chin Saik Yoon & Rachel Carnegie

Practitioners of development communication often set out to change the behaviour of people reached in the projects they undertake. The behaviour may range from getting farmers to adopt a new cropping technique, to persuading mothers to feed their babies boiled water. Their approach may be top-down or participatory, as the occasion requires. It is unlikely that farmers will respond to non-participative interventions in altering their cropping practices, just as it is unlikely that mothers with critically ill babies will respond to lengthy participatory processes when seeking treatment.

Communicators working to change or develop people's behaviour have found it a highly complex activity to engage in, with goals often remaining elusive in spite of their best efforts. Many development communication campaigns succeed admirably in raising awareness about a particular issue while failing abysmally, at the same time, to bring about the sustained behaviour change

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such awareness is suppose to trigger. For example in anti-tobacco campaigns, smokers may quickly learn about the dangers of smoking, but continue to consume the same number of cigarettes that they did prior to their exposure to the messages of the campaign.

Why are people's behaviours so difficult to change? Why do development communication interventions often fall short of their behaviour altering goals?

While some of the answers and solutions maybe found within the discipline of development communication, many others seem to lie well beyond its confines. It seems interventions in development communication must be integrated with a number of other efforts so as to nurture new behaviour in people. Once motivated with information and awareness about a new practice, people need to learn and master new skills to enable them to apply it. At the same time their environment need to evolve in such a way that they are encouraged to practise their new skills and knowledge. In other words, interventions in development communication must be integrated and coordinated with other interventions in education and, policy advocacy and implementation aimed at nurturing the new behaviour.

It seems, on another front, that an individual in a developing community enjoys less freedom to make a strictly personal decision when considering whether to adopt a new behaviour, than her/his counterpart in a developed country. In making such a decision, the individual in a developing country will consider more deeply the interests and views of her/his family, peers and community alongside her/his own preferences. As such campaigns must aim to reach beyond the individuals, whose behaviour we are

interested in, to include the people who influence the individuals and their behaviour.

Underpinning these personal and communal decisions are the values that lie at the core of the community. Shared values define so much of daily life in developing societies that development practitioners must take time to identify and appreciate them. These values are the cardinal reference points of people as they filter new information, learn new skills, discard old practices and beliefs, evolve their environment, and decide upon action.

This integrated approach towards involving people in evolving behaviour is summarised in the model below:

This contribution will focus on the two outer rings of the diagram: "Enabling environment" and "Ability to act".

The inner two rings of "Information" and "Motivation" are the forte of development communicators, and have been covered in-depth in the preceding sections of this publication.

However before we turn to these two topics, let us first review briefly the main theories for behaviour change from the interrelated perspectives offered by sociology, psychology and anthropology.

Theories and Frameworks for Behavioural Change

Understanding people and their behaviour is one of the keys to successful development programmes. The actions and practices of an intended beneficiary or a stakeholder can directly affect the evolution of many social and health-related problems. In order to increase programme impact, and develop interventions that are strategically applied, it is important that development professionals determine, and understand, the various factors that influence an individual's, or community's, decision to perform or not perform specific behaviours.

Applying a behavioural perspective to the programme planning process enables one to identify the populations most ready for change; to examine the behaviours most easily influenced, along with their most important determinants; and to design interventions that are most likely to have the desired influence on these determinants. Behavioural frameworks are not only useful for identifying determinants of both desired and undesired behaviour, but also assist programmers in identifying potential points of intervention.

The relationship between programming and behaviour is critical in developing programmes that address key social and development problems. During the situational analysis phase of a programme, theories influence need assessments by pointing to the types of information that would be most helpful in guiding programme decisions and by identifying behavioural factors that are more important among target populations.

In the planning phase, theories direct attention to important explanatory factors (how different factors relate to behaviour), thus identifying intervention targets. During programme implementation, theories identify change processes that can be targeted.

As part of the evaluation phase, such frameworks are used to identify important explanatory factors for observed behaviours. They also signal factors that need to be measured, in order to understand whether or not the hypothesised change or developmental process occurred as planned.

A variety of behavioural frameworks (models, theories) will be discussed in this contribution but for illustration purposes, emphasis will be placed on health programmes and consequently the use of health behaviour examples. Nonetheless, the reader is reminded that the discussion that follows has a wider application to other social and development programmes.

Although one often hears the term "health behaviour", it has different meanings depending on one's professional training. For programming purposes, distinguishing between health-directed and health-related behaviour is useful. The former refers to observable acts that are undertaken with a specific health outcome in mind. In direct contrast, health-related behaviours are those

actions that a person does that may have health implications, but are not undertaken with a specific health objective in mind.

Box 1: Key Definitions

Behaviour is defined as: "an observable act, such as stepping on a weighing scale". Technically speaking, a behaviour category is used to refer to a composite of discrete actions. For example: "weighing a baby" is composed of several actions: "putting the child in a harness," "calibrating the scale measurement," calculating the kilogram's on a scale", etc.

Behavioural determinants are factors that either influence or cause an action to occur, or not occur. Also referred to as mediating factors, they may be internal (anxieties, beliefs, etc.) or external (peer pressure, supportive setting, etc.). Research has shown that these factors will vary in importance for different behaviours and across different settings; therefore a clear understanding of when, where and under what conditions the desired behaviour should occur (or undesired practices should cease) needs to be determined.

A discussion of behavioural terminology is incomplete without mention of two key internal behavioural determinants, knowledge and attitudes, that affect how human beings act.

Attitudes are feelings, opinions or values that an individual holds about a particular issue, problem or concern.

Knowledge is internalised learning based on scientific fact, experience and/or traditional beliefs. Experience shows that knowledge is necessary but not sufficient to produce behaviour change, which occurs when perceptions, motivation, skills and the social environment also interact.

When formulating interventions, it is important to clarify who is the subject of the action – by age or cultural group, gender, religion, ethnicity or some other characteristic Decisions about which groups to target help us make choices amongst the variety of theoretical models and conceptual frameworks that are based on empirical programme experience. Realising that change in society occurs at

many societal levels, programme staff are often faced with choices as to who they should direct their efforts – individuals, families or households, communities or the wider society as a whole. In practice, these choices are influenced by time and resource considerations and should be informed by an understanding of behaviour as a developmental and change process. Knowledge of the available theories or models can also guide programme planning and clarify the relationships between different factors that influence individual, interpersonal and group behaviour.

Box 2: Female Genital Mutilation [FGM]

UNICEF's Sara Communication Initiative for the adolescent girl in Eastern and Southern Africa, has researched attitudes and produced materials on FGM. Through focus group discussions, communities aired their views on the issue and identified any positive elements related to the practice. Many believed that, as a rite of passage, the ceremonies as a whole gave a sense of cultural identity to young people and provided a form of family life education to young girls. People were aware of the negative impact on the girls' and women's health, yet girls highlighted the anxiety caused by resisting the practice individually, since an uncircumcised girl may be mocked and considered potentially unmarriageable within her community.

The debate in the focus groups centred on whether it was possible to reject the negative while retaining the positive elements of this rite of passage. People also considered who would be the most likely and effective initiators of change within the community as a whole. The Sara film and books reflect these research findings, and seek to stimulate debate on FGM at community level and also advocate for greater support at policy level.

Some Theoretical Frameworks that Explain Individual Behaviour

Health Belief Model (HBM)

The Health Belief Model is the most common and well-known theory in the field of public health and has been used more widely than any other to guide behaviour interventions in development programmes. Developed in the early 1950s by Godfrey Hochbaum and other social psychologists at the US Public Health Service, it was used to explain patients' responses to tuberculosis preventive actions. The HBM model is based on the premise that one's personal thoughts and feelings control one's actions. It proposes that health behaviour is therefore determined by internal cues (perceptions or beliefs), or external cues (e.g. reactions of friends, mass media campaigns, etc.) that trigger the need to act. It specifically hypothesises that individual behaviour is determined by several internal factors:

- Belief about one's chances or risk of getting an illness or being directly affected by a particular problem or illness (perceived susceptibility);

- Belief or one's opinions about the seriousness of a given problem or illness (perceived severity);

- Belief about the efficacy of an action to reduce risk or severity (perceived benefits) compared to one's opinion about the tangible or psychological risks or costs for proposed action (perceived barriers).

According to the HBM, the first two beliefs jointly form one's conviction and influence the degree to which an individual may be motivated to act on a given problem. The theory also suggests that

the above reflections and thoughts are triggered by both internal (e.g. sweating, nervousness, etc.) and external influences (e.g. reactions by other people and/or opinions of significant others, media, etc.). These are labelled as "cues to action".

Once an individual is motivated to act, the actual behaviour undertaken will be determined by a third factor – a personal perception of "cost-benefit". This framework further explains that before deciding to act, individuals consider whether or not the benefits (positive aspects) outweigh the barriers (negative aspects) of a particular behaviour.

In a more recent formulation of this theory, the concept of self-efficacy has been added. This addition takes into account individual beliefs or personal perceptions of one's own ability to undertake a particular action.

Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) and Personal Behaviour (TPB)

Similar to the HBM model, the Theory of Reasoned Personal Behaviour also supports the notion that one's thoughts and perceptions are important determinants of behaviour. Developed by Fishbein and Azjen (1980), this theory added a new dimension to our understanding of behaviour by introducing the concept of behavioural intent. According to their behaviour research, the most critical factor in determining whether individuals will actually perform a desired behaviour is their behavioural intent. Behavioural intent reflects the level of commitment that an individual has to undertake a desired behaviour and likelihood that an individual will perform the desired behaviour: It is influenced by personal attitudes and perceived social pressure/norms.

In later formulations of TRA, the concept of perceived behavioural control was added to the framework. This concept identifies beliefs

that individuals have about the availability of resources and obstacles to performing a behaviour, combined with perceptions of the impact of these, or power of each to resource or obstacle to either facilitate or inhibit desired behaviour. This was an attempt to reflect that factors outside an individual's control could also affect actual performances of a particular behaviour.

Clearly, this theory acknowledges the joint influence of attitudes, norms and perceived control in affecting behavioural intention as a motivating force in the behaviour process. It also clarifies that perceptions of control, similar to behavioural intention, have a direct influence on one's taking action. However, the relevant importance of each of these dimensions is dependent on the behaviour goal, itself. TPB posits that individuals who have positive attitudes towards performing a particular behaviour, and who believe that "significant others" are in favour of or support the desired action, will more likely attempt a particular behaviour. For some people, their own personal attitudes will have a greater influence on their behaviour than perceived social pressure, and vice versa for others.

Stages of Change Theory

The Stages of Change Theory is based on the premise that behaviour change is a process and explains the psychological processes that people undergo are iterative in nature. Assuming that individuals experience different levels of motivation to change, Prochaska, et al. (1992) suggests that interventions should be matched to individuals at their respective stages in the change process. It also suggests that behaviour change can be characterised by five stages: pre-contemplation (no thoughts about change), contemplation, decision/determination, action and maintenance.

The theory, conceived as a circular model, allows for individuals to enter at any stage and takes into account that the stages, themselves, may appear different, given different situations. While these stages can be used to explain why people behave as they do, they can also inform intervention design and communication messages that can be tailored accordingly.

Some Theoretical Frameworks that Explain Interpersonal Behaviour

Social Cognitive Theory (SCT)

Developed by Albert Bandura (1986), Social Cognitive Theory assumes that individuals interact constantly with their social environment and that they influence, and are influenced by their social milieu – friends, family, co-workers etc. Central to this theory is the premise that behaviour is a result of a three-way, reciprocal interaction between personal factors (i.e. one's own feelings and reactions) and environmental influences (i.e. thoughts, advice and feelings of "significant others"). In contrast to the previously discussed conceptual models, this theory emphasises the role of one's own experiences and observations of others and the results of their actions on personal behaviour. SCT explains human behaviour as a multi-dimensional and reciprocal process. It uses four concepts that can be used to guide programme development and behavioural interventions at an interpersonal level: reciprocal determinism, behavioural capability, outcome expectations and self-efficacy.

SCT is centred on the premise that people learn their behaviours from their own experiences (trial and error) and the results of their actions and by observing others.

Observation, and consequently effective role models, are important in learning new behaviours. Empirical study shows that the more similar a role model is to a particular target group, the more the group will identify with the model and try to emulate his or her behaviour.

Practice, trial and error, is the most powerful source of learning. It takes into account that the individual's mastery of tasks is important and that the more they practice and are able to accomplish a particular task, the more motivated they will be to attempt a desired action.

According to Bandura, one's sense of self-efficacy is also learned through emotional reactions or feelings about a situation or from persuasive arguments and encouragement by credible people within an appropriate social context.

Social Experience Model

Using a human development perspective, Bloomberg et al. (1994:455) developed a framework for understanding the critical interaction between elements of the social environment and health. They concentrated on the concept of social experience, and the ways in which social the immediate and wider environment of an individual can affect his/her behaviour. This theoretical model emphasises that human behaviour is the result of interactions with "significant others" and the ways that one is treated due to his/her status or membership in a particular group. It also explains that social context and relationships in which one is involved influences his/her self-perceptions of personal competencies and expectations and can ultimately affect various social or health outcomes.

According to Bloomberg and his colleagues, an individual's socio-demographic background plus his/her own personal traits

determine the social context of interactions with others. They noted that factors such as environment resources, parental education, family income, occupational status are key socio-demographic characteristics that play a role. More importantly, this theory suggests that the opinions and behaviours of one's friends, family, or social network influences one's own personal perceptions and actions. This social experience has a direct impact on one's actions and ultimately, social, health and other development outcomes.

Social Network and Social Support Theory

The theory explains the mechanisms by which social interactions can promote or inhibit individual and collective behaviour. As defined by Israel et al. (1985, 1990) and other researchers, a social network is person-centred and refers to the set of linkages and social relationships between people. An understanding of network theory enables programmers to better analyse how friends, families and other significant people might impact on the same individuals and groups that they are trying to influence. In developing appropriate interventions, the following network characteristics should be considered: size and number of members; frequency of contact and strength of bond between members; extent to which different members know each other; and extent to which resources and support are exchanged between members.

Social support, on the other hand, refers to the content of these relationships – i.e. what is actually being shared or transmitted during different interactions. As such, assistance provided or exchanged through interpersonal and other social relationships can be characterised into four types of supportive action: emotional support, instrumental support such as tangible aid or services,

appraisal support such as feedback and constructive criticism, and informational support in the form of advice or suggestions etc.

Some Theoretical Frameworks that Explain Community or Societal Behaviour

Diffusion of Innovations (DOI)

Based on his study of collective human behaviour and responsiveness to novelty and the introduction of change, Everett Rogers (1983, 1986, 1995) developed a theoretical model entitled Diffusion of Innovations Theory. Based on agricultural extension work in USA and East Africa, this theory explains the progression over time by which members of a community or society adopt new, or different, ideas and practices. It is based on the premise that social change or changes in human behaviour can be understood by the way that individuals and groups respond to new or different ideas and behaviours that are introduced. The theory also provides insight into the impact of social influence on individual and household behaviour.

Commonly referred to as "innovations", these new ideas can in fact be technologies, attitudes, behaviours, policies, practices or even programmes. Experience has taught us that these innovations are not always recognised initially as being necessary, useful, or important, by the target population. Their acceptance, and adoption, on a wide-scale basis begins slowly, as a few people or groups try the idea out first before it gradually spreads to others, as a social momentum may be created or the social climate becomes more accommodating. The theory also posits that the adoption is a process. All eventual adopters pass through five stages: (a) awareness of the innovation; (b) interest in it; (c)

trying it out; (d) making a decision to accept or reject; and (e) adopting or adapting the innovation into one's daily life.

Conceptual Model of Community Empowerment

Many theorists are not satisfied with individual behaviour change alone. They maintain that we should be more concerned with empowerment of people for long-term change (Freire, 1970; Wallerstein, 1992; Steckler et al, 1993). A review of literature (mainly health education articles) reveals that there are a variety of definitions for the concept of "empowerment". For some it is:

- largely a personal process in which individuals develop and employ necessary knowledge, competence and confidence for making their own decisions/voices heard, or,

- participatory competence: the ability to be heard by those in power, or,

- a social process of recognising, promoting and enhancing people's abilities to meet their own needs, solve their own problems and mobilise the necessary resources in order to feel in control.

Central to an understanding of the community empowerment process is the recognition that communities are composed of individuals and organisations that interact in a variety of social networks. This interdependence supports the notion that changes in one part of the social system has rippling effects in other parts. As a result, development programmes that aim to facilitate community ownership, competence and commitment to change must explore the concept of empowerment at three levels of

practice: individual, organisational and community. They are distinguished as follows:

- Individual empowerment has a focus on personal efficacy and competence. It also takes into account one's sense of mastery and/or control over a situation.

- Organisational empowerment emphasises processes that enable individuals to increase control within a formalised structure, and the organisation itself to influence policies and decisions in the larger community. In practice, it also provides opportunities for individual growth and access to decision-making processes.

- Community empowerment centres on collective action and control that is based on participation of both individuals and organisations within a specific social context. Some of its benefits, on a group level, are greater economic independence and social recognition.

In summary, there are a variety of theoretical models from which programme staff can choose. None of these have proven completely satisfactory in the field of international development. Many practitioners find that they can achieve the greatest understanding by combining more than one theory or developing their own conceptual framework. What follows in this contribution is such an attempt. It is not a theory, but it does offer insight in the form of a model which can be easily understood by professionals in many fields and it does answer some of the criticism sometimes made, that theories of behaviour are too Western and geared to the individual.

Strengthening People's Life Skills

The term "life skills" is applied in a variety of ways in the context of different programmes. In some cases it is taken to refer to practical, technical skills, such as mixing oral rehydration solution or putting on a condom. In other cases, it refers to entrepreneurial or livelihood skills, necessary for economic survival. In the school context, it is sometimes taken to mean the essential skills of basic education, including literacy, numeracy, and technical skills in health education. In this section, however, the discussion of life skills focuses on what are often termed psycho-social competencies. These are the skills that enable individuals to think and behave in a pro-active and constructive way in dealing with themselves, relating to others and succeeding in the wider society. Life skills are required both in everyday circumstances and, particularly, in specific risk situations.

The most accessible way to explain life skills is perhaps to provide a list of life skills which have been identified by different programmes around the world. The Mental Health Promotion Unit of the World Health Organization in Geneva has analysed the content of numerous life skills programmes in schools around the globe, and has found that there are five basic life skills areas which frequently appear (WHO/MNH, 1994). These life skills areas provide a starting point. Later in this chapter we will examine whether life skills have a cross-cultural relevance and the ways in which they can be adapted.

Each basic life skill area leads to a multitude of other skills to be developed and practised. For example, developing critical thinking skills can strengthen people's ability to clarify their values and assess risks more effectively. After developing basic communication skills, young people can go on to learn about

negotiation skills, assertiveness and resisting peer pressure. Learning decision making skills can be further refined with additional activities to practise setting realistic goals for the future.

Clearly, different dimensions of life skills are appropriate for different age groups. For example, in the case of communication skills, while young children might aim for clear expression and the ability to speak and listen in turn, older children need more advanced skills in negotiation. Adolescents, and indeed adults, could refine this still further and should be able to combine communication skills and problem solving skills for conflict resolution.

Life skills are required by people for their healthy development by enabling them to:

- to acquire a sense of self-worth and self-efficacy;

- to build supportive relationships with family and friends;

- to promote healthy living;

- to cope with the stresses and pressures of daily life;

- to deal with conflicting values and norms for behaviour.

The acquisition of life skills is clearly linked to the development of values. Of most significance are the attitudes relating to the individual's perception of self and others. The enhancement of life skills goes hand in hand with the promotion of self-esteem, self-control and personal responsibility. It also involves, crucially, both a respect for others, regardless of race, sex, religion or life style, and a sense of the individual's responsibility for the group, be it family, friends or community.

These general attitudes need to be combined with efforts to clarify one's own set of values. In many regions, vast population growth, urban migration and exposure to alternative values through new information channels, have challenged traditional family and community structures that formerly raised young people within their own particular cultural system. In many cases, the social and sexual mores of the modern world are in direct conflict with traditional values. Within societies there is often moral ambivalence, when what is practised contradicts what is preached. All these factors lead to feelings of confusion and alienation for young people attempting to make sense of their world, feelings which may manifest themselves in risky behaviours.

Life Skills Learning Process

What most clearly defines a "life skills approach" from other health promotion initiatives is the teaching and learning approach. In life skills programmes the emphasis is more on process rather than on content; on how something is learned, rather than what is learned; on how to think, not what to think. Life skills are not a set of technical skills that can be taught on the basis of information transferred from the teacher to the pupil. Nor should life skills be taught in isolation. They need to be dealt with holistically, taking into account the social, cultural and economic context of the learners' lives, with application to real life concerns.

Considering the health and social issues addressed within life skills programmes, the information content is, of course, significant. However, effective learning is likely to depend more on the methods employed than on the information component of the programme. "The methods used are what most clearly distinguishes life skills programmes from information dissemination initiatives, such as teaching 'facts for life'." (WHO/MNH, 1994:3)

This educational approach involves participatory and active learning methods. The objective is to create an environment conducive to experiential learning of life skills.

Defining knowledge as a "process of inquiry" (Freire, 1973:46), in which the learner is the active agent in creating knowledge, is the key issue which demarcates active learning in life skills education from conventional, didactic approaches. "The central, and indispensable, component of active learning is the 'inner' activity in which the learner constructs and reconstructs his system of knowledge, skills and values. It is this structure which enables him to order new experiences, and thus to attach meaning both to the outside world and to his role in it" (Somerset, 1988:151).

It must be acknowledged that, for learners of all ages, their experiences will not always be easy or positive. Applying life skills to their real life involves taking risks. If young people refuse to smoke, take drugs or alcohol, they might risk ostracism from their social group. If a person, concerned about his or her partner's sexual history, insists on condom use, he or she might risk rejection. This is why life skills education should always include time to practise skills in a safe learning environment. This is an opportunity to test out other people's reactions to new behaviours.

Obviously all efforts should be made to create as supportive an environment as possible, through parallel work with parents and the community. However, it must be acknowledged that use of life skills is, in itself, a risk-taking venture, since it potentially alters the individual's relationship with others, challenging their values, roles and power relations. This underlines the importance of life skills education as a long-term, sequential and developmentally appropriate intervention. To support the learning and practice of life skills, they should always be taught first in the context of low

risk, non-threatening situations, to provide opportunities for positive feedback from the application of life skills. The skills should then be explored and practised in progressively more challenging or threatening situations over time. It is the confidence gained in the practise of skills in low risk situations which helps people to persevere with their intended action when people do not respond favourably to their behaviour.

Box 3: Zimbabwe School Aids Action Programme

The School AIDS Action Programme in Zimbabwe provides an interesting example of an attempt to take a life skills approach from small scale intervention into a national programme, introduced through the formal education system. With HIV/AIDS prevention as its primary objective, the programme has a broad foundation in the development of life skills.

The programme has been developed by the Ministry of Education's Curriculum Development Unit in partnership with UNICEF. Its main impetus has been on the research, development and dissemination of student textbooks, teachers' manuals and supplementary materials, combined with teacher training.

The programme targets all students from primary Grade 4 to the highest secondary class. It is compulsory in the school curriculum and has one weekly period timetabled. The text books are graded and incremental. As the students mature, so the topics move from "bad touches" to actual rape, from making friends to physical relationships. "The textbooks used are issue-oriented and pose a series of scenarios requiring students to explore feelings, examine alternatives, think through situations, take decisions and make judgements. The books avoid talking down to students and do not prescribe answers to problems. The material provides situations that help students confront issues that enable them to make decisions about their own sexual values and interpersonal relationships." (UNICEF, Harare, 1994) This approach demonstrates how HIV/AIDS education can be planned around life skills development, rather than pure information transfer.

The greatest challenge lies in teacher education, in being able to transform didactic teachers into facilitators. In-service teacher training is provided through a "cascade" model (each level training a lower level), from national down to school level, although this

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inevitably tends to get weaker as it moves downwards. To provide further stimulus and support to teachers and to promote school interaction, "demonstration" schools receive targeted training and serve a local cluster of schools. However, established teachers have found it difficult to transform their conventional approaches, fearing that greater student participation could lead to a loss of control.

Pre-service training is conducted in all teachers' colleges. This incorporates factual information on HIV/AIDS as well as training in the participatory, life skills approach used by this programme. It also targets the college students themselves as a group at risk.

In a preliminary evaluation study on the text books and implementation in Grade 7, students "were unanimous in viewing the book as useful, enjoyable, appropriate and in the main relevant to their experience," although many expressed embarrassment at having to discuss these issues with adult teachers, who were themselves also uneasy with the material (Chisuo, 1995:30-31). However, the study highlights the difficulties which participatory methods present to teachers. Rather than introducing the books as a separate lesson, many teachers have tended to integrate the lessons into other core subjects, returning to their conventional, didactic approaches. This necessarily inhibits the development of life skills. Future development of the programme will focus on teacher training and monitoring mechanisms.

Source: UNICEF Harare, 1994:1-19

Summary of Lessons Learned

Experience of life skills programmes around the world has provided a number of key lessons learned, summarised here:

- Life skills need to be learnt in an integrated, holistic manner, since real-life problems require a range of psychosocial skills. Life skills programmes should be developed to address the "whole person" within his or her environment.

- Life skills education is a long term process and requires follow-up activities to ensure that learners continue, over time, to

apply their life skills in different contexts and have a chance to reflect on their experiences.

- Learners, their families and communities, need to be involved in identifying risky behaviours and the related life skills which are significant to them, to ensure the relevance of the programme and its cultural appropriateness.

- In programme planning, implementation, monitoring and managing, all efforts should be made to promote community ownership of the programme for long-term sustainability.

- Learners require opportunities for practice of skills and positive reinforcement. Consultation and parallel life skills training with other family members, parents, peers and the community can aim to make the environment more supportive.

- Early interventions with children of primary school age enable them to acquire life skills before they may become involved in risk-taking behaviours.

- Both qualitative and quantitative research are an essential part of the whole process of life skills programme development, implementation and maintenance.

- The participatory, active learning approach required for life skills education makes new demands on the abilities of educators. Teacher/facilitator training and follow-up support need to be given priority.

- When designing risk reduction programmes, on AIDS, substance abuse, etc., the life skills required to address the issue should form the central focus. These life skills will then define the learning objectives, the content, materials and educational methods, as well as the behavioural outcomes to be evaluated.

- Work with the media, to promote positive life skills modelling, helps to provide other sources of motivation and examples for the acquisition and practice of life skills, especially for young people.

- Life skills programmes should be underpinned by a human rights stance, giving special consideration to the promotion of the Rights of the Child, and the prevention of gender, racial and other forms of discrimination.

- While strengthening the capabilities of individuals, life skills programme developers should also recognise the importance of wider environmental factors which can constrain people's behaviour and limit their choices. Agencies need to collaborate, working simultaneously at a structural level to promote a more positive environment.

Creating an Enabling Environment

All too often, people wanting to make changes in their lives face the resistance of their family, peers and community. Health services are often inadequate for their needs or insensitive to their situation. The education system often fails them. They may also face religious, cultural, economic, or social pressures – or a lack of structural and legislative support – that constrain their freedom to choose healthy and safe options.

All too often, programmes designed to improve people's lives have focused on the "vulnerable individual", exhorting them to change their lifestyles. Such programmes not infrequently ignore the wider environment and the forces which push people into doing things that undermine their health, such as having unwanted or unsafe

sex, using drugs, being subjected to female genital mutilation (FGM) or using breast-milk substitutes.

At the same time, health promotion programmes can gain far greater impact by building on existing cultural, social and other factors which support safe and healthy choices, for example, in discouraging the use of tobacco or alcohol.

When programming for behaviour development and change we therefore need to think in much broader terms, beyond the individual whose behaviour we are concerned about. Programmes that aim to decrease the number of people who smoke, the number of people injured in car accidents, the number of children who remain without immunisation, the number of teenage girls becoming pregnant, have to do much more than develop individuals' knowledge, motivation and skills to be effective. They have to focus on creating a supportive and enabling environment for these individuals. Such programmes need to build on those aspects of the environment which are supportive to positive behaviours and minimise or change those which are negative or resistant.

Analysing the Environment
There are two major dimensions of the environment to consider, which overlap and are interrelated. The first refers to the "immediate environment" of parents and family, friends and community members, where interpersonal communication is the major influence on behaviour. Then there are those factors in the "wider environment", such as culture and religion, health and education systems, news and entertainment media, which both influence and are influenced by pervading social values.

This section focuses in more detail on those aspects of the wider environment that influence and constrain behaviour choices. These include:

- Policy and legislation;

- Service provision;

- Education systems;

- Cultural factors; religion;

- Socio-political factors;

- Socio-economic factors; and the

- Physical environment.

While each factor is discussed separately, in programming terms they need to be addressed in an integrated way, reflecting the manner in which they relate to a specific issue.

Policy and Legislation

In many countries the plethora of parallel projects by governments, NGOs and other agencies may fail to achieve their potential impact at the macro level if they are not delivered within a consistent policy environment, which achieves synergy through coordinated action. The efforts of individual programmes can ultimately only be sustained and expanded when underpinned by supportive policy and legislation. Such legislation must also be held by the political will to enforce its provisions. Development organisations have a crucial role to play through advocacy in strengthening this political commitment.

There are many examples of effective development of policy and legislation in the creation of an enabling environment for change.

In fact, in many instances, getting new policies passed has been relatively easy. More difficult has been effectively implementing their provisions. As such, policy and the development of national laws can usually only provide a framework for change, except in relatively clear examples, easily enforced by the authorities, such as the enactment and enforcement of car seat belt legislation.

Box 4: Using VIPP: The Case of Zambia

Since its introduction through UNICEF in early 1994, VIPP made great strides in Zambia, building upon the foundations of participatory training that already existed in the country. VIPP methodologies have been used for strengthening teams, project planning, strategy development, managing meetings, generating information, and training trainers. Over 300 facilitators at various levels in government, NGOs, and international development agencies have been trained in the use of VIPP, and several partner organisations have espoused the methods for their own programmes.

VIPP has been used with numerous different types of groups and organisations to develop strategies on a range of issues, including: promoting girls' retention in school, improving youth access to media about HIV/AIDS, problem-solving with street children in urban areas, community-based planning, and capacity-building for health reforms in Zambia. VIPP has also been used within UNICEF's Zambia country office to strengthen its own internal management and planning, and for staff team-building.

VIPP methods are particularly appropriate to raise difficult issues. For example, an adolescent involved with HIV/AIDS education for youth in Zambia uses a VIPP card to anonymously ask: "How can I be sure that my partner is wearing a condom?" Police officers and Lusaka street children have frankly exchanged their perceptions of each other, and at the same time defined common ground. Youths have collaborated with senior health providers to better define their needs in reproductive health service provision. Staff members have been able to raise their fear about speaking up in front of their manager in a manner that allows for constructive exploration of this issue in the workplace.

A preliminary evaluation of VIPP's application in Zambia conducted in 1996 indicated that VIPP is most effective for mid-level decision-

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makers who are often better at talking about the need for participation than at practicing it in their own working environments.

Source: Whitney et al, 1998.

Service Provision

No matter what we do to give people clear and accurate information, to motivate them to change existing practices or to adopt an innovation, and to assist them in developing the skills needed for positive change, our efforts will be largely in vain unless there is a commensurate improvement in the quality of services made available to support such behaviours. Such services include health and education provision, safe water supply, sanitation facilities and waste disposal, and agricultural extension services. These services need to be affordable and accessible, and of a standard to meet the needs of the client community.

Box 5: Interpersonal Communication and Service Delivery

In Bangladesh, the Expanded Programme on Immunisation (EPI) had achieved 62 percent coverage by 1991. However, statistics indicated that dropout levels were still very high. A large-scale, qualitative study revealed that much of this was due to the poor quality of communication between service-providers and clientele. Vaccinators allowed relatives and people with higher status to jump places in lines. They seldom counselled on possible side affects and treated poorer people rudely. It was found that, on average, they spent 21 seconds with each child and caretaker. Very little use was made of the thousands of flip charts and flash cards produced to support interpersonal communication. A more in-depth analysis of the same data indicated that there was little difference in performance between those field workers who had undergone training programmes and those who had learned on the job. This led to the formulation of an interpersonal communication (IPC) training strategy for field workers and their supervisors.

Source: EPI, 1991; Griffey-Brechin, 1993; MOHFW May 1994.

Education Systems

Although education is part of service provision, it merits a separate discussion, given its formative role in determining people's behavioural patterns. For those who have been to school, their educational experience is probably the most significant determinant of the way in which they receive, process and use information. Many examples exist of educational initiatives which promote the development of life skills, including the capacity for critical thinking, decision making and problem solving. In this light, such education systems can be seen to develop the capacity of people to work proactively within and upon their environment for constructive change. The key to this transformation lies in the quality of the educational process. The way in which the learner experiences the learning process can either encourage or inhibit positive behavioural development and change. However, while globally many education systems are working actively to improve the quality of teaching, it remains a fact that the majority of educational environments serve only to promote passivity in learners.

A bleak but influential view of this educational approach was taken by Paulo Freire who characterised it as a "pedagogy of oppression" (Freire, 1973). He sensed that such forms of education can keep people locked in a closed world in a "culture of silence". In this context, education becomes a series of facts passed on from the "knowledgeable" teacher to the "ignorant" student through rote learning. This follows what Freire called the "banking concept" of education, whereby teachers believe their role is to "fill" their students with knowledge. Education suffers from "narration sickness". "Narration leads the students to memorise mechanically

the narrated content. Worse still, it turns them into containers, into receptacles to be filled by the teacher" (Freire, 1973:45).

Where the education system itself is rigid and autocratic, from the style of management at the top, down to delivery in the classroom, it may appear resistant to change. The way society is organised can be reflected and reinforced by the way people are educated: either enforcing acquiescence within a hierarchy or, conversely, encouraging a democratic openness and questioning. However, education systems can be mobilized to challenge social norms and become a catalyst in changing the way people think and behave. Educational reform is possible, albeit slow and incremental.

Many sectoral programmes, particularly in health, water and sanitation, and agriculture, seek to use school systems as a key channel for disseminating their messages. However, such information will likely remain unused unless the learning process encourages enquiry and innovation. Outreach will also be limited unless more students are retained in the school system. Two key issues therefore govern the potential of the education system to contribute to creating an enabling environment. The first relates to the continuing quest for improving quality in teaching; the second to increasing access to and retention in schools.

The education system provides the most crucial point of interface between individuals and their environment. A positive educational experience can prepare people to participate in creating a more supportive environment, in redefining the terms on which they live. For example, disadvantaged groups, who have learnt about the rights to equality before the law, can work individually or collectively to challenge social practice and to lobby for changes in policy and legislation. In terms of programming for an "enabling environment", investment in education becomes the central

priority, for education opens the way for people themselves to influence their environment and widen their options for action.

Box 6: Mobilising for Education for All in Bangladesh

A year after the World Conference on "Education for All", held in Jomtien, Thailand in 1990, not a great deal had been achieved in Bangladesh. There was a great deal of rhetoric and disagreement over the strategies required to bring education to a population of 110 million which was less than 25 percent literate. UNICEF was still giving emphasis to the provision of educational materials, curriculum development and teacher training. There had been much energy and concentration on mass education in the past, with little progress. The Government, academics and NGOs were at odds as to the reasons for the lack of progress, each tending to blame the other. Compulsory primary education was declared by the President at Jomtien, but no one believed that it was enforceable or achievable. The call for "Education for All" remained a hollow cry.

Participatory Planning: A breakthrough came in April 1991. UNICEF organised a participatory planning workshop using a method called Visualisation in Participatory Programmes (VIPP). High-level government, NGO staff and academics attended, along with participants from UNICEF and UNESCO. In three days, participants worked through the essential steps to be taken in mobilizing for Basic Education in Bangladesh and developed a multimedia and multi-partnership plan of action for advocacy, social mobilization and programme communication.

This initial planning workshop was followed by training in VIPP facilitation for key Government, NGO and UNICEF staff involved in education. This training initiated a whole sequence of participatory planning processes, right down to the lowest administrative level. For the first time, people in lower-level posts had a say in what was needed to mobilize the educational bureaucracy, social partners, parents and children.

Determining the Value of Education: A qualitative research study was carried out on the perception and value of education. After a great deal of discussion, it was decided that before launching a major communication initiative for accelerating the provision of educational services and quality of services, more should be known about what parents and children think and believe about schools and school personnel, revealing deep-seated

perceptions, beliefs and values. The information from this research was used in the formulation of mass media, traditional media and interpersonal communication messages aimed at various stake-holders in the educational process.

Launching a Movement: In 1992, the Prime Minister launched the "Education for All" movement in a major national conference attended by people from all relevant sectors and all parts of the country. The conference was a lively affair, with a great deal of debate, which sparked new initiatives. At the above event, a communication symbol for "Education for All" was unveiled. The final symbol above, with the girl slightly ahead of the boy because of her historic disadvantage, was adopted as the best concept to promote basic education for all in Bangladesh. Today, it is used by all major partners in the movement and can be seen throughout the country. It is easily recognisable and communicates a message, even to illiterates.

Cultural Factors

In development programmes the role of culture is often ignored, for example, in analyses of social change which take a purely economic and political perspective. In other instances, where the influence of culture is acknowledged, it is still considered to be either sacrosanct (in representing a "unique" traditional culture) or immutable, and certainly not within the domain of the development programmer. However, cultural values form the overriding determinant of behaviour, which cuts across all other factors. People's behaviour is guided by their personal values, governed by the pervading cultural values of their social group.

A holistic approach to creating a supportive environment recognises the complexity and interrelationship of the various factors determining behaviour, of which culture plays a very significant and influential part. For our discussion, we can adopt a working definition of "culture" as a set of values and practices shared by a group. The domain of such a culture is therefore

determined by the number of people or communities who identify with and subscribe to its shared set of values and practices. This results in layers of cultures and subcultures within a single society.

As with the other factors in this section, the discussion of culture and behavioural change merits a whole book in itself. However, the review of gender programmes offers some general lessons that can be applied more broadly to other aspects of culture. It emphasises the value of a programmer's role as a listener, learning about people's culture through formative research. This insight allows initiatives to tap into the evolutionary process of culture, building on the value and behavioural shifts that communities believe are desirable and possible. Such work can be reinforced by establishing alliances with other agents in society, particularly harnessing the power of the mass media.

However, as culture exists as a set of values and practices shared by a group, change cannot be imposed from without, but will evolve within communities through a participatory process, in which people are enabled to become more objectively conscious and to consider possible transformations.

This finally brings us to the ethical issues that a programmer needs to consider when dealing with cultural issues. Community participants need to be fully conscious that efforts to reform their culture may lead to social disruption. It is they, not the programmer, who carry the risk in challenging their cultural norms. As with the example of FGM, interventions concerned with culture are more appropriate in addressing the community as a whole, on all its levels, rather than isolated, and possibly vulnerable, groups within the community.

Finally it is worth remembering that programmers too, from whatever society, may subscribe to an "international development" culture, their own shared set of values, which could also benefit from a regular, critical scrutiny. In its worst manifestation, this could be portrayed as a sense of cultural superiority, implicit in same policy statements, "particularly when programmes involve 'educating' a 'target population'" (Allen, 1992:338). Our guard against this is to adopt a listening stance and approach our work with communities as a process of mutual learning.

Conclusion: Integrating for Change

This brief review of the many processes and factors that must converge in order to facilitate behaviour change, strongly suggests the importance of adopting integrated approaches in designing development communication programmes. It calls into question the current trend of using the words "information" and "knowledge" to mean the same thing. It also questions the marketing hype which suggests that knowledge can be downloaded from appliances plugged into the Internet. And that there are technological shortcuts to change and development.

This review also emphasizes to policy makers and programme directors the importance of building effective and responsive communication elements into development programmes right from the start of all projects. While communication on its own will not bring about change and development, neither will change happen without development communication. We need to integrate all our efforts.

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13.

Edutainment in HIV/AIDS Prevention. Building on the Soul City Experience in South Africa[1]

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Introduction

How do you on a large scale communicate about HIV/AIDS? How do you make people not just knowledgable about HIV/AIDS but really make them change behaviour and especially take preventive measures to avoid the spread of the disease? And not least: how do you measure the impact of the communication intervention you use to pursue your objective about promoting HIV/AIDS prevention? These are key questions to many governments and NGOs/CBOs in a growing number of countries. Both multilateral and bilateral development agencies are – despite more than 15 years of experience - still debating how to respond to these difficult challenges.

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[1] This article draws in part on the article "Entertainment-Education and Participation – Assessing the Communication Strategy of Soul City" published in the *Journal of International Communication.* It furthermore constitutes the first article written in the context of the research project "HIV/AIDS Communication and Prevention" which I am directing, at University of Copenhagen, from July 2001 to the end of 2003. This research project explores HIV/AIDS communication and prevention on the basis of case studies from South Africa, Burkina Faso and Vietnam.

Inspired by UNAIDS' holistic and culture sensitive conceptual framework for HIV/AIDS communication programming (UNAIDS, 1999), but based in practice on the successful experience from the South African media- and health NGO "Soul City – Institute of Health and Development Communication", this article explores lessons learnt in HIV/AIDS communication and prevention and concludes by outlining a series of recommendations which can contribute to the advancement of HIV/AIDS communication programming.

Soul City is a multi media communication vehicle in South Africa which combines the production of tv-fiction with radio drama and with a massive production and subsequent distribution of print materials through newspapers and through educational systems as well as through and to civil society. All the media products circle around the same fictional universe, a fictional township called Soul City. The same characters have thus been appearing and reappearing on tv, in radio and in print through the past 7 years. There is furthermore a strong advocacy component in Soul City's communication vehicle. Since Soul City began broadcasting in 1994, HIV/AIDS has been a recurrent issue amongst their thematic foci, present in all five campaigns so far, and increasingly prioritised.

Thus, Soul City possesses significant experience in conducting HIV/AIDS communication. Long and in-depth formative research, taking up to 18 months prior to the design and production of media products, has been a way for Soul City to engage all relevant segments of society, including lay audience as well as experts, in the research process, developing messages that are consistent with the audience knowledge, opinion and needs. This very

thorough formative research process is particularly important when dealing with issues as complex as HIV/AIDS.

Prior to entering further into the case of Soul City, let me briefly introduce the field of health communication and edutainment.

Health Communication and Edutainment

Since communication for development grew as a concept in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s, many experiences have been obtained with communication. *Entertainment-Education (equivalent to edutainment)* has played an important part of this history of communication for development and has obtained widespread use, not least in health communication. The hypothesis of this article is - based on the Soul City experience, and with a further elaboration and adaptation of the edutainment strategy to the complex issue of HIV/AIDS – that edutainment can become an even more powerful instrument in the combat of the HIV/AIDS pandemic. As will be shown, it can be a useful instrument in prevention strategies.

The turning point in edutainment is the use of drama and entertainment for educational purposes. Most often it is done by integrating instructive or best practices into a fictional narrative, often a radio drama or a television series, and thereby communicating to the audiences how they can tackle specific issues, often health issues, in their everyday life. A large part of the entertainment value of the drama lies in the moral dilemmas and drama that are spun around the problems that are articulated by the health problem the characters may have. In many countries, these radio drama and television series have obtained very high ratings, thus securing high reach and exposure of the problems and messages that are to be communicated. Soul City managed in 1999, with their fourth television series, to reach 16.2

million South Africans. 79% of the 16-24 year olds watch Soul City, 71% of the 25-35 year olds and the percentage gradually decreased to 49% of the 46 year olds and over (Soul City, 2000).

In the case of HIV/AIDS, the issue is complex and must be presented as such. It is a significantly different and more difficult communicative challenge than for example communicating about tobacco and arguing for the audiences to stop smoking. Not least with such a complex issue which transcends health and deals with many more aspects of life, melodrama in tv and radio, becomes relevant and very useful. Firstly, melodramas on radio or in tv reach right into the private sphere of peoples homes, and as such makes it possible to bring issues so private as sexual practices into the home in an efficient and private manner (Tufte, 2000). Furthermore, as Soul City executive director Garth Japhet has argued (Japhet, 2001), communicating about HIV/AIDS goes well on television – in particular using a melodrama, one might add (contrary to communicating about child nutrition on tv, he argued). The drama of everyday life in many South African families and communities struck by the HIV/AIDS pandemic can very well be played out in a fictional drama on the screen.

Theoretically and methodologically, scholars such as Martine Bouman, Arvind Singhal and Everett Rogers have competently contributed to the advancement of *entertainment-education (EE)* as a communication strategy for both individual and social change. They have shown the important impulses deriving from social marketing, persuasive communication theory and practice, mass media (play) theory and social learning theory. As such, the history and development of EE is well-known (Bouman, 1999; Singhal & Rogers, 1999). Meanwhile, the point of highlighting Soul City's edutainment model, which is explained later in this chapter, is that

by using the edutainment strategy Soul City has been able, in practice, to bridge the gaps between traditionally very separate paradigms encountered within theories and methods of communication for development.

Making a rough categorization within communication for development, we can say that we traditionally find participatory communication strategies on one side (Freire, 1972; MacBride, 1980; Wilkins, 2001) and on the other we find strategies based largely on the diffusion model of communication (Rogers, 1995). What characterizes the practice of Soul City, based on their own model of communication, the edutainment vehicle, (Japhet, 1999) is a bridging between these two paradigmatic oppositions within communication for development (Tufte, 2001). Soul City's edutainment vehicle is developed and used within the social reality of South Africa, elaborating excellent social marketing strategies and combining them with participatory components that promote dialogue, challenge power structures and promote community based action. In very recent years we see Soul City expanding the applicability of their model and the adoption and adaptation of their multimedia material to a number of other countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, including Zambia, Mozambique, Namibia, Malawi and Zimbabwe. In other words, Soul City believes in the generic value of their communication strategy.

The constantly growing advocacy part of Soul City's communication strategy coincides with a growing, but still very incipient international trend towards social change agendas, collective action and context-based studies of impact of EE-strategies (Singhal, 2000). Unlike many communication interventions, the point with Soul City is that it operates strategically within three interlinked units of change: the individual, the community and the broader

society. As such, it reflects a holistic, multilevel and culture sensitive communication strategy which lies in line with the principles argued, by UNAIDS and increasingly others in the development community, as the overall recepy for communication strategies, not just in HIV/AIDS prevention but generally seen within communication for development.

HIV/AIDS

The Present Situation

We all know how dramatic the situation is regarding HIV/AIDS in the world: 34 million people are living with HIV/AIDS, 25 million of them in Africa South of Sahara. 18.8 million are dead of AIDS since the beginning of the epidemic and 13.2 million children have become orphans since the beginning of the epidemic (UNAIDS, 2000a). While in Southern Africa HIV/AIDS is a devastating epidemic striking and affecting all sectors of society, it is in Asia a 'ticking bomb', with scary statistics and perspectives, considering not least the potential catastrophes of India and China. The impact of HIV/AIDS so far has been tremendous in Africa. Estimates in 1991 predicted that in sub-Saharan Africa, by the end of the decade, 9 million people would be infected and 5 million would die (Piot in UNAIDS, 2000a:7). In other words, the impact of HIV/AIDS has in the past decade been almost *threefold underestimated*. It has had catastrophic consequences, resulting it a situation now where the pandemic not only requires urgent but also substantial and long-term responses to be efficiently combated. As Kofi Anan said at the UN Security Council meeting in January of 2000: "The impact of AIDS is no less destructive than war itself, and by some measures, far worse". Communicationwise, this should consequently result in both ambitious and long-term responses

bringing the mainstream practice of communication strategies beyond the traditional concept of short-term campaigning. Long-term responses, I would argue, would entail a 10 year perspective or more.

The above described HIV/AIDS situation has led many development agencies, both the bilaterals and multilaterals, to make HIV/AIDS a top priority in the years to come. Contrary to many NGOs that have been in the field for long and that have had elaborate strategies and policies for long (i.e. PANOS), national policies and action plans have only in recent years come into being. Danida, for example, has in late 2000 finally adopted a policy and developed an action plan to engage substantially in the combat of HIV/AIDS. The key objectives include a number of points that could open up for increased support to ambitious and long-term communication strategies. Thus, Danida's action plan speaks of the need to:

- *prevent the spread* of HIV/AIDS and to limit the effects of the epidemic (Action Plan, 2000:6);
- develop preventive activities within all sectors, and the consequences of the epidemic must be analysed and tackled *in their totality* (Action Plan, 2000:7), and that;
- key elements in an analysis will be (…) *an assessment of general communication strategies employed* (Action Plan, 2000:8)

In other words, priority is on prevention, a holistic approach and an acknowledgement of exploring communication strategies. However, it remains to be seen how this will translate into actual support to communication strategies. Many bilaterals, such as DFID, SIDA, USAID and others, do have substantial experience

upon which to draw in the further development of HIV/AIDS communication programming.

The Complexity of HIV/AIDS

When wanting to design, implement and evaluate HIV/AIDS communication programs, it is, as mentioned earlier, extremely important to consider the complexity of HIV/AIDS. Panos, one of the oldest and most important international NGOs in the field of HIV/AIDS communication and prevention, has since 1986 been arguing for a number of key aspects to be considered when addressing the issue of HIV/AIDS prevention (Panos, 1986, 1988, 1989, 1990. See also UNESCO 2000.). These issues, highlighted below, reflect the Panos analysis, and have been reconfirmed in their most recent policy paper "HIV/AIDS: Social Change through Public Debate – The Panos AIDS Programme: 2001-2005", February 2001. The issues are:

- HIV/AIDS is both a cause and consequence of poverty and underdevelopment
- Discrimination and stigma
- Sexual equality
- Openness and deep-rooted change
- Political leadership
- A chronic crisis, not an emergency
- Money is only part of the answer, and can be an obstacle to HIV prevention
- Informed public debate

While Panos focuses on articulating public debate, there are many other methodological approaches whereby to respond to this analysis of the causes – one is the use of edutainment. Fundamentally, the crucial issue is to understand the theoretical

underpinnings of the method chosen, understand how communication works but equally – as the above 8 points suggest – understand the nature of the pandemic and the social, cultural, political and economic contexts within which it has be able to spread so dramatically. Recognizing – and profoundly understanding - these contexts is the first step in designing any communication strategy.

HIV/AIDS Communication and Programming

The new priority HIV/AIDS currently is given by the international community is accompanied by various critical reexaminations of the effectiveness of existing HIV/AIDS prevention programmes. One process has recently been theoretically innovative communication framework which UNAIDS has developed. The process was conducted by UNAIDS between 1998 and 2000. In 1998-1999 UNAIDS conducted a major reexamination of communications programming which involved consultations in all major regions of the world and which culminated in the publication of *A Communications Framework for HIV/AIDS: A New Direction* in late 1999.

Based on a review of the literature and of experiences in the field, participants in the global consultations noted that most current theories and models of HIV communication programming did not provide an adequate foundation on which to develop communications interventions for HIV/AIDS in the regions. They further noted the inadequacy and limitations of current theories and the models derived from them (UNAIDS, 1999). As such, they resonate with what Soul City, in practice, experienced. Chief among the weaknesses they identified were:

a) The simple, linear relationship between individual knowledge and action, which underpinned many earlier interventions, does

not take into account the variation among the political, socio-economic and cultural contexts that prevail in the regions.

b) External decision-making processes that cater to rigid, narrowly focused and short term interests tend to overlook the benefits of long-term, internally derived, broad-based solutions.

c) There is an assumption that decisions about HIV/AIDS prevention are based on rational, volitional thinking with no regard for more true-to-life emotional responses to engaging in sexual behaviour.

d) There is an assumption that creating awareness through media campaigns will necessarily lead to behaviour change.

e) There is an assumption that a simple strategy designed to trigger a once in a lifetime behaviour, such as immunization, would be adequate for changing and maintaining complex, life-long behaviours, such as consistent condom use.

f) There is a nearly exclusive focus on condom promotion to the exclusion of the need to address the importance and centrality of social contexts, including government policy, socio-economic status, culture, gender relations and spirituality.

g) Approaches based on traditional family planning and population program strategies tend to target HIV/AIDS prevention to women, so that women, rather than men, are encouraged to initiate the use of condoms.

The findings of the UNAIDS report are also seen in the work and conclusions of a network facilitated by the Rockefeller Foundation which brings together communications actors and experts, ranging from grassroots and community based NGOs through to international NGOs and major multilateral and bilateral organisations. The network, dealing more broadly with communication for social change, concludes that while mass education campaigns aimed at changing individual behaviour play an essential role in AIDS prevention, they are highly unlikely to be successful or sustainable unless they are accompanied by deep-rooted social changes which will only result from internally driven

change processes, including informed and inclusive public debate (Rockefeller Foundation, 1997, 1999; RF and JHU, 2000).

Finally, UNESCO, in 1998 initiated a project on preventive information based on investigative journalism and HIV/AIDS in East and Southern Africa. This project resulted in a publication (UNESCO 2000) and includes practical and technical guidelines for media practitioners specializing writing or broadcasting about HIV/AIDS. However, the focus is mainly on journalism and the case studies presented deal mainly with investigative reporting. As such, most of the content of this project lies within another genre of HIV/AIDS communication than the EE-focus of this article.

No matter the chosen approach or strategy, the facts show that many millions of dollars have been spent on individually targeted education campaigns, and far from all with the desired results. Many of these campaigns have had some important impacts. Increasingly, however, concern is mounting that these campaigns are at best insufficient, in achieving the kind of long term, sustainable and rooted changes in society that are required for HIV/AIDS to be confronted.

Soul City's Edutainment Model

It is in the context of the above theoretical and methodological preoccupations and discussions that Soul City emerges as a useful case to analyse. The results of Soul City are visible and substantial: massive awareness raising and change in behaviour, social mobilization, public debate in the media and influence on legislation are some of the visible results. Soul City has developed into an innovative and important agent in the poverty oriented work around health, HIV/AIDS, womens' and childrens' rights in South Africa. As mentioned, Soul City is currently working on

expanding their ideas, methodologies and even their brand to other development countries, also to countries with a much weaker media infrastructure than the South African. A 240-page manual on edutainment, written by Soul City and distributed to all UNICEF-offices worldwide, is an attempt to spread the knowledge about edutainment arguing that it can be applied on a village theatre or any other medium. It it the methodology with is crucial, not the medium.

The Edutainment Vehicle

Contrary to rational communication of information through for example news genres, the point about using the narrative and melodramatic is to articulate emotional engagement. By using melodrama to draw attention, recognition and identification the aim is to promote insight and change of attitude and behaviour.

The guiding communicative principle for Soul City is edutainment, their denomination of entertainment-education. Garth Japhet has developed a model that explains the main principles of the "Edutainment Vehicle" (Japhet, 1999/2001 – the revised and updated version is presented here. See also Witthaus, 1999). The Edutainment Model proposed by Japhet argues for a cyclical communication strategy, where a number of inputs are fed into the media vehicle which then results in a number of outputs. The overall process and the outputs in particular are then evaluated which then serves as a key input into the next phase of the on-going vehicle.

Figure 1. The Soul City Edutainment Model (Developed by 'Soul City – Institute of Health and Development Communication'.)
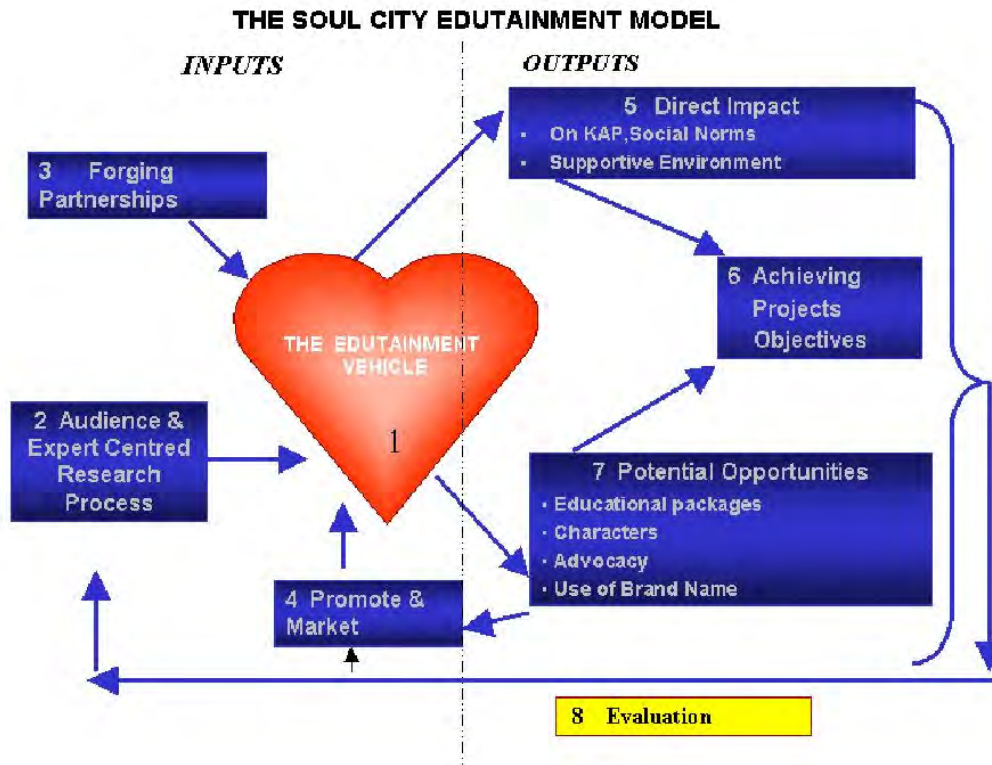
As for inputs, there are two key *inputs*:

1. *the audience and expert centered research process*, the formative research, and,

2. *the partnerships* established with civil society, government, private sector, international partners and others. In a very participatory process, messages are developed and worked into the creative products, the media narratives, being both tv, radio and print. Soul City emphasizes that the model is generic, and that any narrative form can be applied in the media vehicle. It could also be popular theatre, music or any other form of popular cultural narrative. Soul City has had the opportunity to work in prime time and with the mass media and believe firmly in the efficiency of this. However, the medium may well be another if this opportunity is not possible.

The media vehicle results in two key types of *output*:

1. *the direct output*, being the changes in knowledge, attitude, social norms and intermediate and direct practices (the traditional KAP-distinction can be nuanced substantially, which Soul City also emphasizes) as well as the development of a supportive environment favouring these mentioned changes, and,

2. *the development of potential opportunities*. These potential opportunities, made possible due to the media intervention, contain a number of interesting opportunities, of some of which Soul City have come far in making use of, while others still are being developed further. These include educational packages, advocacy at both community and national level, and the development and use of their brand name.

When operationalised, the edutainment model is put into practice in the course of 5 phases:

Phase 1   *Research and Planning.* This is topic research involving target audience and other stakeholders.

Phase 2   *Development of the Narrative.* This involved message design, integration of message into chosen form of entertainment, pre-testing with target audience and other role-players. Finally it involve modification as a result of pre-testing.

Phase 3   *Production.*

Phase 4   *Implementation and Promotion.* This includes promoting, popularising and getting the most out of the edutainment during implementation. Thus, large parts of the advocacy takes place at this stage.

Phase 5   *Evaluation.* The communication initiative is evaluated on an ongoing basis, and each final evaluation serves as input into the next campaign (Japhet, 1999).

In the training manual, Japhet also sets up a rough estimate of how much time to use on each phase. 25% on phase one, 50% on the development of the whole project and the narrative, mere 15% on the production and 10% on the implementation and promotion.

The evaluation is considered on-going, despite the fact that in Soul City IV an enormous evaluation was carried out, consuming large amounts of time and money.

So far Soul City campaigns have been launched five times in 1994, 1996, 1997, 1999 and in 2001. Soul City VI is scheduled to start in late 2002. The issues treated so far have, among others, been women's and children's rights, HIV/AIDS, TB, land rights, housing, energy, alcohol and tobacco and personal finance.

The five implemented Soul City campaigns have not all been alike. They have grown in size, but first and foremost, in complexity and impact, with Soul City IV as the most influential campaign to date. Communication-wise they have been very learning processes, for Soul City as well as for EE-practitioners and scholars around the world.

The underlying discourse, seen in the language used, remains closely linked to the discourse encountered in diffusion theory and in what is generally know as the transmission model of communication (Bouman, 1999:47). Soul City's materials speak of diffusion, persuasion, impact, messages, etc. It is a language which lies far from the discourse of participatory communication which speaks of people as key agents of change, emancipation, dialogue, balanced ecology, and of communication processes where the output - the produced meaning - is not highly predictable nor readily controlled. This kind of rapid analysis of Soul City's materials, including the edutainment manual, the evaluations and of a number of other documents by Soul City all points towards a paradigmatic belonging of Soul City to the transmission model.

Despite these paradigmatic connotations, Soul City's *practice* is different. It deals with issues and concerns such as social mobilization, empowerment, advocacy and active and multiple audience reception, and uses a language that corresponds well to the reception model of communication and especially to participatory models of communication. In practice Soul City works both with the individual and with the broader communities and with society as units of change. However, overall, there is a discrepancy between Soul City's written representation of their work on one side, and their practice on the other.

The fact is that Soul City has been developed as a health communication project, but mainly by health scholars and with no substantial participation of communication scholars. As such, the scientific connotations in the discourse they apply seemingly play less of a role in their practice. The point is that the nuanced understanding of audiences encountered in their practice resonates very much with the notion of audience found in what in media studies in known as reception theory. Here the audience is conceived of as actively using the media, again largely resonating with the notion of audience used in participatory communication strategies.

Seen in retrospective, Soul City has from the outset in 1992 had some basic principles guiding their work. Some of them refer to the inputs in the edutainment models, others are direct impacts and opportunities Soul City ambitiously and deliberately have pursued from the outset. These basic principles are:

1. Soul City is conceived as an on-going vehicle, recurrent and building up a quality brand around the name of Soul City.
2. Soul City applies a multi-media strategy, combining tv-series with radio programmes in numerous languages, newspaper booklets, adult education material, etc.

3. Soul City emphasizes substantial formative research as well as summative research.

4. Soul City promotes community activism and enhancing strategic partnerships.

5. Soul City develops materials and courses, training and education, in the issues of concern.

6. Soul City works with advocacy both on community level as at the national level.

Evaluating the Impact

In the evaluation of Soul City's fourth intervention, in 1999, a number of results provide strong indications of how the communication strategy impacted on the audiences. HIV/AIDS was one of the 4 major issues addressed in the media products. 43% of the people who watch the Soul City television series spoke more openly about HIV and AIDS as compared to 25% of people who did not watch Soul City. 38% of people who have been exposed to 3 Soul City sources were found to use condoms more often as compared to 6% who had not watch Soul City at all (Soul City, 2000).

What evaluations of Soul City so far have been able to document emphasize predominantly quantitative outcomes such as reach, ratings, quantifiable relations between exposure to Soul City media products and the degree of change in social norms, attitudes and to some degree also behaviour (Soul City, 2000). In two sentinel site studies, Soul City has studied more in-depth the impact of their media vehicle. In relation to HIV/AIDS four actions were measured, and radio proven particularly influential on influencing these actions: "Soul City radio appeared to be a particularly effective vehicle for encouraging respondents to take measures to try to find out more about HIV/AIDS, assist someone who is HIV

positive, using condoms or going for an HIV/AIDS test" (CASE, 2000).

Some of the lessons that can be learnt from Soul City's edutainment strategy are:

- edutainment recognizes the strengths and relevance of basing communication strategies in the popular culture of the audiences;
- fictional genres have shown particularly useful and efficient, contrary to what often is (not) obtained through the more traditional journalistic spread of information;
- successful edutainment strategies require a strong advocacy component;
- there is a need to further develop follow up activities to edutainment campaigns, and;
- successful edutainment strategies require a strong advocacy component term.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Soul City has managed to create a communication model that transcends the traditional focus on individual behaviour change, and has combined a focus on individual behaviour change with the need to address the larger social, political, economic and media environments the individual is situated within. However, another range of issues should be included, focusing on exploring and understanding the full process of the communication strategy, from the formative research, script-development, pretesting, production, broadcasting, reception and summative research.

On the basis of the last, very large, EU-funded evaluation of Soul City, and following my own participation in the international advisory panel to Soul City, a number of issues have been identified as needing further research as well as operational

testing. My overall argument is that both Soul City as the international health communication community can benefit from an in-depth qualitative analysis of the role of Soul City media product in the lives of the audience. By drawing on new media theory as reception analysis and audience ethnography, the hypothesis is that an increased understanding can be obtained as to the relation between communication interventions and both individual and social change. The impossible question to answer in health communication is "what is the causal link between a communication intervention a individual and social change"? This question remains the key issue that both donors, local governments and practitioners themselves wish to clarify.

In exploring a whole range of qualitative research methodologies, brought in especially from newer media and communication theory, there exists a largely unexplored potential to further advance the field of health communication in general and HIV/AIDS communication in particular. A number of recommendations can be made as pertinent points for Soul City to pursue in order to develop their edutainment model even further. These are:

- Conduct audience ethnography. To further explore the media use in everyday life and how the media flow relates to the everyday life of the audience.

- Conduct qualitative reception analysis referent the produced television and radio programmes, and the print materials, to better understand processes of identification, meaning-making and the establishment of para-social relationships between characters and audience.

- Carry out content analysis of Soul City programmes to supplement the reception analysis.

- Develop qualitative indicators for impact and outcome evaluations. This will be related to the above mentioned fields of research, but must be treated as a separate issue.

- Analyse the impact of long-term communication strategies over time. In the case of Soul City a retrospective of their impact from 1994-2001 would be very useful.

Recommendations

Given the lessons learnt from Soul City on how to use edutainment for HIV/AIDS communication and programming, a number of more general recommendations can be made to this field of both research and practice:

1. Further Development of Communication Strategies: Clarify Epistemology, Substantiate Theory and Improve Methodology

This recommendation is three-fold. A well-developed communication strategy is obviously the strategy that manages to be efficient, also cost effective, and achieve the objectives, most often a change of behaviour. However, many of the mistakes and inefficient strategies in the past can – in addition to the given limitations of communicative action *per se* - be attributed poorly designed strategies. Often, there is no clear epistemological stand, and equally no clear theory informing the chosen methodology. Finally, classical shortcomings lie in not prioritising formative and summative research and giving no attention or very little attention to the use of qualitative methods. Developing qualitative indicators for impact assessments is thus an issue which only recently is being given attention amongst international organisations working in this field. Almost no NGOs/CBOs and governments have in practice incorporated such indicators in their HIV/AIDS communication programming.

Combined, the fulfilment of the three points of this recommendation will increase the understanding of how communication strategies work in practice and should contribute to

the successful design and evaluation of future HIV/AIDS communication interventions.

2. Understanding HIV/AIDS

Given the socio-cultural and political-economic complexities of the rise and spread of HIV/AIDS, and given the diversity in perceptions and explanations surrounding the pandemic in different countries, it is crucial to obtain a clear, holistic and localized understanding of all crucial issues that must condition any HIV/AIDS communication and prevention in any country. In other words, although communication strategies at the overall level are generic, no strategy will work if it is not carefully developed in context of local conditions. These include:

a) The meanings (stigma, fear and denial) attached to HIV/AIDS in the respective settings.
b) The sexual practices and the inherent gender roles and relations of target audiences.
c) The local institutional capacity to tackle the HIV/AIDS problematic (with particular focus on the health and educational systems).
d) The national policies and communication practices informing and guiding HIV/AIDS prevention in the chosen countries.

There are obviously many more local conditions to take into account, but the above are definitely recurrent no matter the country or region.

3. Developing an International Health Communication Resource Base

Recognizing that HIV/AIDS will be a problem in many years to come, a coordination of and an increased discussion between the disperse resource persons worldwide is required. The resource base needs further development with very few people yet specialized in HIV/AIDS communication. Such a resource base

should be articulated and strengthened through joint seminars, relevant publications, and discussion should be generated between all relevant fora, both practitioners, donor communities, academic communities, NGOs and other relevant stakeholders.

One relevant forum where this was pursued recently was at the VIIIth International Communication for Development Roundtable held in Managua, Nicaragua, on November 26-28th 2001. This Roundtable gathered 65 representatives from UN Agencies, bilateral and multilateral donors, foundations, NGOs, scholars and a number of practitioners in communication from throughout the world (see http://www.comminit.com/roundtable2/index.html). This VIIIth Roundtable focused its attention on the HIV/AIDS pandemic and the communication challenges it presents. Amongst the three immediate actions proposed by the Roundtable was the formation of an international brain trust on HIV/AIDS communication strategies and tools. This should be expanded further to embrace as many of both the theorists and practitioners in this field, with the ultimate ambition of improving the quality and impact of communication interventions in the field of HIV/AIDS communication.

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14.

Community Development and the Internet

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Situating the Potential: New Digital Opportunities for Communities?

The *global information society* seems to be a fact. It is widely assumed that the so-called *new economies* will bring new digital opportunities for all. The only problem seems to be how to bridge the so-called *digital divide* and to train people to use the new information and communication technologies (ICTs). The final report of the Digital Opportunity Task Force (DOT Force, 2001), that was created by the G8 Heads of State to analyze the *digital divide* and the opportunities of ICTs for social and economic development, speaks of "a historic moment" and a "digital revolution". The report formulates the potentials of ICTs as follows: "Despite recent turbulence in the so-called "new economy", it is undeniable that the world is in the midst of a set of profound changes that create enormous new opportunities, while posing equally daunting challenges. Precisely because the digital revolution has the power to transform production processes, commerce, government, education, citizen participation and all other aspects of our individual and collective lives, it can create substantial new forms of economic growth and social development. Therefore, access to, and effective use of the tools and networks of

the new global economy, and the innovations they make possible, are critical to poverty reduction, increased social inclusion and the creation of a better life for all."

As a result of the new potentials that ICTs are said to offer, the concept of 'community' has also been pushed to the front again.[1] There seem to be two explanations for this new association between ICTs and the concept of community. First, community has always been associated with networking. What has been centralized in many approaches to the concept of community and community development is the (direct) interaction between people (participation). The new ICTs and especially the internet open new ways of participatory communication for community networking. Second, in many development approaches, the concept of community is considered to be the primary focus of many development programs. Moreover, in the debates on globalization versus localization, the localization side of the continuum is often put into operation by focussing on the community. Combining these already established interests in the community with the new digital possibilities accounts for another explanation of the renewed interest. Community development programs now try to benefit from the advantages that the new ICTs and especially the internet can offer. This contribution focuses on both areas in the use of ICTs and the internet for community development.

An obvious question to begin with is: *What are the advantages of internet over other media forms? Why do we want to use the internet when it comes to community development?* There seem to be at least four advantages:

1. *The increase in speed*. Information travels much faster and is more mobile with the internet (including email) in comparison to other media forms such as snail mail.

2. *The decrease in costs*. The idea here is that costs will be reduced for the end user. This is only true if other conditions are met. For instance, infrastructure needs to be available and costs for the end user also depend on the costs of access.

3. *The possible integration and convergence of different media forms*. The technology of the internet opens the possibility of integrating and converging different media forms like text, audio, visuals and moving pictures. In the long run, the internet might even converge regular radio, television and telephone.

4. *The possibility of interactivity and especially the consultation of information*. When discussing the possibilities of the internet, the concept of interactivity is often mentioned. This is of course very important for community development, but certainly not the only or even most important advantage of the internet. The essence of the World Wide Web is not interactivity. It is consultation. This means that information is stored on different servers and in different databases around the world. This information can be consulted at any time from any place, provided the conditions of infrastructure, access and skills are met.

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[1] For an extensive theoretical elaboration of the concept of 'community' in relation to media, see CARPENTIER, N., LIE, R. & SERVAES, J. (2001). **Making Community Media Work**, Paris: UNESCO, 50 pp.

A Technological Perspective Versus a Culturalistic Perspective on Community Development

Internet and email do have advantages, also for community development and the *digital divide* is real. There exists a widening gap between access to ICTs in the Northern countries and access in the Southern countries. But, we need to be very cautious in applying such one-sided technological determined perspective on development, social change and democratic processes. Questions too often only address the technological (hardware) based advantages and/or the policies regarding bridging the *digital divide*. When the end users are included—if they are included at all—they are reduced to figures. We also need to address questions concerning software and the use of the software, like: what kind of information is relevant; who needs this information, and who decides if people need it; who uses the new technology and who profits from that use? These kinds of questions need to be addressed from a more culturalistic perspective on the internet and community development. After all, the *digital divide* is primarily the result of inequality, not the cause.

We can distinguish between two perspectives on the internet in relation to community development. The first, and most dominant perspective is the technological-economic perspective. The second is the culturalistic perspective. Most visions on development and development communication are still of a technological and economic nature. This, despite the fact that many practitioners and academics have pointed to the inhuman and structural focussed aspects of such a view. For instance, the debate on the causes and solutions of the *digital divide* uses primarily a technological, economic and policy oriented discourse. A genuine social and cultural vision is lacking. What follows is a summary of the main

characteristics of both perspectives on community development and the role of different media forms, among which ICTs and the internet.

Fig. 1. Characteristics of a culturalistic and technological-economic perspective on community development

Characteristics of a technological-economic perspective on community development	Characteristics of a culturalistic perspective on community development
• Close association with political development, policy and regulatory reform.	• Close association with social development, processes of democratization and human rights.
• The total development of a community equals the economic development of that community. Technological development is a necessity for economic development. Social and cultural development is a(n) (automatic) spin-off of economic development.	• The total development of a community is of an economic-political nature as well as of a socio-cultural nature. Both aspects are given equal attention, but the economic-political development should serve the socio-cultural development. Technological-economic development is not a goal in itself.
• The perspective is 'from the outside in' and 'from the top down'. Human beings are primarily seen as economic factors.	• The perspective is 'from the inside out' and 'bottom up'. Human beings are primarily seen as socio-cultural actors.
• The guiding objective is to offer media forms and ICTs to bridge the *digital divide* and thus (automatically) close the information gap between and within communities. The perspective is technology and media centered.	• The guiding objective is to offer relevant, cultural, and social sensitive information. The media form (which can include ICTs and the internet) is chosen accordingly. The perspective is information/software and socio-cultural centered.

Communities in Digital and Civil Action

When discussing social and community development from a culturalistic perspective, it is especially within *civil society* and within movements such as *the indigenous and ethnic movements*, *the women movement*, *the anti-globalization movement*, and *the new democratic and social movements in general* that communities are active in their use of the internet. New communities are formed and existing communities are expanded by the use of the new digital networking possibilities. These so-called new 'virtual communities' or 'digital networks', using the internet as communication technology, are often contrasted with 'real life communities' (see for instance Van Dijk, 1998; Hollander, 2000:372). "In this dichotomy 'virtual community' usually refers to geographically dispersed, internet based virtual communities of interest, whereas the 'real life community' stands for a geographically based community grounded in face-to-face-interactions between members" (Hollander, 2000:372; emphasis added). Pointing at the issue of geography seems indeed a common, useful and in this case sufficient way to define the difference. The 'geographically dispersed communities' relate to issues of community building for localized and/or democratic development in, and through the use of cyberspace. Therefore, we can call them 'cyberspace based communities'. What will be addressed in discussing these kinds of communities are aspects of communication *within* and *between civil society communities* and *civil society organizations* (CSOs). The relation with the average citizen is also of importance.

With 'geographically based communities' and their use of the internet, the situation seems to be different. The issue here is that an existing community uses the internet as a tool for development.

The internet and email are considered to be relevant media for development goals. The question that thus becomes of relevance to the case of 'geographically based communities' is: *How can relevant information that is available on the internet be made accessible to a community and thus serve the community?* From a technological-economic perspective, this question primarily addresses hardware and infrastructure related problems (access). From a culturalistic perspective, this question also includes software and content related problems (relevance).

In the next part, I want to consider both—the 'cyberspace based communities' and the 'geographically based communities'. Both kinds of communities will be related to development and the internet. First, the focus will be on 'cyberspace based communities'. In discussing the potentials of these kinds of communities, two issues will be addressed: 1. *on-line community dialogue*, and, 2. *on-line community networking and getting the word out. But to whom?* Second, it will be discussed how the internet can serve existing 'geographically based communities' by making the internet and email available to the community. Several cases will be provided.

'Cyberspace Based Communities'

On-Line Community Dialogue

The internet can play a significant role in increasing the participation in a community and by doing so *increase the representation of the community* as a whole. An increase in dialogue (quantitative as well as qualitative through the possibilities of this new technology) leads to an increase in quality. This process can relate to the core members as well as to grassroots supporters of any kind of organization or community.

Any increase in participation is in itself a democratic development. Every community, be it a nation, the United Nations, a government, a company, a NGO or any kind of community of interest is somehow represented through an image and an identity, e.g. in the case of a company: a corporate image and a corporate identity. The quality of this image/identity is highly dependent on the participation of the members and grassroots supporters in the process of constructing this image/identity. Therefore, the use of ICTs and the internet can increase the quality of the image/identity of a community by increasing the participation of its members. If, for instance, we take the case of citizens actively participating in civil society, the quality of the image/identity of civil society can improve by stimulating internet-based communication. If the citizens have cheaper, faster and more efficient and effective means of communication, this can only have a positive effect on quality. Also in the case of the European Community, ICTs and the internet can help establish a better image and firmer identity of the Community. The new communication and information technologies simply offer a new way for internal (civil) communication.

This kind of use of ICTs is marginal in the so-called developing countries. A basic condition for this kind of democratization is the availability of hardware and infrastructure for the community members. This condition is not met in many 'Third World' countries. Even in the so-called 'First World' such a penetration is not guaranteed everywhere. Especially the internet is often directly associated with democracy and freedom, with access being the key word. The assumption is that if access is guaranteed, this will lead to more knowledge and more transparency, and consequentely45 to more democracy. But, if infrastructure and access are missing, as it is the case in many developing countries, other forms of

communication—like radio, press, folk media—could be promoted in order to reach the same goals of democracy. Another possibility could be that internet is integrated from within one of these more 'traditional' media like radio (see Case Sri Lanka: *Kothmale Community Radio*). Too often ICTs are opted for where other media could be more appropriate. In a culturalistic perspective on development, such a media-centered focus is rejected because, among other things, it is not realistic to assume that developing countries will have a similar level of ICT-penetration as the 'First World' countries.

In the so-called 'First World', but even more important, in the world of international cooperation, access to ICTs and skills to use the ICTs seem to be sufficiently available. ICTs can thus play a significant role in the process of 'participation in representation' in civil society. All kinds of organizations and communities are formed through so-called 'email lists' and 'newsgroups'. In this way, they increase the quality of their representation by participating in the group's communication. This kind of *internal civil communication* thus refers primarily to communication within civil society organizations (CSOs) striving for external processes of democratization. These kinds of communities often work in the area of 'counter action' and are nationally and internationally organized around themes such as politics, environment, democracy and human rights.

The case to illustrate the use of internet for internal civil communication *within* 'cyberspace based communities' is *Soc.Culture.Singapore*. It concerns a virtual civil society community, which has a spontaneous origin. As such it is not related to an organized CSO, but concerns a less formalized way of community building through internal civil communication.

Case Singapore: *Soc.Culture.Singapore*

One of the early and international acknowledged examples of internet use for internal civil communication can be found in Singapore. In January 1993, the newsgroup *Soc.Culture.Singapore* (SCS) was established. Shortly after, in the years 1994 and 1995 the USENET-newsgroup was widely known as a forum where the actions of the Government of Singapore were discussed from a democratic angle. From mid-1994 until mid-1995 over 10,000 messages were sent to this newsgroup. Today, Singaporeans, but also non-Singaporeans can still send so-called *postings* or *articles* to the members of the newsgroup. The discussion is open and unmoderated. What is exceptional here is that critique can be given uncensored and can be consulted in the newsgroup itself and through the web site *Singapore Internet Community* (SInterCom) (http://www.sintercom.org).[1] However, it is also voiced that all messages on SCS are closely monitored by the Ministry of Information and the Arts (MITA). It is also said that young members of The People's Action Party (PAP) began sending pro-PAP *postings* to the newsgroup. "This PAP presence becomes especially evident during certain debates, such as that which transpired in 1995 over the appropriateness or otherwise of Prime Minister Goh being awarded an honorary degree from Williams College in the U.S. Protesters argued that the curbs on free speech and critical inquiry in Singapore under Goh rendered any award from an American university offensive. In the various exchanges on Soc.Culture.Singapore, the stance by Young PAP was bolstered by the appearance of a spokesperson on behalf of the Ministry of Information and the Arts, who attacked government critics and played a custodial role for the PAP's position" (Rodan, 1997).

Today there are thousands of these kinds of newsgroups and related web sites. Some of these communities are moderated and others are not,[2] but they all have in common that information and opinions are posted for immediate or archived consultation. Besides actively sending *postings* to the group, consulting the information increases participation in the specific community. The representation of the community is thus bundled and intensified by the use of ICT, in this case an internet based newsgroup. Critics have found a platform to express their critiques and improve their communication capacity as individuals but under the umbrella of a community.

[1] The *NOT The Straits Times Forum Page* can also be consulted at this web site. At the site, you can read letters that were rejected for publication in the *Forum*

Page of *The Straits Times*, the largest English language newspaper in the region. You can also read letters that were mangled. The *NOT The Straits Times Forum Page* publishes the original letter next to the mangled version, provided they are not libelous.

[2] SCS now also has a moderated version. The unmoderated newsgroup became too popular. Over 400 messages were posted each day. This popularity resulted in a lot of irrelevant information on the list, such as commercial messages and pornography.

Another case of increased representation caused by increased participation in dialogue is provided by so-called *electronic conferences* or *on-line forums*. These kinds of virtual gatherings can take different forms, but the core is that discussion and information exchange takes place in a virtual community that is created by email connections. Most forums of this kind have a less spontaneous character than the USENET-based newsgroups, like *Soc.Culture.Singapore*. Electronic forums range from simple theme oriented LISTSERV- or MAJORDOMO-based email lists, to more short-term and direct goal-oriented conferences. The goals of the dialogues within these communities also differ. Some are established to discuss issues prior to, and in preparation of a face-to-face meeting. Other objectives can be to establish consensus among the community members. Still others discuss issues and share information about geographical regions or countries, or discuss issues within domains such as human rights, media and democracy, minority groups, etc. Often the discussion is archived and made accessible through a web site and is often framed by other relevant information at the web site.

One important characteristic of electronic conferences, in contrast to open lists and USENET newsgroups, is that the discussion is often guided by questions that are formulated by the initiator, who is also often the moderator of the meeting. The goal of these questions is to focus the discussion. This makes the role of the

moderator very important. Moreover, as with 'real life' conferences, there is often a set time period for the discussion. An example of such an electronic conference is provided in the case *AR-WACC On-Line Forum on "Communication for Reconciliation in the Asian Context"*.

Case: *AR-WACC On-Line Forum on "Communication for Reconciliation in the Asian Context"*

This electronic conference was organized by the Asia Regional (AR) Association of the World Association for Christian Communication (WACC). Initially, the idea was to have the on-line forum up and running from 17 September 1999 until 30 November 1999. This to support the General Assembly and seminar on "Communication for Reconciliation in the Asian Context" that was held in Hong Kong from 25 until 31 October 1999. The forum intended to have discussions prior to the General Assembly and seminar, as well as until one month after the seminar to allow post-seminar discussions. Eventually, as a result of the request by enthusiastic on-line members, the forum was extended to the end of January 2000. The whole event was moderated by WACC's Regional Co-ordinator for Asia and the Pacific and the whole conference consisted of a total of 178 actions and reactions (The archive of the postings can be found at http://www.churchnet-kr.org/arwacc-forum/archive). It is unknown how many people participated in this forum.

Plans were underway to have a summary of the on-line discussion published in the hardcopy version of the newsletter of the AR-WACC. Such a publication serves two purposes: a. to inform those who do not have access to email facilities, and, b. to come to some kind of closure of the forum.

This conference is not chosen here as an example because of its success. The reason that it is chosen as a case is that the process seems to be typical for on-line conferences. This typicality consists of at least three observations:

1. *Its connection to a 'real life' event.* In many cases, as in this case, an electronic conference is linked to a 'real life' event, often also a conference or other kind of meeting. Such a supportive electronic forum allows for preparatory discussions as well as evaluative discussions. Moreover, the forum can be used for sharing practical information on the 'real life' event.

2. *The crucial role of the moderator.* The moderator is also the on-line facilitator and stimulator of the discussions. But s/he is also a distributor of information. To illustrate this in quantitative terms; out of the 178 messages that were submitted to the forum, exactly a 100 were from the moderator himself.

3. *The release of questions structuring and guiding the discussions.* In this case the AR-WACC Executive Committee invited WACC members and non-members to respond to the following questions:

   1. *On Values of Human Dignity*: Many people say that Asian countries have a different standard of human rights compared with the West. The so-called Asian values are predominant in the newly developed countries. Do you think communicators of different faiths and ideologies in Asia (e.g. Christianity, Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Confucianism, Marxism and Leninism) share common values on human dignity? If yes, what are these shared values? If not, what different values does each have when it comes to human dignity?

   2. *What constitutes "human dignity" based on your faith and from the context of where you come from?*: Does it matter to your faith and to where you come from? Why or why not?

   3. *On Peace*: Many believe that Peace is one of the common values that people of different faiths share. Nonetheless, religious dogmatism creates barriers between religions. Religious conversions ignite conflicts and cause suspect among peoples. Is there any possibility for peace? What's the alternative way? How can religions commit themselves to a new world order guided by a new ethic where principles of human dignity and peace form the driving force?

   4. *On Freedom of Expression, Quality of Life, and Market Economy*: Many newly opened countries such as China, Vietnam, Cambodia, and Mongolia have shifted from state-controlled/owned economy to market economy, as an effort to improve the quality of life of the people. This trend is obvious after the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, when the so-called Eastern Bloc collapsed with the Marxist-Leninist ideology. Do you think: (a) that to improve the quality of life means just the material enrichment and excluding human dignity?; (b) that the new concept guarantees freedom of expression and the right to access to media? If not, what seems to be hindering these countries from moving towards a democratic society in Asia?

   5. *What are the present problems that hamper the equality of resource sharing and freedom of media?*: Are they any different from the problems these countries had under state-controlled economy and Marxist-Leninist ideology?

   6. *On Nationalism*: In many countries, nationalism has become a source of intolerance and exclusive identity. People who do not belong to the majority are excluded, because the majority defines the identity of the nation. In what way can we overcome this perverted nationalism and in turn overcome the barrier for reconciliation?

   7. *On Your Faith and Reflection*: How does your Christian faith (if you are a Christian) affect your approach of promoting Peace and Reconciliation in

Asia? Is there any way to work for peace and reconciliation with other religions in Asia?

8. *If you are a media worker, how can you help reconcile conflicts and promote peace?*

(Excerpts are taken from the web site: http://www.churchnet-kr.org/arwacc-forum.)

These *on-line community dialogues* in their various forms of existence are not unproblematic and their success various. Van Dijk (1999) summarized some of the problems for on-line policy oriented discussions in the communication between the government and the citizens. I have slightly modified his inventory to fit our purposes here. Some of the problematic limitations of *on-line community dialogues* seem to be:

1. *The objectives are not always clear.* In many on-line discussions, the objectives of the dialogues are not always made explicit. Because of this lack of clear objectives, the expectations and motives to join the dialogue are not always realistic.

2. *The range is too limited.* This limitation concerns the problem of access to internet and email. In order to have 'real' democratic dialogue, access must be available to all community members. In many cases, and especially in the Southern countries this is not guaranteed.

3. *The participation is uneven.* The actual participation in the on-line dialogues is often even more uneven than it is the case with regard to the issue of access to the internet. If we include socio-democratic factors, level of education, income, gender, ethnicity etc., the image becomes very clear that in many cases the participants in the dialogues already formed a pre-existing community. A community that is male oriented has a high

income, a high level of education and does not include representatives of various ethnic origins and minority groups.

4. *The level of interaction is too low.* Another major problem with on-line dialogues is that the actual interaction is very low. There is not an 'action-reaction-action-reaction'-type of discussion as is common in face-to-face meetings. Often reactions are limited and short.

5. *The results are for many disappointing.* In many cases, there is no closure, which leaves the participants with an unsatisfied feeling and with reluctance to join another conference.

6. *The absence of experts or responsible persons in the dialogue.* Responsible politicians, administrators, or experts in a certain field are often not participating in the on-line dialogue.

This inventory does not mean that *on-line community dialogue* has no potential for democratic movements. First, not all the limitations apply to all the different forms of *on-line community dialogues*. Second, there seems to be a difference in the extent to which certain limitations apply to different regions in the world. Various community based organizations (CBOs) in the United States of America are for instance very active in the use of email lists, whereas this seems—for the time being—only marginal in Europe.

On-Line Community Networking and Getting the Word Out. But to Whom?

The above-discussed form of internal communication *within* communities can be of importance to external communication *between* communities. Good internal communication can support effective and efficient communication between

representatives/associates of groups/organizations/communities. In a democratic context, this mainly concerns communication between communities and organizations within civil society. The civil society counterbalances the forces of the state and the market in a democratic way. Because of the advantages that internet has over other media forms—especially with regard to time reduction and costs reduction in combination with possibilities of interaction and consultation—the internet and email have become very important integrating parts of civil society.

Two of these organizations that work for community building and networking among NGOs and CSOs in cyberspace are briefly considered in the case entitled *Towards Global and Local Civil Communities?*.

Case: *Towards Global and Local Civil Communities?*

An example of a global civil community is The Association for Progressive Communications (APC). APC is a global network that offers digital support to all kinds of civil society organizations (CSOs). In 1990, APC started out as the first globally interconnected NGO network of groups working for peace, human rights, development and protection of the environment. Now, APC membership is open to civil society organizations anywhere in the world that share the same mission as APC: to empower and support CSOs through the use of information and communication technologies.

An example of a local civil community network is NGOnet in Belgium, serving the region of Flanders and thus providing its information in the Dutch language. The project started in 1995 and initially the main objective was to offer only technical assistance. By now, this network has also developed into an organization that is devoted to information sharing and education in the field of development cooperation and the internet. NGOnet's 'strategical document' from 1998 states the objective of the organization as follows: "The objective of the NGOnet is to ensure the presence of NGOs on the internet and to introduce and support the use of the

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new information technologies for communication and information gathering by NGOs and their partners".

(Excerpts are taken from the following web sites: http://www.apc.org; http://www.ngonet.be.)

APC and NGOnet are networks that are devoted to applying the internet to improve communication *between* 'cyberspace based communities' that are part of civil society.

Questions that come to mind in this regard are: 1. *How is communication between CSOs of relevance to the citizens?*, and 2. *How can democratic information be found on the internet?*. The next part will consider both questions.

The first question I want to address is *How is communication between CSOs (community networking) of relevance to the citizens?*. Democratic information that is available from the internet seems to be consulted only by those people who already have an interest in civil society issues. Moreover, this concern is often found with professionals and volunteers who, through their work have contact with this kind of information. Such an assumption is not very revolutionary, but an important consequence of this assumption is that a broad perspective of informing and educating the 'normal' citizen does not apply. Local NGOs in, for example Mexico, South Africa or Malaysia seldom directly communicate with citizens in the so-called Northern countries. If there is communication at all, it is through sister organizations in the so-called 'First World'. There seems to be a reversed two-step-flow communication process. Theories of development communication in the '60s and '70s assumed that communication from the 'First World' to the 'Third World' occurred in two separate steps. First,

development information was sent to so-called opinion leaders and they disseminated the information among the target audiences. Now, the process seems to be reversed. The internet provides the technology to assure a democratic and indigenous flow of information from Southern NGOs to Northern NGOs, CSOs and news agencies. These organizations are the new opinion leaders and gatekeepers. They can play an essential role in localizing the information and then sharing it with local citizens. How this information flows from the NGO in the North to the citizen in the North is an old problem that already existed before the arrival of the internet. The assumption is that the internet can, at least for the time being, only play a minor role in this communication from a local NGO to a local citizen. The case of the use of the internet by the Zapatistas in Chiapas illustrates this point.

Case Mexico: *Zapatistas Creating a Cyberspace Community*

A by now already classic example of the use of internet to support basic processes of democratization can be found with regard to the war in Chiapas, Mexico. This case situates in the mid-'90s. The Indians of Chiapas wanted to be looked at as full citizens of Mexico. With the uprising of January 1, 1994 the Zapatistas started their struggle for democratic rights, land and jobs and thus against the Mexican federal government and its neo-liberalism (a term often used in Latin America to describe pro-market, pro-business, anti-worker and anti-peasant policies). More than 145 people died in the initial 10 days of fighting, and efforts since to negotiate a lasting peace have failed. The struggle resulted in the invasion of the Mexican army in the Zapatista area in February 1995.

Well known in this struggle is the story that the sub-commandant Marcos of the Zapatista National Liberation Army (EZLN) sent the *communiqués* from the jungle to the internet. The story goes that he used the electricity from the cigarette lighter in his pick-up to power his laptop. It is doubtful if the story is true. First, it is questionable if the Zapatistas possessed such equipment at the beginnings of their struggle and second, it is doubtful if this was technically possible at all in 1994. More important is the fact that

the EZLN got the *communiqués* and other information out in the open by placing it, or having it placed on the internet. It is realistic to assume that the *communiqués* and other information, after a long and difficult road to Mexico city, were sent from here to 'email lists' (e.g. CHIAPAS-L, see http://burn.ucsd.edu/archives/chiapas-l), were put on web sites (e.g. Chiapas95, see http://www.eco.utexas.edu/faculty/Cleaver/chipas95.html) and were published in the electronic bulletin MEXPAZ (see e.g. Cleaver, 1998; Pence, 1997; Ponsioen, 1997; http://www.dds.nl/~noticias/prensa/zapata; an annotated list of relevant 'email lists', web sites, archives, books and films is available from http://www.eco.utexas.edu/faculty/Cleaver/zapincyber.html). Related to this use of the internet is the emergence of LaNeta in Mexico. LaNeta—now operating under the wings of APC—has developed into a national Mexican electronic network of civil society organizations (http://laneta.apc.org) (see e.g. Marino, 1999). The NGOs in Mexico account for 20% of the internet traffic. The remaining is reserved for business and government (Mont, 1999:96).

What is important to realize in this example from Mexico is that it are not so much the 'normal' citizens who consult the information about the war in Chiapas on the internet. Apart from maybe the direct ethnic concerned citizen, it is first the representatives or associates from NGOs and other organizations in Mexico and around the world, which are interested in the information. An example of such a local organization is the now dissolved Amsterdam based solidarity movement for Mexico (see for more information http://www.dds.nl/~noticias/prensa/zapata/ and more specific about the disbandment, see Ten Dam, 1999). Second, it is the news agencies (e.g. IPS) that are interested in the indigenous perspectives on the war. This kind of communication is first of all communication between NGOs (and other organizations) and not communication between NGOs and the citizens. Before the citizen gets involved, the information needs to be 'localized'. In the case of Chiapas, this localization can for instance mean translating the

communiqués and other information into a local language or making it otherwise available and accessible to the local public.

The second question *How can democratic information be found on the internet?* is rather peculiar. What seems to be the case is that consulting democratic information on the internet is in many cases dependent on an announcement of that information elsewhere. The information will only be consulted after it is announced through another medium, like radio, television, newspapers, newsletters, and personal communication. Because of the size of the internet, new information cannot be found, unless it is announced elsewhere. The internet seems not yet a medium that can stand by its own when it comes to finding relevant information. The possibilities of finding the information by using the internet itself are limited. However, there seem to be at least three possibilities: 1. *search engines*, but these cannot always find recent and specific information, 2. *'portal sites'*, but the problem with 'portal sites' is that substantial investment is required to keep these sites up-to-date. Such investments are difficult within the civil society, and 3. *announcements via email*, e.g. newsgroups, LISTSERVs, newsletters based on individual subscriptions, or personal communication. An example of this third possibility is given in de case of *Wereldwijd Mail* (World Wide Mail).

> ### Case Flanders: *Wereldwijd Mail* (World Wide Mail)
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> An example of a 'localized' and locally distributed newsletter on 'current affairs in the global civil society' is provided by the *Wereldwijd Mediahuis* (World Wide Media House). This NGO is based in the region of Flanders in Belgium and produces the weekly electronic newsletter called *Wereldwijd Mail* (World Wide Mail). The primary language used in the newsletter is Dutch. The

newsletter started at the beginning of 2000. At the end of 2000, the newsletter had 660 subscribers. In April 2001, it was 950. The newsletter especially carries news items that are not covered in the mainstream media. The selection of the news is based on its relevance to everybody who sympathizes with marginalized people in a globalized world. The news items carry links to relevant web sites and background information. Old newsletters are archived and can be retrieved from the web site of *Wereldwijd* (http://www.wereldwijd.be).

At the end of 2000, *Wereldwijd Mail* conducted a 'web site based'-survey among its subscribers to establish a profile of its readers and to cumulate insights in to what extent the objectives of the newsletter were met. Results showed that the readers are predominantly urban based and between 20 and 40 years of age. Two-third of the respondents is male, one-third is female. Almost 90% has a higher education. What seems very important to notice is that more than half of the respondents are professionally or voluntarily active in the fields of development, NGOs and new social movements. Moreover, the electronic newsletter seems to be considered by many readers as an useful addition to the hardcopy magazine (*Wereldwijd Magazine*) and the journal (*Noord-Zuid Cahier*) that the *Mediahuis* publishes. This also illustrates the point that, at least in the case of civil society issues, the internet seems to be a professional medium instead of a citizen's medium.

(The text is based on internal documents from *Wereldwijd Mediahuis.*)

'Geographically Based Communities'

In a way the case of the Zapatista movement can also be used as an example of how the internet can serve a 'geographically based community', such as the community of the Indians of Chiapas. The Zapatistas 'got the word out' by using the internet. However, in presenting the case of the Zapatistas, the focus was on how a democratic movement was able to build an international or global 'cyberspace based community'. Here, under this heading of 'geographically based communities' the primary focus will be on *providing public or collective access to the internet*, and thus *making information accessible and of use to the community members.*

With 'geographically based communities' and their use of the internet, the situation seems to be that an existing community uses the internet as a tool for development. The internet and email are considered to be relevant media for development goals. The question that thus becomes of general importance to the case of 'geographically based communities' is: *How can relevant information that is available on the internet be made accessible to a community and thus serve the community?* From a technological-economic perspective, this question primarily addresses hardware and infrastructure related problems (access). The question is rather peculiar because studies in 'community development' and 'communication development' taught us that it is not the information or the hardware that should guide the questions. Instead, 'participatory problem statements' and 'community needs' should be among the guiding principles in the formulation of questions. The central hypothesis behind the hardware-centered rationale is that increased connectivity and access to ICT-based tools and knowledge can enable communities to solve their own development problems and begin close the information and development gap. But, this hypothesis is often too easily adopted as being true without examining alternatives. This is not to say that the potential is not there, but specific contextual factors complicate every unique local situation. Moreover, from a culturalistic perspective, such a problem statement should also include software and content related problems (relevance).

This kind of use of the internet for community development is not solely, but often associated with (rural and urban) *multipurpose community telecenters* (MCTs). Originally from Scandinavia, these kinds of public community places provide different kinds of telecommunication services (phone, fax, computer, photocopies...)

and exist in many different forms and in many different parts of the world. As such, they provide an excellent site for the integration of internet and email access. In other cases, these centers are primarily established to provide the access to the internet and email. Pfiester, Roman and Colle (2000) define these centers as "shared public facilities that provide telecommunication services to persons who, for various reasons, do not have them available individually" (Pfiester, Roman & Colle (2000:62). They are distinguished from cyber cafés or telephone call offices by their emphasis on a broader spectrum of information services and by their explicit support to community or individual development. Although these centers seem to be very popular, especially in Africa, still little evaluation studies are available. In the executive summary of *Assessing Community Telecentres. Guidelines for Researchers*, the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) states this problem as follows: "The evaluation studies are urgently needed to provide an assessment of the role and impact of community telecentres, as organizations and donors are implementing these facilities in many parts of Africa without an adequate understanding of how well they respond to the communication and information needs of African communities (particular, the rural communities) or of their impacts on social equity and economic development" (IDRC, 2000).

Case Africa: *Rural Multipurpose Community Telecenters (MCTs) Pilot Projects*

This pilot project concerns the establishment of five rural multipurpose community telecenters in Africa. The project was implemented in 1998 and developed within the UN System-wide Special Initiative on Africa, entitled *Harnessing Information Technology for Development* (HITD). The involved agencies are UNESCO, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA),

IDRC, the ITU and the World Bank. HITD is intended to support the long-term framework for regional telematics policy called "Africa's Information Society Initiative" (AISI, http://www.bellanet.org/partners/aisi), adopted in 1996 by the ECA Conference of Ministers and ITU's Regional African Telecommunication Development Conference.

The Rural Multipurpose Community Telecenters (MCTs) are implemented in five African countries: Benin (Malanville - a town of about 26,000 in the lightly populated far north of the country), Mali (Timbuktu - a town of about 30,000 and regional seat in the desert north), Mozambique (Manhiça and Namaacha - towns of 22,000 and 10,000 close to the capital, Maputo), Tanzania (Sengerema - a town of about 45,000 on Lake Victoria), and Uganda (Nakaseke - a rural village of about 1000, 50 km north of Kampala). The centers are means of providing affordable access to modern information and communication technology tools for development. By enabling users to share the costs of facilities and support, the telecenters offer low-cost means of providing library services through the provision of access to national and worldwide electronic information banks as well as providing information support for literacy campaigns, basic and non-formal education, information on government programs, etc. They also provide facilities for the generation and exchange of community-based information. The rationale of the project fits within the idea of lifelong and life-wide learning of individuals and communities within UNESCO's Learning without Frontiers (LWF) initiative. Other services and facilities are access to the internet for businesses, NGOs, farmers and the public interested in online banking, market information, weather forecasts and promotion of their products, as well as basic office administration services such as telephone, typing, printing and faxes. Depending on location and demand, other applications such as telemedicine and formal distance education programs could also be added.

Nakaseke, Uganda

The MCT pilot project in Uganda is located in the community of Nakaseke, a rural village about 50 km north of Kampala (http://www.nakaseke.or.ug; http://www.nic.ug/nakaseke/). The MCT is build around the new public library sponsored by the Uganda Public Libraries Board (UPLB) and officially opened its doors on March 5, 1999. In an early stage of the project, it was realized that success would come from a proper understanding of the project by the community, and its participation in the design, content and general operations of the MCT. This led for instance to the community making recommendations on the inclusion of local

newspapers, popular local literature and games to cater for leisure time. Moreover, a local Uganda-based NGO, *Uganda Connectivity*, was asked to train a cadre of users from the community who could help to train others. The telecenter started with a library/resource center complete with custom information materials (a survey was made during the consultation period on what kind of materials the community wants). These materials included newspapers and magazines, a photocopier, computer services and training and community education/training seminars. Other services that have been introduced following community requests are free topical and feature film shows every Friday afternoon, games facilities every evening, functional adult classes every Friday and radio listening for particular groups. Three of the main areas in which the MCT now proves its use are: education (e.g. computer training and the library service in general), agriculture (extension information and communication) and health (especially through the pilot telemedicine application regarding teleconsulting).

The adopters of these MCT's services include:

- teachers, students and pupils, who want photocopy services and a good resource center;

- medical officers who often want a good and appropriate reference library;

- business people with the interest of communicating with others in the capital city and an interest in innovations to make own receipt forms and custom letters;

- community members, elders and opinion leaders interested in reading newspapers and following current affairs (until the opening of the telecenter there was no source of newspapers in the community, and people who wanted to read could not just afford them);

- young people who are just interested in learning new skills and trying them out; these users provided the first core user group in the extension program, and;

- women in development groups who wanted to enhance their work by getting information on videos.

The following is an assessment of the impact of the telecenter a year and a half after its establishment:

- The community has got a modern library/resource center, telephone connectivity and a core ICT facility. The school

community (7000 school-going children) as well as community workers and medical officers have benefited a lot from the resource center. One of the volunteer trainers remarked that the MCT "has started enhancing the prospects for development because most of the people have been communicating and receiving information after travelling very long distances and wasting a lot of money [...] but now they can use the telephone in the telecenter and save the money for other development activities".

- The community (42 villages and 3000 households) is gradually appreciating the importance of information as evidenced by the growing number of people inquiring about information on a variety of issues. Farmers are now requesting market rates and general trends on crops and how they grow. The daily newspapers at the telecenter have also helped to keep the community up-to-date with what is going on in the country.

- Computers are no longer strange and mysterious machines in Nakaseke. Over 60 community members have now been trained in ICT and computer communication services which has led to the growth of a core of ICT skilled people within the local community.

- A number of lessons have been learned and documented for future telecenter development. Management systems for sustainable telecenter operation have been tried and confirmed.

- The MCT has proven that ICTs can be useful for development in rural areas. A good number of development groups have visited the telecenter with a view of establishing a similar one in other areas.

(Excerpts are mainly taken from Rose, 1999. Additional information can be found at Nakkazi, 2001 and the web sites http://www.nakaseke.or.ug and http://www.unesco.org/webworld/telematics/telecentre.htm.)

Despite the popularity of the MCTs, the introduction and use still seem to be in a phase of exploration and there is widespread skepticism about their usefulness and sustainability. A few general lessons can be deduced from different project (e.g. Benjamin & Dahms, 1999; Pfiester, Roman & Colle, 2000; Rose, 1999...). First, management, coordination and organizational structure seem to be crucial. It is important that the local population is involved in all

stages and all sectors of MCT development and that community participation, although very difficult to implement, is pursued and promoted. Ultimately, the goal should be community driven self-management that is rooted in local needs and local cultures. The members of the community must understand the objectives and be convinced of the benefits of an MCT. They must adopt the project as their own, and must acquire the basic skills needed to move ahead. The concept of 'training the trainers' seems to be very important in this regard. Moreover, the concept of 'appropriate technology' seems to be applicable. Associated with the concept of 'relevance', 'appropriate technology' comes close to the discussed culturalistic perspective on community development. Community development does not equal technological development and an embedded, overall and comprehensive view on community development is needed to make technology appropriate and to make the content of relevance to the community. Finally, financial and economic sustainability is to be considered in a long-term perspective.

Another way of integrating the internet in the field of 'community development communication' is through association with traditional and already established community media. Radio seems to be an obvious choice, because of its, in many cases firm integration in the community. The following case from Sri Lanka is an example of such an 'integrated community media forms' perspective.

Case Sri Lanka: *Kothmale Internet Community Radio*

The Kothmale Internet Community Radio project is a pilot project jointly implemented by UNESCO, the Ministry of Post Telecommunication and the Media of the Government of Sri Lanka, Sri Lanka Telecommunication Regulatory Authority and Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation and the University of Colombo. The core

of the project is a community radio station radiating with a one KW transmitter 15 hours on weekdays and 20 hours on weekend days and covering about 60 villages, three towns (Nawalapitiya, Gampola and Hatton) in the south central region of Sri Lanka. The radius is about 20 kilometers and given the hilly terrain, the community radio is sometimes the only source of information for some villages. The radio station began broadcasting in 1989. Programs are produced in a participatory way and cover topics such as health, education, agriculture and various life skills. However, what makes this project unique is that, since 1998, the station uses community radio as an interface between the community and the internet. The community radio provides access to the internet and helps raise awareness about the internet among the community members.

Broken down to its basics, the project has three main objectives concerning the internet: 1. it provides individual access for community members; 2. it uses radio to share information taken from the internet with the community, and 3. it develops and maintains web sites that contain useful information for the rural community and the global community.

Free Public Access for Community Members

Free public access to the internet is made available at the radio station. Two other access points are linked to the server at the radio station at the community libraries in the towns of Gampola and Navalapitiya. The Government, through its Telecommunication Regulatory Commission provides the connectivity. There are 6 computer terminals available at the station. An average of 20 to 25 people visit daily to the radio station to browse the internet while an average of 10 to 15 people visit the Gampola access point. The most frequent users are young people between the age of 15 and 20 years (60%). UNESCO-trained community volunteers help the young people to learn the skills. Most of them search for information required for their school projects. Elderly people who do use the service mainly surf to be informed about current affairs. Those who have overseas relatives also use email to stay in touch.

Radio Browsing

In contrast to the direct public access that is mainly used by young people, most elderly people learn about the internet from the daily radio browse program. This one-hour program is broadcasted 5 days a week. The rationale behind this program is that radio broadcasters interpret information from selected internet sites and the listeners can direct queries to the radio station to find specific

information from the internet. One of the advantages is that the community radio provides the requested information in the local languages and thus makes it accessible to those who do not understand English. Relevant information here translates into learning about new tools and techniques for craftsmen, or learning about new or better techniques in the field of agriculture or education. Others find relevance in just being informed about current affairs.

The Database and Community Web Sites

The web site component was added to the project to fulfil the following objectives: 1. to develop a database that would obtain useful information for the rural community; 2. to add content in the vernacular in order to overcome the linguistic barrier and provide a point of departure to the speakers of the local languages into the largely English dominated wide web; 3. provide a portal for the community broadcaster in a manner that would facilitate radio program production, and; 4. provide a means of expression for the community within the cyber community through web publishing. Some people from the community have formed an internet club, learned HTML and web design and now maintain different home pages. These community web pages can be found at http://www.kothmale.net. The database web site can be visited at http://www.kirana.lk.

(Excerpts are taken from the UNESCO publication "Including the Excluded", January 2001 and the web sites http://www.kothmale.net and http://www.unesco.org/webworld/public_domain/kothmale.shtml.)

Concluding Remarks

The relation between community development and the internet takes many different forms, but the fundamental distinction that was made in this contribution was one between internet and its relation with 'cyberspace based communities' and internet as it can serve 'geographically based communities'. The so-called *digital divide*—although primarily a result of inequality and not a cause—is real. Its mere existence does pose problems for community development in the sense that there is a growing divide between the so-called 'information haves' and 'information have-nots'. This problem seems to be more severe in the case of 'geographically

based community development' than with 'cyberspace based community development'. As we have seen, especially in on-line community networking, it is the members of established institutions in civil society that constitute the on-line networking. These representatives of NGOs, CSOs or other professional organizations can now more easily form global, regional and local 'virtual communities' by using the internet as communication technology. It is here that the internet is fully acknowledged by its advantages over other media, such as the increase in speed, the decrease in costs, the possibility of interactivity and consultation, the convergence of different media forms (text, audio, visuals and even moving pictures), and especially the combination of these possibilities.

It was shown throughout the contribution that internet based on-line community dialogue can play a significant role in increasing the participation in a community and by doing so increase the representation of the community as a whole. The quality of the process of determining different organizational positions and thus cumulating the image/identity of the organization is improved by using the new information and communication technologies. It was also stated that this kind of use of the internet primarily applies to the so-called developed countries and to the community of international organizations (the world of international cooperation). In these spheres, ICTs and the skills to use the ICTs are available in a sufficient way, contrary to the so-called developing countries where this kind of use is marginal. The case that illustrated this kind of on-line internal civil communication was the newsgroup *Soc.Culture.Singapore*. An example of a more deliberate, structured (moderated) and goal-oriented on-line dialogue was provided by the case *AR-WACC On-Line Forum on "Communication*

for Reconciliation in the Asian Context". An inventory was also made of the problems related to these on-line community dialogues.

On-line community networking has been another area of interest. This interest does not concern communication within communities, but *between* communities. Two organizations that work for this kind of community building and networking among NGOs and CSOs in cyberspace (APC and NGOnet) were briefly considered in the case entitled *Towards Global and Local Civil Communities?*. The complex flow of information from one locality to another was then illustrated in the now already classical case of the Zapatistas movement in Mexico. However, the internet and email do not seem to be appropriate media to inform the broader public on democratic and civil issues. NGOs or CSOs, or indeed any kinds of organization do not yet seem to be able to construct a broader community that includes citizens or geographically based community members. The case of *The Zapatistas Creating a Cyberspace Community* and the case of *Wereldwijd Mail* (World Wide Mail) both showed that the internet seems to be a professional medium instead of a citizen's medium when it comes to civil society issues. With regard to the use of internet and email, the Zapatistas case might have shown that it is possible—under certain circumstances—to get information from, and about, a civil society movement to the international community of civil society organizations, but the *Wereldwijd Mail* case showed that it is difficult to get the same kind of information from the international professional community to the citizen.

The other form in which the internet was associated with community development was through the question of how the internet can serve 'geographically based communities'. This question has in many cases led to the implementation of (rural and

urban) multipurpose community telecenters (MCTs). The MCT in Nakaseke in Uganda—one of the five UNESCO *Rural Multipurpose Community Telecenters Pilot Projects* in Africa—illustrated the rationale of these kinds of centers. The relevance of these MCTs and their appropriateness for community development is not undisputed. This means that we should be very cautious with widespread implementation of these centers and should promote experiments and evaluation research instead. Another way to serve communities with internet and email facilities is through an association with more 'traditional' media, like radio. *The Kothmale Internet Community Radio* project in Sri Lanka demonstrated how an already established local radio station can adopt and integrate internet access and help raise awareness about the internet among the community members through its so-called 'radio browsing'.

Especially in this regard of 'internet being a tool for the development of geographically based communities', the technological-economic perspective seems to be the dominant perspective. If such a one-sided technological and infrastructural centered approach to development is adopted, then the danger exists of ignoring community needs, interests and appropriateness, or, being counterproductive to human socio-cultural development and processes of democratization all together.

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15.
Making Community Media Work

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Defining Community Media

The concept of 'community media' (CM) has shown to be, in its long theoretical and empirical tradition, highly elusive. The multiplicity of media organizations that carry this name has caused most mono-theoretical approaches to focus on certain characteristics, while ignoring other aspects of the identity of community media. This theoretical problem necessitates the use of different approaches towards the definition of community media, which will allow for a complementary emphasis on different aspects of the identity of 'community media'. This contribution has two aims: it firstly combines four theoretical approaches in order to capture both the diversity and specificity of these community media. Secondly it aims to show the applicability of these combined approaches by analyzing and evaluating a mixed media project in a North Belgian town.

None of the four approaches discussed below can be considered as giving a sufficient overview when applied independently, as we postulate that the only way to capture the diversity that characterizes community media is the simultaneous application of these four approaches. This does not exclude the sometimes-

strong interrelationship between the four approaches, especially when comparing the two media-centred approaches one and two, and the two more society-centred approaches three and four. Differences within the two media-centred approaches and the two society-centred approaches are based on the application of a more essentialist theoretical framework, as opposed to a more relationalist theoretical framework. In approaches one and three, the identity of community media is defined as autonomous, while in approaches two and four this identity is defined in relationship to other identities. These relationships can be summarized in Table 1:

Table 1: Positioning the Four Theoretical Approaches

	Media-centred	Society-centred
Autonomous Identity of CM (Essentialist)	Approach I: Serving the community	Approach III: Part of civil society
Identity of CM in relation to other identities (Relationalist)	Approach II: An alternative to mainstream	Approach IV: Rhizome

Implementing these four approaches also allows highlighting a series of arguments stressing the importance of community media in a wide range of areas; at the same time, they can (and will) be used to analyze the weaknesses of and threats to community media. After a brief description of each approach, they are then operationalized, directing the analysis of both the arguments

emphasizing the importance of community media and the arguments uncovering any weaknesses and threats. This analysis will lead to a summarizing table containing both sets of arguments.

A promising starting point for the theoretical analysis is given by the 'working definition' of community radio adopted by AMARC-Europe, the European branch of the World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters[1]; an organization that encompasses a wide range of radio practices in the different continents. In Latin America, the AMARC constituents are termed popular radio, educational radio, miners' radio, or peasants' radio. In Africa, they refer to local rural radio, while in Europe it is often called associative radio, free radio, neighborhood radio, or community radio. Asians speak of radio for development, and of community radio, in Oceania of aboriginal radio, public radio and of community radio (Servaes, 1999:259). Attempting to avoid a prescriptive definition, AMARC-Europe (1994:4) labels a community radio station as '*a "non-profit" station, currently broadcasting, which offers a service to the community in which it is located, or to which it broadcasts, while promoting the participation of this community in the radio*'.

Multi-Theoretical Approaches

Approach One: Serving a Community
In AMARC's working definition, it is nevertheless clear that there is a strong emphasis on the concept of 'community.' Moreover, the geographical aspect is explicitly highlighted ('*in which it is*

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[1] The World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters is usually referred to by its French acronym AMARC, or the 'Association Mondiale des Radio diffuseurs Communautaires'. The AMARC website can be found at: http://www.amarc.org.

located'), although other types of relationships between medium and community are often mentioned ('*to which it broadcasts*').

Within the disciplines of sociology and anthropology, the concept of 'community' has a long history. Already in the previous century, Tönnies (translation 1963) theorized a distinction between community and society: where 'community' is defined by the presence of close and concrete human ties and by a collective identity, the prevalent feature of 'society' is the absence of identifying group relations (Martin-Barbero, 1993:29). Morris and Morten (1998:12-13) exemplify Tönnies' distinction by using the concepts 'communion' and 'association'; community thus refers to the '*notion of a big family*', while society '*represents a colder, unattached and more fragmented way of living devoid of cooperation and social cohesion. Instead of a sense of neighborliness, people are isolated.*'

As Leunissen (1986) argues, conceptualizations of community refer predominantly to geography and ethnicity as structuring notions of the collective identity or the group relations. These structural conceptualizations of community are put firstly into perspective by introducing the concept of the 'community of interest', which emphasizes the importance of other factors in structuring a community. Although one cannot explicitly assume that a group of people has common interests[2] (see, Clark 1973:411 a. f.), the communality of interest can form the conditions of possibility for the emergence or existence of a community. Especially the analysis of the impact of information and communication

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[2] In sociology, a group of people that is formed based on common interests is usually referred to as a 'collectivity' (Merton, 1968:353). A collectivity does not always have direct interaction, but is often only based on a common goal or interest. The people who belong to a collectivity do not need to know each other,

technologies (ICT) on everyday life has shown that communities are not only formed in geographically defined spaces, but also in cyberspace, such as so-called 'usergroups'. Jones (1995) has shown that such 'virtual' or 'on-line' communities have similar characteristics as the geography-based communities[3]. The 'new' communities have further altered the rather fixed idea about space, clearly showing that geographical nearness is not in all cases a necessary condition for, or quality of, 'community.' As Lewis (1993:13) remarks, a 'community of interest' can extend '*across conurbations, nations and continents*'. What is a defining feature for 'community' is the direct and frequent contact between the members and the feeling of 'belonging' and 'sharing'.

A second type of re-conceptualization is based upon the emphasis of the subjective construction of community, where Lindlof's (1988) concept of 'interpretative community' and Cohen's (1989) 'community of meaning' are relevant. Although Lindlof's re-conceptualization is specifically aimed at redefining the audience as a community, both re-conceptualizations approach the concept of 'community' from within. Cohen pleads for, in line with the above, '*a shift away from the structure of community towards a symbolic construction of community and in order to do so, takes culture, rather than structure as point of departure*' (Cohen, 1989:70). Community is not something that is imposed on people from the outside and that, like a machine, punches structure in big metal plates. A community is actively constructed by its members and those members derive an identity from this construction. People

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and one cannot always identify direct interaction between them.

[3] Hollander (2000:372) correctly argues that geographically based communities can also use digital technologies, which implies that a clear dichotomy between 'virtual' and 'real life' communities is not tenable.

extract a 'community identity' from their own constructed social communication structure. These different conceptualizations are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2: Defining Community

Community as close and concrete human ties, as 'communion', As a collective identity, with identifying group relations.		
<u>Traditional:</u>	<u>Re-conceptualization 1:</u> Supplementing the geographical with the non-geographical	<u>Re-conceptualization 2:</u> Supplementing the structural/ material with the cultural
• Geography • Ethnicity	• Community of interest • virtual or on-line community	• interpretative community • community of meaning

Community media are thus oriented towards a community, regardless of the exact nature of this community (defined geographically/spatially or otherwise), but the relationship between the community medium and the actual community transcends 'ordinary' one-way communication, where '*topics are chosen in the same way, by professional communicators, and targeted towards the apparent needs and interests of the audience.*' (Berrigan, 1979:7) As is illustrated in AMARC's working definition (especially by the segment stating that community media should be '*promoting the participation of this community*'), relationships between broadcaster and community are defined by the concept of two-way communication. Access by the community and participation of the community are to be considered key defining factors, as Berrigan eloquently summarizes: '*[Community media] are media to which members of the community have access, for information, education, entertainment, when they want access.*

They are media in which the community participates, as planners, producers, performers. They are the means of expression of the community, rather than for the community.' (Berrigan, 1979:8) Referring to the 1977 meeting in Belgrade, Berrigan (1979:18) (partially) links access to the reception of information, education, and entertainment considered relevant by/for the community: '*[Access] may be defined in terms of the opportunities available to the public to choose varied and relevant programs, and to have a means of feedback to transmit its reactions and demands to production organizations.'* Other limit access to mass media and see it as '*the processes that permit users to provide relatively open and unedited input to the mass media*' (Lewis, 1993:12) or as '*the relation to the public and the established broadcasting institutions*' (Prehn, 1991:259). Both the production- and reception-approaches of 'access' are considered relevant to the definition of 'community media' and will be incorporated in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Access and Participation of the Community

Production of meaning	**Reception of meaning**
Access to the content producing organization → Ability to produce content and have it broadcast	*Access to the content considered relevant* → Ability to receive and interpret content
Participation in the produced content → Co-deciding on content	
Participation in the content producing organization	
→ Co-deciding on policy	→ Evaluating the content

Participation is seen here, following Pateman (1972:71), as a process where the individual members (of a community) have a certain degree of power to influence or determine the outcome of that process. Community media not only allow but also facilitate the participation of members of the community in both the produced content and the content producing organization. Prehn illustrates this as follows: '*participation implies a wider range of activities related to involving people directly in station programming, administration and policy activities.*' (Prehn, 1991:259)

A. The Importance of Community Media in Approach One: Validating and Empowering the Community

In this first approach the relationship between the broadcaster and the community is placed in the foreground. By choosing a specific community as a target group, the (concept of) community itself is validated and strengthened. The audience is not defined as an aggregate of individuals who only share socio-demographic or economic characteristics, but instead as a collective of people holding a series of identifying group relations. In this fashion, the situatedness of the audience, as part of complex set of social structures, is emphasized, deepening and bridging the traditional state-citizen and medium-audience dichotomies that tend to articulate the public and the audience as an aggregate of individuals.

Moreover, the aim of community media in approach one to serve the community is often translated as enabling and facilitating access and participation by members of the community. 'Ordinary people'[4] are given the opportunity to have their voices heard.

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[4] In other words: people who are not part of a societal elite (including politicians,

Topics that are considered relevant for the community can be discussed by members of that community, thus empowering those people by signifying that their statements are considered important enough to be broadcast. Especially societal groups that are misrepresented, disadvantaged, stigmatized, or even repressed can benefit from using the channels of communication opened by community media, strengthening their internal identity, manifesting this identity to the outside world, and thus enabling social change and/or development.

B. Threats to Community Media in Approach One: Which Community?

This orientation towards a community also creates a situation of dependency towards this community, as two-way communication demands two partners more or less equally interested in communicating. While the dominant discourse on media is based on one-way communication, raising the community's interest to go beyond this limited form of communication does not speak for itself, due to what can be called the lack of two-way communication skills and interest. This problem is strengthened even more by the diffusion of specific technologies oriented towards one-way communication and the lack of technologies facilitating two-way communication.

Moreover, the concept of 'community' – central to the identity of community media – has often been reduced to its geographical meaning. This reduction has trapped community media in the position of small-scale local media, gradually de-emphasizing their role towards serving the community and eventually copying commercial media formats in their efforts to survive.

experts, and media professionals) and those not considered to be celebrities.

Approach Two: Community Media as an Alternative to Mainstream Media

A second approach to defining community media is based on the concept of alternative media. This concept introduces a distinction between mainstream and alternative media, where alternative media are seen as a supplement to mainstream media. As alternative media are sometimes defined in a negative relationship towards mainstream media, the contingency of this concept should be emphasized: what is considered 'alternative' at a certain point in time could be defined as mainstream at another point in time. The societal context in which alternative media function is inseparable from the concept of 'alternative media' and can serve as a starting point for the definition of alternative media. Present day mainstream media are usually considered to be:

- Large-scaled and geared towards large, homogeneous (segments of) audiences
- State-owned organizations or commercial companies
- Vertically structured organizations staffed by professionals
- Carriers of dominant discourses and representations

Alternative media can take a (or several) opposite position(s) on these matters:

- Small-scaled and oriented towards specific communities, possibly disadvantaged groups, respecting their diversity
- Independent from state and market
- Horizontally structured, allowing for the facilitation of audience access and participation within the frame of democratization and multiplicity
- Carriers of non-dominant (possibly counter-hegemonic) discourses and representations, stressing the importance of self-representation

A more elaborate description of these different domains is given by Lewis (1993:12), as seen in Table 4:

Table 4: Defining Alternative Media[5]

Domain	Examples of the domain
Motive or purpose	• Rejection of commercial motives • Assertion of human, cultural, educational ends
Sources of funding	• Rejection of state or municipal grants • Rejection of advertising revenue
Regulatory dispensation	• Supervised by distinct institutions • Independent / 'free'
Organizational structure	• Horizontal organization • Allowing 'full' participation • Democratization of communication
Criticizing professional practices	• Encouraging voluntary engagement • Access and participation for non-professionals • Different criteria for news selection
Message content	• Supplementing or contradicting dominant discourses or representations
Relationship with audience and/or consumers	• Degree of user/consumer control • Allowing the needs and goals to be articulated by the audience/ consumers themselves • Democratization of communication
Composition of the audience	• Young people, women, rural populations • Diversity and multiplicity
Range of diffusion	• Local rather than regional or national
Nature of research methodology	• Qualitative, ethnographical and long term research

Source: Lewis, 1993:12

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[5] Table 4 is a reprint of the list Lewis (1993:12) mentions. Some of the examples in Table 4 were added by us.

A. The Importance of Community Media in Approach Two: Supplementing, Contesting and Resisting Mainstream Media Discourse

This second approach of community media defines these media as an alternative to mainstream media, supplementing mainstream media both on the organizational as on the content level. At the organizational level, the existence of community media shows that media can exist independently from state and market. As the pressure on large-scale mainstream media in order to become more market-oriented tends to be considerable, community media show that 'the third way' is still open for media organizations. The same argument can be applied for the (internal) structure of the media organization, as large-scale mainstream media organizations have a tendency towards a more vertical structure. Again, the more horizontally structured community media show that alternative ways of organization, and more balanced and/or horizontal structures, remain actual possibilities.

On the content level, community media can offer representations and discourses that vary from those originating from the mainstream media. The main reason for this difference can be found at the higher level of participation of different societal groups and communities and the aim to provide '*air space to local cultural manifestations, to ethnic minority groups, to the hot political issues in the neighborhood or locality.*' (Jankowski, 1994:3) Mainstream media tend to be oriented towards different types of elites, as is the case, for instance, in mainstream news broadcasts favoring government sources, often resulting in what is often called structural bias (see McNair, 1998:75 a. f.). The orientation of community media towards giving voice to various (older and newer) social movements, minorities, and sub/counter-cultures

and the emphasis on self-representation, can result in a more diverse content, signifying the multiplicity of societal voices.

At the same time, the critical stance towards the production values of the 'professional' working in mainstream media leads to a diversity of formats and genres and creates room for experimentation with content and form. In this fashion, community media can be rightfully seen as a breeding ground for innovation, later often recuperated by mainstream media.

B. Threats to Community Media in Approach Two: From Alternative to Marginal?
When community media are situated in an antagonistic relationship towards mainstream media, community media may find themselves is a less advantageous position. Being small-scale, independent, and horizontally structured organizations that carry non-dominant discourses and representations hardly guarantees financial and organizational stability.

Especially when the antagonistic relationship between public and commercial media is placed in the context of competition and these media try to hegemonise their identities at the expense of community media, the latter usually pay the price. Community media are then articulated as unprofessional, inefficient, limited in their capacity to reach large audiences and as marginal as some of the societal groups to whom they try to give voice. In this fashion, the need for an alternative is denied, as mainstream media are deemed to cover all functions considered relevant to society. One of the main consequences of marginalizing the alternative (or connotating it negatively, for instance as naïve, irrelevant or superfluous) is the low political priority given to what is considered to be 'marginal', causing a downward spiral for community media.

Approach Three: Linking Community Media to the Civil Society

The explicit positioning of community media as independent from state and market supports the articulation of community media as part of civil society. Civil society is deemed important for a variety of reasons, summarized here by Keane (1998: xviii):

- *'Civil society gives preferential treatment to individuals' daily freedom from violence;*
- *the importance of enabling groups and individuals freely within the law to define and express their various social identities;*
- *the impossibility, especially in the era of computerized networks of communication media, of nurturing 'freedom of communication' without a plurality of variously seized non-state communications media;*
- *the superiority of politically regulated and socially constrained markets as devices for eliminating all those factors of production that fail to perform according to current standards of efficiency.*
- *But of special interest […] is the subject of democracy or, more precisely, the intellectual and political need to revive the democratic imagination.'*
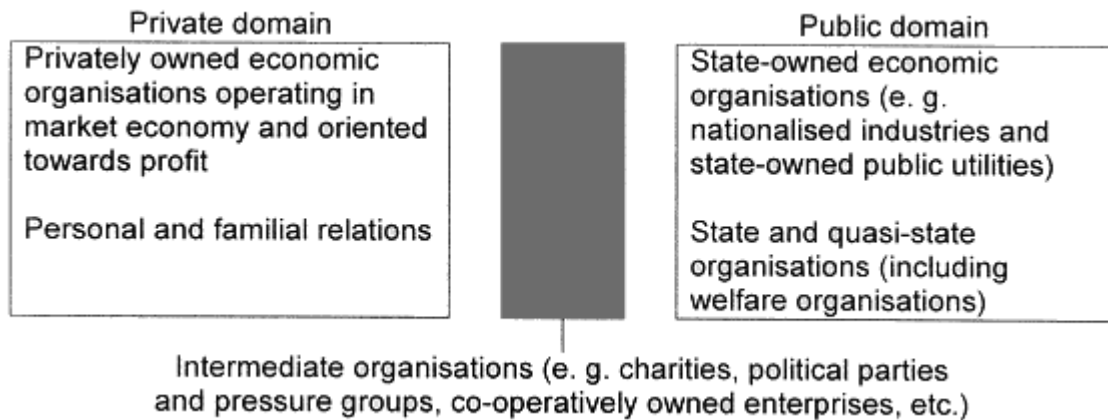
By defining community media as part of civil society, these media can be considered the '*third voice*' (Servaes, 1999: 260) between state media and private commercial media. One of the clearest examples of this articulation can be found in the introduction of Girard's 'a passion for radio', where he formulates the following answer to the question of '*a passion for [community] radio?*': '*The answer to that question can be found in a third type of radio – an alternative to commercial and state radio. Often referred to as community radio, its most distinguishing characteristic is its commitment to community participation at all levels. While listeners of commercial radio are able to participate in the programming in limited ways – via open line telephone shows or by requesting a favorite song, for example – community radio*

listeners are the producers, managers, directors and even owners of the stations.' (Girard, 1992:2)

A starting point for defining community media as (part of) civil society can be found in Thompson's model describing the public and private domains in contemporary Western societies, where organizations related to the state are seen as constituting the public domain. Privately owned economic organizations geared towards profit, and personal and family relations are considered to be part of the private domain. Based on this distinction, civil society can be defined as a group of intermediate organizations, separate from the privately owned economic organizations operating in the market economy, personal and family relations[6] and from the state and quasi-state organizations. Table 5 shows the positioning of civil society in between the private and public domain.

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[6] When defining civil society, Cohen and Arrato (1992:ix) explicitly include what they call the intimate sphere. The exact nature of civil society, and the question which spheres to include is beyond the objectives of this text.

Table 5: Private and Public Domains in Contemporary Western Societies[7]

Private domain		Public domain
Privately owned economic organisations operating in market economy and oriented towards profit Personal and familial relations		State-owned economic organisations (e. g. nationalised industries and state-owned public utilities) State and quasi-state organisations (including welfare organisations)

Intermediate organisations (e. g. charities, political parties and pressure groups, co-operatively owned enterprises, etc.)
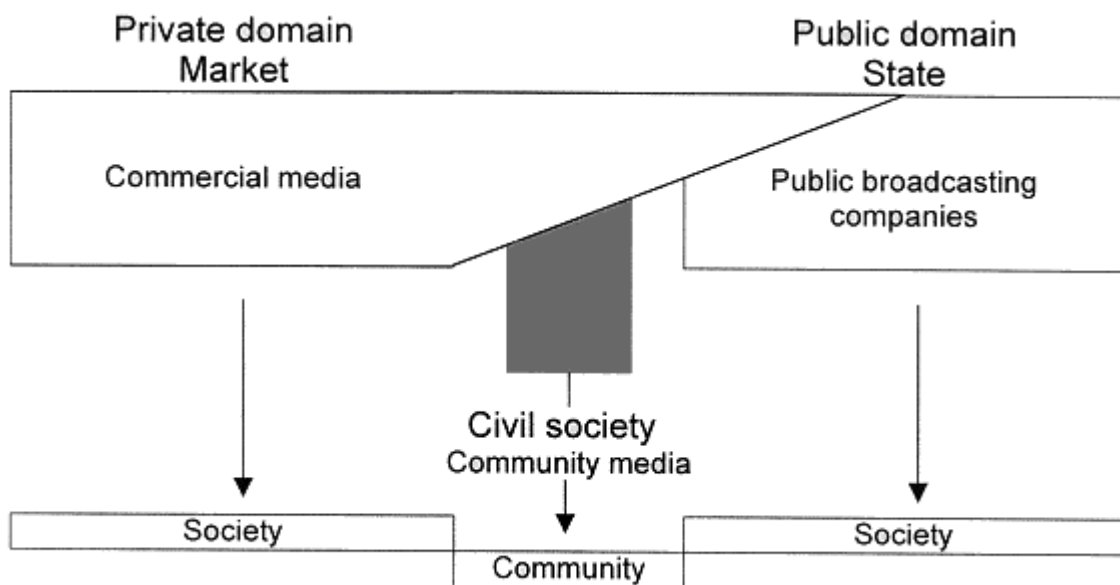
Source: Thompson, 1995:122

Although the nature and structure of civil society varies across regions and continents, this Western-inspired model tends to be applicable in most continents, as the neo-liberal market economy has become the predominant form of organizing society. Even in societies where the public domain is to be considered repressive towards civil society, different forms of what Lewis (1993:127)

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[7] Table 5 is a replica of Thompson's (1995:122) model on public and private domains. Table 6 is based on the Table 5, but has been thoroughly reworked.

named '*pockets of resistance*' emerge, as could well be illustrated by the existence of the Samizdat in the former U.S.S.R.

When reworking Thompson's model for the specificity of media organizations, a series of changes should be implemented to the model. Media deregulation, or more generally, the impact of the neo-liberal discourse on media policies, has prompted public broadcasting organizations (in some continents) to adopt more market- and efficiency-driven approaches. This includes an increased emphasis on audience maximization (see e.g., Ang, 1991), thus orienting these broadcasting companies' efforts (even) more towards the societal level, and less to the community level. The reworked model in Table 6 also shows how this reorientation has allowed the market-driven approach to penetrate the public domain.

Table 6: Media, Market and State

Private domain
Market

Public domain
State

Commercial media

Public broadcasting
companies

Civil society
Community media

Society

Community

Society

Based upon: Thompson, 1995:122

*A. The Importance of Community Media in Approach Three:
Deepening Democracy*

The third approach defines community media as part of civil

society, a societal segment considered crucial for the viability of

democracy. Although the nature of civil society can vary

extensively across nations and continents, it is argued here that, following Cohen and Arrato (1992:vii-viii), this concept is relevant to most types of contemporary societies and can be seen as an important locus for the expansion or deepening of democracy by means of increasing the level of participation (see Held, 1987).

Community media can firstly be seen as an 'ordinary' part of civil society, as one of the many types of organizations that is active in the field of civil society. The democratization *of* media, as Wasko and Mosco (1992:7) call this, allows citizens to be active in one of many (micro-)spheres relevant to daily life and to exert their rights to communicate. Secondly, as different political philosophers (from Rousseau, J.S. Mill and Wollstonecraft onwards) have pointed out, these forms of micro-participation are to be considered important, because they allow people to learn and adopt democratic and/or civic attitudes, thus strengthening (the possible forms) of macro-participation. Verba and Nie (1987:3) summarize this as follows: *'a participatory polity may rest on a participatory society'*. Held (1987:280) uses another catchy phrase to exemplify this: *'we learn to participate by participating.'*

When the specificity of broadcasters and their potential role as (one of the) major public sphere(s) is brought into focus and community media are not defined as just 'ordinary' parts of civil society, these media become important because they contribute to what Wasko and Mosco (1992:13) call the democratization *through* media. Community media offer different societal groups and communities the opportunity for extensive participation in public debate and for self-representation in the (or a) public sphere, thus entering the realm of enabling and facilitating macro-participation.

B. Threats to Community Media in Approach Three: A Viable Civil Society?

This approach also allows a foregrounding of the struggle between community media (as part of civil society), the state, and the market. Commercial (and public) media tend to see community media as '*contenders in a Darwinistic struggle among commercially oriented media*' (Prehn, 1992:266). The rejection of advertising as a prime source of income by community media places them in a financially hazardous situation, sometimes making them limp from one financial crisis to another.

The situation for community media becomes even worse when they (as part of civil society) are considered to be a threat to a repressive state. The objectives of community media can cause some state apparatus to interfere, placing staff in sometimes life-threatening situations. The (recent) example below contains a fragment of an email alert (among others mailed to the 'Development and Media'-mailing list) giving an accurate description of the dangers community media collaborators face in Haiti.

According to information collected by RSF, on 23 December, Caraïbes FM, a Port-au-Prince radio station, suspended its news programmes after having received telephone threats from mass organizations close to the Lavalas Family Party (currently in power). "We are always targeted by these organizations…when they invite us to their press conferences," explained newsroom director Carlo Sainristil. The station also decided to suspend the programme "ranmase" (summary), a weekly political news programme which has also been the target of threats. Sainristil also said that he and several journalists received disturbing telephone calls in recent months. A manager for Radio Kiskeya, another Port-au-Prince station, also claimed that his station received anonymous telephone threats in recent months.

Moreover, on 28 December, Amos Duboirant, the director of Rotation FM radio station, which broadcasts from the town of Lascahobas (in central Haiti), denounced the threats and intimidation against his station. Speaking on the air on another radio station, he reported that armed men connected to the municipality had surrounded Rotation FM's premises on 27 December, after the station denounced the unhealthiness in the city during the end of year holidays.

Dominique, director of the Radio Haïti Inter private station, was killed on 3 April as he was arriving at his station, located in the Delmas neighborhood (in Port-au-Prince's north-east). The station's guard was also killed in the attack (see IFEX alerts of 18, 7, 5 and 4 April 2000). A well-known political commentator in Haiti because of his constant commitment to democracy, Dominique had received death threats on several occasions. Radio Haïti Inter's director had disclosed several cases in which he implicated politicians and business people on his programme "Inter Actualités". On 3 October, Radio Haïti Inter's personnel demonstrated against the slow progress of the investigation. At the time, the journalist's wife, Michelle Montas, said: "I do not know the source of the barrier, but one clearly exists".

Originator: Reporters sans frontières (RSF)
Date: 2001-01-03
Country: HAITI

When focussing on the internal functioning of community media, it should be emphasized that '*making democracy work*' (1993), to quote the title of one of Putnam's main publications, is a very difficult task that needs constant attention. The ongoing power struggle at the Pacifica network (USA) can be considered a textbook example. Organizations that are horizontally structured and oriented towards community participation have to deal with a certain degree of inefficiency, sometimes making their functioning and the realization of their objectives impossible or perverting these objectives. As Held (1987:281) puts it: '*it is at least questionable whether participation per se leads to consistent and desirable political outcomes*'.

Approach Four: Community Media as Rhizome

Although the civil society approach defines community media in (a negative) relation to the state and market, this theoretical position is still based on the autonomous identity of the different actors and tends to ignore the contingency and interdependency of these identities. For this reason the civil society approach is radicalised building on Deleuze and Guattari's theory of the rhizome (1987) and combined with the relationist approach of community media as alternative media. This theory is based on the juxtaposition of rhizomatic and arbolic thinking[8]. The arbolic is linear, hierarchic and sedentary, and could be represented as '*the tree-like structure of genealogy, branches that continue to subdivide into smaller and lesser categories*' (Wray, 1998:3). It is, according to Deleuze and Guattari, the philosophy of the state. On the other hand, the rhizomatic is non-linear, anarchic and nomadic. '*Unlike trees or their roots, the rhizome connects any point to any other point …*' (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987:19).

The image of the rhizome allows incorporating the high level of contingency that characterizes community media. Both their embeddedness in a fluid civil society (as part of a larger network) and their antagonistic relationship towards the state and the market (as 'alternative' to mainstream public and commercial media) make the identity of community media highly elusive. In this approach it is argued that this elusiveness and contingency, as is the case for a rhizome, forms its main defining element.

As rhizomes, community media tend to cut across borders and build linkages between pre-existing gaps: 'a rhizome ceaselessly

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[8] Deleuze and Guattari have developed a theory that is situated within the field of epistemology. Here we focus more on organizational structures that are seen

establishes connections between semiotic chains, organizations of power and circumstances relative to the arts, sciences and social struggles' (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987: 7). In the case of community media, these connections apply not only to the pivotal role community media (can) play in civil society, but also to the linkages community media (and other civil organizations) can establish with (segments of) the state and the market, without losing their proper identity. In this sense, community media do not operate completely outside the market and/or the state, although the identity of community media is often defined in an antagonistic relationship (as being an alternative to the mainstream) towards the market and the state. Community media also establish different types of relationships with the market and/or the state, often for reasons of survival. At the same time they can be seen as potentially destabilizing ('deterritorializing' in Deleuze and Guattari's theory) the rigidities and certainties of public and commercial media organizations.

The visualization of both the elusiveness of the rhizomatic network, and its deterritorializing potential towards the more rigid media organizations in the public and private domain can be found in Table 7.

as the sedimentation of the arbolic and/or rhizomatic ways of thinking.

Table 7: Civil Society and Community Media as Rhizome

= Community medium

= Civil movement and/or organisation
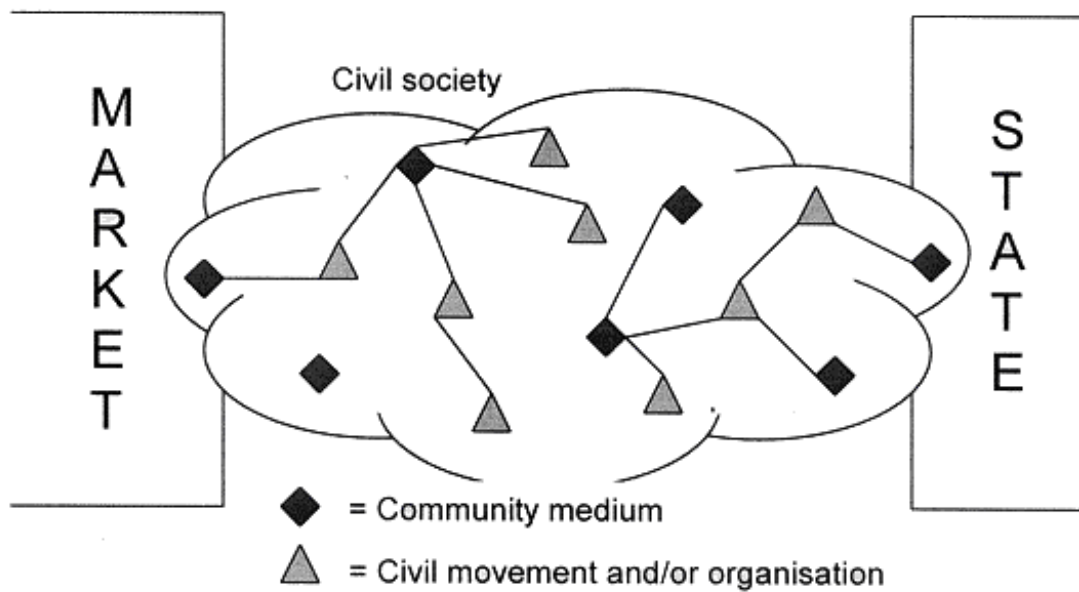
A. The Importance of Community Media in Approach Four: Connecting Civil Society

This fourth approach builds further onto the importance that is attributed to civil society and (in relation to) democracy. In contrast to the third approach, the main emphasis for describing

the importance of community media is not their role as part of the public sphere, but the catalyzing role they can play by functioning as the crossroads where people from different types of movements and struggles meet and collaborate, such as people from different women's, peasants', students', and/or anti-racist movements. In this fashion community media not only function as an instrument giving voice to a group of people related to a specific issue and/or, but also can function as a catalyzator, grouping people active in different types of struggle for equality (or other issues).

Especially in the field of radical democratic theory, ample emphasis is attributed to the necessity for linking diverse democratic struggles in order to allow the '*common articulation of, for example, antiracism, antisexism and anticapitalism*', as one of the proponents puts it (Mouffe, 1997:18). She continues by stressing the need to establish an equivalence between these different struggles, as it is not considered sufficient to establish '*a mere alliance*' (Mouffe, 1997:19) but deemed necessary to modify '*the very identity of these struggles … in order that the defense of workers' interests is not pursued at the cost of the rights of women, immigrants or consumers.*' (Mouffe, 1997:19)

The approach of community media as rhizomatic also makes it possible to highlight the fluidity and contingency of (community) media organizations, in contrast to the rigid ways mainstream public and commercial media often (have to) function. Because of the elusive identity of community media, they can – by their mere existence and functioning – question and destabilize the rigidities and certainties of public and commercial media organizations. At the same time, this elusiveness makes community media (as a whole) hard to control and to encapsulate in legislation, thus guaranteeing their independence.

B. Threats to Community Media in Approach Four: Diverging Interests and the Lack of a Clear 'Common Ground'

This fourth approach allows us to add some other threats to the existence and functioning of community media. Not only is it possible that its potential role at the crossroads of different social movements simply is not realized, when community media organizations, for instance, choose an isolationist position or propagate one overpowering type of social struggle. This role can also endanger these organizations, when the objectives of (one of) these movements conflict with the objectives of the broadcaster itself and the independence vis-à-vis these movements and/or civil organizations might be threatened.

Secondly, the complex relationship with state and market organizations creates the risk of incorporation of the community media by these state and market organizations and/or the loss of the independence, for instance financial, of community media.

The approach of community media as rhizome uncovers a third potential threat to the existence of community media. These media may signify the fluidity and contingency of media organizations, in contrast to the rigidities and certainties of public and commercial media organizations. At the same time this elusiveness might prevent the existence of a 'common ground' on which policy may act. This lack of a clear 'common ground', unifying and structuring community media as such, also complicates the functioning of the organizations representing community media (such as, for instance, AMARC) and has prevented in the past the emergence of a well-defined community media movement.

The four approaches and the deduced arguments showing the importance and weaknesses of community media are summarized

in Table 8. This overview articulates community media as an important but vulnerable type of media organization.

Table 8: Summarizing the Four Theoretical Approaches

Approaches to Community media	1 Serving a community	2 Community media as an alternative to mainstream media	3 Linking community media to the civil society	4 Community media as rhizome
Importance of community media	• Validating and strengthening the community • Treating the audience as situated in a community • Enabling and facilitating access and participation by members of that community • Topics that are considered relevant for the community can be discussed by members of that community • Opening a channel of communication for misrepresented, stigmatized or repressed societal groups	• Community media show that 'the third way' is still open for media organizations • Alternative ways of organization, and more balanced and/or horizontal structures remain an actual possibility • Community media can offer representations and discourses that vary from those originating from mainstream media • Emphasis on self-representation, resulting in a multiplicity of societal voices • Diversity of formats and genres - room for experiments	• Importance of civil society (as such) for democracy, with community media as part of civil society • Democratization of media in relation to micro- & macro-participation • Democratization through media: extensive participation in public debate and opportunities for self-representation in the (or a) public sphere	• Community media as the crossroads where people from different types of movements and struggles meet and collaborate • Deepening democracy by linking diverse democratic struggles • Highlighting the fluidity and contingency of media organizations • Questioning and destabilizing the rigidities and certainties of public and commercial media organizations, making at the same time room for collaboration and partnerships • Elusiveness makes community media (as a whole) hard to control and to encapsulate – guaranteeing their independence
Threats to Community media	• Dependency towards the community • Raising the community's interest for two way communication when the dominant media discourse is based on one way communication • Lack of two-way communication skills and interest • Lack of technology facilitating two-way communication • Reduction of community to its geographical meaning, trapping community media in the position of small-scale local media, gradually de-emphasizing their role towards serving the community	• Lack of financial and organizational stability, being small-scale, independent and horizontally structured organizations • Articulated as unprofessional, inefficient, limited in their capacity to reach large audiences and as marginal as some of the societal groups they try to give voice to • Low political priority given to the 'marginal'	• Community media as contenders among commercially oriented media • Rejection of advertising as a prime source of income leads to financially hazardous situations • Dangers caused by a repressive state • Dealing with a certain degree of inefficiency • Making democracy work requires constant attention	• Not realizing its role as crossroads • Diverging or conflicting objectives with civic organizations, threatening the medium's independence towards these organizations • Incorporation by state and market organizations, loss of independence towards these organizations • Lack of a clear 'common ground' leading to lack of policy efforts, complicating the functioning of representative organizations and preventing the emergence of a well-defined community media movement

A Belgian Case-Study: Kijk de Wijk - Look My Neighbourhood

In this part the resulting multi-theoretical approach is put to work as a toolbox for the analysis of a mixed media project, which is aimed at improving the social and economic texture in a North Belgian town.

Societal Context

The 'Kijk De Wijk'-project[9] is situated in an area of Antwerp called Seefhoek, which is part of the North Belgian city's 19th Century industrial belt. Though Antwerp is considered to be one of the centres of gravity of the Belgian economy - because of its large harbour and key role in the trade of diamonds, to name but two - different areas of this town with 500.000 inhabitants are considered to be deprived. A complex set of societal problems, complemented with a very high number of votes for the extreme right party 'Vlaams Blok'[10] have prompted policy makers at different levels to invest in these deprived areas, in order to improve living conditions and the social and economic texture. These funding opportunities included the use of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the North Belgian Social Impulse Fund (SIF), with the Cultural Projects Fund (CPF) as one of its programmes.

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[9] 'Kijk de Wijk' can be translated as 'Look My Neighbourhood' and will be abbreviated as KdW.

[10] At the most recent election of the Community Council (on 8 October 2000), 33% of the Antwerp population (inhabitants that were entitled to vote) voted for the 'Vlaams Blok'.

A Brief Sketch of KdW

A group of social organisations[11] - with among them one of the few community radio stations left in North Belgium (Radio Centraal in Antwerp) - applied for a CPF-funding for the KdW-project. The project has two main objectives: to give media training to people living in the Seefhoek-area, and to improve the image of that area. In order to achieve these objectives a series of activities is planned, including audio and video training workshops, radio broadcasts on Radio Centraal, photo exhibitions, making (and distribution) of a neighbourhood newspaper and the development of a web-site giving an overview of the produced content, and a virtual impression of a neighbourhood in the making.

At this point in time 11 media training workshops have been organised:

- Three workshops for 8 members of 'Brandpunt 23' (a local working group for 'social photography'), discussing technical and content related aspects of social photography with two professional photographers.

- Three workshops for a group of 12 young asylum seekers, introducing them to the relevant techniques and allowing them to make a series of video and audio documentaries related to the topic of travel.

- One workshop for a group of 6 children, in collaboration with a Gynaika-project. Gynaika uses a bus to organise a series of multimedia and art workshops located at different squares in Antwerp. The collaboration enabled a small group of children to interview bystanders.

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[11] These organisations are: Het Oude Badhuis ('the Old Bathing House' – a social centre), Brandpunt 23 ('Focus 23' – a local working group for 'social photography'), Kzinix (an organisation working on audio-visual projects), Het Noordelijk Halfrond ('The Northern Hemisphere' - an organisation placing cultural activities in a social change framework), PSC ('Protestant Social Centre'), AMAS ('Antwerp Minor Asylum Seekers' - an organisation giving support to minor asylum seekers) and Grote Goesting ('Great Desire' – a theatre production in collaboration with local residents).

- One workshop ('How to be famous I') for the (regular and occasional) visitors of the 'Oude Badhuis', allowing about 25 local youngsters to use a basement television studio (specifically constructed for the occasion) after a short training. Images were made at a neighbouring square the day before and used as a 'teaser' to attract the attention of potential participants. The day of the actual workshop, when the site (the 'Oude Badhuis') was an open house, the participants registered and interviewed the other visitors. They also edited the material themselves, which was broadcast using an internal television circuit.

- Three workshops ('How to be famous II') for 10 (regular) visitors of the PCS, training them in the use of audio and video equipment, after which they were allowed to take the equipment home. The collected material was then edited, resulting in a 30-minute news broadcast about the neighbourhood.

These workshops were complemented with the exhibition 'Great people' and three neighbourhood newspapers. In the 'Great people'-exhibition 12 'local heroes' were photographed and interviewed. These pictures were enlarged to a 5x3 metres format and put on display on different locations, where the interviews could be heard through speakers hidden in a cellar window, a tree, a letter box, or through an open window in a nearby house. During the opening of the exhibition artists who were born in the Seefhoek performed and several hundred inhabitants[12] paraded – accompanied by local brass bands – from picture to picture. In the three newspapers (printed on 15000 copies and distributed in the neighbourhood[13]) residents told their life- and living-stories. These

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[12] Other inhabitants showed their dissatisfaction with the presence of non-white 'local heroes'.

[13] Especially the third newspaper met with resistance from one of the other local newspapers (the 'Wijkgazet'). The 'Wijkgazet' is also funded by the SIF and uses a more traditional approach, combining semi-political communication and the distribution of local information by a professional redaction. It was feared that

residents were also portrayed in the newspapers by one of the teachers of the 'social photography'-workshop.

Other activities, such as a new series of workshops, two 'ordinary' radio broadcasts, one live low-power radio broadcast in the neighbourhood itself[14], a subproject with the collaboration of the residents of an estate in the Seefhoek, the virtual neighbourhood web-site, one new neighbourhood newspaper and the closing exhibition, still have to take place.

More on the Objectives of KdW

As mentioned before the two main objectives of this project are giving media training to people who live in the Seefhoek-area, and improving the image of that area. Both objectives are interrelated, as the residents are trained in the use of media technology, in order to control themselves the image of their area being (re-)created. As is mentioned in the application text: *'the aim is to allow the participants to function in complete autonomy when registering and interpreting the events deemed important by him/herself in their immediate neighbourhood.'* In one of the letters to the residents, one of the trainers writes: *'We would like to record the changes, on photo, film, though radio and a newspaper. But we would like to be able to choose the changes. We would like to see the neighbourhood change the way the inhabitants think the neighbourhood should change.'* The combination of both objectives will result in a virtual image of a new Seefhoek, (partially) based on the content produced by the

the 'populist' approach of the KdW-newspaper would increase the support for the Vlaams Blok, instead of diminishing it.

[14] This can consequently be considered as a form of neighbourhood radio.

residents, that will serve as a *'plan, project and programme for the future'*.

At the same time the training workshops and the learning process that lies behind the creation of the different media products, serves a series of more independent objectives:

- Helping the participants understand the functioning of the mass media, mainly through an analysis of media power (based on a combination of a political economy approach and a more culturally inspired critique on media representation). In the letter mentioned above, the trainer writes: *'We think it is important that people gain more power over the media. Television for instance is often made for financial reasons and not for the pleasure of the viewers. It is important that we really experience how media work. That way we can all become little journalists.'*

- Changing the perceived participants' cultural and political passivity and disinterest. This objective is summarised in the application dossier as follows: *'The democratic level of our society will increase when citizens have a more nuanced view on different problems and when they function less as a individual and more as a community.'*

- Improving the participants' opportunities on the labour market. As the Seefhoek is characterised by a level of unemployment that lies well above the town's average and the educational level lies well below average, it is claimed that this project will increase (to a certain extent) the educational level of the participants and hence their labour opportunities.

The so-called creation of a new image of the Seefhoek also serves a number of purposes that can been seen as independent from the media training of the residents. As mentioned above, the project is financed by the Social Impulse Fund, which aims at strengthening the social and economic texture of the city, at improving living conditions and indirectly at decreasing support for the extreme-right. The KdW-project ambitiously aims at creating a new plan for

the Seefhoek and the realisation of this ambition is the
responsibility of the co-ordinating organisations - and not of the
participants - as the concept of participation is strongly oriented to
the creation of a series of (mutually independent) media products.

Both objectives are included in the figure below:

Table 9: Objectives of the KdW-Project
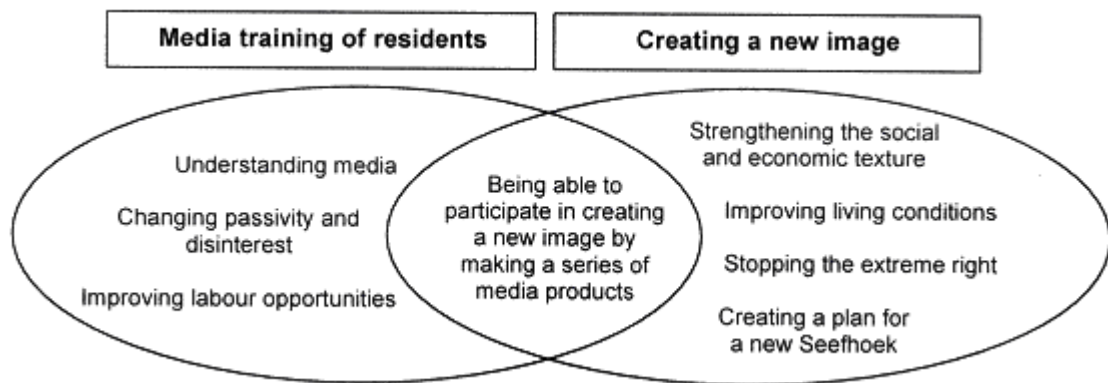
Within the articulation of these objectives, main structuring
components of the KdW-project are firstly 'participation and
empowerment oriented towards social change', and secondly
'media synergy without media centrality'. The project explicitly
aims to empower 'ordinary people' by learning them the tools of

the trade and offering them the opportunity to get acquainted with semi-professional audio and video equipment. This allows the participants to become *'little journalists'*, or in other words, to break the barrier between the professional media elite and the 'ordinary people'. By taking hold of some of the basic communicative tools, they are placed in a position that they can tell and record their live- and living-stories, with the clear intention to promote social change. This intention is not only realised by denouncing local problems, but also by showing that 'ordinary people' are capable of using the technology and journalistic conventions for analysing these local problems and for telling their own stories. In the case of the three PSC-workshops, the news broadcast contained items on refugees/asylum seekers and dilapidation on the one hand, but also featured a local writer and a local photographer talking about their work.

The second structuring component - media synergy without media centrality – refers to the use of mixed media as carriers of compatible meanings. The pictures and interviews used in the 'Great people'-exhibition were for instance also used in one of the KdW-newspapers, and will feature on the project's web-site. The interviews will also be used for a radio broadcast. The emphasis on mixed media prevents that the media organisations involved become the starting point of the project. The community radio station 'Radio Centraal' is one of the partners of the project, but is not considered to be central to the project. Based on its expertise related to media technology and its knowledge of the functioning of alternative and mainstream media, it can adequately contribute to the project, without dominating and/or monopolising it (and the participants).

Analysis & Synthesis

The KdW-project is to a very high degree oriented towards the *local community*. The project aims to give voice to the inhabitants of one of the most deprived areas of Antwerp in drafting a new (still virtual) neighbourhood, thus using a geographical approach to the concept of community. Access and participation of the members of the community in the use of different media are facilitated by training-workshops, where the participants are not only offered an opportunity to get acquainted with media technology, but also stimulated to discuss the problems they consider relevant to the community's wellbeing. At the same time the logic of project funding, combined with the lack of financial resources and time to invest in large training-workshops limits the degree of participation of the inhabitants. For reasons of efficiency and time-management the workshops are highly structured (though nevertheless improvised) and the involvement of the participants in certain domains (such as editing) is kept rather limited.

When confronted with this criticism, one of the project co-ordinators expressed the intention to increase the level of participation in the workshops-to-come, in the production of the fourth newspaper and in subproject in the estate. In the case of the newspaper it is being considered to ask the participants of the workshops to interview other residents and write articles on issues of their choice.

The discourses used during the workshops and in the media products are strongly related to the *alternative-mainstream* dichotomy. The analysis made of the North Belgian mainstream media can be considered critical, when it comes to their (commercial) intentions, their lack of interest for the 'real'

problems of 'ordinary people' and their disinterest in a problem-solving role. For this reason(s) the KdW-project can be linked to the analysis made in the sphere of civic/public journalism, although it is more related to 'participatory journalism'[15]. At the same time KdW offers a set of 'alternative voices and images' that contrast with the representations used and created by mainstream media. The inhabitants are represented (and allowed to represent themselves) as critical and creative citizens, showing great interest in the evolution of their neighbourhood. Being outside mainstream media also creates problems of (financial) stability and continuity, which results in a relatively small number of workshops with a relatively small number of participants for a relatively limited amount of time. This problem is explicitly recognised by one of the KdW-co-ordinators: *'As long as there is no alternative medium, through which we can give these realisations news value, by confronting them with an audience of listeners and viewers, we will stay in the margins of the world of communication. And the participants will remain – despite our efforts – ordinary people.'* He also expresses the need for the creating a form of 'permanent follow-up' for the project: *'The young Deborah, the old Adriaan and the participants from the Open House belong to a target group (not the right phrase, but still …) that cannot act independently in reporting the issues and stories they find relevant. They do not have the means (yet), as the teachers and equipment are gone. Hence the idea of a cybercafé for the continuation and permanent follow-up of the project. Up to now, we've only shown them the possibilities …'*

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[15] 'Participatory journalism' is linked with what McQuail (1994:131-132) calls the democratic-participant media theory.

Thirdly KdW explicitly aims to improve the *democratic (local) culture*, by creating a more critical stance towards the functioning of the mass media and towards local problems as perceived by the inhabitants. Moreover, the project offers the participants a tool for social change, by teaching them a way to tell, structure and record their stories. Although participation at certain levels is rather limited and the teacher-participant relation sometimes echoes the 'professional elite' -'ordinary people' relation[16], the residents of the Seefhoek are empowered to have their voices heard. Especially the mixed media approach and the use of a *network* of different organisations – ranging from a local working group for social photography to an Antwerp community radio station – should be considered a major strength. From this viewpoint, the project takes on the role of a crossroads, bringing together people from different organisations and from different backgrounds. Although this situation also sometimes creates differences of opinion and/or strategy, it also enables different social struggles to meet, thus further deepening (local) democracy. Furthermore, the strategic alliance with some of the Belgian and Antwerp government bodies - financing the project - has allowed these civil society organisations to cut across the traditional borders between state, market and civil society, without fundamentally weakening their identity construction as different or alternative from state and market organisations. By breaking with a more isolationist tradition the organisations (and especially the community radio station in question) are given the opportunity to expose the outside world to

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[16] This for instance happens when a teacher uses technical jargon that is beyond the comprehension of the participants. The participants also define the teachers as professionals - because they are seen to possess 'professional knowledge' – despite the efforts of the teachers and their different – sometimes opposite - self-identification.

their combined democratic discourses, potentially destabilising mainstream (media) discourses.

A Brief Note on Methodology

This evaluation of the KdW-project is based on the analysis of the available documents, provided by the two project co-ordinators, which were also interviewed. The text-analysis was supplemented by an analysis of the recordings of two of the PSC-workshops. One of the researchers was also present (as an observer) during the third PSC-workshop. The four theoretical approaches discussed above were used as sensitising concepts, structuring the analysis and the brief report.

The results of the analysis were then mailed to the two co-ordinators for feedback, allowing them to give their view on the analysis. In the next phase this feedback was analysed, and relevant changes and additions were implemented. As the KdW-project is an ongoing project, the research should be (partially) defined as interventionist, as it is (also) aimed at identifying the factors that delimit the residents' participation, thus attempting to increase the level of participation of this project.

Strategies for Change

In the final part of this text, we focus on a series of possible strategies to improve the situation of community media. By using a combination of four theoretical approaches, we have not only shown the importance of community media, but also their vulnerability. For this reason, the conclusion of this paper discusses a series of strategies oriented towards improving the situation of community media. These strategies are deduced from the theoretical framework, from the summarising table that was used

as a tool for the analysis of the Belgian case, and from the Belgian case itself. It is contended that these strategies should take into account both the diversity and the specificity of community media.

We suggest two types of strategies. The first strategy is aimed towards strengthening the niches community media often are located in, being caught in the uneasy position between market and state. The second strategy focuses more at the societal context in which community media function: by enlarging the network (or rhizome) community media are part of, their democratic function within civil society can be realized to a higher degree.

Strengthening the Niches

In order to improve the position of their community media, several countries have established media funds, specifically oriented towards direct project funding, and privileging community media. Examples are the French 'Fonds de soutien à l'expression radiophonique' and the South-Belgian 'Fonds d'aide à la création radiophonique'[17]. These (community) media funds could also function on a more transnational level, allowing community media from a specific continent, or different continents to apply for direct project subsidies.

A second point of attention is the quality of legislation and its enforcement in different countries and continents. This legislation might not be limited to the protection of human rights (in their widest sense), but also to the recognition of the specificity and difference of community media on technical, organizational and

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[17] 'Fonds de soutien à l'expression radiophonique' and 'Fonds d'aide à la création radiophonique' can be translated as support funds for the radiophonic expression or creation.

content-related levels. As community media often find themselves in a more vulnerable position than market and state media, and their relation towards the state and market is also sometimes problematic, specific legislation is needed for their protection. This area includes access to good quality frequencies, the necessary technical equipment at a reasonable price, the presence of alternatives for (usually expensive) technical innovations, the (legal) acceptance of organizational structures that are used by community media. All these would help facilitate the position of their volunteers, at the same time allowing for decent housing and protecting the independence and safety of the community media and their staff.

Enlarging the Network/Rhizome

At the same time, policies could be oriented towards the important role community media can play for reaching, maintaining, and deepening the level of democratization. This democratic function is especially related to their role as a nodal point in the network of civil society. The first step in improving the strength of the rhizome is improving the network between the different community media themselves, an aim that could be realized by the structural (financial) support for the representative organizations of community media, at the national and international level. This could allow these representative organizations (among others) to increase the number of 'regional offices' (covering a limited group of countries), to organize the exchange of programmes using different carriers, and the ability to exchange community media staff. In these ways, the contacts between community media collaborators from different countries and/or continents might be established, thus stimulating organizational learning and networking.

Furthermore, the number of connections between community media and non-media civil organizations should be increased. Project funding specifically aimed at the collaboration of media and non-media organizations should be given priority. Contacts between the staff - working on compatible issues - of these different organizations should be stimulated. Exchange programmes for training community media staff by members of the non-media civil organizations in the areas of their expertise (and vice versa) should be organized. In this fashion, the opportunities for partnerships between media and non-media organizations are increased and the media-centrality that still (sometimes partially) characterizes most media organizations would be diminished.

Finally, the importance of the connections between (public) mainstream media and community media should be stressed. The rhizomatic approach allows breaking through the rigid separations that are created by the antagonistic position towards mainstream media (approach II) and towards the market and the state as such (approach III). The fourth approach creates more room for both the deterritorialising of mainstream media and at the same time enabling the collaboration with state and/or market organisations. Partnerships between (especially public) mainstream media could strengthen the rather problematic, vulnerable and isolated position of community media and allow mainstream media a unique form of organizational learning.

These different strategies, when implemented with the up-most respect for diversity and specificity, can allow community media to remain in a position where they can (continue to) serve their community, act as an alternative to mainstream media (discourse),

push for democratization in and through media, and function as a crossroads of civil society.

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16.

Media and Ethnopolitical Conflict

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> "Society is like an ecosystem that needs variety to maintain itself. When one 'species' is exterminated or suppressed, others will multiply too fast at the expense of some others. Thus, diversity will decrease, the complexity of the system will diminish and it will all become less defensible against erosion."
>
> Hamelink, 1988

The world has entered an era of rapid change. Dramatic population movements and increasingly dynamic human interaction through the technological revolutions in computers, travel, and telecommunications have begun to erode traditional cultures and ways of living, thus making it more and more difficult for both individuals and groups to define and redefine themselves (Barber, 1996).

In this uncertain and increasingly complex world where the only constant is change, many groups and leaders around the world have turned to ethnicity as the answer to their dilemmas of identity. As many of these newly identified ethnic groups live in the same states, inter-ethnic conflict has become a mainstay of the Post-Cold War era. Newspaper headlines around the world are filled with news of different ethnic groups reacting violently to

perceived threats both from other groups and the aforementioned population and technological changes, that is, threats to their identities. Indeed, there are currently 233 politically active groups in 93 countries engaged in political or military struggles as a result of which more than 20 million refugees are in flight (Manoff, 1998:11).

The causes of this eruption of ethno-political conflicts are numerous. 'Structural factors,' including economic, social, and political issues relating to wealth distribution and inter-ethnic relations, 'facilitating factors,' including the degree of politicisation and ethnic consciousness, and 'triggering factors,' including sharp economic shocks, inter-group tension and the collapse of central authority are generally argued to be the main causes of ethnic conflicts (Costy & Gilbert, 1998:12). Media play a central role in the negotiation of the structural factors, as well as the creation of the facilitating factors and triggering factors that lead up to a violent conflict. As argued by Cees Hamelink (1997:32), national or ethnic propagandists through the media can "suggest to their audiences that 'the others' pose fundamental threats to security and well-being of the society and that the only effective means of escaping this threat, is the elimination of this great danger." The German media, for example, played a central role in shaping the image of the 'other', i.e. the Jewish people, into an evil figure that had to be exterminated (Goldhagen, 1996:9). More recently, the private Radio Television Libre Des Mille Collines in Rwanda has played a major part in triggering the conflict by broadcasting messages like "You cockroaches must know you are made of flesh. We won't let you kill. We will kill you," a few days before the genocide in that country (http://www.ejc.nl/mn/showresultnews.hmx?4867). Unfortunately,

the world today abounds in many other examples of the media contributing to the escalation of violent conflicts as a result of sensationalistic reporting.

Before going into the proposed actions for the positive potentials of the media in conflict transformation, the perception that journalists are 'neutral' or they are supposed to remain 'neutral' must be overcome. In reality, as argued by Van de Veen too (1999), the issue is not about taking sides in reporting conflict since journalists are already a third-party in any conflict they are covering. Thus, the media and consequently journalists are inherently non-neutral: simply by being there and reporting about a conflict, they alter the communication environment. Furthermore, the way in which journalists report a certain conflict can drastically affect the audience's perception of the conflict and thus possibly its direction and eventual outcome.

Thus, we will first argue (Negative Potentials of the Media in Conflict Transformation) that what journalists perceive to be a 'neutral' position is actually 'taking the side of their nation/ethnic group'. Once this point is established, we argue for a more ethical journalism or even an 'intended outcome' peace programming, in order to counterbalance/reverse/heal the damage done (Positive Potentials of the Media in Conflict Transformation).

Negative Potentials of the Media in Conflict Transformation

International and inter-ethnic relations news coverage stands out as two of the main areas where the aforementioned partiality of journalists favouring their home nation/ethnic group is particularly noticeable. Research about comparative international news, for example, confirms the significant role of the media in perpetuating

a worldview that consistently favours the home nation/ethnic group perspective on world affairs. In their coverage of international and national events, the media continually produce and reinforce certain socially shared ethnic prejudices (Carrier, 1997; Rivenburgh, 1995; Sreberny-Mohammadi, 1985). Since a prejudice forms in an oppositional relation with the 'other', the media often make use of certain 'oppositional metaphors' in constructing these prejudices.

It is not our intention here to endeavour to an exhaustive discussion about nationalist and racist attitudes of the media, since an extensive literature already exists on this topic (e.g. Bonnafous, 1991; Hartmann & Husband, 1974; Jager & Link, 1993; Van Dijk, 1991, 1997; Wilson & Gutierrez, 1985). It is useful at this stage, however, to review some of the main 'oppositional metaphors' used by the media in conflict areas.

Oppositional Metaphors

"Us" with the great old civilisation vs. "Them" with their historical backwardness;

"Our" tolerance vs. "Their" nationalistic exaltation;

"Us" the modern civilised society vs. "Them" the uncivilised savages;

"Us" the giving/accepting host vs. "Their" receiving/frightening minority in "Our" country (Terzis, 2001)

Some examples of the above from the Greek Press [regarding the Greek-Turkish conflict] include: (El. 2/10): "The Turks even today behave according to primitive instincts, like a few centuries ago … when masses of their blood-lust conquerors knocked on the gates of Europe … And how does the civilised West react to the

disobedient towards the international laws and agreements barbarian Asiatics?" Furthermore, the law that was pass in Turkey for the obligatory flag decoration of public buildings, [which is a permanent reality in Greece!], is treated ironically by the whole Greek press: "Flag-mania in Turkey" (N. 26/10), "Exaltation with the half moon" (E.T. 26/10). Concerning the aspirations of Turkey to join the EU the national Greek press writes: "The political-military establishment may have put on a European cloak, but this country still conceals within it deep remnants of authoritarianism which pass on 'by the grace of God' to all forms of power (...) The Turkish state has not as yet shown the necessary respect towards its citizens, so that it can be included in the society of the dignified countries" (N. 19/7) (www.greekhelsinki.gr).

These 'oppositional metaphors' abound in the media of conflict-ridden countries all over the world and often present themselves in the national media's coverage of internal and external issues as 'threats' facing the nation. In the case of conflict between two countries for example, often the ethnic minorities of the 'other' in the country are identified as the official representatives of the external 'enemy' regardless of the weakness of the ties between them. While everyday discrimination against them is hardly ever covered in the media, the few cases of crime committed by ethnic minorities becomes the central evidence of the 'ungrateful ethnic criminal' image drawn. They are also often perceived as a threat to the social well-being and national security and their contribution to the economic, political and cultural diversity are rarely mentioned (Van Dijk, 1999).

These discursive strategies present the 'Other/enemy' as a homogeneous, internally undifferentiated entity intending to deprive 'Our' country of her identity and territory. Equating

(through dissimulation) the representations of the 'Other's' citizens, political forces, government and Diaspora with ultra nationalists is a commonly used strategy. The political field is thus simplified into two opposing forces, 'Us' vs. 'Other', 'good' vs. 'evil', 'moral' vs. 'immoral'. Hence the perception of the human rights of political, ethnic and religious minorities is that they are secondary to the 'national rights'. Political, ethnic, and religious minorities are treated as a threat in the media text, or worse as traitors, and their perceived anti-nationalist action is criminalized (Sofos & Tsagarousianou, 1993).

The reasons for the (re)production of these 'oppositional metaphors' and hate speech in the media can be found in every stage of the general media production cycle or 'basic social determinants of journalism' (McNair, 1998:14):

Constraints of Journalists Reporting Conflict

1. Professional culture (e.g. absence of journalism code of ethics, professional ideology that sees journalism as a necessary tool to defend the 'national interests of out county and preserve out cultural autonomy, poor training of the media personnel and absence [or lack of enforcement] of media laws),

2. Organisational constraints (e.g. deadline pressures that a lot of times do not allow in-depth/balanced reporting),

3. Technical constraints and possibilities (e.g. lack of equipment, limited and/or biased newsgathering techniques),

4. Political pressures (e.g. censorship, traitor labelling, intimidation, lobbying, regulation, the interlocking interests of the media, the politicians and the business sector),

5. Economic pressures (e.g. destroyed market conditions, fierce unregulated commercialisation, market forces that promote sensational journalism),

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6. Source tactics and strategies (e.g. intimidation of the journalist by the government sources, public relations/conflict spin doctors).

(Adapted from Ozgunes & Terzis, 2000)

Hence, every level of these 'social determinants of journalism' in conflict-ridden areas potentially plays a negative role in the coverage of inter-ethnic relations.

Positive Potential of the Media in Conflict Transformation

Having established the media's negative potential for reinforcing prejudices that exacerbate the oppositional relations with the 'other', we would like to argue for a more ethical journalism and a pro-peace media that can play a key role in conflict prevention and transformation.

Cultural autonomy and preservation of national identity in the present changing world does not mean fanatic nationalism or ethnocentrism and closing down of all the channels of communication. On the contrary, as Fanon argues, "the consciousness of self is not the closing of a door to communication. Philosophic thought teaches us, on the contrary, that [communication] is the guarantee" (Quoted in Hamelink, 1983). Thus, our efforts should be focused on enhancing the pluralism of the media environment of the countries in conflict and keeping the doors to communication open. Minimal pluralism of the media suppresses the emergence of new cultural movements amongst which are peace and rapprochement movements.

Necessary Steps in Media-Project Planning

Unfortunately, there is no 'magic-recipe' for implementing a successful media project for positive conflict transformation since no two ethnopolitical conflicts are the same. But there are three basic steps that every related project should take:

Step 1: Two Dimensional Pre-Project Assessment

The mission of the two dimensional Pre-Project Assessment is to find out if the conflict is appropriate for a media-based intervention for conflict transformation, and if so, what kind. The answers to the following questions are crucial in providing guidance for finding the market-niche for making a difference and consequently in shaping the right communication strategy (media-mix) in the case of a positive atmosphere for a Peace Media Project:

Objectives of the Conflict Assessment

- History/Time-line of the conflict: Pre-War, War, Post-War

- Which are the international players involved?

- What is the current level of ethnic, political and economic tensions?

- What is the current state of the militaries, political and religious authorities and economies of the opposing sites?

- Top-down: what are the positions of the political elites of the opposing sides? are there any negotiations (Track One) going on at the moment? If so, are there secret, closed-door or open?

- Bottom-up: What are the views of the peoples on the various sides of the conflict? What do they perceive the reasons, resolution and desirable solution to be? What are their needs of security, identity and development? Is there a grass roots peace movement (Track Two)?

- Middle-out: Is there sufficient communication between political elites and the people? Between Track One and Track Two diplomacy?

- Would the political bodies and civil society encourage the entry of a Peace Media Project into the media environment(s)?

- How can the Peace Media project avoid being perceived as a top-down, foreign-imposed solution?

- What are the possibilities for grassroots community involvement in such project?

Objectives of the Media Assessment

- Which communication avenues are available?

- Who owns/controls them?

- What are the audience ratings for different media and what is level of access -media penetration of different media?

- How does gender and social class affect access to the media?

- Which sources are trusted by the society?

- How does the inter-media agenda setting work in the countries involved? Which media are considered prestigious enough and set the agenda for the others?

- What is the legal framework in which the media in the country operate?

- What is the journalists' 'professional culture'?

- What is the strength of the professional unions of journalists?

- What is the economic framework that the local media work?

- What is the approach of the different media outlets to the conflict?

- What is the level of public, media and media-broker diplomacy?

- What are the logistical/time-frame, material/technical, and human resource requirements in the country(ies) in conflict for establishing a Peace Media initiative?

Goals of the Assessment

- Do we need to do training? To whom? What kind?

- Do we need to establish new media or can we work with existing ones?

- Do we need to create partnerships between local and international media?

- Do we need to distribute hardware to the local media and the population and what kind?

- What will the specific content of these productions be?

- What will the outlet be?

- Which one of the different media and genres formats will be appropriate to achieve the 'intended outcome'?

- What will be the method of production and who will produce it?

- What will be the appropriate time for implementing it?

- How would we maintain balance between the opposing parties?

- How can we assure the sustainability (commercial or voluntary) of the project?

- What is the 'opportunity cost'? In other words, what other project for the positive transformation of the conflict we could do with the same effort and money?

Fundamental in this two-dimensional assessment is designing the questions for each dimension according to the local variables. Such a case-specific approach would allow the implemented strategies to vary widely according to the nature of the conflict, the cultural geography of the field and the local mediascape.

Step 2: Project Design & Implementation

We will divide the types of Media Peace Projects in three categories: Training, Provision of Hardware and Media Content.

(a) Training

There are three main categories of people that we could possibly need to conduct training for:

- Media Technical Staff (printing, recording, editing, sound, maintenance, etc);

- Judges, Lawyers, Civil Servants (Press Law issues: freedom of speech, censorship, diversity; International Conventions protecting journalists, assisting in changing restrictive media laws, etc), and;

- Journalists and journalism students can be trained on:
  - safety instructions,
  - standard journalism skills,
  - media management,
  - human rights and ethnic minorities reporting,
  - health-emergency or humanitarian reporting,
  - web based and non-mainstream source reporting,
  - standard conflict resolution theory,
  - conflict analysis reporting, and,
  - media and media-broker diplomacy.

[All the above can be extended for grassroots peace movements who would like to use media for peace oriented programming in workshops, community radio, television or press.]

Projects that aim for the following goals (through conferences, professional exchanges, training workshops, and joint productions) can contribute substantially to media's positive role in conflict transformation. (Please see example of training curriculum for journalists reporting ethnopolitical conflict for a joint training between opposing sites in the following Box):

Training Programme for a Journalists' Workshop on Reporting Ethnopolitical Conflict	
Day/unit one:	Introduction to the literature on media and conflict (Research on why and how the media have a negative effect. How can they have a positive effect in conflict transformation?).
Day/unit two:	Case studies of reporting from other areas of ethnopolitical conflict. Case studies from home.
Day/unit three:	Writing in the shoes of the 'other' (How do we think that the 'other' thinks about 'us'?).

Day/unit four:	Standard conflict resolution training and conflict analysis reporting.
Day/unit five:	Jointly reporting the past (Scratch the historical wounds and revitalise memories of co-existence; try to understand the 'other's' memories, and attempt to create a joint 'interpretation' of history.).
Day/unit six:	Jointly reporting present divisive issues.
Day/unit seven:	Jointly reporting current areas of (possible) cooperation.
Day/unit seven:	Exercise 2020; jointly imagine and report the future (year 2020) of the opposite parties (future problems and future solutions).

As argued also by Manoff (1998), "there is ample evidence that objective, fair, accurate and timely journalism is an effective way to help prevent or manage conflicts." Manoff points out to media's potential to create a common basis in conflict transformation through the activities it undertakes such as building confidence, counteracting misperceptions, identifying the interests underlying the issues, and building a consensus.

Siebert (1998) contemplates on the same issue and points out to similar 'potential' roles of the media in conflict situations such as: acting as a medium of communication between conflicting parties, generating options to violent conflict, reflecting the ordinary person's desire and need for peace, communicating the process of negotiations to the constituencies involved, securing a free flow of accurate and constructive information, playing a watchdog role to help ensure long-term accountability from leaders to the people and providing a forum for on-going dialogue.

Goals of Projects Targeting Journalists

- Journalists and consequently their audience should learn more about the position of the 'other', discuss them in public, and eventually report more about the political and social realities of the 'other';

- Journalists should have more permanent contact with journalists from the other side. Annual joint Workshops, exchanges of news and feature items, internships in the 'others' media, internet communication and a journalists' networks are possible channels for the creation of this type of fora;

- Using skills from conflict analysis theory, journalists must take a more in-depth and analytical reporting approach to the conflict;

- The journalists of the opposing sides must utilise sources outside of the official ones so that alternative concepts, frameworks, perspectives, and interpretations to the military worldview are heard;

- Journalists should avoid presenting certain views or actions as belonging to a whole ethnic group and portray their subjects as individuals, as government representatives, or as a specific interest group (Ozgunes & Terzis, 2000).

(b) Projects Targeting Media Content

As it has already been mentioned in the first step there are

different media and genres formats available to carry out the

media content:

Different Media and Genres Formats Appropriate for a Peace Media Project

- Drama Series (Television & Radio);

- Documentary Series (Television & Radio);

- Magazine Show (Television & Radio);

- Roundtable Talk Show (Television & Radio);

- Peace Song (Television & Radio);

- Inter-Ethnic Team Reporting (Newspapers, Television & Radio);

- Video Dialogue;

- Video Diary;
- Spacebridge;
- Call-in Show (Radio);
- Editorial Exchange (Print);
- Street Theatre;
- Advertising, Public Service Announcements, and;
- Posters and Matchbooks.

The conflict situation and the state of the local mediascape will determine which one (or combination) of those media and genres is more appropriate. The mission of the media content could be an expression by ANC leader Andrew Masondo: "Understand the differences; act on the commonalties." In general, the media content for constructive communication in breaking the cyclical nature prevalent in ethnic conflicts should be guided by three general principles.

First of all, the people of the groups in conflict need to mentally revisit those moments in history when wounds to self-respect occurred. The perception of losses in ethnic conflicts is generally so painful in terms of lives, territory, justice and integrity that time, on its own, does not offer much healing. Healing and reconciliation of past conflicts depend on a process of transactional contrition and forgiveness between the 'historical enemies'. This process proves to be indispensable to the establishment of a new relationship based on mutual acceptance and reasonable trust. Media content that offers joint analysis of the history of the conflicts, and the recognition of injustices and the resulting historic wounds are fundamental parts of this process. Media's potential to reach and influence large numbers of individuals puts it in a position to

become a central actor in this process of reconciliation (Ozgunes & Terzis, 2000).

Second of all, the media content should promote identities other than ethnicity. Once the groups in conflict manage to heal the wounds of their historical differences, they should then attempt to build trans-ethnic identities. Such identities can assist them in finding common ground and developing ties based on common interests. The media again have a potential positive role to play in this process. Media content that reveals different aspects of the societies in conflict, such as individual aspiration and achievements, common environmental problems, business prospects, or disaster relief, can contribute significantly to the creation and strengthening of alternative identities. As Sofos (1997:269) argues, the peaceful coexistence of groups in conflict requires a radical transformation of the public spheres that would enable alternative social identities and solidarities to be negotiated and forged, which in turn would contribute to the flourishing of non-ethnic notions of citizenship. For this to materialise, the positive role of the media proves to be vital.

Finally third, a sense of security and the faith of the people in human kinship must be re-established. Such faith could create a moral system of obligations among strangers that have the capacity to come into force when all other social relations capable of saving a person have been destroyed. The boundaries of our moral universe that have usually been limited to the borders of our tribe, language, religion, or nation need to be extended for the peaceful co-existence of groups in conflict. This extension through the human kinship empathy and networking should be one more of the philosophical lines that drive our efforts for media

programming that promotes the positive potentials for conflict transformation (Ignatieff, pp. 4, 20).

(c) Provision of Media Hardware

Because of the disruption to the media infrastructure and/or the malfunctioning of the media in areas of conflict the provision of media hardware is increasingly been recognised as an important area of humanitarian assistance.

1. Financial and technical support to local print and broadcast media to re-establish themselves: It is usually preferable to support and strengthen existing local media, but this assumes their editorial independence and ability to reach the affected population.

2. The most common strategy, in case that the former conditions do not exist, it is to set up a new radio transmission facility (which usually presupposes the co-operation of the local authorities. Recent technical developments have made for FM broadcasting low budget and simple to use. The total cost of a complete radio broadcasting package (digital recording, editing and transmission within a 30 km radius) can be under $15,000. Special considerations should be taken for: a) a technical survey and mapping the possible geographical sites for establishing low cost FM transmitters, b) considerations should be given to power sources (DFID, p. 37-38).

Other media hardware provisions include:

3. Building radio and TV studios;
4. Distributing radios and batteries or solar radios to the local population;
5. Donating newspaper paper and printing machines;
6. Donating computers and free access to internet;
7. Setting up internet portals for exchange of information and chat rooms for exchanges of opinion;
8. Donating mobile phones when absolutely necessary for the communication of the journalists;
9. Subsidising newspaper supplements;

10. Subsidising the printing of training materials, and;

11. Providing office equipment.

Overall considerations should be taken to accompany hardware with appropriate training, maintain balance of support between opposing parties and avoid to disrupt the local media market with long term subsidies and out-of –context high salaries (DFID, p. 38).

Common Ground's Projects in 'Media and Conflict Transformation'

Angola

The Centre for Common Ground in Angola has been working since 1996 to build a strong constituency for conflict prevention and reconciliation activities. CCG began with dialogue facilitation and consensus building, and training Angolans in conflict resolution skills using various media and materials. In April 1997, the Centre completed the recording of the Angolan Peace Song, with the help of thirty-five of the most popular Angolan musicians from diverse political backgrounds. CCG has also recently produced twelve TV documentaries about Angolans making a difference in their community. Each video is being aired on national television.

BiH

Since the implementation of the Dayton Accords the European Centre for Common Ground has been working to reduce ethnic tensions and to promote a collaborative approach to the development of the country. ECCG started working in Bosnia in 1996, with the production of Resolutions Radio and Radio Zena. These weekly radio programmes tackled topics from politics and economy, to cultural and women's issues, trying to build consensus on contentious problems. Moving on to television programming, ECCG produced a four-part series entitled Mimo Vas, presenting an intimate look at the lives and concerns of ordinary people throughout the country. The series paid particular attention to successful efforts to rebuild the nation's economy, politics, and society.

Burundi

Responding to the rise of hate radio and the need for balanced, reliable information, Studio Ijambo (Kirundi for "wise words") was established as the first independent radio studio in Burundi in 1995. The purpose of the studio is to produce quality programmes through fostering dialogue and co-operation between Hutu and Tutsi journalists. Objectivity and thoroughness have given Studio Ijambo a reputation for credible reporting. In 1998, Studio Ijambo won the first place in the 2nd Annual ECHO (European Community Humanitarian Office) Television and Radio Awards.

Greek-Turkish Co-Operation

As a response to longstanding tensions between Greece and Turkey, ECCG has developed a project, which emphasises work with the media to facilitate cross-cultural understanding and collaboration. This two year-programme includes training in conflict resolution skills for journalists, twinning of university journalism departments, editorial exchanges and joint-media projects (radio and television documentaries), facilitating meetings between media owners/executives.

Liberia

Inspired by the successful experience of Studio Ijambo in Burundi, Talking Drum Studio in Liberia has been producing programmes since 1997, with the overall goal of reducing political and ethnic violence by stressing the themes of peace, reconciliation and reconstruction. In the past two years, the studio has attained nearly 90% listenership among Liberians in and around Monrovia. As another significant proof of its success, in 1998, Talking Drum Studio in Liberia won the second place in the 2nd Annual ECHO TV and Radio Awards.

Fyromacedonia

ECCG has been working in FYROMacedonia since 1994 to transform potentially violent and destabilising conflict among the country's diverse ethno-linguistic groups into inter-ethnic co-operation and collaborative projects in the areas of media, education, and the environment. Through this multi-pronged approach the organisation strives to build a culture of inter-ethnic understanding and peaceful conflict resolution.

Over the years, ECCG carried out numerous media projects including five inter-ethnic reporting projects and the production of a series entitled Path to Agreement, which covered contentious issues from the points of view of all ethnic groups. Presently, ECCG

is producing the children's conflict resolution television series entitled Nashe Maalo (Our Neighbourhood). The show targets 7 to 11-year olds and is aimed at strengthening inter-ethnic co-operation among future generations of Macedonians.

Sierra Leone

ECCG in co-operation with Common Ground Productions will draw upon its experience in Liberia and Burundi to use radio to address the most pressing issues facing Sierra Leoneans. It will also allow for a sub-regional approach to the conflict by building upon the success of its operations in Liberia. The overall goal of this radio project is to reduce violence by stressing the themes of peace, reconciliation and democratisation in the sub-region.

South Africa

Search for Common Ground produced a series of 13 half-hour TV programmes that explore how people and governments manage to resolve conflicts around Africa. In order to widen the impact of the series, it is being broadcast not only in South Africa, but also across the whole African continent.

(d) Holistic/Multi-Level Approach

Finally, efforts to realise the positive potentials of the media must be the part of a concerted action to shift the political culture in which the media operate. Experience in the field of media and conflict transformation proves that efforts limited only to the media often fail to address the 'structural' factors that gave rise to the conflict in the first place. Thus, in our design and implementation, efforts to transform the individual and societal mentalities should be extended to include governmental and non-governmental organisations, political leaders, businesses (including media owners), public opinion leaders, teachers and academics, and marginalized sections of the society. It is through this multi-level approach that a conflict can eventually be transformed since these bodies constitute the umbrella under which media can formulate

the specific content of their programmes and activities (Ozgunes & Terzis, 2000).

Step 3: Post-Project Assessment

This is the last step of programme development that allows the organisation to determine whether their programs are furthering the cause of peace. Assessing the impact of programs can be as simple as documenting informal audience feedback following the radio broadcast or other activity, or creative measures of listener feedback such as a call for opinions delivered to a mobile unit in a central location. But it can also involve structured interviews and/or discussions with members of the target audience, surveys or other forms of elaborate data collection. The point is to identify ways to measure achievement of objectives (how does the audience appropriates the messages?). The benefit of predetermining a methodology for assessment is that it will contribute to more conscientious program development and to the establishment of a system of documentation.

The information generated by program assessment serves multiple purposes. For this type of projects, however, the short-term objectives of assessment are to provide feedback on progress towards program and activity objectives and to feed information forward into future program decisions. This latter purpose aids continuity of programs and the progression towards long-term organisational objectives. It might, for example, uncover the need to reformulate program objectives, change a format, or alter/add a target audience. The documentation of audience feedback should serve as a rich source of ideas for immediate or deferred program development.

The assessment process should also serve as an opportunity to verify whether or not conflict resolution strategies are guiding programming. Producers can ask themselves how their program, for example, reduced stress for the audience, or how it modelled co-operative strategies. Finally, complementary to the outside evaluation programs, mechanisms for in-house evaluation should be established in order to provide continuity and decrease the cost of the assessment.

Conclusion

In our conclusion we would like to refer to certain identified risks or risky assumptions which are the usual causes of peace media project failure:

Risks and Risky Assumptions or the Most Common Reasons that We Fail

- Ability to research information sources of at-risk populations;
- Willingness of credible local and/or international media to disseminate humanitarian and other peace related information;
- Availability of qualified technical assistance;
- Viability of partnerships with local NGOs and CBOs;
- Appreciation by the funders of the value of media-based peace projects;
- Recognition by funders and local leaders that quality, as well as diversity of media output, is critical in rebuilding civil society;
- Existence of rapid broadcasting deployment units in areas of disaster;
- Bureaucratic restrictions/pressure to media personnel (visas, frequencies, taxation, employment restrictions, etc);
- Loss of equipment;
- Change of media ownership during the times of conflict;
- Misunderstanding of the culture and the context of the conflict, as well as the genuine priority needs of the people;

- Pre-project assessment delays the programming;

- Finding reliable local journalists and setting up editorial checking systems in local languages;

- Striking the right balance of editorial guidance: too much editorial control can be resented by local journalists, too little can lead to inaccuracies or boring programmes and publications;

- Difficulties in establishing editorial freedom;

- The message is perceived by the local population in a positive way;

- Verifying the impact with measurable indicators;

- Ability to tackle deep rooted structural inequalities only with media based projects;

- Tough competition results in the failure of non-commercial media, and in a media environment where the only sources of information are the state media;

- Airtime charges are too high for NGOs to access local radio and television with pro-social broadcasts;

- Increasingly fragmented audiences mean greater difficulty in reaching a 'critical mass' through a mass media channel;

- Equal access to the media personnel positions by different gender, social class and ethnic groups;

- Equal media penetration to different gender, social class and ethnic groups;

- Unproductive competition for funding between NGOs;

- Being perceived as an agent (US or Russian or other spy), and;

- Blindly doublicating projects from one region to another without considering the local context.

(DFID, pp. 11-28)

Finally we should also address the question and possible dilemma of implementing media-projects in conflict-ridden areas, whether outside forces are at all, and if so under what conditions, legitimised to intervene in the media landscape of a country/ region in conflict. What gives us the 'right' to be there? Are we the

new 'white angels of mercy'? Are we exporting/imposing our own value-system while implementing the project? Are we funder driven? Can we really make a difference? Are there cases that our intervention will make the situation worst?

The answer to these questions is usually provided first by the pre-project assessment (and it has to be reassessed during the design and implementation of the project, as well as during the final phase of the post-project impact evaluation). Do we have the right means to address the problems of the conflict through the media? What is the stage of the conflict? Can a media intervention, during the negotiations for example, endanger their positive outcome? And finally, and perhaps most importantly, what is the state of national media landscape(s) and communication environment in general and how we involve the local media and grassroots peace movements in the process? Because our ideology should be participatory and in every stage of the project (pre-project assessment, design implementation, and post-project assessment) we should have the participation of the locals as the only compass that legitimises our presence and can successfully produce the positive potentials of media in conflict transformation. Last but not least, what 'justifies' our Peace Media Project in the areas of conflict is the introduction in our Project Design of an 'exit strategy' for handling over the project to local community groups or professional organisations and the implementation of this strategy.

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