

Communication *for* Development: Demonstrating Impact *and* Positioning Institutionally

Report of the 11th United Nations
Inter-Agency Round Table on
Communication for Development

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Table of Contents

Executive Summary	3
Introduction	5
1. Communication for Development in UN Agencies	8
2. Institutionalisation of C4D: Challenges and Course of Action.....	15
3. Monitoring and Evaluation of C4D: Challenges and Course of Action	21
4. Recommendations.....	25
Appendix	29
Acronyms	29
Agenda.....	30
List of Participants	33
Background Papers	36
Overview of UN Inter-Agency Round Tables on Communication for Development.....	37
Fitting the Glass Slipper! Institutionalising Communication for Development within the UN	50
Discussion Paper on the Monitoring and Evaluation of UN-Assisted Communication for Development Programmes	64

Executive Summary

This report presents the proceedings of the 11th Meeting of the UN Inter-Agency Round Table on Communication for Development held in Washington, DC on 11 to 13 March 2009. The meeting was convened to discuss the theme ‘Moving Communication for Development up the International Development Agenda: Demonstrating Impact and Positioning Institutionally’.

The objectives of the meeting were to review the evidence across sectors and agencies about how to assess the impact of Communication for Development (C4D) and present results clearly and concretely; discuss how to position C4D as a self-standing area of work in development, including the optimal institutional arrangements; review the use of communication-based research approaches to enhance project design and assess communication as a sector in client countries; and discuss C4D training and learning programmes designed to strengthen skills and ensure rigorous quality standards.

The meeting offered an opportunity to review current C4D activities across UN agencies and the invited partners, discuss challenges and courses of action to strengthen the institutional position of C4D, and further improve monitoring and evaluation of C4D programmes. Following the Rome consensus, Communication for Development is defined as “a social process based on dialogue using a broad range of tools and methods. It is also about seeking change at different levels, including listening, building trust, sharing knowledge and skills, building policies, debating and learning for sustained and meaningful change. It is not public relations or corporate communication.”¹

Levels of activity, methods of approach, and institutional positioning of C4D vary widely across agencies. While the presence of C4D is well-established in some agencies, it is more recent in others. Despite differences, similar challenges remain to better position C4D as an integral component of aid and development programmes. A common challenge is raising awareness among key stakeholders about the richness of communication and its manifold contributions to programmatic goals.

Participants agreed that decision-makers’ persistent lack of a comprehensive understanding of communication and limited awareness about its added value are key challenges. They agreed to design and implement advocacy actions to demonstrate how C4D could be better integrated into efforts towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals and improving aid and development effectiveness. With these goals in mind, participants discussed the need to produce a series of indicators of communication impact that are valid across agencies and programmes. They agreed that it was important to have compelling impact data to demonstrate the contributions of C4D, and improve the effectiveness of C4D interventions. Actions are needed to make Monitoring &

1 *World Congress on Communication for Development—Lessons, Challenges, and the Way Forward*, The World Bank, 2007.

Evaluation (M&E) an integral part of communication programmes, and to utilize indicators that measure the impact of communication on technical goals.

Based on the diagnosis of the challenges, participants agreed on the following recommendations. Four actions were accepted to strengthen the institutional position of C4D: 1) develop a UN Round Table advocacy strategy for C4D that includes materials documenting good practices in key C4D programmes; 2) develop and implement a common learning framework on C4D in order to enhance the capacity of UN agencies, governments and external actors; 3) conduct advocacy actions to promote C4D at country and regional levels; and 4) coordinate common efforts closely with other inter-agency mechanisms.

Two recommendations were adopted to strengthen M&E in C4D: 1) establish an inter-agency working group to develop a common M&E framework for C4D; and 2) conduct an agency-level review of existing national capacity development activities to assess ways to integrate M&E for C4D.

The recommendations of the UN Round Table reach all Heads of Agencies including the office of the Secretary General, and the United Nations General Assembly in a prominent biennial report that encapsulates good practices and other valuable examples of C4D from within the UN system. This report provides updates on C4D thinking in the UN system, and it also serves as an advocacy tool.

This report is divided into four sections. The first summarizes presentations by UN agencies on their activities in C4D. The second presents key challenges and proposes actions to further institutionalise C4D in the UN system. The third analyzes the challenges and proposed actions to strengthen the M&E component of C4D. The fourth presents the recommendations and proposed next steps.

Introduction

The first UN Inter-Agency Round Table on Communication for Development was convened in 1986. The goal was to offer a mechanism for UN system collaboration and information exchange. In 1994, a report of the Joint Inspection Unit recommended holding regular Round Table meetings to facilitate dialogue across agencies and to improve communication strategies. The report was the basis for resolutions on Communication for Development in the UN system in 1995 and 1996. It also encouraged decision-makers to include C4D as an integral component of programmes and reports.

The meetings of the Round Table focused on various topics including: approaching C4D as an integral component of projects and programmes; ensuring that communities were taught skills and given platforms to express their opinions and demands; prioritizing the evaluation of communication programmes; strengthening capacities in behaviour change communication; forming an international coalition on HIV/AIDS Communication for Development; identifying cross-cutting approaches in Communication for Development (governance or participation, sector-specific communication, and information and communication technologies); integrating C4D into all stages of programme design and development; and promoting C4D at the country level. A detailed history of the Round Table is found in the background paper commissioned for the 11th Meeting, and included in the Appendix of this report.

This report presents the proceedings of the 11th meeting of the Round Table held in March 2009 in Washington, DC. It is divided into four sections. The first summarizes presentations by UN agencies on their activities in C4D. The second presents key challenges and proposes actions to further institutionalise C4D in the UN system. The third analyzes the challenges and proposed actions to strengthen the M&E component of C4D. The fourth presents the recommendations and proposed next steps.

The 11th meeting of the Round Table was hosted by UNDP and the World Bank. The main goals of the meeting were to examine how UN agencies work together, measure the results of C4D initiatives, and identify the best ways to scale up C4D and position it as a specific field in the development agenda. To achieve these goals, the meeting was expected to review:

1. The evidence across sectors and agencies in widely varying contexts about how to assess the impact of C4D and present results clearly and concretely;
2. How to position C4D as a self-standing area of work in development, including optimal institutional arrangements;

3. The use of communication-based research approaches to enhance project design and assess communication as a sector in client countries;
4. C4D training and learning programmes aimed at strengthening skills in this field and ensuring rigorous quality standards.

The two central themes of the meeting were strengthening the institutional position of C4D and M&E. Institutionalising C4D refers to positioning C4D, with a strong focus on the UN System and its partner development agencies and organizations, and promoting its value-added for aid effectiveness within the development sector. Key issues in M&E are: assessing the impact of C4D; applying different monitoring and evaluation methods and indicators; and using assessment to improve performance and advocate for C4D's key role in development.

The following questions were identified for discussion:

INSTITUTIONALISING C4D

- How is C4D integrated into policies, strategies and operations in UN agencies? What is required to enhance the institutionalisation of C4D in the UN System (e.g. in the UNDG, the Chief Executives Board, and some of the high-level committees) and its specialized funds and agencies and other leading development organizations? What are the challenges?
- What is the current structure and institutional position of C4D Units in the UN agencies and other development organizations? How can the value of these units be shown to enhance the effectiveness of aid programmes? What would be the best way to promote and/or enhance the role of such units? What are some approaches that could help establish such units in the institutions that don't yet have them?
- What would be the best way to position C4D as a self-standing area of work and part of the operational sectors? Where and what formal institutional arrangements will help to strengthen the positioning of C4D and its systematic mainstreaming in development policies and practices?

MONITORING & EVALUATION IN C4D

- How can M&E methods and instruments be used to provide more reliable and systematic evidence of the impact of C4D?
- What indicators are currently used by agencies? What kind of indicators: behaviour or social change indicators, process indicators, outcome indicators?

- Have they proven useful? If so, how? If not, why not?
- Is it possible (and desirable) to agree on a few indicators across agencies? (Many other sectors are moving towards universally agreed indicators or already use them.)
- What cases do we have of programmes or projects that have made good use of C4D-related indicators and monitoring mechanisms?
- What challenges do we face in measuring communication impact? How does it enhance effectiveness in development projects and programmes?
- How can we use this evidence in order to position C4D in a way that ensures adequate financial and human support?
- What “good practice” experiences are available for evaluating C4D programmes or projects?
- Are there any good models for writing up case studies of C4D experiences?
- How can the available evidence be used to position C4D to ensure adequate financial and human resource support?

The meeting had several expected outcomes. For the discussion on institutionalising C4D, the meeting was expected to produce a set of recommendations and a proposal for an action plan (including objectives, audiences, proposed activities, required funding, responsibilities, and timeframe) to advance the institutionalisation of C4D in the UN system. For the discussion on M&E, the meeting was expected to produce an inventory of the work being carried out by UN agencies on the impact of C4D (monitoring and evaluation, including the use of indicators), outline a proposal for common indicators and methods for monitoring and evaluating the impact of C4D, and define a common set of actions on how to use the evidence of impact to position C4D more strongly.

The methodology used in the meeting consisted of plenary and small working group sessions to discuss challenges and recommend actions to demonstrate impact and strengthen the institutional position of C4D in UN agencies. Background papers were commissioned to highlight key themes and identify questions to further inform the discussions. Abridged copies of the papers are included in the Appendix while full versions are available online at www.undg.org/c4d.

The following UN agencies and units were represented at the meeting: FAO, ILO, ITC-ILO, UN Chief Executives Board, UN Coordination Unit Rwanda, UNAIDS, UNECA, UNCDF, UNDG, UNDP, UNESCO, UNICEF, UNRWA, WFP, WHO/PAHO, and the World Bank. Other partners who attended included the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Communication Initiative, BBC World Service Trust, SIDA, OECD Development Centre, and the Communication for Social Change Consortium. A list of all participants is included in the Appendix.

1. Communication for Development in UN Agencies

Opening remarks made by representatives of the World Bank, UNDP, and UNESCO emphasized the need for rigorously adopting and broadly using communication, engaging stakeholders, building consensus towards change, and raising the profile of the C4D field in UN agencies. They noted that rapid changes in today's world require bold thinking about how communication contributes to development. Also, it was mentioned that communication needs to be approached as a horizontal, cross-cutting sector 'woven into,' or 'mainstreamed' into development programmes. Particularly given the present global financial and economic crisis, which affects funding and programmatic priorities, some speakers remarked that it is necessary to make development agencies aware of the benefits of C4D, and push for greater integration of C4D in UN programme guidelines. Speakers stressed the importance of several communication issues for sustainable development: participation, transparency, accountability, empowerment, freedom of expression, media development, and behaviour and social change.

During the first plenary session, participants provided an overview of current C4D activities across UN agencies, and discussed common challenges. Prior to the presentations, the discussion focused on general aspects related to the institutional challenges for C4D in UN agencies.

A key challenge for C4D is the prevalence of traditional thinking about external communication, which focuses on the public information needs of institutions rather than on participation and empowerment of communities to contribute to sustainable social change. It is therefore necessary to promote communication as a cross-cutting sector integrated into general operations. This will require a long-term advocacy strategy with activities that engage key stakeholders and inform partners and senior officials of the benefits of C4D for development programmes. It was mentioned that such activities should be oriented both "upstream" and "downstream" in the agencies in order to expand a common understanding of communication and raise the institutional profile of C4D.

The presentations offered a wide-ranging set of examples that illustrate both the multiple applications and the diversity of experiences and roles of C4D across agencies.

UNDP emphasized the need to include C4D in different programmes and to approach it as an integral programmatic component. It also stressed the importance of working towards the inclusion of C4D in CCA/UNDAF guidelines, a key recommendation of the 10th meeting of the Round Table. It explained that information and communication audits have been piloted in five countries (Ghana, Lao PDR, Madagascar, Mozambique, and Nepal). The audits have been used to define a baseline of information and communication opportunities and needs of marginalized groups, and to identify national and local strategies to enhance inclusive participation.

The **World Bank** explained that C4D is institutionalised as a central service. C4D is embedded in projects that require assessment of political risks, and the analysis of the capacity of media, governments and other relevant partners. There is increasing evidence of the value of C4D in project cycles. In terms of M&E, the World Bank uses various methods and tools to evaluate communication impact. The World Bank's Communication for Governance and Accountability Program (CommGAP) produced an evaluation framework as well as other products documenting the impact of communication programmes through a series of case studies.

While recognizing its limited experience in C4D, **UNCDF** presented a recent programme in East Timor. The programme has two components: 1) capacity development to strengthen the capacity of government public relations, strengthen links to the media, and train local authorities; and 2) activities to raise awareness about the decentralization process. The impact of communication activities includes increased awareness of planned reforms; increased media coverage and public identification of decentralization as a national priority; and enhanced political dialogue on government legislation.

FAO identified three stages in the evolution of C4D in the agency. During the first stage, communication was basically conceived in support of rural and agricultural development. Then, there was a shift to capacity building in communication. The third stage started with the merger of the C4D group with research and agricultural extension education in the mid-1990s. As a consequence of the organizational restructuring in 2005, however, C4D lost visibility. Also, C4D programmes suffered a considerable reduction in budget amidst a climate of uncertainty. Currently, C4D is focused on three areas: research, climate change, and capacity building.

ILO stated that although C4D is not yet common currency in the agency, some communication initiatives have been useful in promoting C4D such as champions, partnership, and interagency collaboration in Geneva. It also described the use of the C4D approach in its Small Enterprises Unit to empower the mass media to encourage the growth of small enterprises.

UNECA explained the role of the Regional Coordination Mechanism (RCM) cluster system in institutionalising and mainstreaming C4D in the UN system development framework at the regional level in Africa. Its advocacy role for development of C4D tools to enhance the UN "Delivering as One" initiative for Africa was also highlighted. It showcased the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) Knowledge Management website as an example of C4D interactive regionally. It also summarized the recently held Regional Media Dialogue on NEPAD, organized by the RCM Advocacy and Communication cluster in South Africa in February 2009. The main outcomes of the Regional Media Dialogue on NEPAD were the Vaal Consensus, and key recommendations and action points were agreed on in the following key areas: 1) training and

capacity strengthening for the African media; 2) strengthening the Communication and Advocacy unit at the NEPAD Secretariat; 3) professional support to the media; and 4) provision of financial and technical assistance to the media, to be addressed by the various stakeholders: the media, the African Union Commission/NEPAD Secretariat, UN agencies and the African Development Bank, in the development processes of the continent.

UNESCO described C4D as part of its response to the organization's constitutional commitment to foster the free flow of ideas. A focus on media development and capacity-building initiatives has been applied to recent activities that include "gap analyses" which define entry points for C4D practice in selected 'One UN' pilot countries² (Rwanda, Mozambique, and Pakistan); promotion of diagnostic tools such as the Media Development Indicators being tested in Croatia, Cape Verde, and Mozambique; expert consultations and the creation of tools such as a model journalism education curriculum, and a toolkit for media professionals on education for sustainable development; and enhancement of journalism training institutions (including potential Centres of Excellence in Africa), community media, electronic and broadcast media, particularly in developing and least developed countries.

UNFPA said that it has limited C4D capacity in country offices, and that the work is typically conducted by short-term consultants. It has three strategies: 1) integrate C4D into existing initiatives to address social aspects/drivers (e.g. child marriage, campaign to end fistula); 2) develop online platforms to allow voices from different stakeholders to be heard; and 3) create programmes to use new technologies to reach marginalized groups (e.g. cell phone game on gender-based violence using football as the entry point).

The past two years have witnessed a strong organizational commitment to revitalizing the C4D function in UNICEF. With strong consensus on the definition, scope, key terminology and concepts of C4D, the Headquarters, Regional and Country functions have been streamlined to strengthen technical and operational capacity. C4D has been recognized as a key cross-cutting strategy in UNICEF's Medium-Term Strategic Plan, and at HQ, the C4D function is now strategically located within the Policy and Practice Group. A four-year Strategic Framework and a Capability Development Framework are in place, and C4D is being integrated into key organisational processes and in programme policies and guidelines. To optimize limited capacity and resources, and strengthen the evidence base, UNICEF's C4D function over the next four years will focus on a few flagship areas: currently, accelerated child survival and development, and ending violence against children. Other areas of focus are the development and delivery of C4D training and learning opportunities, including the development of toolkits, and strengthening information and

² 'One UN' is a UN initiative being piloted in a few countries, which consists of adopting a unified UN identity, instead of the traditional individual identity and branding of each UN fund, programme and agency.

knowledge management through establishing web-based platforms and Communities of Practice. In the area of M&E, efforts are underway on the development of indicators and M&E toolkits, and collaboration with the Evaluation Section to develop C4D evaluation criteria and methods that can be integrated into all sectoral programmes. Challenges include translating M&E theory into simple, practical action, especially in resource-poor settings, and strengthening the social change aspects of M&E.

UNIFEM has conducted an Internet-based awareness and advocacy campaign as part of Phase 1 of campaign 2007-08. During the 1st Phase, the campaign collected over 5 million signatures and received support from 30 Heads of State, 170 Ministers from 69 governments, and more than 200 civil society organizations. Also, it has been involved in activities to initiate change at the national level through, for example, the review of a National Action Plan on violence against women in Tanzania. Finally, it is working on an evaluation design focused on effectiveness of process and results in intermediate outcomes of the campaign.

UNRWA described key strategies and challenges in its current work with 4.5 million refugees in Gaza, West Bank, Syria, Lebanon and Jordan. Key strategies include needs assessments of staff and refugees, Field Implementation Plans (FIPs) based on the needs assessment, the integration of outcome M&E strategies in the FIP, donor engagement, and organizational development that includes decentralization, programme cycle management, and communication. The main challenges are the lack of a culture of communication, and the fact that the senior management speaks English and not the local languages.

WFP explained that C4D principles are embedded but are not articulated as such in many of its programmes, especially HIV and nutrition, although a more systematic approach is needed. Other challenges include the lack of M&E for programme communication and the difficulties in institutionalising C4D, particularly at the country levels.

WHO/PAHO explained that despite the low level of institutionalisation of C4D, many communication activities are ongoing in “vertical” programmes. Particular emphasis is given to new subjects including communication and HIV/AIDS risk among specific populations such as sex workers, transgender, and men who have sex with men.

UNAIDS described the current work on National Programme Indicators that takes a communication for behaviour and social change perspective. It confronts two main challenges: build staff capacity, and put C4D on the agenda of country leaders.

At the **ITC-ILO**, C4D mainly takes the form of capacity building, learning, and training. Participants are consulted about development and learning needs in their organizations during the design phase of the Centre's activities. These are intended for professionals with middle or higher-level responsibilities, who mostly come from developing countries. The ITC-ILO facilitates learning through an experiential, participatory approach, backed up by knowledge repositories, learning platforms, on-line forums and learning packages. Participants go on to embed and apply

C4D programmes in partner organizations. Summaries of presentations made at a panel.

The **Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation** explained that it integrates C4D into all its programmes as part of its effort to achieve high impact, sustainable programmes.

In this, it differentiates among outreach, communication, and advocacy activities, using each means as appropriate to achieve specific outcomes or goals with clearly identified audiences. The foundation takes an evidence-based approach. It discussed the Global Libraries initiative in Latvia to illustrate some key lessons in programming C4D: the importance of conducting national and local advocacy with key stakeholders to build wide-spread, sustained commitment and support to programme objectives; the benefit of measuring needs and programme impact, and using that evidence in advocacy for support and long-term programme sustainability; and, the importance of training local stakeholders (e.g. librarians) to be advocates.

The **OECD** Development Centre stated that C4D is a growing market for bilateral donors, but knowledge and know-how is sparse. It also reported findings from a survey of donors. It shows that one third has integrated C4D (only three have a strategy, fewer have M&E), one third are planning to include it, and the remaining third haven't planned to do so. Programmes are the main source of funding for C4D. Two key challenges were mentioned: bridging policy and communication departments, and ensuring that C4D is incorporated at the outset of programmes and projects. It was urged to avoid positioning C4D as a stand-alone component. The challenge is to mainstream communication (including C4D) in managing for results.

The **Swedish International Development Agency** stressed the need to focus on aid effectiveness. It explained various aspects of its current approach in C4D. It described its work on programme-based approaches (PBA) that stress the importance of working with government ministries and supporting public information management. Also, it explained its current work on PBA for civil society and the media, and the diagnostic tools to enable communication and media perspectives.

The **Communication for Social Change Consortium** emphasized the need to discuss how and when to institutionalise M&E in C4D. It stresses the importance of focusing on M&E methods that fit the overall communicative process. It argued for a "systems" approach to M&E which puts the emphasis on indigenous knowledge, involves key constituencies, and measures impact on the system (rather than on the activity). Finally, it underlined the importance of incorporating M&E in all programmes, and the need to enhance knowledge of M&E approaches and methods at all levels.

the competencies they have acquired within their home institutions or jobs, thereby fostering institutional development.

KEY TRENDS AND DISCUSSION

The discussion that ensued focused on three issues: the conceptualization of communication impact and effectiveness, the distinction between communication and programmatic impact, and the fragmentation of resources for measuring impact.

The discussion addressed the different ways in which communication impact is conceptualized. Whereas some agencies talked about impact in terms of development issues, others stressed the “efficient” delivery of C4D programmes. Different expectations in each agency require communication officers to clarify how and where to position C4D in their respective organizations. Some participants stressed the need to put the emphasis on “development effectiveness” instead of “aid effectiveness.” One reason is that “development effectiveness” is related to issues such as voice, accountability, governance, and transparency, which are central to C4D. From this perspective then, it is necessary to state unambiguously what is to be measured, and how local governance is built and strengthened beyond aid and the efficient delivery of specific programmes.

Putting these ideas in action seems more feasible in agencies where communication is identified with issues such as governance, participation, and rights. In agencies where C4D is associated with information dissemination and public relations, however, the challenge is to broaden prevalent understandings of communication. Questions about the impact of communication are inseparable from how C4D is understood across agencies. As long as communication is associated with disseminating information and producing materials, it is unlikely that matters related to C4D impact would be sufficiently inclusive to address participatory approaches.

A second issue of discussion was the problem of the “insular nature” of the communication for development sector. This is expressed, for example, in talking exclusively about “communication results.” To avoid this, it was proposed that communication results need to be articulated in terms of contributions to overall programmatic goals. Thus, the challenge is not only to demonstrate the impact of C4D on communication issues to various audiences, but also to provide evidence about how it helps to achieve institutional objectives.

A third issue was that the lack of resources and fragmentation of C4D contribute to the duplication of efforts. To address this challenge, it was proposed that the Round Table serve as a “benchmark” forum for discussing C4D impact, offer opportunities to take stock on progress, and recommend strategic directions/actions to mainstream C4D.

These three points re-emerged in subsequent discussions during the meeting in relation to “what” and “how” to measure communication impact and appropriate strategies to strengthen the institutional position of C4D.

The presentations illustrated the persistence of various understandings and functions of “communication” across agencies. Communication is associated with participation, dissemination of materials, crisis management, public relations, behaviour and social change, training and capacity strengthening, interpersonal and media processes, advocacy and social mobilization, and information technologies. Despite the existence of a broad consensus within the Round Table about “what is C4D”, communication remains associated with a diversity of tasks. It seems unlikely that the boundaries of the field would be settled permanently, and that a common approach to communication would be applied across all agencies. This situation demonstrates not only the diversity with which the field of communication can meet various institutional needs. It also shows the expansion of the understanding of communication in UN agencies. Certainly, progress has been uneven across agencies, given unique histories and institutional configurations. The trend, however, is positive. C4D has gradually moved from a narrow conception of communication as information dissemination and material production to gaining recognition as a field linked to matters of governance, participation, rights, and behaviour and social change.

Given these conditions, advocacy for strengthening the institutional position of C4D needs a common yet flexible strategy. It is important both to acknowledge similar challenges to mainstreaming communication as an integral component of development programmes, and to remain sensitive to varying expectations and cultures across agencies. While general evidence about the impact of communication is indispensable, it is also important to have both strategies and evidence that are specific to the professional communities in each agency. Arguments for strengthening C4D need to recognize two key issues. First, agencies have mandates across development issues (e.g. poverty-reduction, health, economic growth, freedom of expression, democratic governance). Thus, impact data and arguments that may be effective for one agency may not necessarily be effective for another. Second, it is necessary to recognize that institutional decision-makers, the primary audience for advocacy efforts, have different professional backgrounds. Understanding their perceptions and professional cultures is fundamental for effective advocacy for C4D.

Common advocacy efforts also need to take into consideration the difficulty of drawing generalizations about the institutional position of C4D in UN agencies. The historical trajectory and current state of communication programmes are vastly different. The presentations portrayed a range of programmatic experiences, as shown by the kind of tasks assigned to communication units, institutional views and awareness about communication, and resources for staff and activities at headquarters, regional, and country offices. Also, the process of institutionalisation has not been

linear across agencies. From structural reorganization to personnel changes, various factors have affected the institutional position of C4D since the Round Table was established. The fact that the evolution of C4D has experienced advances and setbacks in some agencies suggests the need for continuous advocacy that makes strategic use of opportunities and changing dynamics.

Finally, the availability of human resources for conducting advocacy for C4D is uneven across agencies. In some agencies, there is a critical mass of full-time staff; in others, the number is limited as most communication tasks are performed by short-term consultants. Consequently, the capacity to conduct activities to strengthen the institutional position of communication is different. Disparate capacity across agencies and institutional levels (headquarters, regional, and local) makes it necessary to consider who implements advocacy strategies and how.

2. Institutionalisation of C4D: Challenges and course of action

As defined in the background paper written by Warren Feek and Chris Morry of the Communication Initiative, institutionalisation refers to ‘UN agency understanding, acceptance, and implementation of C4D [or its equivalents] as a central, critical, and core element of their policy frameworks and programming strategies’. This means that C4D is expected to be properly and formally acknowledged within the organizational structure of the agency.

The plenary session started with the presentation of Feek and Morry’s paper, which focussed on findings from a survey conducted with UN staff about the institutional position of C4D (the paper is included in the Appendix).

Key findings of the survey are the following:

“How is C4D integrated into the policies, strategies, and operations of UN agencies?”

- “Not at all” 10%
- “Somewhat integrated” 59%
- “Well integrated” 24%
- “Fully integrated” 7%

“How does institutionalisation of C4D take place in agencies?”

- “At discretion of project managers” 45.5%
- “Mandated by formal policy” 29%
- “A core element of organizational reviews” 27.5%
- “Suggested by good practice note” 25.5%
- “Through asset of program planning criteria” 18%
- “No institutionalisation” 18%
- “As recommended by budget line item” 12.5%

“What challenges complicate efforts to centralize C4D?”

- “Absence of clear comprehension of C4D” 67%
- “Lack of understanding of added value” 61%
- “Few managers with C4D backgrounds” 46%
- “Agency structure biased to other professions” 42%
- “Insufficient advocacy by C4D staff” 39.5%
- “Absence of research base for C4D effectiveness” 39%
- “No natural structural home within agency” 23%
- “C4D process threatens others in agency” 11%
- “Other” 11%

Survey respondents suggested several ways to further institutionalise C4D: select and use the most compelling impact data; coordinate advocacy activities with senior management; enhance training and skills development, select different strategies given that “not one size fits all;” build upon existing successes and “pockets of excellence;” and integrate C4D across all levels of UN agencies.

Based on these findings, several recommendations were offered. The paper suggested developing collective actions among UN agencies, and setting up a leadership team to head advocacy actions. The main goal of advocacy should be to provide an understanding of the “added value” of C4D for development programmes through identifying, engaging, and convincing 50 specific, named, key UN decision makers. It was also recommended to gather the “ten most compelling data” that

demonstrate the effectiveness and added value of communication for development action relative to poverty reduction and other MDGs.

Three key activities were suggested to raise awareness about the contributions of C4D and obtain institutional support: 1) conduct training by identifying 20 learning institutions that can provide C4D and learning programmes for UN staff; conduct recruitment through developing and negotiating both a communication for development job description template and a model job advert for a C4D job with the Human Resource Departments in UN agencies; and establish, support, and actively facilitate a knowledge sharing and social networking platform for UN agency staff working in or interested in C4D.

The findings and recommendations were addressed in small group discussions. Two groups were asked to discuss challenges and courses of action separately and then collectively to produce a common list. At a presentation during a plenary session, the following challenges for institutionalising C4D were identified: inconsistent practice of C4D within the UN system (impacts leadership and allocation of resources, both human and financial); competing institutional priorities and approaches (normative values); and lack of awareness, understanding and clarity across all levels (role, function, value).

Several additional points were addressed during the discussion:

It was mentioned that in order to identify appropriate courses of action, it is necessary to prioritize challenges. It is not obvious how the challenges are linked to each other. For example, does the lack of awareness result in inconsistent practices and competing priorities?

The existence of different ways of defining and practicing C4D as well as different mandates across agencies was extensively discussed. Because agencies don't have identical mandates, C4D is expected to achieve different goals. Thus, strategic actions to institutionalise C4D may not be identical. In response to concerns about "false dichotomies" in C4D (e.g. cross-cutting vs. separate programme, theory vs. practice, rights vs. behaviours), it was suggested that it is necessary to identify a common core of C4D, a "middle ground" that is applicable across agencies. It was mentioned that continuous clarification may be unavoidable given that, although a core group of institutions and individuals has been involved in the Round Table for some time, new institutions continue to join. Also, it is not unusual that many agencies practice C4D even though it is not called "C4D."

Solid M&E data is a key to positioning C4D more strongly in each agency. Defining issues of peer-reviewed evidence and standards in C4D is crucial to bolster the legitimacy of C4D, particularly in the eyes of target audiences.

In terms of strategic issues to institutionalise C4D, several ideas were proposed. It was suggested to produce a toolkit to enhance how C4D is understood and implemented in each agency. Also, it was mentioned that it is vital to understand target audiences (e.g. policy makers) in order to design effective strategies to institutionalise C4D. It is necessary to know their language, the issues they deal with, and their thinking about communication (even if they don't call it C4D). Finally, it was observed that it is important to identify opportunities to mainstream C4D within organizations, as well as champions in the system.

Small working groups produced several ideas for discussion. One point was the development of a UN Round Table advocacy strategy for C4D, and the production of two materials: a document that reviews good practices in key C4D programmes (e.g. Rwanda, Pakistan), and a C4D booklet. Another set of suggestions dealt with ways to strengthen communication capacity. One proposal was to provide a common learning framework on C4D that could be used to enhance capacities of the UN, governments, and external actors. It was also suggested to develop an interagency knowledge management platform on C4D. A final set of proposals referred to the need to articulate and promote C4D at country and regional levels, and to coordinate more closely with other inter-agency mechanisms, including UNDG.

During the plenary discussion, strong support was voiced for the following actions:

First, include C4D in UNDAF guidelines that are currently being prepared by over 90 country offices. The discussion focussed on how to incorporate C4D in the guidelines. It was suggested that considering the substantial number of projects in the pipeline, it is necessary to identify those that have C4D components, select champions among gatekeepers, and plan ways to reach gatekeepers through advocacy and specific informational products (e.g. booklet). It was advised to ensure that C4D issues are incorporated in the revision of UNDAF guidelines. Also, it was suggested to promote C4D in policy guidelines within UN agencies. One proposal was to produce the previously mentioned toolkit to enhance knowledge among key UN staff about how C4D fits within specific organizations and programmes. Because people tend to look at a given issue through the lens of their own programme and search for specific results, it would be important to provide practical tools to educate staff about how C4D contributes to their priorities. In this way, the above mentioned toolkit could enhance institutional recognition and support.

Second, strengthen capacity through learning frameworks, toolkits, and communities of practice. Likewise, it is important to demonstrate success at the country level and involve country staff. On this issue, it is crucial that focal points have access to resident coordinators not only to get country participation, but also to understand how C4D issues are manifested on the ground.

Third, identify activities that feed into the process, such as documenting experiences at the country level, developing a website, and producing a brochure. The goal is to prepare materials that could be used in activities to raise knowledge and awareness about C4D among key decision makers in the UN system. It was recommended that participants seek support from External Communication offices in their respective agencies to conduct these activities.

Fourth, design and implement training activities on C4D. It was mentioned that the training should feature key case studies that document successful programmes. It was also suggested to find ways to integrate C4D components in existing workshops across the UN system.

Fifth, document good practices in selected C4D programmes. It was also proposed that UNESCO should lead this activity. The suggestion was to take a C4D approach to analyze the Pakistan and Rwanda cases, and identify points of entry.

Also, the discussion touched on follow-up, logistical issues to ensure that the momentum continues after the Washington meeting. It was proposed to identify focal points in each agency to organize activities.

Participants agreed on the need to frame institutionalisation in strategic and systematic ways. While it is important to both produce documents on the impact of C4D and implement capacity strengthening activities, these actions need to be integrated in a common advocacy strategy. Advocacy requires the definition of key audiences, appropriate actions, and clear objectives.

It was agreed to move forward with two products as part of a wider inter-institutional strategy that needs to be developed:

The **first product** is a C4D booklet. It was agreed that UNDP will take a lead role. UNICEF, UNESCO, and ILO agreed to contribute; the WB could support this initiative, too. Decisions remain pending about whom, how, and when to contract to produce the booklet. It was also proposed to prepare a fifteen-minute, “off-the-shelf” presentation that describes the Round Table work. This presentation will be useful for advocacy activities. It was urged to produce the booklet before the end of 2009.

The **second product** is the organization of training modules and courses as part of capacity building activities in C4D. UNICEF will lead the development of the training proposal. FAO and ILO are willing to produce and contribute to the modules. UNESCO agreed to be part of the process. UNDP Geneva office will also participate in producing this product. It was agreed that the Round Table should aim to offer a training course during the Spring/Summer 2010.

TRAINING

It was suggested that the working paper drafted jointly by ILO, UNDP, UNICEF, and the WB on Inter-Agency training should be used as the basis for developing training activities. This document was prepared as input for the 11th Round Table and was distributed at the meeting. It outlines the basic framework for C4D, and identifies two basic outputs: an agreement on initial communication framework for training on C4D; and a specific proposal to hold a training workshop for C4D specialists at the International Training Centre of the ILO. It also stresses the fact that the proposed training must be tailored to meet the needs and expectations of three different audiences: UN representatives, policy makers, senior managers; programme officers and country managers; and communication managers, officers and practitioners.

The overall training approach discussed during the latest UN Round Table envisioned a shared learning framework (with agreed common core competencies) and a sort of three-pronged action-plan: 1) an inter-agency ‘stand-alone’ training, aimed at three of the above indicated audiences (namely communication managers, practitioners and programme officers) to take place at the International Training Centre in Turin; 2) a component from existing training programmes, directed to UN Senior Management and UN Resident Representatives, to be included in current orientation and training programmes run by UNSSC; and 3) a number of individualized training courses that, based on the shared learning framework, would be customized and implemented individually by various UN agencies.

In terms of the content, the discussion focused on the first type—namely, the training course on communication for development, envisioned to last approximately five days. It was proposed that the training should consist of a modular structure that features materials and exercises to be delivered in different formats and venues. The design of the content should draw from a review of available courses and materials. Particular emphasis should be given to case studies that tap into a wealth of existing materials across agencies. It was also mentioned that the curriculum should have clear expected outcomes/results. Principles of adult learning theory need to be central to the pedagogical approach. The course should also have goals and a timeframe that are realistic. It was also suggested that training should have an “experiential” approach that could contribute also to enhance not only the skills but the attitudes needed to adopt C4D effectively. Ideally, the training should be designed for a mix of UN and non-UN staff at the national level. Finally, it was suggested that the proposal should address organizational and logistical aspects of the implementation of the training.

Regarding possible venues and implementation formats, it was suggested to hold the pilot course at the ITC-ILO Centre in Turin. The subsequent pilot, aimed at UN senior management and UN Representatives, should be piloted on a similar basis at the UN system staff college in Turin, Italy.

It was also highlighted that the design of these training programmes should have other venues in mind, too. Rough estimated costs for a five-day training in Turin were discussed. Also, it was mentioned that the cost of the training should not be substantial, and that it will basically need to cover the cost of human resources and living expenses of participants.

The next steps for the C4D course at the International Training Centre are to define the methodological learning approach, develop core content, define costs and a business plan, and determine agenda and schedule. The first training is expected to take place in March 2010. Regarding the second pilot to be held at the UNSSC, contacts have already started and should be followed-up by relevant focal points.

3. Monitoring and evaluation of C4D: Challenges and course of action

The discussion about challenges and course of action related to M&E of C4D took place in plenary and small group discussions. It was based on a background paper written by Andrew Puddephatt and colleagues from Global Partners (an abridged version is included in the Appendix, and a full version is available online at <http://www.undg.org/c4d>).

During the plenary session, Puddephatt presented an overview of the current state of M&E in C4D and identified several challenges. The first challenge is the unsystematic and sporadic use of M&E. Only a limited number of communication interventions are adequately monitored and evaluated. Second, communication officials are uncertain about appropriate approaches and methods. A broad spectrum of quantitative and qualitative methods and models is generally used. This is the result of the conventional division in “institutional silos” across agencies, and the existence of different conceptions of communication. It was mentioned that a mix of quantitative and qualitative measurements is needed. Third, there are various technical challenges. It is often difficult to attribute impact to communication activities given that they are often implemented together with multiple interventions.

Therefore, it is necessary to disaggregate the causal impact of many factors, including communication. Also, communication activities are often given tight timeframes, which lead to short-term, high-profile results but with little sustainable change. The prevalence of “boutique” projects makes it difficult to show the impact of communication at scale. Fourth, M&E confronts organizational challenges such as the split between policy centre and operational hub, limited resources, different expectations about the focus, time frame and methods of M&E among donors.

Puddephatt also discussed several “good practices” for ensuring high-quality M&E in C4D. Comparing “intervention” and “control” groups that didn’t receive communication interventions is a possibility to measure impact, although this strategy has cost and ethical implications. Producing baseline studies and broad sets of indicators allows for producing pre- and post-intervention results. Another suggestion is to align results with donors and funding bodies. This requires discussing expectations about impact with donors and informing them about the range of communication interventions and indicators. Other “good practices” are the use of indicators that are drawn up locally and are specific to the programme, and the availability of toolkits that provide simple, quantitative and qualitative methods. Finally, the presentation stressed the need to make M&E an integral part of every C4D initiative.

The plenary discussion tackled various issues. Participants raised a number of questions about challenges, and discussed possible solutions for measuring the impact of C4D: Is it possible to have a common set of indicators? How much information and data is it necessary to provide to others to demonstrate that “C4D works”? What is the problem to be solved? Who sets the expectations about C4D?

A central theme was the need for solid indicators to convince partners in development organizations that C4D adds value to achieve the MDGs. This point led to a discussion about whether partners could produce a common set of indicators that would be used across agencies. Some participants said that it is possible, albeit challenging, to produce such indicators through a broad, inter-agency consultative process. The “language of indicators” can be confusing in part due to different organizational cultures across agencies. Also, agencies typically demand different types of indicators. While this issue was not settled, there was interest in the idea of striving to develop common C4D indicators.

The indicators and results which are produced are contingent on how communication is defined. Some participants made a strong argument for utilizing indicators of empowerment and governance. Others stressed the need to produce indicators that are useful for broader initiatives rather than only communication activities. It was also observed that indicators demonstrating long-term impact of C4D are still necessary.

Participants agreed that organizational challenges undermine M&E. Challenges include the incorporation of C4D when projects have already started, the existence of unrealistic expectations about the timeframe given to measure impact, and the separation between communication and M&E staff.

These points were taken up in small group discussions. Two groups were tasked to discuss these issues separately and, then, came together to identify a common set of challenges for M&E of C4D. Three key challenges were identified: the lack of clarity between programmatic impact indicators and communication indicators; the lack of awareness, understanding and capacity of M&E in C4D; and bureaucratic expectations related to funding, programme and reporting cycles.

A rich plenary discussion followed the presentation of the challenges for M&E. The discussion highlighted several points.

There was general agreement that the main problem is not the lack of indicators. In fact, several agencies regularly use various indicators in C4D work. For example, the World Bank uses 23 indicators, UNESCO uses detailed media indicators, and UNAIDS is currently developing indicators about communication and AIDS prevention. Some participants cautioned about the problems of “obsessing” about indicators while ignoring other challenges for M&E. That is, one could have solid indicators but still face obstacles to make a convincing argument demonstrating the impact of C4D.

One challenge is to develop a common set of indicators that could be used across agencies. It was suggested that defining simple and robust, “common” and “satellite” indicators would be useful. Also, it was proposed to examine both successful C4D experiences and current efforts by other organizations and UN agencies to produce common indicators. The need was mentioned to address the question “whose reality counts?” originally posed by Robert Chambers, a leading theorist of participatory development, to produce common indicators. What communities may define as “development” would not necessarily fit institutional criteria about impact. While the idea of developing common indicators received general support, some participants raised questions about how it would be feasible given that agencies have different mandates and approaches. Also, others warned about producing “too many” indicators given the impossibility of fitting them all in one programme.

Another challenge is the difficulty of attributing impact to communication in an unequivocal manner. Because communication is rarely the only intervention in a given programme, it is hard to establish a straightforward causal relation between communication interventions and specific results. To address this issue, it was suggested that a “control group” methodology could be used to determine impact and make evidence-based arguments. It was also mentioned that it is necessary to address the confusion between communication and technical indicators, that is, indicators used in communication interventions are not identical to what technical programmes are mainly interested in measuring or consider key evidence of impact. Because of this, then, it is necessary to use indicators that are articulated with programmatic goals and fit institutional expectations.

Subsequently, the plenary sessions discussed ideas for strengthening M&E in C4D. One suggestion was to set up an inter-agency working group to develop a common M&E framework for C4D by the end of 2010. This work could consist of four steps: agencies agree on a spectrum of approaches, compile and synthesize sets of indicators and methodologies, compile and synthesize drafts of existing guidelines and tools, and document existing M&E framework. Another suggestion was to focus on strengthening country and regional capacity in M&E.

Both suggestions were positively received. In terms of the type of indicators, it was stressed that indicators need to represent both quantitative and qualitative approaches. One participant noted that “measure what we treasure” should be a guiding principle in the development of common indicators. It was also suggested to select indicators that measure both behavioural results as well as human rights/governance issues given that they are widely used across agencies. Likewise, equal weight should be given to “outcome” and “process” indicators, particularly given, as one participant put it, that the majority of indicators are generally “outcome” indicators. Several participants endorsed the idea that there is no ideological gap underpinning the use of various indicators and methodologies; one participant stated that “we speak the same language.” This discussion reiterated the willingness of participants to produce indicators that reflect the diversity of applications of C4D.

It was suggested that a list of indicators should be compiled and synthesized, and be part of a shared and practical toolkit. This work should strive for a balance that reflects several constituencies in C4D, and “amalgamate” a variety of M&E indicators, which could eventually be adapted to particular circumstances.

On the issue of M&E capacity, it was proposed to work towards strengthening both country and regional capacity in M&E. Also, it was urged to continue ongoing work at both country and regional levels, and to take advantage of existing capacity-building activities.

In terms of next steps, Puddephatt’s paper will be used to identify future actions. It was also suggested to plan a workshop with a core group of people to elaborate a typology of indicators and define tentative dates. Also, it was proposed to introduce M&E in C4D at the annual meeting of the UN evaluation working group, and to give presentations to evaluation units. It was also proposed that each agency review ways to integrate M&E for C4D into their existing capacity development activities.

At the end of the discussion it was agreed that within 3 months after the Round Table meeting participants will pull together information about ongoing M&E activities in their agencies, and suggest ways to take the process forward. Also, it was proposed that participants talk to M&E staff

in their agencies to ask for their support in the process. It was also suggested that the common M&E framework should be completed by August 2010, in time for the 12th Round Table. This activity will be discussed at the follow-up meeting to the 11th Round Table.

4. Recommendations

The last day of the meeting was limited to the Focal Points of UN agencies. The main goals were to identify recommendations, and make institutional commitments for follow-up activities.

Participants observed that the discussions during the 11th meeting of the Round Table were more sharply focused and strategic than in the past. The willingness to go beyond conventional “dichotomies” in the understanding of C4D (e.g. rights or behaviour, upstream or downstream, theory or practice) that were the subject of much debate in past meetings, and the tenor of the discussion are signs of the growing maturity of the Round Table. Likewise, strong interest among participants to move forward with concrete actions suggests important advances. The existence of Focal Points and awareness about several C4D issues among participants are also positive signs.

Several ideas were discussed for strengthening the institutional position of C4D. Participants suggested the following: identify fifty key people in UN agencies who need to know the contributions of C4D; collaborate with “champions” who see C4D as a priority in development programmes; convene meetings with media stakeholders; and produce a brief document outlining C4D in the UN system. Strong support was voiced to raise demand for C4D in countries. One suggestion, which was enthusiastically supported, was to produce a document focussed on successful country-level experiences in C4D. This document could be used in briefings with resident coordinators, and discussions about concrete and pragmatic ideas to “embed” communication in ongoing and future programmes.

The need was discussed to strengthen C4D capacity at the government level through identifying existing human resources and training opportunities. On this issue, it was observed that the emphasis should be placed not only on government capacity, given that some of the most effective, proven strategies have included working with civil society organizations. Finally, several participants emphasized the need to position C4D within current discussions and efforts across UN agencies to improve development effectiveness, and the need to articulate communication impact with concrete actions towards the MDGs.

The establishment of a website was recognized as a step forward towards the consolidation of the work of the Round Table. The new site (www.undg.org/c4d) hosted by UNDG is intended to serve

as a C4D platform for UN agencies. Partners were asked to send content for the website to UNDG. Quality control of the information is the responsibility of each agency that decides to submit documents for electronic distribution.

UNICEF has maintained its pledge to host and organize the 12th meeting of the Round Table and will confirm its position to UNESCO by June 2009. ILO motioned a move to co-host the event and will confirm around the same period. UNICEF will discuss internally a possible theme of the meeting, and then will communicate with partners. Participants suggested the need to ensure strong country representation at the next meeting, and to hold it in 'the field.'

It was agreed that UNESCO will dispatch correspondence to all UN system organizations requesting focal points and describing the inputs required by focal points as soon as the co-hosts provide their confirmation. UNESCO informed the Round Table that the host is responsible for: meeting the cost of the Round Table; raising additional funding or in-kind contributions; assuring field level participation (and developing country participants when the meeting is open to large participation of civil society, academia and others); coordinating decisions pertaining to the Round Table date, venue and agenda; printing and distributing the Round Table recommendations and report; and following through the implementation of recommendations and decisions in collaboration with the preceding hosts and organizers.

In terms of procedures for the organization of the 12th meeting, it was agreed that in order to ensure organizational continuity, there will be a 'troika' mechanism integrated by UNESCO (as the 'seat' of the Round Table), WB/UNDP (as hosts of the 11th meeting), and UNICEF/ILO (as proposed hosts of the 12th meeting). Also, it was suggested that the Focal Points will discuss where and when the 'interim' meeting will be held, as well as the terms of reference. It was requested that each agency designate one Focal Point and back-up staff to ensure continuous inter-agency communication. Additionally, it was agreed that official invitations for the next meeting will be sent to the Heads of Agency whom will be asked to designate and/or confirm the Focal Points.

The 11th meeting of the UN Round Table on C4D concluded with participants agreeing on the following recommendations and identifying roles and responsibilities for different agencies:

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POSITIONING INSTITUTIONALLY

1. Develop a UN Round Table advocacy strategy for C4D (i.e. packaging the product) including:
 - 1a. Document good practices in key C4D programmes (e.g. Rwanda, Pakistan and others) and distribute to key actors effectively, by the end of 2009; this effort will be led by UNESCO, in collaboration with FAO, UNDP, UNFPA, and UNICEF.
 - 1b. Produce the UN C4D booklet by the end of 2009. UNDP will lead this effort in collaboration with the World Bank, UNESCO, ILO, FAO, and WHO/PAHO.
2. Provide a common learning and knowledge framework on C4D that is able to enhance UN capacities and those of government and external actors. Proposal to be submitted to UN system organizations by the end of 2010. The learning and capacity-building effort will be led by UNICEF, ITC-ILO, and the World Bank. UNDP and FAO agreed to collaborate.
 - 2a. Develop an interagency Knowledge Management platform on C4D; UNDP will be the lead organization for this activity.
3. Articulate and promote C4D at country and regional levels. The following agencies agreed to participate in this activity: UNESCO, the World Bank, UNFPA, UNECA, WHO/PAHO, and UNCDF.
4. Promote C4D through regional and other Inter-agency mechanisms including Regional Coordinating Mechanism, UNDG, UNCG, UNGIS, UNEG and platforms such as WebDev. All agencies will contribute to this effort; the result will be reported at 12th RT.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR STRENGTHENING M&E IN C4D

1. By the end of 2010, an inter-agency working group to develop a common M&E framework for C4D; UNDP will lead this effort in collaboration with ILO, FAO, UNESCO, UNICEF, the World Bank, and WHO/PAHO. Four steps were indicated:
 - 1a. Agreed spectrum of approaches across all agencies
 - 1b. Compile and synthesize sets of indicators and methodologies
 - 1c. Compile and synthesize drafts of existing guidelines and tools
 - 1d. Document existing M&E framework

2. Each agency will review how M&E for C4D could be integrated into their existing national capacity development activities and other capacity-building initiatives.

These recommendations reflect unprecedented, broad agreement and consensus across UN agencies during various discussions about next steps to further strengthen the institutional position of Communication for Development.

Appendix

ACRONYMS

C4D	Communication for Development
CCA	Common Country Assessment
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
ILO	International Labour Organization
ITC-ILO	International Training Centre-International Labour Organization
JIU	Joint Inspection Unit for the United Nations
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
RCM	Regional Coordination Mechanism
SIDA	Swedish International Development Agency
UN	United Nations
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV and AIDS
UNCG	United Nations Communication Group
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistant Framework
UNDG	United Nations Development Group
UNDOCO	United Nations Development Operations Coordination Office
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commissions for Africa
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNGIS	United Nations Group on the Information Society
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
UNFPA	United National Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency
UNWFP	United Nations World Food Programme
WB	World Bank
WHO/PAHO	World Health Organization/Pan American Health Organization

AGENDA**WEDNESDAY, MARCH 11**

8.30 – 9.00	Sign in & Breakfast
Session one 9.00 – 9.45	Opening Session <i>Chair: Paul Mitchell, World Bank</i> Welcoming Remarks — Peter Stephens, Director, Operational Communication – The World Bank — Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi, Director, Democratic Governance, UNDP — Suzanne Bilello, Senior Public Information and Liaison Officer, UNESCO Office in New York
Session two 9.45 – 10.30	Review of Progress since the Xth Roundtable <i>Chair: Paul Mitchell, World Bank</i> — Venus Jennings, Programme Specialist, Media Capacity Building Section, Communication Development Division, UNESCO — Q&A
10.30 – 10.45	Coffee break
Session three 10.45 – 12.00	C4D in UN Agencies <i>Chair: Adam Rogers, UNDP</i> Presentation of C4D work in each agency, focusing on best practice in institutionalisation and M&E
Session four 12.00 – 1.00	M&E and Institutionalisation in Partner Agencies <i>Chair: Riccardo del Castello, FAO</i> Brief presentation by invited guests from partner agencies: — Kristin Olson, Advisor on Communication and Media for Development, Department for Methodologies and Effectiveness, SIDA — Steffen Beitz, Coordinator, Informal Network of DAC Development Communicators, OECD Development Centre — Denise Gray-Felder, President/CEO, Communication for Social Change Consortium — Amina Tirana, Policy & Advocacy Officer, Global Development Policy & Advocacy Department, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation Round Table Discussion
1.00 – 2.30	Lunch
Session five 2.30 – 3.00	Introduction to Theme 1: Monitoring and Evaluation <i>Chair: Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi</i> Presentation of background paper on Monitoring & Evaluation (Andrew Puddephatt, Global Partners) Q&A

Session six **Introduction to Theme 2: Institutionalising C4D**
 3.00 – 3.30 *Chair: Paul Mitchell, World Bank*
 Presentation of background paper on Institutionalising C4D (Warren Feek, The Comm. Initiative)
 Q&A

3.30 – 3.45 **Coffee break**

<p>Session seven Two Working Groups: Monitoring & Evaluation 3.50 – 5.20 <i>Facilitators: UNDP, UNICEF</i> Situation analysis and key challenges</p>	<p>Two Working Groups: Institutionalising C4D <i>Facilitators: World Bank, UNESCO</i> Situation analysis and key challenges</p>
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<p>Session eight One Working Group: Monitoring & Evaluation 5.20 – 5.50 <i>Facilitators: UNDP, UNICEF</i> Review of and agreement on key challenges for presentation on 2nd day</p>	<p>One Working Group: Institutionalising C4D <i>Facilitators: World Bank, UNESCO</i> Review of and agreement on key challenges for presentation on 2nd day</p>
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6:00 – 8:00 **COCKTAIL RECEPTION**

THURSDAY, MARCH 12

8.30 – 9.00 **Sign in & Breakfast**

Session one **Brief review of previous day and agenda for the 2nd day**
 9.00 – 9.15 *Chair: Paul Mitchell, World Bank; Adam Rogers, UNDP*

Session two **Plenary session: Presentation of Working Group on M&E**
 9.15 – 9.45 *Chair: UNDP, UNICEF*
 Presentation of the key issues and challenges
 Group discussion

Session three **Plenary session: Presentation of Working Group
on Institutionalising C4D**
 9.45 – 10.15 *Chair: World Bank, UNESCO*
 Presentation of the key issues and challenges
 Group discussion

10.15 – 10.30 **Coffee Break**

<p>Session four One Working Group: Monitoring & Evaluation 10.30 – 12.00 <i>Facilitators: UNDP, UNICEF</i> Group discussion on Recommendations Drafting of Recommendations/ Next steps</p>	<p>One Working Group: Institutionalising C4D <i>Facilitators: World Bank, UNESCO</i> Group discussion on Recommendations Drafting of Recommendations/ Next steps</p>
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12.00 – 1.30 **Lunch**

Session five Plenary session: Presentations by Working Groups

1.30 – 3.00

Chair: Sina Odugbemi, World Bank

Presentation of recommendations and next steps on Monitoring & Evaluation

Presentation of recommendations and next steps on Institutionalising C4D

Reflections, comments and statements of interest by each participating agency on how to advance/promote C4D

Session six Conclusions

3:00 – 3:30

Chair: Sina Odugbemi, World Bank

— Bjoern Foerde, Director, Oslo Governance Centre, UNDP

— Paul Mitchell, Manager, Development Communication Division, World Bank

Closing Remarks

— Venus Jennings, Programme Specialist, Media Capacity Building Section, Communication Development Division, UNESCO

— — — CLOSE OF ROUNDTABLE — — —

The following sessions are reserved for UN focal points only.

Session seven Learning and Capacity Building in C4D

4:00 – 5:30

Chair: Rina Gill, UNICEF; Co-chairs: Adam Rogers, UNDP; Paolo Mefalopulos, WB

Presentation: History and Experiences of Training and Capacity Building on C4D

— Prof. Jan Servaes, University of Massachusetts — Amherst

Presentation of training proposal

— Rina Gill, UNICEF; Paolo Mefalopulos, World Bank; Adam Rogers, UNDP

Discussion of the way forward

FRIDAY, MARCH 13

8.30 – 9.00

Sign in & Breakfast**Session one**

9.00 – 10.00

Conclusions and Way Forward: Monitoring & Evaluation*Chair: Bjoern Foerde, UNDP*

Review of conclusions and follow-up action plan

Discussion

Session two

10.00 – 11.00

Conclusions and Way Forward: Institutionalising C4D*Chair: Paul Mitchell, World Bank*

Review of conclusions and follow-up action plan

Discussion

11.00 – 11.15

Coffee break**Session three**

11.15 – 12.40

Mechanisms for follow-up*Chair: Rina Gill, UNICEF***Session four**

12.40 – 13.00

Closing Session*Chair: Venus Jennings, UNESCO*

— Bjoern Foerde, Director, Oslo Governance Centre, UNDP

— Paul Mitchell, Manager, Development Communication Division, World Bank

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BACKGROUND PAPERS

Overview of UN Inter-Agency Round Tables on Communication for Development

Fitting the Glass Slipper! — Institutionalising Communication for Development within the UN

Discussion Paper on the Monitoring and Evaluation of UN-assisted Communication for Development Programmes

Overview of UN Inter-Agency Round Tables on Communication for Development (Abridged Version)

NOTE: This paper is an abridged version of the Background Paper prepared for the 11th Inter-Agency Roundtable. The full version which discusses the deliberations and outcomes of the roundtables in considerable detail is available at <http://www.undg.org/c4d>

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DISCLAIMER

The views expressed in this paper are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of any UN agency, the World Bank, or an agreed inter-agency position.

Acronyms

AMARC	World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters
CCA/UNDAF	Common Country Assessment/UN Development Assistance Framework
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CTA	Centre for Agriculture and Rural Cooperation
C4D	Communication for Development
CSO	Civil Society Organization
GA	General Assembly
IDRC	International Development and Research Council
IPAL	Instituto para America Latina
JCGP	Joint Consultative Group on Policy
JIU	Joint Inspection Unit
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
RT	Round Table
UNPAEERD	UN's Programme of Action for Africa's Economic Recovery and Development
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
ILO	International Labour Organisation
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNCDF	United Nations Capital Development Fund
UNCTD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDG	United Nations Development Group
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDPI	United Nations Department of Public Information
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WB	World Bank
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organisation

Introduction³

The Inter-Agency Round Tables on Communication for Development began in 1988. At the time, UN agency designated communication staff were “rarely aware of each others objectives largely due to their focus on individual policies that reflected their work and guided their operational programmes and projects.”⁴ The initial impetus behind the Round Tables (RTs) was to exchange ideas and experience in the area of communication for development (C4D) and promote cooperation among UN agencies. These objectives have remained a fundamental platform for discussion at all RTs. The Report of the UN Joint Inspection Unit (JIU)⁵ on Communication for Development quotes a participant from the 4th RT, held in Lima in 1993: “The Round Tables began as a club for people from industrialised countries but are now open to others.”⁶ The JIU report states that the RT was the only inter-agency “professional consultation mechanism on communication for development.” It points out that the RT process, whilst only in place for five years, had contributed to highlighting the importance of C4D.⁷

The RT process can be viewed in three broad evolutionary phases. The first phase comprises RTs 1-5. These early RTs were relatively informal and only those UN agencies with an active C4D component and selected CSOs specialising in this area were involved.⁸ In this phase, NGOs took the lead in organising two RTs. The second phase, encompassing RTs 6-7, was a transition period in which the RTs begin to take account of the JIU report’s recommendations, and their deliberations now form part of the UN Secretary General’s biannual report to the General Assembly on Communication for Development. Although the Secretary General’s report has continued to provide an important opportunity for participating UN agencies to report on their involvement in C4D, it has not been used as a tool for collective reporting and has not systematically addressed follow-up to recommendations from respective RTs.

RTs 8-10 can be said to fall into a third phase. They have sought to build on the UN’s renewed commitment to greater inter-agency collaboration, as reflected in the revised programming

3 Reports from RTs 3 and 5-10, the Secretary General’s Reports to the General Assembly on Communication for Development and other relevant documentation were reviewed for this report. In addition, telephone and e-mail discussions were held with various UN and NGO staff and ‘C4D pioneers’ who had some involvement with the RT process. A key constraint in conducting this review was the very limited institutional memory, particularly within UN agencies, of the early RTs that took place largely in the pre-digital age and prior to the review by the Joint Inspection Unit in 1984. This has inevitably constrained a full understanding both of the genesis of the RT process and the themes/outcomes of the early meetings.

4 Jayaweera Wijayananda’s speech at the opening of the 9th Round Table, Rome 1994.

5 UN Joint Inspection Unit Report, 1994, Communication for Development Programmes in the United Nations System.

6 Annex IIII Synthesis of the IV Report on the Round Table on Development Communication, Lima, Peru (1993) cited by Francesco Mezzalama in the UN Joint Inspection Unit Report (1994).

7 The JIU report notes that ‘well-designed communication programmes improve understanding among the main actors of development, encourage co-ordination between agencies involved in development work and increase efficient and effective use of scarce resources.’ It goes on to state that “it is regrettable that General Assembly Resolution 47/199 “triennial policy review of operational activities for development within the United Nations system,” which deals with practically all development issues does not make any reference to communication for development programmes” (para.98).

8 UN agencies included UNESCO, UNICEF, FAO and UNFPA.

instruments (CCA/UNDAF) and in One UN. They have also had a sharper thematic focus and sought to demonstrate the importance of C4D in achieving the UN's development priorities articulated in the Millennium Declaration and the Millennium Development Goals.

1.1. CHANGES IN UN ORGANISATIONAL AND POLICY CONTEXT SINCE 1988

Ten Round Tables (RTs) on Communication for Development (C4D) have taken place since 1988, during which time there have been some significant organisational shifts within the UN. From a RT perspective two changes in particular can be seen as reflecting an institutionalising of its informal objectives and leading to greater cooperation and collaboration among UN agencies. However, the RTs have yet to take full advantage of these changes.

The first key organisational change was the emergence of new strategic planning/programming instruments – the Common Country Assessment (CCA) and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) as part of the 1997 reform process. Guidelines for this new strategic planning approach were introduced in 1999 in response to the call from the Secretary General to articulate a coherent vision and strategy that allowed for a unified approach towards common goals.⁹ One UN, the second key change, emerged from the recommendations of the High Level Panel (2006) which was invited to explore how the UN system could work more coherently and effectively. To overcome systemic fragmentation across the UN, the panel made a number of inter-linked recommendations organised around four 'ones': One Programme, One empowered Leader and team, One Budgetary Framework and One Office. It was really only at the 10th and most recent RT in 2007 that participating agencies sought to build on/take advantage of this new unity of purpose and spirit of collaboration within the UN by agreeing to develop a common strategy as a first step towards strengthening the role of C4D as a key component of UN system programming.

A significant shift in policy emphasis took place within the UN between the 7th and 8th RTs. In 2000 the UN General Assembly endorsed a global development agenda which enshrined the Millennium Declaration. The latter articulated the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the achievement of which has become the overarching goal for most UN agencies. RT 8 acknowledged the new global development landscape and its Declaration placed C4D within the framework of the Millennium Declaration by asserting that "human rights are an inherent part of all Communication for Development." The 9th RT stated that the MDGs cannot be achieved without

9 These guidelines were revised in February 2007 to take into account new developments in aid effectiveness (World Summit Outcome Document, Paris Declaration), cross-cutting principles and comments from agencies and country teams. They also stress the inclusiveness of all UN agencies in the programming process and clarify accountability by encouraging the clear division of labour among UNCT members to improve efficiency of the process as well as accountability for the end product.

“good communication” and stressed the need for new strategies and tools to be developed in support of the goals. This was re-emphasized at the 10th RT.

1.2. TRENDS IN THE GLOBAL INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION CONTEXT

Since the inception of the Communication for Development Round Table in 1988 the global information and communication landscape has undergone a transformation largely due to two key factors – the democratisation process following the end of the Cold War and the rapid growth of horizontal communication due to availability of new communication technologies. Key features of this transformation include:

- rapid liberalisation and proliferation of the media, particularly of broadcasting, together with a subsequent decline in support for former state (monopoly) broadcasting;¹⁰
- greater use of new and more cost effective information and communication technologies;
- greater consideration in design of development strategies given to the media’s role in reinforcing/ countering the way in which vested interests and other political factors affect development interventions;
- a growing communication knowledge network facilitated largely by NGOs;
- and in the post 9/11 world, an increasing tendency on the part of some governments to withhold and censor information under the guise of national security.

There is evidence that RT discussions have taken account of some of these trends. The report from the 3rd RT notes “the dramatic spread of democracy of recent times, and the growing ill-repute of central planning were working in favour of more participatory decision-making at the local level and of communication as part of that process.” The 6th RT acknowledged the impact of media liberalisation at a local level and emphasised the role of community radio in promoting two-way dialogue. This RT also called for more experimentation with low cost technologies. The 8th RT highlighted the importance of community radio stations in Africa in helping disempowered people make important decisions about their own lives. The 9th RT reflected on both the potential and limitation of new Information and Communication technologies. Discussions recognised that mobile telephony was a powerful tool in bringing telecommunications within the reach of rural communities and in some contexts has enabled poor and illiterate people to earn income.¹¹ This meeting also drew attention to a number of barriers that prevented poor people from accessing

¹⁰ “Communication for Empowerment: developing media strategies in support of vulnerable groups,” UNDP Practical Guidance Note.

¹¹ The 9th RT report cites the Grameen Bank supported Village Pay Phone scheme as an example of an income earning activity for poor rural women.

new technologies, particularly the internet. These included illiteracy, lack of basic infrastructure in rural areas, the relevance of available information, and few opportunities to input their own local knowledge.¹²

International NGOs such as Panos, AMARC, BBC World Service Trust and Communication for Social Change Consortium, and national NGOs such as Soul City, ANDI, and Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan have been at the forefront in promoting changes in the communication landscape and pushing the boundaries of C4D at international and national levels. Together with local partners they have implemented innovative practices in efforts to meet the communication needs of some of the world's poorest people. NGOs focusing on communication engage in a range of activities including initiating discussion on new laws/institutions needed for an independent and pluralist media, promoting the right to access public information, promoting the development of relevant information and communication technologies, research, facilitating the development of independent radio broadcasting, conducting surveys on the constraints to media pluralism and training of journalists. The Communication Initiative is a vibrant global knowledge network that performs an invaluable role in facilitating the transfer of up-to-date knowledge on C4D approaches and tools among a wide range of development actors. The extent of NGO participation in the RT process has varied in each event. NGOs are recognised by most participating UN agencies as essential partners, not just in developing relevant C4D policies and strategies at national level but, crucially, in transforming these policies into effective operational projects at local level.

1.3. CHANGES IN FOCUS AND SUBSTANCE OF ROUND TABLES

All RTs to date have shared some common objectives – to exchange information and experience, develop common strategies and identify common mechanisms to consolidate networks. During the course of the RTs there has been a perceptible shift from information dissemination to a focus on C4D as a crucial enabler of effective community participation.¹³ Since the inception of the RT process there has been a broad consensus among participating UN agencies on the general principles of C4D. In the early RTs, however, relatively few UN agencies considered C4D initiatives as an integral aspect of all sectoral activities.¹⁴ In some UN organisations, communication was placed within the Information Division, which, as the JIU report pointed out, diminished the importance of the discipline. Following the 6th RT and the passing of General Assembly Resolution 51/172, there were increased calls for all UN agencies to include C4D as an integral component of development projects. Successive RTs sought to address this issue. However, it appears that only at the 10th and most recent RT in 2007 was there an acknowledgement that if resolution 51/172

¹² Report of Ninth Round Table, pp 44 -47.

¹³ See Declaration of Ninth Round Table.

¹⁴ UNESCO, UNICEF and FAO were among those UN agencies that prioritized C4D in projects.

was to be transformed from an aspiration into a reality it was necessary for C4D principles to be integrated into the UN's strategic programming guidelines – the CCA/UNDAF.

1.4. COMMON AND RECURRING THREADS IN THEMES AND OUTCOMES OF ROUND TABLES

An analysis of available agendas and reports reveal that some themes have recurred across several RTs.¹⁵ These have included: (i) mobilising decision makers' support for C4D, (ii) training, (iii) evaluation, and (iv) media/ new communication technologies. With the notable exception of the most recent RT (10th), follow up on conclusions and recommendations reached at these meetings appears to have been more ad hoc than systematic.¹⁶ This may have contributed to some themes being repeated in successive RTs. Nonetheless, revisiting themes allowed UN agencies to advance their own thinking in these areas and begin the process of developing common strategies for addressing key challenges.

Mobilising decision-makers' support

Convincing high-level decision makers of the importance of communication as a key element in development has been a constant concern of RT participants and appeared in some form in the deliberations of RTs 3, 5, 9 and 10. However, there is only very limited evidence to date that RT discussions and recommendations have resulted in a higher profile of C4D in UN country programmes and national development strategies.¹⁷ RT 3 recognised the need for better strategies to communicate with decision makers and recommended as a first step that a survey of their attitudes, experiences, and expectations should be conducted. RT 5 featured a survey report of 39 decision makers, which revealed that key obstacles to application of C4D in projects included the need for more information on the impact, costs and benefits of communication.¹⁸ RT 9's action plan included advocacy as one of five cross-cutting priorities, and called for deeper engagement with policy makers to ensure that C4D was recognised as a central component in all development initiatives. The RT presented a number of new C4D initiatives, including supporting a World Congress on Communication for Development, which had as one of its principal objectives the attraction of high-level decision makers. However, many of those decision-makers did not attend the Congress. RT 10 made more substantive recommendations to move forward the process of

15 Reports from Round Tables 1, 2 and 4 were not located.

16 UNESCO hosted a meeting of several UN agencies in December 2007 to follow up on the recommendations from the 10th Round Table.

17 The report from Round Table 10 suggests that there is still a very poor understanding of C4D at the highest level of decision making within the UN and that C4D "was viewed as a downstream dissemination function and unconnected with the design and implementation of projects," p. 25.

18 Report from Round Table 5, p. 1.

mobilising support for C4D. It identified various high level forums, including the Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB), within the UN system as key advocacy targets. It also recognised that C4D principles needed to be integrated within the UN's strategic planning instruments, the CCA/UNDAF, if heads of UN agencies at country level were going to support C4D needs assessments and other communication initiatives as an integral part of development programming. A paper, illustrating the close alignment of C4D principles with essential elements for development effectiveness and indicating how C4D activities could be integrated into the UNDAF process, was presented to participants at the follow up meeting to the 10th RT.

Training

The need for appropriate training on C4D is threaded across all the RTs and is emphasised in the conclusions of the Joint Inspection Unit's report. After 20 years, relevant training to enable C4D to be integrated effectively into development programming remains a priority of the RT process. RT 3 reports unanimous agreement amongst participating agencies that training on C4D is required at all levels. The meeting discussed a joint UNESCO/UNFPA training initiative consisting of a concept paper and a series of case studies aimed at harmonising development communication approaches within the UN system. Participatory Communication Training was one of the three core themes of the 5th RT. Discussions confirmed that the UNESCO/UNFPA initiative had been developed into an orientation and resource kit that was circulated to UN agencies as well as selected NGOs and universities.¹⁹ It contained several modules including profiles on specialised agencies and NGOs, five case studies on how the participatory approach was used in different projects, and a database of approximately 300 projects. RT participants felt that while this comprehensive resource met the needs of development planners and decision makers, it needed to be made more relevant to grassroots-level users and oriented towards participatory training methods. The 6th RT called for the capacity of national and local institutions to be enhanced to enable C4D to be better integrated into development activities. The 7th RT recommended that the UNESCO/UNFPA kit should be updated. The 8th RT, while making no specific reference to the UNESCO/UNFPA kit, acknowledged the need to "develop toolkits that address the needs of different audiences."²⁰ The Declaration²¹ from this meeting included a recommendation that tools from UN agencies and NGO implementers be collected and shared to identify and improve access to "proven tools" and reduce duplication.²²

19 The kit was entitled 'Approaches to Development Communication: an overview and resource kit'. See report from Round Table Five, p. 2

20 Report from Eighth Round Table, p. 70.

21 The 8th RT was the first to formulate a Declaration from the deliberations. It was included in its entirety in the report of the Secretary General to the General Assembly.

22 Ibid, p. 11.

The Communication Initiative has played an important role in this regard by using its network to collect and share C4D tools amongst NGOs and multilateral and bilateral agencies. The 9th RT also gave training similar prominence and included in its Declaration a recommendation that training initiatives should focus on “collaborative learning in C4D encouraging experiential, value-based, culturally sensitive training in Participatory Communication for Development and fostering a community of practice across the regions.”²³ The stocktaking exercise by UN agencies at the 10th RT did not specifically follow up on this recommendation, although the need for such a community of practice was perhaps implicitly acknowledged in various issues such as the need for UN-system strategies for data collection. The subsequent follow-up meeting highlighted the importance of UN inter agency training for county level staff at all levels to better integrate C4D into policy and project development.²⁴

Evaluation

The importance of rigorous monitoring and evaluation systems was discussed in several of the RTs. At the 5th RT, participants stressed the need to develop reliable indicators to measure the impact of C4D projects particularly as donors wanted to see evidence of communication’s impact on development projects. The survey of decision makers indicated that evaluations had not “adequately brought out the measureable contribution of communication to development objectives.” The Tambuli Community Radio project in the Philippines was considered by several agencies to have developed indicators capable of measuring C4D’s contribution to the development process. The meeting recommended that an evaluation report should be compiled from empirical studies of UN agencies’ C4D projects and presented at the next RT. It is unclear which agency had responsibility for compiling these studies. The 6th RT report makes no mention of them. The 7th RT revisited evaluation and recommended the use of peer review to evaluate projects. The importance of community engagement in devising indicators and ownership of the evaluation process was emphasised at the 8th RT. The tension between donor and community indicator requirements was discussed at this meeting but no consensus was reached on the primary audience for evaluation.²⁵ The 9th RT reinforced the participatory nature of evaluation and for the first time called for impact assessments to include participatory baseline and communication needs assessments. Participants felt that these assessments should then inform policy development. The 10th RT included Monitoring and Evaluation as a priority component in a revised UN Inter Agency C4D strategy. Impact assessment is one of two core themes of the 11th RT to be held in March 2009. Discussions

23 Report of Ninth Round Table, p. 9.

24 Report, Follow up to the Addis Recommendations United Nations Inter-Agency Meeting (2007), pp29-33.

25 It was felt that the indicators required by donors may demand a level of research/analysis/resources beyond the community’s capacity while community’s requirements of indicators may fall short of donor’s needs (8th Round Table Report, p. 67).

at this meeting should enable an assessment of the extent to which UN agencies have developed indicators capable of measuring the impact of C4D initiatives.

Media in development

Most RTs have discussed the role of traditional and modern media in development. Their deliberations acknowledge that radio was and remains the most widely available and affordable mass medium for poor people. Participants at the 3rd RT concluded that community radio was a significant force in development. The 5th RT examined how traditional and new communication technologies could contribute to poverty alleviation. Radio, TV and new digital technologies were classified as modern communication technologies. Participants identified three criteria essential for the successful application of modern communication technologies in pursuit of poverty reduction – appropriateness, accessibility and sustainability. The 6th RT called for UN agencies and NGOs to contribute to the establishment of community radio in rural areas in Africa and to support the development of legal frameworks supportive of the media. The 8th RT included a number of examples of how local media, particularly radio, was used to stimulate debate and dialogue between individuals and communities on HIV/AIDS and other development issues.²⁶ The 9th RT, while confirming that in rural areas radio was often the only medium available, called for communication initiatives to make use of all communication channels available – mixing and matching traditional and new technologies to meet the needs of local people. The 10th RT recognised the transformative potential and capacity of ICTs.

1.5. OUTCOME OF ROUND TABLE DELIBERATIONS

The extent to which specific recommendations have been implemented is unclear. Systematic mechanisms to follow up on recommendations have yet to be introduced. With the exception of the last (10th) RT, any follow up seems to have been ad hoc. In some instances it is not clear which UN agency had responsibility for following up on commitments made. It is also unclear whether participating UN agencies made additional funding available to implement recommendations. A more systematic follow up may have been seen by some as at odds with the stated informal nature of the RT. It is interesting to note that reviewing the status of recommendations from previous RTs does not feature as a specific item on RT agendas.

Since 1996 the Secretary General's biannual report to the General Assembly on Communication for Development has represented an important opportunity for those UN agencies that take part in

²⁶ The 8th RT report includes short overviews of Soul City (South Africa), Sustainable Community Radio Stations in Mozambique, and the Tambuli Radio Project in The Philippines.

RTs to provide an overview of their engagement with C4D to a global audience. In some instances this has permitted reporting on specific recommendations from the RTs.²⁷ However, to date the report has not been used as a tool for collective reporting by UN agencies and, with the notable exception of the recommendations from the JIU report, it has not systematically addressed key recommendations from respective RTs. The RTs have undoubtedly served to advance UN agencies' thinking on a range of C4D related issues and reinforced the need for a common strategy to harness communication in support of the MDGs. However, despite the two supportive General Assembly Resolutions²⁸ there is little evidence that they have contributed significantly towards institutionalising the principles and practice on C4D across the UN system.

²⁷ For example, in its contribution to the Secretary General's report on Communication for Development in 2006, FAO included a specific section on follow up to the 9th Round Table.

²⁸ Resolutions 50/130 (1995) and 51/172.

Annex 1: Round Table Chronology

- 1988: ————— **First** RT held at UNICEF headquarters in New York
- 1990: ————— **Second** RT held in Ottawa coordinated by CIDA/IDRC
- 1991: ————— **Third** RT held at FAO headquarters in Rome.
- 1992: ————— **Request** by UNESCO and FAO for C4D to be included in the work programme of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU)
- 1993: ————— **Fourth** RT, held in Lima organised by Instituto para America Latina (IPAL)
- 1994: ————— **JIU** report on C4D programmes in the UN system
- 1995: ————— **Fifth** RT, organised by Worldview International Foundation and held in Chiang Mai, Thailand, 25-28 January
- Resolution** 50/130 (20/12/95) – UN General Assembly (GA) took note of JIU recommendations and comments of the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) and requested the Secretary General, in consultation with the Director-General of UNESCO, to report on the implementation of the resolution to the 51st session of the Assembly and thereafter on a biennial basis
- 1996: ————— **First** report to the 51st session of the GA (29/08/96) on C4D programmes in the UN system
- Sixth** RT, organised by UNESCO and held in Harare, Zimbabwe, 2-5 September
- Report** of the Second Committee of Sustainable Development and International Cooperation included a recommendation that the GA adopt a resolution on C4D programmes in the UN system which, inter alia, commended the C4D RTs as ‘a ‘notable’ mechanism of inter-agency cooperation and coordination for promoting and advancing communication for development, owing, inter alia, to their openness to partners outside the United Nations system and the outreach of their outcomes’
- 1998: ————— **Seventh** RT, organised by UNICEF in Salvador de Bahia, Brazil from 10–13 November
- 1999: ————— **54th** session of the General assembly (16/08/09). The Secretary General reports on the implementation of the recommendations of the JIU on C4D

- 2001: ————— **Eighth** RT, organised by UNFPA in collaboration with the Rockefeller Foundation, UNESCO, and Panos in Managua, Nicaragua, from 26-28 November
- 2004: ————— **Ninth** RT, organised by FAO with UNESCO, Government of Italy, World Bank, IDRC and CTA in Rome from 6-9 September
- 2006: ————— **61st** Session of the General Assembly (19/07/06): Secretary General includes a Summary of main points and recommendations arising from the Ninth Inter-Agency Round table as part of his report on Communication for Development programmes in the UN system.
- 2007: ————— **Tenth** RT, organised by UNESCO, in Addis Ababa from 12–14 February

UN inter-agency meeting to follow up on recommendations from 10th RT; 3-4 December
- 2008: ————— **63rd** Session of the General Assembly (28/07/08): Secretary General includes a Summary of main points and recommendations arising from the Tenth Inter-Agency Round Table as part of his report on Communication for Development programmes in the UN system

**Fitting the Glass Slipper!
Institutionalising Communication for
Development within the UN
— A discussion document —**

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DISCLAIMER

The views expressed in this paper are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the World Bank, any UN agency, or an agreed inter-agency position.

“Communication for development is the Cinderella behind external and corporate communication.”

1. A brief statement on method and approach

The World Bank asked The Communication Initiative (CI) to prepare a discussion document for the March 2009 Round Table on Communication for Development (C4D) in Washington DC. In order to do this in a short period of time, between December 2008 and February 2009, the following process and methodology was established:

1. *Design and set up an online survey in consultation with The World Bank.*
2. *Invite UN Agency staff from the CI network and via UN C4D focal points to fill it in.*
A note was sent out to 3,762 UN staff who are members of the CI network and UN agencies also sent out notes asking communication staff to fill in the resulting 11-question survey which resulted in 261 responses.
3. *Conduct telephone interviews with several UN Agency C4D focal points.*
6 UN communication focal points were interviewed.
4. *Prepare a draft outline of the discussion paper and initial findings in time for a UN C4D focal point meeting in Geneva at the end of January 2009.*
This was submitted and discussed with comments integrated into this final version of the paper.
5. *Finalise the paper incorporating feedback from the focal point meeting and submit to The World Bank for presentation at the Communication Round Table on March 11 and 12 2009.*

This paper reflects findings from the interviews with focal points along with comments from the meeting in Geneva, and responses from the survey.

2. Purpose and suggestion

The paper that follows attempts to be short, succinct, and specific – as is required for an effective process at your UN Round Table meeting. It is designed to help facilitate your important discussions.

However, we strongly recommend that you also pour yourself a cup of tea or coffee, put your feet up and review the full survey results and comments. As in any communication process it is vitally important to understand the “audience” and particularly in this context, your allies and “accomplices”. Increasingly, the UN – and bilateral development agencies for that matter – are driven by country and regional office perspectives and priorities, albeit within the over-arching priorities established globally. We believe the survey results help gain an understanding of the regional and country perspectives and ideas. In addition, the way that the questions were asked was an attempt to quantify some important issues and options.

3. A word on definitions

This is not the place or time for a focus on definitions; however, we do wish to recap on our understanding of one concept that was central to the request for us to undertake this work, namely “institutionalisation”. From our briefing we understood this concept as follows:

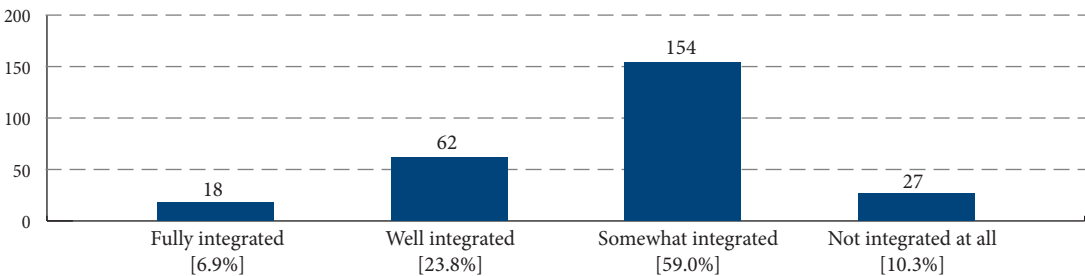
Institutionalisation: UN agency understanding, acceptance, and implementation of C4D [or its equivalents] as a central, critical, and core element of their policy frameworks and programming strategies.

4. Overview of major findings

4.1. PRESENT SITUATION

Survey Question 4 (Respondents 259)

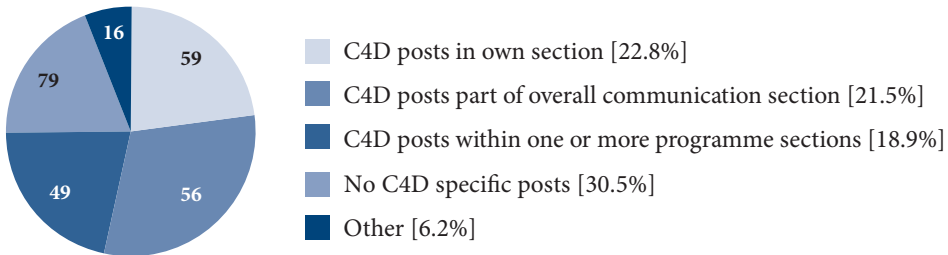
In your opinion, how well is Communication for Development integrated into the policies, strategies and operations of your UN agency? (Please choose one only)



Over 69% of respondents felt that C4D was only somewhat or not integrated and only 30% felt it was well or fully integrated. Furthermore even those who felt C4D was fully or well integrated noted many of the same concerns in their comments as those who felt it was somewhat or not at all integrated.

Survey Question 5 (Respondents 261)

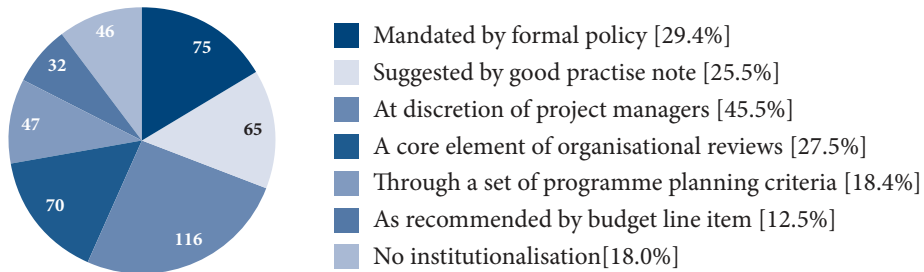
What is the current structure and institutional position of Communication for Development [C4D] within your UN context as identified above (e.g., Global HQ, Regional Office, Country Office)? (Please choose one only)



While over 30% of respondents indicated their organisations had no specific C4D posts, over 63% had C4D posts in one or more areas. Many who answered this question commented that they could have provided a different answer depending on the sector or level they focused on.

Survey Question 6 (Respondents 261)

How does institutionlisation of Communication for Development take place within your agency? (Select as many as are appropriate and please do add comments in the text box)



The above chart can be divided into two main categories which could be called ‘soft or no institutionalisation’ and ‘hard or mandated institutionalisation’. In the ‘soft or no’ category 45.5% indicated C4D was at the discretion of project/programme managers, 25.7% that it was suggested by a good practise note and 18.2% said the question was not applicable as there was no institutionalisation. In the ‘hard’ category 29.4% said C4D was mandated by formal policy, 27.5% said it was a core element of organisational reviews, 18.4% said it was through a set of criteria for overall planning and 12.5% said it was a recommended budget line item. Of the total 449 responses (respondents were asked to select as many responses as appropriate) the split between these categories is 50/50 with 226 in the soft category and 224 in the hard. Nevertheless the largest single set of responses 45.5%

indicates that C4D initiatives within the UN remain significantly influenced by, and at the discretion of, programme and project managers.

Many of the issues that have been raised at Round Tables going back many years continued to be raised by both the people completing the survey and those whom we interviewed. There is a common picture of where C4D finds itself in the UN system today. This can be summarised as:

1. lack of central status in policy, strategy, and programming;
2. lack of demonstrated impact data;
3. absence of compelling and well-understood case studies;
4. lack of skilled C4D staff;
5. need to learn from other UN experiences and to support each other;
6. lack of organisational and management support; and
7. lack of dedicated funding.

There is an historical sense that C4D was making progress in the 90s, but the early 2000s were a time of retrenchment and lost opportunity as C4D leadership among key UN agencies began to fall off. There is also a sense that this has begun to turn around somewhat over the past few years, and that rhetorical support is now being matched with organisational support in some agencies. However, this is not an even development across the UN system and there is a sense that C4D support tends to be an on-again, off-again affair. Furthermore, C4D is still seen to be in the shadow of communication units dominated by other communication priorities, the Cinderella behind external and corporate communications, as anointed by one survey respondent.

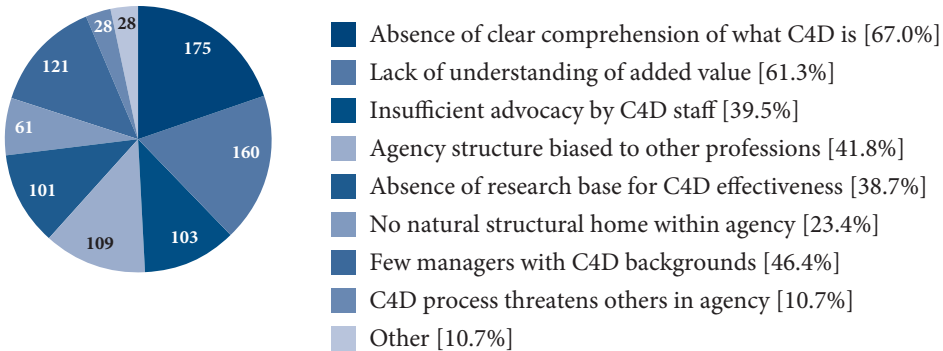
So the present situation may be styled as one in which there is renewed interest and focus in some UN agencies and therefore optimism, but concern that the historical challenges C4D has faced remain and sustainable progress towards institutionalisation is far from a given even in those agencies where it is strongest.

4.2. CHALLENGES

Sometimes the problem starts from the philosophical nature of communication itself. We can all communicate. Therefore programme people do not see the big deal in having any expert in what they all can do naturally. Some of them have taken one or two courses on the principles of communication and also do not see the need for more expertise. Finally C4D has too many theoretical constructs, often *times confusing to practitioners and their clients too.*”

Survey Question 7 (Respondents 261)

What challenges complicate efforts to centralise C4D relative to policies, strategies and operations in your agency? (Choose all that apply)



Against a backdrop of very guarded optimism there is awareness of the many difficulties C4D faces in any attempt to institutionalise itself across the UN system and disagreement about what needs to be done.

Definitions and Understanding: Some feel that varied definitions of C4D within the UN present a challenge for discussion across UN agencies and sectors, suggesting that without some underlying clarity about what’s being discussed there is a lot of room for misunderstanding. On the other hand there are those who feel that struggling to find a definition will use up a lot of time without much progress.

“The fact that I cannot really tell someone else what communication for development is at this stage in my whole agency should be sufficient to explain the absence thereof.”

“Despite 10 years+ efforts of the inter-agency coordination and increasing recognition for the term, it seems that the concept and scope of activities of C4D still remains too obscure to become a major subject in UN development policy.”

Fragmentation and Personal Preference: There is a strong sense that C4D remains fragmented across the UN and within individual agencies. Whether or not it is a priority often seems to be up to the interests of individuals at the programme or country level. Even where there is strong HQ leadership this still seems to hold true. There are clearly spaces of real C4D excellence, but these seem to rely on individual leadership and when an individual moves on, C4D can drop in priority.

“I believe that the first step is for all agencies to have a common definition and understanding of C4D. Depending on the agency (WHO, UNICEF vs. UNDP, UNEP) each agency will have its own understanding and will define C4D in their own context. Just as there is a global communications group on climate change that coordinates climate change communications on the ground, C4D also needs an overall coordinator across the UN system.”

Structure: Often C4D functions at a programme level but is not a coherent part of the organisational structure creating a patchwork where some programmes have strong C4D elements and others have none. Furthermore when C4D action is implemented in this patchwork way it can limit communication between C4D staff even in the same office.

“Cross-cutting issues often suffer in organizations.”

Partnerships: There is also a potential dilemma the UN system faces as it moves to strengthen C4D internally – its mandate is not an internal one but an external one relating to many external partners in government and civil society. Moving forward with institutionalising C4D within and across the UN system, as difficult as that may be, will also require building similar commitments and capacities among those partners. UN agencies work in an increasingly networked world, and this heightens the imperative of these partnerships and relationships.

“Staff should be trained on C4D with programme implementation guidance and this should expand with specialised courses for partners (Govt., Institutions, NGOs, INGOs, etc.) that the UN agencies work together with for the implementation of the development works.”

4.3. POSSIBLE WAYS FORWARD

In spite of the challenging context, there were many suggestions for ways to move C4D towards greater institutionalisation within the UN. These included:

Impact Data: Many feel there is a need for advocacy with the UN that would be based on evidence related to achieving the MDGs and results from centres of C4D excellence within the UN. The idea of focusing on gathering such evidence and looking for spaces to bring together key decision makers to present this evidence has fairly wide currency.

“The need for evidence cannot be overemphasized.”

“We need better evidence of impact, and that evidence needs to be well understood and widely available.”

Senior Management Advocacy: A coordinated effort to engage and work with senior UN management, in order to encourage their deeper recognition of the value that C4D brings to action on UN priorities, is seen as an essential component for making C4D a permanent and well understood element of development programming. Such an approach also avoids the kind of pendulum support that has been observed in the past. Though this already takes place within each individual UN agency, what is being suggested is a much more deliberate, concerted, and collective effort for compound value.

“There is a need to develop a unified UN approach, building for example on UN collaboration regarding avian flu prevention.”

“...to achieve MDGs, people need to change not only through policies but through attitudes. This requires a common strategy and funding between all UN agencies.”

Training and Skill Development: There does appear, from the survey responses and interview observations, to be a lack of skilled C4D practitioners. Therefore, C4D training and skill development are also considered critical elements in building understanding, support, and stronger C4D programming at all levels. It is felt that such training and skill development would build a critical mass of people within the UN who understand and accept C4D as central to development

processes, while also developing the capacity to implement C4D with competence and success. Some also feel that this training should be extended beyond the UN system so that C4D capacities and commitments were being built together with partners. It may be that in many cases the training and capacity will flow from partners to the UN as much as the other way around.

“There is need for staff to know what C4D is, and the value it has on programmes.”

“We need a high-level, well-funded, C4D training course with commitment from all agencies to fund a minimum % of staff. All Senior Managers from All agencies should undergo a high quality, evidence-based C4D orientation — demonstrating that sustainable development is only ever achieved through C4D strategies.”

Not One Size Fits All: This strategy also needs to recognise that while C4D improves development outcomes across many sectors and should be integrated into all of them, UN agencies have different mandates and structures; there is no one size that will fit all. C4D needs to grow and expand its own space within the UN system by demonstrating its worth and focusing on the areas where it is strong in order to show impact, gather evidence, and share experiences.

“The UN system should validate a common C4D framework in order to harmonize policies and interventions; yet this framework will have to consider agencies’ particularities and field of actions.”

Build from Strengths: Emerging from the survey responses and interviews, it is clear that there are some real centres of communication for development excellence within the UN system across a number of agencies. Some correspondents suggested – and we endorse – that an integral part of the institutionalisation strategy should be the recognition and identification of those centres of excellence, as well as a process of growing their work, modelling that work for others, and incorporating that work into any C4D advocacy strategy. Some core elements of this could include:

- Identify centres of C4D excellence across the UN at a variety of levels from HQ to specific programmes.
- Work with these centres to develop impact evidence, identify good practise guidelines, share knowledge, and establish training priorities.

- Encourage training and skill development in C4D possibly building out from the centres of excellence.
- Look for ways to work on C4D initiatives across UN agencies as a way of sharing knowledge and skills, as well as potentially finding ways to scale up C4D initiatives that show promise.
- Forge alliances with non-UN organisations, such as academic institutions which may support research and training and C4D organisations, in order to identify wider networks of C4D practise and other centres of excellence.
- Use the evidence and increasing skills and capacity within the UN and networks outside the UN to build support over time from key UN leadership.

“Several agencies, funds or programmes (FAO, UNICEF) are ahead of the game in C4D. We need to have their decision makers talking to other decision makers and make C4D an all UN approach.”

Integrated: The ideas above incorporate working from the ‘bottom up’, the ‘top down’, and horizontally across the middle – this approach was stressed and advocated by many respondents.

“There is a need for having a consolidated and coordinated approach in terms of promoting C4D in the whole UN system.”

5. Recommendations

It is always dangerous, as outsiders to a process or organisation, to make specific recommendations to the insiders about what they should do next! However, as you requested us to do so, we will now outline some recommendations.

Understanding that these are for the purpose of ensuring that you have a focused and productive discussion about the next strategic steps that you decide to take to advance the institutionalisation of communication for development; and

Requesting – as is highlighted above – that you review the full survey results. Both the perspectives and buy-in of the UN C4D involved and interested “work force” will be critical for any strategies that you undertake, and the survey responses provide important insights.

5.1. RECOMMENDATION 1: COLLECTIVE ACTION

That there is a decision made by the UN agencies represented in the Round Table that they will work together in a coordinated, day-by-day basis to:

- Implement an agreed, common strategy that seeks to make communication for development more central to core UN policies and strategies; and
- Support each other's individual efforts to achieve a similar outcome within their individual agencies.

Rationale: Without such a deliberate decision, there is little basis for moving forward relative to the UN as a whole.

5.2. RECOMMENDATION 2: AGREED LEADERSHIP

That the agencies at this Round Table agree a leadership team for this strategy, with the endorsement [election? acclamation?] of specific people to particular roles. We propose that these roles include:

- Overall Coordinator
- High-Level Advocacy Coordinator
- UN Staff Knowledge and Network Coordinator
- Centres of Excellence Advancement Coordinator
- Training and Recruitment Coordinator
- Impact Data Coordinator

Rationale: These positions are as they sound – coordination and support, not direction and decisions. They recognise the “autonomy” of each UN agency but they also recognise that if there is to be progress to further institutionalise communication for development both within individual agencies and across the UN system, then cross-agency coordination and support is vital.

5.3. RECOMMENDATION 3: A SELECTIVE COURSE OF ACTION

That the UN Round Table adopt the following four main tactical areas as its core approach for significantly advancing the institutionalisation of communication for development across the UN system (including the identified milestones after 12 months):

Tactic 1: Understanding

Develop, and communicate widely, a simple statement about the nature and added value of communication for development relative to poverty reduction and the other MDGs.

March 1, 2010 Milestone: Simple, short paper developed and signed off on by 15 UN agencies.

Tactic 2: Decision Makers

Identify and seek to engage and convince 50 specific, named, key UN decision makers about the ways in which communication for development can enhance action on their development priorities.

March 1, 2010 Milestone: 40 substantive discussions have taken place with at least 25 of the identified decision makers [some once – some more than once].

Tactic 3: Impact Data

Agree the 10 most compelling pieces of impact data that demonstrate the effectiveness and added value of communication for development action relative to poverty reduction and other MDGs – a selection that will need to take into account:

- the range of issues and geographies – a balance will be required.
- the validity of the data – e.g., a requirement that it be peer-reviewed journal derived.
- the attractiveness of the data – e.g., how quickly and easily will it be understood by non-C4D people?

March 1, 2010 Milestone: a list of 25 to 40 pieces of impact data identified and being reviewed and rated by UN agencies and UN C4D staff networks.

Tactic 4: Training and Recruitment

Training: Identify 20 learning institutions that can provide effective communication for development training and learning programmes for UN staff, and support these institutions to do so.

March 1, 2010 Milestone: Following an assessment, the 20 learning institutions are identified.

Recruitment: Develop and negotiate both a communication for development job description template and a model job advert for a communication for development job with the Human Resources Departments in UN agencies.

March 1, 2010 Milestone: Job description template and model job advert agreed.

Tactic 5: Network

Establish, support, and actively facilitate a knowledge sharing and social networking platform for UN agency staff working in or interested in communication for development.

March 1, 2010 Milestone: Platform agreed and process underway.

Rationale: There are any number of tactics that could have been outlined. The above selection is not an attempt to be comprehensive and all encompassing. It is an attempt to identify some key strategic recommendations that will have significant 'splash' effect and can be reasonably easily managed and achieved.

NOTE: We would have included "Evaluation Indicator Agreement" as one of the tactics outlined above however we understand that this is a specific issue that you will be considering at another time in this meeting and did not want to cross over into that deliberation.

6. Discussion themes

As you read the above and below we are sure that a large number of discussion points come racing to mind. As an opening move for your discussion, we provide the following possible kick-off questions (positioned as pairs):

1. Do we really want to do this?
 - If not, what other approach can we take?
2. Is this assessment – of the issues confronting communication for development that it will need to overcome if it is to have a more central role in UN agency policies and strategies – correct?
 - If not what elements are missing?
3. Is the selection of the strategies in Recommendation 3 correct?
 - If not, what needs to be added and deleted?
4. Do the “internal organisation” suggestions make sense?
 - If not, what would be a better organisational base?

Conclusion

We very much hope that this paper supports your process effectively and we look forward to both presenting these ideas to you in Washington, DC and supporting your deliberation of the best ways forward.

Discussion Paper on the Monitoring and Evaluation of UN-assisted Communication for Development Programmes

–Recommendations for Best Practice Methodologies and Indicators–

NOTE: This paper is an abridged version of the Background Paper prepared for the 11th Inter-Agency Round Table. The full version which discusses the deliberations and outcomes of the round tables in considerable detail is available at <http://www.undg.org/c4d>

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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DISCLAIMER

The views expressed in this paper are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of any UN agency, the World Bank, or an agreed inter-agency position.

Executive Summary

This document has been prepared as a background paper for the 11th UN Inter-Agency Round Table on Communication for Development, to be held in Washington from 11-13 March 2009 and serves as a discussion paper for the first theme of the Round Table: “Assessing and Demonstrating the Impact of Communication for Development”. UN agencies recognise Communication for Development (C4D) as a central tool in supporting development, and in particular the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). As a consequence, much work has been carried out to understand and embed the principles of C4D within the UN structure. However, despite an emphasis on C4D programmes and also on results-based management within the UN, there are currently no commonly-agreed tools for assessing the impact of C4D programmes. This paper is designed to help round table participants explore the key issues surrounding C4D, consider case studies and best practice methodology, in order to identify key questions and indicators at the roundtable, from the draft indicators proposed at the end of this paper.

- 1. Interpretation of C4D** Despite a greater appreciation of C4D within the UN, there is still some conceptual confusion regarding its practical interpretation and application. The first section addresses this confusion in the context of monitoring and evaluation (M&E), locating C4D programmes under two broadly-defined, human rights-based frameworks: diffusion or behaviour change communication and participatory communication, or communication for social change. These approaches are underpinned by a wide range of information and communication technologies. There is no single definition of C4D for the complex field of development work, but evidence suggests that combining elements of both approaches can be the most effective way to ensure the success of a C4D process.
- 2. Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation** Initiatives that simultaneously employ several levels of communication require a more complex, nuanced approach to M&E. There is a wide range of analytical tools available to and employed by evaluators yet there is no systematic use of M&E to demonstrate impact. Moreover, interviews have revealed that there is often uncertainty over what this entails and which approaches are best. This section considers the definitions of “monitoring” and “evaluation” and highlights the benefits of an effective M&E strategy adopted at the outset of a C4D initiative, emphasising that formative evaluation and planning are as critical to impact as subsequent M&E of outcomes and impacts. Building on the categories outlined in the first section, the paper discusses the principal tools and approaches, from conventional, quantitative research techniques to more intricate, participatory processes. As such, it provides an overview and analysis of M&E approaches to inform thinking on best practice methodologies, and which practitioners and policy makers alike can refer to when thinking about the most appropriate toolkit for an intervention. Finally, it considers

these approaches in the context of managing for development results (MfDR) and country ownership of results.

3. **Challenges to Monitoring & Evaluating C4D** The third section considers the principal challenges associated with measuring C4D that discussions over best practice must take into account. These challenges are generated by the nature of development aid itself and the complexity of C4D.
4. **Research, Monitoring and Evaluation in Practice** An examination of the practical application of C4D and strategies to monitor and evaluate progress and impact follows. A theoretical model is used to illustrate how programme goals, results and activities link in to research, monitoring and evaluation. Various case studies are used to illustrate how initiatives have used a variety of approaches to gather informative results and feed these back into programme design. Others highlight some of the practical challenges to M&E even within a highly successful programme, such as limited understanding at senior stakeholder level of the implications and requirements of participatory M&E, organisational weaknesses and country capacity and lack of resources.
5. **Best Practice Methodologies and Conclusions** A combination of research and information gathered from interviews with practitioners at policy and field level is used in this section to make recommendations for best practice methodology, when faced with several significant challenges to effective M&E in the field. The section discusses the issues of causality/attribution; working within the resources available for analysing an initiative (which are often very poor); using M&E to establish all the outcomes of an initiative; combining approaches to provide enhanced feedback and avoid a conceptual divide; reporting for and aligning results with donors and funding bodies while nonetheless maintaining ultimate objectivity; working through country-led systems; identifying the strategic intent in order to give an initiative a clearer direction; making planning, monitoring and evaluation key parts of any C4D initiative and ensuring that all the above considerations feed into real country ownership of results. The section proposes that a tailored toolkit approach to M&E of C4D is necessary in order to deal with the many complexities of this field. It emphasises the need for flexibility within any evaluation and discusses the strengths of Most Significant Change, Outcome Mapping and the LogFrame as state of the art techniques that attempt to meet the above challenges. The section concludes by reiterating that qualitative and quantitative tools are not mutually exclusive but should be used as complementary strategies for providing the most comprehensive, clear and pragmatic assessment and reporting of C4D.
6. **Draft Indicators** Section 6 moves on to consider the use of indicators for assessing impact across the broad remit of UN agency activities in the field of C4D. 5 principal C4D components are identified: the level of local awareness about the development programme and the issues

covered by the initiative; evidence of direct impact as a result of the programme; participation and empowerment; the level of media coverage; and country capacity. Within each component, key questions, proposed indicators and guidance on methodology to verify the indicators are suggested. This framework for thinking about indicators has been designed to have practical application in the field and is proposed to guide discussion at the round table over how such an approach can be used across the UN system.

7. **Questions for the Round Table** The paper concludes by proposing questions for round table participants to discuss in order to refine the suggested indicators and consider strategies for their adoption. A critical part of such strategies and the successful adoption of indicators will be strong communication and coordination at all levels within the UN agencies in terms of continuing to enhance and cultivate modes of monitoring and evaluation for communication programmes.

1. Introduction

Communication for development (C4D) is based on the premise that communication approaches and methodologies have a significant impact on the development and growth of individuals and communities. As development is driven by people, C4D efforts are being focused in the community while the UN is moving towards institutionalising the concept and application of C4D. Aligned with these efforts, there is now a clear focus on the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of C4D. C4D is an under-resourced area within the UN and providing strong evidence of impact through effective M&E systems is a vital tool in securing funding, human resources and time for future work in this field. Results gathered from the practical application of C4D are also necessary to inform the development of communication strategies and to show accountability. While there is a large body of work on C4D as an initiative in itself, there is less research into the M&E of C4D and a similar lack of documentation on the evaluation of these initiatives in the field. In order to move C4D into the mainstream UN agenda, there must be systematic efforts to fill this knowledge gap.

As the nature of the development system changes from donor-driven approaches to country-led systems that promote systemic aid harmonisation and alignment with national development priorities,²⁹ the task of M&E is becoming harder. It is increasingly difficult to attribute change to individual actors and to situate “impact” within the wider development system. Different agencies, stakeholders and participants expect different results, thus making it difficult to define ‘results’ in the results-based management systems of the UN agencies. Discussions over a system-wide approach will need to reflect on what types of results it needs to collect and report. At the point of

²⁹ da Costa, P “Managing for and Communicating Development Results.” Background Paper Prepared for the OECD Informal Network of DAC Development Communicators (DevCom Network) p.2-3.

identifying indicators, the paper will also make the distinction between C4D as the key approach for a development programme in itself and C4D as one facet of a broader programme.

This paper aims to propose recommendations for best practice methodology and indicators to measure C4D. It first explores the concept and process of C4D with a focus on M&E. Through research, case studies and personal interviews the paper examines and discusses the various approaches to M&E and the associated challenges with a view to highlighting some state of the art methodologies and determining best practice. Following this analysis, the paper identifies broad categories of indicators, which are proposed as the central theme for discussion alongside best practice methodology at the 11th Round Table. These indicators are designed to focus on the effectiveness of communication as a tool and process for development rather than on the impacts of specific C4D programmes.

2. Interpretation of C4D

A brief examination of C4D initiatives in terms of theory, design and implementation is necessary in order to understand them in the context of M&E. The Rome Consensus holds C4D to be “a social process based on dialogue using a broad range of tools and methods. It is also about seeking change at different levels including listening, building trust, sharing knowledge and skills, building policies, debating and learning for sustained and meaningful change. It is not public relations or corporate communication.”³⁰

There is still some conceptual confusion and disagreement over the practical interpretation of C4D, yet a degree of consensus must be reached in order to move C4D up the development agenda. The 8th UN Round Table in Managua identified three broad approaches to C4D: behaviour change communication, communication for social change, and advocacy communication.³¹ While recognising the importance of this definition, this paper, considering the practical application of M&E approaches, will describe C4D initiatives under two headings: one-to-many, or diffusion communication; and two-way, or participatory communication. It should be highlighted that the former approach does not preclude the process of two-way dialogue, but rather that less emphasis is placed upon it. Both frameworks are underpinned by a wide range of information and communication technologies. The third dimension, advocacy,³² is more used by some agencies than

30 “World Congress on Communication for Development: Lessons, Challenges and the Way Forward.” p.xxxiii.

31 UNFPA, “Communication for Development Roundtable Report. Focus on HIV/AIDS communication and evaluation.” 8th Round Table, 26-28 November 2001, Managua. p.15

32 Advocacy is defined by the UN as organized, often collective efforts involving networks and coalitions to influence public policy and attitudes to social norms on wide ranging issues. UNESCO “Towards a Common UN System Approach: The Role of Communication for Development in Achieving the MDGs.” Background Paper prepared for the 10th UN Inter-Agency Round Table on Communication for Development p.11

others. Participatory in nature and rooted in collectively-organised, community action, advocacy, while often differing from other modes of two-way communication in its range of actors, will be considered, for the purposes of this paper, within the broad field of participatory communication for development.

2.1. DIFFUSION-COMMUNICATION

Initiatives based on diffusion theory use communication to carry out a transfer of information. “Diffusion is the process by which an innovation is communicated through certain channels over time among the members of a social system. Diffusion of innovations is a theory of how, why, and at what rate new ideas spread through cultures.”³³ A central component of many civic education initiatives, diffusion aims to provide individuals and their communities with the opportunities to make informed choices on issues that affect their lives.³⁴ An outcome-oriented approach geared towards a change in attitudes and consequent change in practice, this approach has evolved greatly, adopting a more holistic, human-rights based perspective to C4D, using increasingly sophisticated methods of marketing and education and a growing element of interpersonal communication. This interpersonal aspect has in several instances proven to be the critical catalyst for eventual action. It can also provide key local knowledge and understanding, to ensure that the programme is correctly directed and based upon premises that successfully translate into the values of the target audience.

2.2. PARTICIPATORY/ BEHAVIOUR AND SOCIAL CHANGE COMMUNICATION

The shift in diffusion initiatives described above has prompted the emergence and consolidation of Communication for Behaviour and Social Change and other participatory processes within the field of C4D.³⁵

Communication for Development (C4D) is a systematic, planned and evidence based **strategic process** that is intrinsically **linked** to **programme elements**; uses **consultation** and **participation** of children, families, communities and networks, and privileges local contexts; and relies on a **mix of communication tools, channels and approaches**, to **promote positive and measurable behaviour and social change**.³⁶

33 Everett Rogers, *Diffusion of Innovations*, 1962; 1995 and others.

34 UNDP, “Integrating Communication for Development [C4D] into the Common Country Assessment [CCA] and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework [UNDAF]” Background paper for Addis Ababa Round Table follow-up meeting UNESCO, Paris, 3-4 December 2007 p.3

35 UNDP has, for instance, selected the Communication for Social Change Consortium as training vendor in C4D for its regional offices. CFSC Consortium – Current Projects.

36 UNICEF Concept Note, Communication for Development, Organisational Review Exercise: April 2007

C4D is a long-term process. While some results can be achieved in a short time frame, intrinsic behavioural and social change is a multi-year process, sometimes spreading over two or more generations.

In order to achieve desired behavioural and social change objectives, Communication for Development uses a **mix of four key strategies**:

- ***Behaviour Change Communication (BCC)*** – uses a combination of approaches, including social marketing and participatory communication, to help inform, influence and support households, community groups and opinion leaders for the adoption and sustained practice of desired behaviours. In general, BCC is considered more data driven, based on empirical evidence and able to demonstrate measurable results, sometimes in relatively shorter time frames.
- ***Community-led Communication for Social Change (CFSC)*** – seeks to engage and empower communities and networks to influence or reinforce social norms and cultural practices to create an environment that supports long-term sustainable change. It is *human resource intensive* and often requires investment over longer periods of time. Its results are usually measured in terms of processes and shifts in social norms or power relationships.
- ***Social Mobilisation*** – engages and motivates civic society (NGOs, community- and faith-based organizations/networks, etc.) around a common cause, to educate and provide support to communities and families.
- ***Advocacy*** – helps develop mechanisms to ensure that the perspectives, concerns and voices of children, women and men from marginalized groups, are reflected in upstream policy dialogue and decision making.

Results of Communication for Development interventions **can be measured by**:

- Increased knowledge and awareness
- Improved and new skills
- Increased demand for products and services
- Improvements in service delivery (e.g. improved interaction between service providers and clients)
- Changes in behaviour and practices

- Shifts in attitudes, social norms and power relationships
- Enhanced self esteem, self efficacy³⁷

These processes work towards longer-term social change within communities, based on “a process of public and private dialogue through which people themselves define who they are, what they need and how to get what they need in order to improve their own lives. CFSC utilizes dialogue that leads to collective problem identification, decision making and community-based implementation of solutions to development issues.”³⁸ While participatory initiatives still have a specific development objective as their outcome, the emphasis is largely upon the process of the intervention: “The act of people coming together to decide who they are, what they want and how they will obtain what they want... demonstrates success, especially for poor, previously marginalised or excluded people.”³⁹ This encourages local ownership, shared responsibility and empowerment among communities while also creating the potential to impact upon policy and delivery at higher levels.⁴⁰ This approach includes advocacy communication as a tool to highlight policy issues at the decision-making level and to reduce the impact of forces that restrict or oppose the inclusive, participatory process.

2.3. FLUIDITY THROUGH THE SPECTRUM

While the above approaches place different emphasis on design, process and outcome, it is crucial to recognise that there is in fact great potential for fluidity through the spectrum and the combining of C4D strategies for the greatest impact. Experience has shown that communities involved in participatory communication in development projects are more receptive and responsive to diffusion initiatives, while other cases have proved that a blending of strategies within an initiative can prove most effective. Rather than targeting one methodology, the key is to ensure that strategy design harnesses the power of C4D in every form throughout the development process⁴¹. However, initiatives that simultaneously employ many types and levels of communication necessitate a more complex and sensitive approach to M&E. This will, in turn, impact upon the discussion of best practice evaluation and the potential for designing of a shared set of indicators.

37 Ibid.

38 Communication for Social Change Consortium - Our Mission.

39 Gray-Felder, D in Figueroa, ME, Lawrence Kincaid, D, Rani, M, Lewis, G “Communication for Social Change: An Integrated Model for Measuring the Process and Its Outcomes” (Foreword)

40 Servaes, J “Communication for Development: Making a Difference”

41 See Parks, W “Developing communication and social mobilization indicators to monitor behavioural outcomes.” Background resource paper for the UNICEF ROSA Experts’ Consultation on Strategic Communication for Behaviour and Social Change in South Asia, p.18, Parks notes that studies have shown the futility of trying to pinpoint what exactly triggers, stimulates or sustains individuals and social groups to ‘change’. Instead, planners should strive for a blend rather than seek or rely on the ‘silver bullet.’” For example, a mass media message, may have negligible direct results, but it can have significantly greater impacts when mediated through other channels of communication, such as interpersonal or group communication (Inagaki 2007, p.35)

2.4. INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES (ICTS)

The common denominator throughout these approaches is the use of a wide range of ICTs to deliver information and promote discussion and participation.⁴² ICTs provide a very substantial opportunity for C4D as they facilitate information access and enable community participation in policy processes as well as creating multi-stakeholder partnerships.⁴³ The capacity of ICTs for development has increased dramatically in the past decade as access to and provision of technologies has democratized the use of communication channels across the developing world. This allows C4D initiatives to cut across social divides and reach those most at risk of missing out on the information revolution while encouraging everyone to get involved in issues that affect their lives and their development.

3. Planning, Monitoring & Evaluation

The emphasis on results in the UN (along with the recognition of C4D as a significant element of the international drive to attain the MDGs) demands a clear and precise framework to analyse impact and demonstrate performance.⁴⁴

Monitoring and Evaluation provide tools for organisations to assess the performance of C4D programmes, through measuring progress and managing programme inputs and outputs to achieve the highest outcome results. In the right context M&E establishes links between past, present and future interventions and results, and demonstrates accountability. It provides critical information that empowers policy makers to make better-informed decisions⁴⁵ as well as help build country capacity for future development, organisation and learning.

Monitoring is a continuous process that provides regular feedback regarding the development – direction, consistency, outputs – of a programme. Systematic monitoring can offer early indications of progress and success and can be used to identify the potential for improvement in service delivery.

42 For instance, where a diffusion campaign will depend on a local radio station to educate through regular soap opera stories, a participatory campaign may use a radio station to communicate timings and locations of community meetings, thereby promoting local dialogue.

43 United Nations System Report of the Director-General of UNESCO on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 50/130, including the recommendations of the tenth UN Inter-Agency Round Table on Communication for Development p.4

44 This is clearly reflected in a survey of UN agency staff involved with C4D initiatives carried out in preparation for the 11th C4D Round Table, which expresses the crucial need for well-documented evidence proving the value of C4D. *“The added value of C4D to accelerate results is not well known”; “collect good practices and evidence of how C4D contributes to impact and showcase these during high level meetings with decision makers”; “A solid evidence base is an essential precondition to acceptance of C4D as a core strategy of successful development.”* World Bank / The Communication Initiative (draft): “Institutionalising Communication for Development within the UN System” Executive Summary

45 Segone, M (ed.) UNICEF *New Trends in Development Evaluation* p.12

Evaluation analyses the relevance, appropriateness, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of development efforts, based on agreed criteria and benchmarks. Ideally, the systematic and objective study of programme design, implementation and results should aim to identify what works and why, highlight intended and unintended results, and provide strategic lessons for the future.⁴⁶ Evaluation can be undertaken both prior to an initiative (formative) and after it (summative). However, while most resources are directed towards summative evaluation, formative evaluation, planning and research is equally critical in providing baseline data, identifying desired outcomes and designing a project.

For M&E to be effective in the context of C4D, a common approach to harnessing the power of communication throughout the design, planning, monitoring and evaluation stages of any initiative must be pursued within the UN system. There is a strong case for integrating C4D into all UN programme development and for UN communicators therefore to be at the table from the outset, working alongside results professionals, programme managers, M&E specialists and statisticians to ensure that C4D indicators are included in the wider picture of results-based management.⁴⁷

With a degree of confusion over the concept and practical application of C4D across the UN, there is also a certain divergence about what M&E of C4D is and what it should achieve. This discrepancy is exacerbated by the wide range of analytical tools that are available to and employed by the large number of UN partners in the MDG and national development goal projects.⁴⁸

Where some M&E strategies are designed to obtain clean, quantitative results, measuring inputs against outputs and outcomes, participatory analyses of C4D initiatives focus more on processes. The extent to which an initiative fosters community learning, decision-making, critical self-analysis and collective action – the process – is as significant as the development objective itself. Accordingly, M&E needs to include a far broader range of more qualitative factors: “points of resistance to change; how organisations both constrain and empower people with regard to change; those aspects of change potential that are limited to certain contexts and those that are transferable across contexts; how innovations gain leverage within social and political structures; and how people actually do (or do not) change behaviour patterns.”⁴⁹ Social changes can often be too fluid, too long-term or too intangible to quantify in more traditional ways and require a similarly nuanced mode of analysis, which makes producing data that can be used in a results-based management system more challenging.

46 “The Evaluation Policy of UNDP” Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme and of the United Nations Population Fund. (Annual Session 2006) p.5

47 Da Costa, P. Correspondence with consultant.

48 World Bank, “World Congress on Communication for Development: Lessons, Challenges and the Way Forward.” p.98-99

49 Segone, M (ed.) UNICEF “*New Trends in Development Evaluation*” p.10

3.1. COMMONLY USED APPROACHES TO MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The full version of this paper⁵⁰ provides an overview of the main approaches that are currently employed in the field of M&E and which have application to C4D. The paper categorises the M&E approaches into two distinct categories: Diffusion Based and Participatory. The M&E approaches under Diffusion based tools and approaches are mostly conventional, quantitative research techniques that obtain and analyse statistical findings. These include approaches such as **behaviour change comparisons/behavioural surveillance surveys; cost benefit/cost effectiveness analysis; experimental impact evaluation studies; knowledge, attitudes, behaviours, and practices (KABP) surveys; logical framework analysis; media coverage analysis, policy change analysis; propensity score matching; public expenditure tracking surveys; rapid rural appraisal; regression analysis; and tracking surveys.**

Participatory approaches are important in promoting dialogue and building capacity towards community empowerment and ownership. Reflection at stakeholder level can generate greater appreciation of process and results and also, most importantly, help communities articulate their development needs, and move towards designing and implementation of future projects. Depending on how they are applied, which can be in more or less participatory ways, these approaches can provide a framework for decision-making. Participatory M&E approaches include: **ethnographic action research (EAR); most significant change (MSC); outcome mapping; participatory rural communication appraisal; and social network analysis**

Where more traditional, quantitative evaluation techniques fail to appreciate the increasingly complex nature of many development initiatives, participatory methods focus on innovative ways to assess less tangible outcomes alongside the principal objective and often use more qualitative analyses. There is some difference of opinion as to the value of quantitative against qualitative data, but increasingly there are calls for an appropriate combination of both. In terms of statistical evidence and securing funding from donors there is still a preference for “hard” data produced from standard, quantitative evaluation techniques.⁵¹ As with the approaches to C4D themselves, these modes of M&E should not be seen as mutually exclusive, nor as rigidly defined in every case, rather as a complementary set of methods that can be adapted and when used in the right combination can provide a suitable strategy for pragmatic evaluation and clear reporting.

50 For the full version of the paper http://www.undg.org/docs/9918/5_Background_Paper_M&E_final.pdf

51 Jacobson, T. “Participatory Communication: The Case for Quantitative Assessment” *The Drum Beat* 381.

Participatory approaches to M&E focus heavily on analysing process goals such as dialogue and empowerment, yet each initiative still has a specific outcome goal to be measured. A diffusion of information programmes designed in consultation with local community members may choose to assess the outcome goal with quantitative data, but will also need the analytical capacity to account for and understand the value added by the element of participation. As a tool for advocating for C4D's key role in the UN system, M&E must therefore seek to assess the extent to which participation meets both process and outcome goals in a more precise, comparable manner.

In order to drive C4D into the UN development framework at both theoretical and operational levels, the above methodologies must be considered in the context of achieving results and more specifically managing for development results (MfDR), defined as '... a management strategy focused on development performance and on sustainable improvements in country outcomes.'⁵² It offers an effective model for thinking about results and has informed efforts in the OECD to embed communication strategies within its development agenda. Where current practices within the UN are being, and can continue to be, more systematically positioned within the results agenda, there is real potential for progress within the institutionalisation of C4D.

Yet the process of measuring C4D should not only produce results: it should also seek to ask and determine *whose* results they are. As the development system shifts focus and approach, so C4D evaluators should set out to ensure their systems of measurement involve the stakeholder fully and are driven by demand. As the understanding and appreciation of C4D grows within the broad field of development, the next step is to use and build upon current methodologies to harness the power of stakeholder participation in cultivating M&E, implementing and reporting on it. This feeds directly into the issue of ownership: specifically, the concept of building country capacity, of raising awareness and developing systems, so that local ownership of development becomes a realistic and tangible objective.⁵³ It is not only the processes of C4D initiatives themselves that have the ability to make communication available and give voice to those groups marginalized by social inequality, but also the way development agencies choose to evaluate these efforts. As discussed above, some approaches will have more natural scope to do this than others, but stakeholder communication, involvement and ownership should not be limited to methodologies that are more participatory in nature: efforts should be made to build this element into any evaluation practice.

52 da Costa, P. "Managing for and Communicating Development Results." Background Paper Prepared for the OECD Informal Network of DAC Development Communicators (DevCom Network)" p.5

53 da Costa, P. Correspondence with consultant.

4. Challenges to Monitoring and Evaluating C4D

Nearly all approaches to M&E in this field have to face certain difficulties posed by the very nature of C4D and development aid in general. The extent to which methodologies can overcome these challenges is important and should be taken into account when creating indicators for best practice.

- **CAUSALITY / ATTRIBUTION** — Evaluation teams face the challenge of isolating the impact of a C4D programme from the influence of other political, economic and social factors. Without intervention the observed changes may have occurred anyway, at a lower level or slower pace as part of natural development/progression or could have been stimulated by other factors such as private and public investment from domestic, international and traded resources, all of which drive development.
- **RESOURCES** — Constraints over resources such as funding, personnel and time do exist and can exert a significant amount of pressure on efforts to evaluate C4D programmes.
- **NATURE OF OUTCOMES** — Some process goals and outcomes such as empowerment, governance, dialogue and equality can be hard to measure and define in terms that can be used for analysis and comparison.
- **TOOLS OF MEASUREMENT – A LACK OF CONSENSUS** — Approaches to M&E differ greatly as does the information they provide. As a result, it may be difficult to compare studies that are quite similar in objective and process if they have been analysed using different methodologies.
- **TIME FRAME** — In many areas targeted for development, such as agriculture and conservation, changes happen over long periods of time: setting/imposing an unrealistic time frame for impact evaluation would reduce the potential for providing the most complete and accurate results. Conversely, for an initiative conceived in a short time frame, out of necessity, such as humanitarian relief in a crisis situation, there may not be time to construct and implement a comprehensive M&E framework. And yet this is one area where the ability to reference tried and tested approaches, as guidance for future emergency interventions could be of most use.
- **DEFINING THE TARGET AUDIENCE** — When initiatives are designed using a medium with a broad reach, it is difficult to define a specific target audience, as in the case of radio or television campaigns or dialogues for broader social change.

- **GAINING ACCESS** — ICTs can offer impressive opportunities for development but are not a panacea. In addition to supporting ICT growth, care must be taken to ensure that ICT provision does not simply serve to exacerbate existing economic and social divides and further marginalize the poor through a disparity of access and capability. Approaches to monitoring and evaluating ICTs initiatives must therefore give careful consideration to the enabling factors related to ICTs provision/access.
- **REPORTING FAILURE** — In searching for best practice methodologies, published studies have a bias towards successful initiatives which tend to be “boutique” in nature, with the consequence of under-reporting weaker projects even when they are most valuable for learning processes. In terms of M&E, this raises the question of their wider applicability and relevance.
- **REPORTING FOR THE LONGER TERM** — A study of C4D initiatives revealed that there is a significant lack of rigorous analysis and reporting on the long-term effects of communication, yet the outcomes of many C4D initiatives can only be assessed over a longer period of time than is often granted.⁵⁴
- **CREATING SUSTAINABILITY AND CAPACITY** — Linked to this, sustainability and capacity development are central concepts in moving C4D up the international agenda. Tools promoting participation and empowerment can help to create a more sustainable development environment but again, more work needs to be done on reporting and developing this issue within the context of M&E. The reasons behind these gaps and limitations need careful consideration - in particular the general dearth of resources for sustained long-term M&E and related capacity development in this sector.
- **PROACTIVE AND REACTIVE INITIATIVES** — The nature of a C4D initiative itself can throw up difficulties in the field of M&E, as observed in two interviews.⁵⁵ Agencies are involved in a lot of preventative work to avoid a problem occurring as well as conventional development work to deal with a problem that already exists. However it is much harder to measure and assess the impact of preventative measures and it is very difficult to demonstrate impact when something *didn't occur* as the result of an initiative. This may be where tools such as story-telling can add significant value.
- **FROM THE INDIVIDUAL TO THE WHOLE** — By their nature, boutique-style projects fail to tackle the root causes of poor service delivery and the structural changes necessary for development. One project at a time will not add up to development, especially if it is developed and implemented in isolation from the policies and responsibilities of the developing country government. While this is not of specific relevance to approaches to M&E, it is important to emphasise the point at this stage.

54 Inagaki, N “Communicating the Impact of Communication for Development – Recent Trends in Empirical Research.” p.41

55 Interviews conducted with World Bank staff.

- **GLOBALISATION** — The increasing intensity and velocity of relationships between countries⁵⁶; the growing inequality within and between countries, and between individuals and groups—provides an overarching challenge to the effective implementation and M&E of C4D. The MDGs measure progress in tackling poverty by aggregating and averaging change at national level, but do not address issues of distribution. In this way some of the goals could in theory be achieved without in practice reducing inequality.⁵⁷ All development campaigns must be addressed in this context and work towards alleviating these disparities, not increasing them.
- **ORGANISATIONAL CHALLENGES** — Significant organisational challenges within the UN hinder the institutionalisation of C4D and its M&E. These include: tensions between policy at the centre and operations at the field level and working through country-led systems; working with and answering to different donors or governments; operating under substantial time, personnel and funding restraints while needing to achieve and prove results; and ensuring that C4D is recognised as an effective development strategy by practitioners involved in other fields.

5. Research, Monitoring and Evaluation in Practice

The case studies described in the full version⁵⁸ of the paper, demonstrate how good practices of research, monitoring and evaluation can contribute to the success of a communication initiative and also help to uncover the reasons for weaknesses. Some are very specific examples; some show how evaluation might transfer across similar initiatives; others are more general. There are very few well-documented examples of good practice in the field of M&E for C4D: this raises major questions about the level of resources dedicated to M&E processes over time, including those for capacity development. Where examples do exist, they re-occur throughout the literature. Conversely it appears relatively easy to find examples of C4D initiatives. There is definitely great scope for future work on the M&E of C4D at all levels, an area that remains in need of greater investment.

The table below is a theoretical model showing how M&E practices can link together in a simple progression to provide clear results. It offers a best practice model for the research, monitoring and evaluation of a programme for the prevention and control of avian influenza/pandemic influenza and merits consideration for its simple framework and descriptive capacity.

56 Held et al. *Global Transformations: Politics, Economics and Culture*.

57 UNESCO, “Towards a Common UN System Approach: The Role of Communication for Development in Achieving the MDGs” Background Paper prepared for the 10th UN Inter-Agency Round Table on Communication for Development p.18

58 UNDG, for full version of the paper http://www.undg.org/docs/9918/5_Background_Paper_M&E_final.pdf

Table 1. Linking Programme Goals, Results, Activities with Research, Monitoring and Evaluation

Level	Avian Influenza/pandemic influenza example	Research, Monitoring Evaluation
Programme Goal	Contribute to the prevention and containment of avian influenza and human influenza epidemics in XXX	Impact Evaluation Baseline, Ending, Time after Strategic Communication ended
Programme Results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce morbidity and mortality and minimize social disruption associated with pandemic 	Outcome Evaluation Baseline, Endline
Behavioural Results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rural poultry farmers send reports of suspected bird cases immediately (within 24 hours) to the local veterinary authorities (one of several behavioural results) 	Behavioural Monitoring, Significant Change Monitoring Evaluation Baseline, During, End
Activities (inputs, outputs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training of interpersonal communicators • Community radio bulletins • Training of farmer support groups • Local administrative mobilisation • Point-of-service promotion at field stations • Mobilisation of school students 	Implementation Monitoring, Pre-Testing During – As Planned? Reach? Quality? Satisfaction? Participation? Readjusting?

Note: XXX refers to country. The upward arrows indicate the upward logical linkage. If implementation activities are carried out successfully, this should lead to achievement of behavioural results. In turn, if behavioural results are achieved, this should lead to achievement of programme results, and so on.⁵⁹

6. Best Practice Methodology and Conclusions

Recommendations provided below⁶⁰ relating to best practice methodology for the M&E of C4D should serve to inform discussions at the Round Table over the potential for a system-wide framework governing C4D initiatives within the UN. A central challenge to identifying best M&E practices is the fact that we are effectively aiming to evaluate evaluation techniques but there is no standardized way to measure one approach against another. Comparison is further complicated by

⁵⁹ Parks, W, "Essentials for Excellence. Researching, Monitoring and Evaluating Strategic Communication for Behaviour and Social Change with Special Reference to the Prevention and Control of Avian Influenza/Pandemic Influenza" p.5

⁶⁰ Developed based on the research for the paper and interviews carried out with staff from UNDP, UNICEF, UNESCO, World Bank, CFSC and independent consultants.

the fact that several tools for M&E may be used together, effectively multiplying the combination of subjects under comparison.

Dealing with Attribution / Causality As mentioned above, evaluators consistently encounter the problem of attribution, or causality, which provides a central challenge to results-based management in the context of development. Given the complexity of communication initiatives, their outputs, outcomes, and impacts, best practice should always aim to create the analytical space to allow for the emergence of unexpected results and to establish causality for these results. This information can feed back into the programme for further refinement and may also provide suggestions for future initiatives relating to other development goals. Several analytical approaches seek to overcome the issue of attribution internally with varying degrees of accuracy,⁶¹ but “controlled comparisons... to estimate what happens when strategic communication is in place versus what would happen without it... probably remain the best way to address the problem of attributing effect.”⁶² However this approach is resource-heavy in terms of personnel, funding (to repeat it on a control group) and time, and also has ethical considerations. Time series analysis offers another approach to establishing causality through the systematic modification of the programme and consequent assessment of the resulting changes over time, but this again demands time and capital and requires the programme to be sufficiently flexible to permit such modifications.⁶³

However, development and sustainable change are, by nature, long-term goals. Where the measures mentioned above are not a practical option, a thorough baseline analysis combined with well-conceived indicators should help evaluators establish links between inputs and outputs. Yet the challenge lies in moving beyond immediate outputs to track and prove links to eventual outcomes and impacts in the longer term. For any initiative that hopes to establish some level of understanding relating to attribution, there should be an ongoing M&E system that provides short, medium and longer-term results and also promotes a continuous dialogue between these stages. The challenge is to demonstrate and convey outcomes and impact of an initiative rather than immediate outputs – which is far simpler.

Measure Where the Money is – Working Within Resources Available While there is great need for enhanced awareness and understanding of C4D and a consequent increased allocation of resources, teams must also aim to work within the resources available. M&E approaches should focus available funds for analysis to where the greatest investment has been made – literally speaking, to monitor where the money is. Such an approach, while limiting the scope for a multi-faceted evaluation, can

61 For instance, Outcome Mapping, MSC, Propensity Score Matching

62 PARKS,W “Essential for Excellence. Researching, Monitoring and Evaluating Strategic Communication for Behaviour and Social Change with Special Reference to the Prevention and Control of Avian Influenza/Pandemic Influenza” p.16

63 PARKS,W “Essential for Excellence. Researching, Monitoring and Evaluating Strategic Communication for Behaviour and Social Change with Special Reference to the Prevention and Control of Avian Influenza/Pandemic Influenza” p.16

nonetheless be highly useful in demonstrating that the investment has made a difference. Moreover, focussing measurement on specific aspects of a programme and managing M&E in detail increases the accuracy of the data obtained and helps overcome time constraints. Monitoring systems that are continuously gathering data effectively can feed valuable information into final evaluations, including those that are carried out in 'less than a month'.⁶⁴ The Real World Evaluation (RWE) approach has been developed in response to some of the challenges discussed in this section.⁶⁵ The principle stages of this methodology are illustrated in Annex II of the full version of this paper (available online).

Measuring to Establish All the Results A second challenge within the context of application and experience is that “*you get the results you measure for.*” This is overlaid by the fact that processes, outputs and outcomes, measured and presented in different C4D programme contexts hold different levels of currency with different UN agencies. The vast majority of documented cases show a clear trend for employing evaluation techniques that reflect the nature of the communication process itself: the use of qualitative evaluation is biased overwhelmingly towards projects that are predominantly participatory, horizontal and process-focused while most diffusion projects are assessed quantitatively. Studies, including a World Bank study of 35 C4D initiatives, only one study investigating the impacts of a mass media diffusion campaign employed a quantitative approach to monitoring and evaluation.⁶⁶ There is nothing wrong with this but the choice of M&E employed can affect the success of ascertaining outcomes and impacts. Choosing a quantitative methodology for a broadly diffusion-based initiative or qualitative and participatory methods for two-way participatory initiatives, might fail to capture the underlying, structural factors that impact upon the success of a project.

Combining Approaches to M&E to Provide Better Feedback A blend of methodologies within an evaluation strategy should create a sufficient degree of flexibility to permit lessons to be learned from field to boardroom-level, to improve programme design. Discussion of best practice methodology should discourage current trends towards a divide between quantitative and qualitative approaches. Participatory strategies are continuously challenged by power imbalances imposed by existing social hierarchies and cultural differences: corresponding M&E approaches encourage qualitative investigation to uncover such issues that can jeopardise success. Yet diffusion-based strategies can also be challenged by similar power imbalances. Therefore the approach to analysing the impact of these types of campaigns should no less be able to account for this and findings of the quantitative research on the causal link between issues and root causes should contribute to the formulation of

64 Davies, R “Social Network Analysis as an Evaluation Tool: Experiences with International Development Aid Programmes” p.1

65 Segone, M “Country-led monitoring and evaluation systems: Better evidence, better policies, better development results.” p.201

66 Morris, N “The diffusion and participatory models: a comparative analysis” in Hemer, O and Tufté, T (ed.) *Media and Glocal Change*; Inagaki, N “Communicating the Impact of Communication for Development – Recent Trends in Empirical Research”

holistic development approaches.⁶⁷ It is essential to stress that in designing an evaluation neither quantitative nor qualitative methodologies are mutually exclusive – both are necessary for a comprehensive and informative analysis. The key is in the balance and approach used to report results to different audiences.

Reporting for and Aligning Results Evaluation teams must “write to their audience” and align their programme results with the concerns of the body they are reporting to (for example, national development goals when reporting to government; agency development goals to donor agencies; and the MDGs to the UN). Until the concept of C4D is more deeply institutionalised within the UN operating framework (which may allow for future refinement of approaches to evaluating C4D), analysis should aim to provide for all of the above so that agencies, donors and management may best use the information for their ends. However, this recommendation is made with a significant caveat. There is a distinct difference between measuring for the results you want to achieve and measuring for the results you want to be able to prove a programme has achieved. Moreover, as one interviewee noted, it is “sometimes as important to report failures as to report successes.”⁶⁸

Maintaining Objectivity The design of M&E for an initiative must be carried out objectively and as a consequence be able to account for all possible outcomes and shortcomings, as opposed to using tactical research to support pre-existing views. Several interviewees had seen a significant amount of M&E that was tailored to get the data and results evaluators wanted (‘opinion research’), both in terms of justifying funding from donors and in terms of external perceptions of C4D, which often reflected a lack of conceptual understanding and also foreclosed the chance to obtain all the results that exist.

Working Though Country-Led Systems The Paris Declaration and the Accra Agenda for Action both emphasise that working through country-level systems and strengthening country capacity is central to moving development forward. However, practical application has not fully materialized.

Several interviewees referred to a degree of ‘tension’ or ‘deliberation’ between policy at the centre and operations in the field. This mainly revolves around how policies can be fine-tuned to be more effective and relevant⁶⁹ and constitutes, in effect, a demand-driven approach to improving M&E systems. This tension was highlighted by the UNESCO paper for the 10th round table on C4D⁷⁰

67 Inagaki, N “Communicating the Impact of Communication for Development – Recent Trends in Empirical Research” p.46

68 da Costa, P Correspondence with consultant

69 Interview with members of UNDP and World Bank

70 UNESCO, “Towards a Common UN System Approach: The Role of Communication for Development in Achieving the MDGs” Background Paper prepared for the 10th UN Inter-Agency Round Table on Communication for Development p.23

and, evidence suggests, is currently developing through debate and discussion in several agencies.⁷¹ Country offices have a key responsibility to drive the fine-tuning of policy and move the agenda forward by asking for the right tools to do so. Without this, organisations will struggle to streamline global strategy. On the other hand, central management and HQ teams have a responsibility to ensure that recommendations for M&E practices are not only available but also applicable, easy to understand and can be used in field situations. Greater efforts in improving communication, coordination and cooperation among agency offices and between agencies would help to overcome the knowledge gap between country and central offices.

Identifying the Strategic Intent The recently-published UNICEF work on country-led M&E discusses the concept of strategic intent as an “essential requisite for any relevant and efficient country-led evaluation.”⁷² Aligned with, and moving beyond the concept of results-based management, strategic intent takes the end-result as its starting point for designing and evaluating a campaign but aims to provide greater depth and understanding, enabling “judgements on intended and unintended, positive and negative effects of the results achieved”⁷³ through a less linear approach to evaluation.

Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation: Key Parts of the Initiative To be most effective, M&E should be incorporated into any initiative from the outset with a baseline analysis. An assessment of needs feeds into results-based management by directing structure and informing overall design, identifying objectives and indicators and establishing the timeline of intermediate monitoring stages to track inputs and outputs. All information gathered can then be fed back into the initiative in a logical and coherent way. However, in practice the baseline evaluation is often not undertaken or is only partially carried out. World Bank interviewees estimated that between 25% and 50% of all communication initiatives now employ some form of baseline survey. They also stated that their initiatives enjoyed some success in feeding monitoring results back into project development. Yet this example falls short of ideal standards and suggests there is a need for further grounding of this system at the operational level. Successive papers and reports have recommended that C4D become an essential element in any development initiative and that a corresponding communication needs assessment be incorporated into the initiative.

Ownership of Results The current emphasis on country capacity, ownership and empowerment requires the use of methodologies that harness stakeholder communication and participation toward achieving that goal. Where openly inclusive approaches such as those discussed below are

71 Interviews conducted with agency staff.

72 Segone, M “Country-led monitoring and evaluation systems: Better evidence, better policies, better development results.” p.56

73 Segone, M “Country-led monitoring and evaluation systems: Better evidence, better policies, better development results.” p.75

not suitable for evaluation, it remains essential to promote participation through the adaptation of other methods in order to foster local ownership of results.

A Tailored Toolkit Approach to Methodologies As discussed throughout this paper, to deal with the complexities and challenges of monitoring and evaluating C4D projects or project components, a tailored toolkit approach to methodologies is required. The type(s) of methodology selected will depend both on the type of project, but also on time, resources and organizational challenges. As such, suggesting best practice, in terms of selection of methodologies that can apply to all C4D evaluations, would be impossible as well as futile. Instead, the evaluator should decide at the outset of each evaluation what would be the appropriate set of methodologies (quantitative and qualitative) and toolkits for the specific intervention. Nonetheless, it is worth highlighting a few methodologies, which represent “state of the art” techniques that practitioners should consider adding to their existing toolbox of evaluation approaches. It is also critical to emphasise that these and other qualitative processes will not provide a replacement for gathering and analysing statistical data. Findings from these evaluations should always be allied to quantitative analyses for maximum impact and effect.

Most Significant Change is an approach to M&E that is gaining prominence. The various strengths and value of MSC in evaluating individual projects and larger scale initiatives are detailed in the full version of this paper. It can be used to evaluate bottom-up initiatives that do not have predetermined outcomes against which to evaluate, encourages analysis as well as data collection and requires few professional skills to implement, creating space for everyone to “tell a story”. Moreover, it is not merely a tool for M&E but also an intervention goal in itself, involving cooperation, contribution and participation at every level. The ability to absorb and streamline large amounts of data in complex situations where quantitative data is not applicable, is where MSC may prove most useful in moving towards UN cooperation /synchronisation over assessing the impact of C4D.

Outcome Mapping is another methodology with a similarly powerful capacity for M&E, and which also incorporates a strong planning component. This approach holds strong currency among researchers and practitioners as a valuable way to bridge the gap between differing groups of stakeholders, to set indicators and to state intentions. Developing a clear and straightforward framework for its use by non-specialists would enable this approach to become an authoritative tool for planning and M&E of communication for development.

LogFrame A logical approach linking goals to outcomes should form the basis of any M&E process and a strong example of this is the LogFrame. The LogFrame allows the programme team to work through the inputs and outputs of a programme in a precise manner driven by the desired outcomes. In practice programme teams often struggle to determine results because they are

unable to operate the logical framework of how various elements of their programme link together. A basic understanding of M&E grounded in an approach such as this could be one way to progress impact assessment of C4D initiatives as an interim measure and lay the groundwork for more nuanced evaluation over time. As such the LogFrame should not just be an option to be considered for an evaluation but rather a logical model of change that should drive any M&E system.

In drawing some conclusions from the above analyses, it is clear that in every situation a toolkit approach to M&E is critical. It allows stakeholders to maintain flexibility in the face of developing conditions and provides a rich variety of resources to draw on that is tailored to local conditions. Evaluators should avoid the theoretical and practical divide between qualitative and quantitative processes and align their results with the interests of the supervising bodies. Proper research and planning should not be overlooked when conceiving a C4D programme as it will inform direction, design and ultimately help to create conditions that are conducive to success. In a results-based management system, results must also drive monitoring and evaluation. To move forward, it is absolutely critical that results are collected and presented in a sound and coherent manner in order to convince management, donors and development workers in other fields of the effectiveness of C4D.

7. Draft Indicators

Building on these recommendations and analysis, this section proposes some general draft indicators for assessing the effectiveness of C4D.

An indicator is a “measure of inputs, processes, outputs, outcomes and impacts.”⁷⁴ It is information on a particular circumstance that is measurable in some form. It serves as an “approximation of complex processes, events and trends” and combined with information from the programme itself can be used in series to track progress towards an established objective. A group of indicators

Checklist for Indicators

- Validity: Does it measure the result(s)?
- Reliability: Is it a consistent measure over time and, if supplied externally, will it continue to be available?
- Sensitivity: When a change occurs will it be sensitive to those changes?
- Equality: Does it have a way to measure the comparative situation for women?
- Simplicity: Will it be easy to collect and analyse the information?
- Utility: Will the information be useful for decisionmaking and learning?
- Affordable: Do we have the resources to collect the information?

should be easy to interpret, easy to measure and limited in number to a critical selection that have definitive applicability to the development objective.⁷⁵ Indicators should also be able to grow with an initiative.

The 10th round table background paper emphasised that C4 indicators must be “an integral part of every project planning process at the upstream design stage”⁷⁶ and the work in this paper reinforces this fundamental point. The checklist for indicators provided in the adjacent box gives a clear direction in identifying criteria for measurement.⁷⁷

These indicators are presented with a caveat. It is easy to be overly enthusiastic about the creation and use of indicators within M&E and both researchers and practitioners interviewed for this paper have experienced cases where 300-400 indicators have been created – in practice far too many to provide a functional framework for precise analysis and clear reporting. Indicators should adhere to the SMART framework to ensure that they are and remain specific, measurable, action-oriented, relevant and time-bound. Experience and discussion with practitioners suggests that to ensure practical application, indicators should be limited to around 20-25 main indicators per project.

The following headings are proposed as a framework in which to think about indicators. As this paper emphasises the fluidity through the spectrum of diffusion- and participation-based approaches to C4D and the evaluation of these initiatives, the use of indicators is proposed in the context of a toolbox. These categories will not all be equally relevant to each C4D initiative and the aim is that they be selected dependent on conditions on the ground.

The suggested indicators would be structured around five principal **Communication for Development results**. For each result, **key questions** are proposed to arrive at potential indicators. **Sample indicators** are provided in tabular form; finally these indicate the type of **M&E system** that might be appropriate to gather the data necessary to verify the suggested indicators. The structure can be conceptualised as a process of “drilling down” from the desired C4D result to ways of verifying how far this outcome is achieved in practice. The five principal C4D results are:

75 Parks, W “Developing communication and social mobilization indicators to monitor behavioural outcomes.” Background resource paper for the UNICEF ROSA Experts’ Consultation on Strategic Communication for Behaviour and Social Change in South Asia, p.3

76 UNESCO, “Towards a Common UN System Approach: The Role of Communication for Development in Achieving the MDGs” Background Paper prepared for the 10th UN Inter-Agency Round Table on Communication for Development p.31

77 UNDG, “Report on the Tuvalu National Consultation.” p.11

- **Result 1: the level of local awareness about the development programme and the issues covered by the initiative:** the extent to which local stakeholders and subjects of the programme are aware of the existence of the development programme, its aims and objectives or of the issues that are the subject of the initiative; evidence of local media coverage or local communications about the programme or initiative.
- **Result 2: evidence of direct impact** as a result of the programme both in development goals attained, behaviour change visible and whether the impact of the development programme is sustainable beyond the duration of the specific initiative.
- **Result 3: participation and empowerment:** the extent to which there is evidence that local communities and public agencies have participated in shaping and developing the initiative, including in monitoring and evaluating the programme itself; evidence that local participation has helped increase the impact and therefore the results of the programme; evidence of local ownership in the management or direction of the programme.
- **Result 4: level of media coverage:** evidence of local media coverage or local communications about the programme or initiative; willingness of media organisations to engage in discussing and/or promoting the objectives of the programme.
- **Result 5: country capacity:** evidence that the country capacity to sustain development initiatives of this kind has increased; where relevant, that increased capacities have been internalised within the relevant public bodies

Below is the provisional grid setting out the five results. This should be treated as a toolbox in that the indicators most relevant to the desired results should be selected and the most appropriate M&E approaches adopted. This will also hold where C4D is one component of a broader development programme – in this case there may be a broader set of indicators into which some of these can be inserted to test the impact of the specific communication initiative.

Components	Key Questions	Possible Focus of Indicators	Guidance on appropriate M&E methodologies to extract relevant data
<p>the level of local awareness about the development programme and issues</p>	<p>Are local stakeholders aware that the development programme is in place?</p>	<p>Evidence of local communication about the programme – e.g. survey data</p>	<p>KABP surveys using market research tools such as surveys Experimental impact evaluation studies</p>
	<p>Are they aware what the goals of the programme are?</p>	<p>Evidence of local media coverage Evidence of community knowledge prior to and subsequent to a development programme</p>	<p>Tracking surveys e.g. rapid rural appraisal Media coverage analysis Propensity score matching</p>
	<p>Has knowledge of the issues covered by the programme increased?</p>	<p>Demonstrable increased knowledge Behaviour change based on new awareness Evidence of peer to peer teaching/information dissemination</p>	<p>Tracking Surveys Behaviour change comparisons Most significant change Qualitative interviews Logical Framework analysis</p>
<p>evidence of direct impact</p>	<p>Is there evidence that the development goals were attained, wholly or in part?</p>	<p>Results achieved measured against predetermined targets (e.g. % take up)</p>	<p>Behaviour change comparisons Behavioural Surveillance surveys</p>
	<p>Is there evidence of behaviour change appropriate to the development initiative?</p>	<p>Evidence that long-term motivation for change and support for change (including financial) exists.</p>	<p>Outcome mapping Most Significant Change Ethnographic action research</p>
	<p>Is there evidence that the change achieved is likely to be sustainable beyond the life of the development programme?</p>	<p>Evidence that long-term motivation for change and support for change (including financial) exists.</p>	<p>Outcome mapping</p>
<p>participation and empowerment</p>	<p>Is there evidence that the change achieved has been so at a reasonable cost and within a reasonable time frame?</p>	<p>Analysis of output benefits against total cost of programme</p>	<p>Cost benefit/cost effectiveness analysis Public expenditure tracking surveys</p>
	<p>Are local communities and public agencies participating in shaping and developing the initiative?</p>	<p>Evidence of active participation in the development of the programme</p>	<p>Most significant Change</p>
	<p>Have local communities participated in the monitoring and evaluation of the programme?</p>	<p>M&E approaches include local communities in design and data gathering</p>	<p>Participatory Rural Communication Appraisal</p>

	Evidence of changes to the programme that result from local interventions Data that shows local communities regard the development programme as their own – e.g. independent initiatives, from below.	Direct surveys of local participants Outcome mapping
	Examples of programming/publications featuring the project or programme	Participatory Rural Communication Appraisal Tracking surveys / outcome mapping
level of media coverage	Defined percentage of total programming Is the broadcasting or circulation accessible to local communities?	Media monitoring Surveys of media and ICT penetration
	Evidence that the issues raised are communicated to take into account local challenges, such as rural and minority issues.	Media coverage analysis
	Evidence that the community has worked in the production of the output	Tracking surveys
	Are a variety of tools used to spread the message of the programme? (such as debates/editorials/advertising?)	Media coverage analysis
	Evidence of media policy promoting programme objectives	Media policy documents or statements by media editors and producers
country capacity	Evidence that performance in the related sector has improved; that positive changes have occurred.	Most Significant change
	Evidence that more development initiatives are sustained for longer periods of time.	Longer term ethnographic action research / MSC
	Evidence that lessons learned from programmes feed into country policies.	Policy change analysis. Used with tracking surveys or outcome mapping may provide further depth and analysis.

8. Final Remarks For The Round Table

“Communication can make real changes, even under the most challenging circumstances.”⁷⁸ However, a crucial part of achieving the MDGs is monitoring and evaluation, which despite gaining centrality and recognition in the past five to ten years has a long way to go before it is applied coherently, consistently and in a coordinated manner within the UN system.

For this reason, and for establishing and embedding best practice methodology, there is value in creating indicators for C4D to support, and exploit the capacity of the rich array of M&E approaches. These indicators can be adapted to local conditions as long as implementers are grounded in the design, application, capabilities and limitations of communication as a tool for development.⁷⁹ But it is vital that any system of indicators is not too elaborate and detailed as daily pressures of work will militate against the adoption of complex systems of indicators. Therefore, it may be useful to focus on a limited number of indicators that concentrate on the “strategic intent” of the programme.

In moving forward, there is need for a concerted effort to establish mechanisms for sharing experience and learning, coordinating analysis and mapping C4D initiatives within the broader context of UN work towards achieving the MDGs. Adopting a common approach to overarching indicators will take the UN operating framework one practical step closer to making this goal a functional reality.

Feedback from interviews indicated recognition of a change of pace in communication projects – momentum is gathering, driven by a growing sense of urgency. This calls for a very adaptive, almost opportunistic approach to designing C4D initiatives and measuring impact. With time at a premium, the aim is to get coverage as quickly and effectively as possible while remaining thorough. In some situations therefore a substantive quantitative assessment may not be possible: in others, there will not be the scope for a deep, qualitative appraisal. However, the ability to build some evaluation process in from the start allows for the progressive monitoring of the programme and can still provide a rich picture of an initiative’s impact at the end.

78 Inagaki, N “Communicating the Impact of Communication for Development – Recent Trends in Empirical Research” p.46

79 Interview with Will Parks

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