The World Congress on Communication for Development
Rome, Italy, 25 – 27 October 2006

COMMUNICATION FOR DEVELOPMENT
Making a Difference

Jan Servaes (Editor)
Nicholas Carah
Martin Hadlow
Eric Louw
Pradip Thomas
University of Queensland

Silvia Balit
Independent Consultant

Maria Celeste H. Cadiz
University of the Philippines Los Baños

Nabil Dajani
American University of Beirut

Cees J. Hamelink
University of Amsterdam

Tom Jacobson
Temple University

Ullamaija Kivikuru
University of Helsinki

John Mayo
Florida State University

Rafael Obregon
Ohio State University

Doug Storey
John’s Hopkins University

Thomas Tufte
Roskilde Universitetssenter

Karin Gwinn Wilkins
University of Texas at Austin

1 January 2007
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Communication for Development is “the art and science of human communication applied to the speedy transformation of a country and the mass of its people from poverty to a dynamic state of economic growth that makes possible greater social equality and the larger fulfilment of the human potential” (Nora Quebral, 1975: 3). Development Communication creates mechanisms to broaden public access to information, empowers grassroots communities to be involved in participatory communication processes and enables communication activities that are grounded in research (World Bank 2006). This document highlights four themes that are central to current mainstream approaches to communication for development; Communication in sustainable development, Health communication, Governance and development, and ICTs for development.

Communication has contributed to the success of many sustainable development programs throughout the developing world. The innovative Rural Communication System established within PRODERITH (Programa de Desarrollo Rural Integrado del Tropico Humedo) in Mexico in the ‘80s is still today an example of the successful use of communication for participatory planning, social change and sharing of knowledge and skills. It has been described as “the greatest process of dialogue ever organised in Mexico”. In addition to the objectives of increasing agricultural production and productivity, improving the living standards of peasants and conserving natural resources, PRODERITH included community participation as a major aim, and the rural communication system played a decisive role from the start and at every stage of the project. Video was used as a resource to promote dialogue, and proved to be an excellent tool to bring the peasants into the planning process. As a result of the communication process facilitated by video, local development plans were planned and executed with the active participation and consensus of rural and indigenous people. More than 700 videos were produced and used to inform, motivate and train over 800,000 rural people. According to the former Director General of the National Water Commission Fernando Gonzalez Villareal, at a cost of less than 2% of the total investment, the communication system contributed to enhanced project implementation and rapid transfer of technology, with the result that the internal rate of return turned out to be 7% higher than initially planned for PRODERITH.

Health and development communication has become crucial as wider development strategies have begun to focus on social and public health. Critical development issues and goals such as population and family planning, primary health care, maternal and child health and, most recently, HIV/AIDS have focussed attention on the role of communication in public health programmes. Effective health communication programmes integrate their strategy in targeting individuals, policy makers and practitioners. For example, Egypt’s Health and Population Program (1980-2006) has reduced the average number of children born in a woman’s lifetime. This was made possible by long term multi-sectoral commitment at the highest levels of the Egyptian government to support national, regional and local communication programs. In Uganda, a current youth reproductive health program uses a radio serial to engage with cultural attitudes toward sex, the program promotes open public discussion to break through taboos and shift social gender norms that put Ugandan youth at risk.
Governance and Development communication reinforces the importance of an engaged and active civil society, especially in developing countries. For example, in India, growing literacy rates have increased the demand for newspapers. This coupled with media liberalisation and a need to locate new markets has lead to local newspapers becoming important sources of information and dialogue in rural areas. The vibrancy of these local newspapers demonstrates the possibilities for the liberalisation of other media channels, especially radio, which could enable the development of dialogue and debate leading to people-oriented social change.

Also ICTs are vital tools in efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals in health, education and community development. They can deliver a range of services, help capacity building, empower communities, and bridge social divides. For example, rural artisans in Thailand are now able to use the internet to market their crafts to a global audience. Urban women in Senegal use the power of networked technologies to advocate for gender policies on employment, and for environments conducive to entrepreneurial activities by women. The Virtual Souk project for artisans in the Middle East and North Africa provides people the opportunity to maintain their traditional livelihood as craftspeople through a system of locally controlled web e-commerce. ICT projects are most successful when deployed as part of an integrated approach to development and social change.

By mapping the field of Communication for Development through these four themes, several policy recommendations are made in key areas in order to advance the theory of the discipline and practice in the field. Recommendations cover legal and supportive frameworks required, donor coordination and policy trajectories to establish a supportive environment in which Communication for Development can continue to flourish. Within these frameworks, specific institutional structures, training and capacity building initiatives are recommended to support best-practice programs that are given long term funding support, and integrated across themes. The recommendations also include support for ICTs that enable the poor, marginalised and indigenous to harness communication for development and social change. Finally, recommendations are made to continue a theoretical practice of Communication for Development to support applied efforts in the field.

Communication for Development is brought about by people who are involved in participatory communication processes that facilitate a sharing of knowledge in order to effect positive development change. There is no universal formula capable of addressing all situations and therefore communication for development and social change initiatives should be based on, respond and adapt to, the cultural, social, political and economic context. Communication that underpins and leads to successful and sustainable development places the people who are most affected at the centre of the discussions, debates, choices and decisions needed to guide their own development.
CONTENTS

Executive Summary

1. Introduction
2. The Basics of Communication for Development
   2.1. Theories and Models
   2.2. Diffusion and Participatory Communication
   2.3. Underlying Premises
   2.4. From Theory to Praxis
3. Current Communication for Development Initiatives
   3.1. Communication in Sustainable Development
      3.1.1. Perspectives and Challenges
      3.1.2. Approaches and Guiding Principles
      3.1.3. Challenges for the Future
      3.1.4. Evidence and Value Added by Communication for Sustainable Development
   3.2. Communication for Development in Health
      3.2.1. Health Communication in brief
      3.2.2. From Behavioural to Ecological Approaches in Health Communication
      3.2.3. Evidence and Value-Added of Effective Communication for Health and Development
      3.2.4. Applying Health Communication to Policies and Practices
   3.3. Communication for Development in Governance
      3.3.1. Approaches, Themes and Levels
      3.3.2. Evidence and Value Added by Governance and Development
      3.3.3. The Potential for Development Communication in the Field of Governance
   3.4. The Role of ICTs for Communication for Development
      3.4.1. The Proliferation and Promise of ICTs
      3.4.2. Overcoming Obstacles to ICT Access and Use
      3.4.3. ICTs as Catalysts for Community Development and Social Change
      3.4.4. ICTs for Development Evidence and Value Added
      3.4.5. Creating Enabling Environments for ICTs
4. Conclusions
   4.1. The Need for New Thinking
   4.2. No Sustainable Development without Communication
   4.3. Main Challenges for the Field of Communication for Development
5. Reference List
1. INTRODUCTION

When Nelson Mandela called on the world to “Make poverty history” his words rang loud and clear across the globe, reverberating in the hearts of millions. “Poverty is not natural” he reminded us all, “it is man-made and it can be overcome and eradicated by the actions of human beings”.

But how far has humankind come in the last 50, 20 or even 10 years in achieving the goal of freeing people from what Mandela called “the prison of poverty”? In the year 2006, it is estimated that 1.3 billion people world-wide still live in absolute poverty. Most are in developing countries, but poverty also reaches into industrialized regions, such as North America and Europe.

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) set by the Member States of the United Nations strive to address critical poverty issues and solve some of the most pressing problems within the next decade. But will they be successful? Are citizens in donor countries fatigued by endless calls to arms? Is there really light at the end of the long, dark tunnel of inequality? Why have we not yet resolved the key problems? Is there enough political will and commitment? And have any poverty alleviation solutions of the past really worked?

In the 21st century, humanity holds within its grasp some of the most powerful technologies ever invented. In particular, modern communication tools have enabled us to make the world a smaller place, as well as providing us with gateways to knowledge and pathways to information. However, these very structures, without which the global economy would not function and humankind, would not be able to instantly communicate across continents, have been relatively marginalized as partners in the development process. Now is the time to recognise the potential and power of these instruments and to utilize them in unshackling people from their “prison of poverty”.

But communication for development and social change is more than satellite television, community radio, mobile phones, ICTs, and the Internet. Certainly, it can call on all these resources. However, at its heart it is about individuals and about employing the most appropriate methods and tools to empower those individuals to set their own agendas and achieve their own defined goals. Often, development projects and programmes have stalled, reversed or even failed for want of simple communication discourse with the recipients. Thus, just as it is unthinkable that an engineer would build a road in Europe or construct a bridge in North America without discussion and interaction with the end-users, so it should be mandatory that the clientele of any donor-funded development project be fully involved in the design, planning and outcome-setting process from the outset of that project’s genesis. To do otherwise, flies in the face of reason. The logic seems obvious. However, every day, donors defy logic by planning grand visions without once consulting with those who will live with the decisions. Therefore, development projects necessarily have to engage with power relationships between the various stakeholders.
For more than 60 years, communication for development professionals have been working with grassroots communities to break the cycle of habit and further enable end-users to interact with donors, not just as partners in development, but leaders in their own advancement. Countless examples exist of measurable outcomes where the ‘value-added’ of communication has aided the successful implementation of worthwhile and life-changing programmes and where locally designed best practices are working to “make poverty history”.

Communication that underpins and leads to successful and sustainable development action puts the people who are most affected at the centre of the discussions, debates, choices and decisions needed to guide their own development. It is a socio-cultural process of dialogue, information-sharing, building mutual understanding, agreeing to collective action and amplifying the voice of people to influence policies that affect their lives. It makes use of a variety of communication vehicles from mass to community media and new technologies to traditional and folk media and interpersonal communication. Its central goal is to empower people to take action to positively effect their own development according to their own cultural and social needs and requirements.

Communication for development, therefore, utilizes the society's entire communication system including interpersonal, social, community, organizational networks as well as conventional and electronic media in a communication environment that underpins knowledge and media accessibility, content diversity and good governance.

To work most effectively communication for development requires an enabling environment that includes:

- Free, independent and pluralistic media systems, accountable to their audiences, through which open dialogue and debate can occur.
- Open, transparent and accountable government that encourages public debate, discussion and input.
- Broad public access to a variety of communication media and channels, as well as a regulatory environment that promotes pro-poor licensing for local radio and low cost universal access to Internet and telephone services.
- An open society in which all groups and sectors are able to participate fully in development discussions, debates and decision making processes.

Nelson Mandela's 2005 call to the world to “make poverty history” recognised this environment. He said that we live in “times in which the world boasts breathtaking advances in science, technology, industry and wealth accumulation”. However, given that islands of plenty exist within a sea of injustice, he ranked the scourges of poverty and inequality “alongside slavery and apartheid as social evils”.

For fatigued citizens in donor countries, is it a battle lost or a battle which can be won? The World Bank has estimated that it would require the contribution of only 1% of developing countries’ consumption to abolish extreme poverty. The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations goes a step further in simplifying the challenge and presenting it in more personal terms. It says that a
contribution by the citizens of developed countries of just US$13 per person per year would solve the problem of poverty. A small price to pay to ‘make poverty history.’
2. THE BASICS OF COMMUNICATION FOR DEVELOPMENT

Historians have eloquently explained how each historical epoch has had to solve a particular problem. While feeding the people was the major challenge during the agricultural age, the industrial age provided material well-being. Now we are said to be living in the information age with its demands on ever more and faster (universal) services. In each epoch initial problems of scarcity (hunger, poverty, and information poverty) have been taken over by more sophisticated structural problems: over-abundance (pollution and waste, extreme wealth and information overload), inequality (ecological, economic, educational, and cultural), and (digital and other) divides. In this overview we wish to concentrate on the issue of “communication for development”, sometimes also called “development communication”, or “communication for social change”. How to deal with these issues in real world environments will be the key challenge for citizens, and how to regulate this in a democratic way will be the challenge for public authorities.

Academics can assist citizens and public authorities in structuring the debate and identifying the real issues. However, government officials, practitioners and others working in the development field may have different perceptions of what the defining characteristics of development communication are. Early in its history, some spoke of it as “development support communication” suggesting that the communication function was a sub-component of various development sectors. Today some argue that development communication should itself be a sector.

The suggestion has also been made that development communication is interpersonal communication and that mass communication is something else. Others would argue that a "development communication" approach dominated by face-to-face communication has inherent limitations if one measure of success is widespread change of behaviour in short periods of time, a goal that might be highly appropriate in some circumstances. Framing the discussion as mediated communication versus face-to-face communication is probably not the best approach.

This topic can be addressed according to the different perspectives on communication and the relative functions they are expected to perform. They are usually divided in two broad camps (which will be discussed in more detail in the following pages). One camp envisions communication as a way of organizing and delivering information in order to fill knowledge gaps or persuade audiences to change their intended behaviour. The other perspective considers communication more broadly, going beyond the delivery of information, and envisioning it as a process needed to build trust, seek consensus and assess the situation involving all stakeholders. It is a process contextual to the situation where it is occurring, hence based on the specific socio-cultural environment.

Within these two perspectives, there are a number of other intermediate ones, even if each of them would tend to be closer to one of the two perspectives mentioned above. The approaches related to the first perspective are often linked to diffusion models and tend to rely more heavily on mediated communication, either alone or in
conjunction with interpersonal communication. The opposite is true in the case of the second perspective.

Clearly the role of media and new information technologies (ICTs) are affecting both perspectives and though there are different ideas about how they could best be used for development purposes, their role is considered important. Usually media and ICTs are not seen in isolation from the overall communication effort, or from other channels being used.

One could, for instance, examine the role and benefits of radio versus the Internet in terms of their impact on development and the emergence of democratic institutions. Both the Internet and the radio enhance certain kinds of interactivity. However, if, as many believe, better access to information, education, and knowledge would be the best stimulant for development, the Internet’s primary development potential is as a point of access to the global knowledge infrastructure. The danger, now widely recognized, is that access to knowledge increasingly requires a telecom infrastructure that is inaccessible to the poor. There also is a danger that the ICT thrill may weaken the potential embedded in radio: governments tend to be very careful about the local empowerment capacity of local radio and hence control the license procedures very strictly, while the ICT does not often meet such an indirect resistance. Therefore, the digital divide is not about technology per se, but rather about the widening gaps between the developed and developing worlds and the information-rich and the information-poor.

While the benefits offered by the Internet are many, its dependence on a telecom infrastructure means that they are only available to a few. Radio, on the other hand, is a much more pervasive, accessible and affordable medium for most people. Blending the two could be an ideal way of ensuring that the benefits accruing from the Internet have wider reach.

Since the Second World War, the focus of communication for development is no longer predominantly, or even exclusively, focused on information dissemination and the diffusion of innovations. The scope of communication for development has broadened to include the interpersonal dimension, i.e. dialogue, which is needed to achieve mutual understanding, build trust and seek consensus, thus facilitating the achievement of sustainable changes. This means that communication should not be included only halfway through the project, but it should be a key ingredient from the beginning of any development initiative. However, the responsibilities of donors and development agencies should also be looked at in a more structural and historical way. They have both supported certain modes of communication (like community radio in the 1980s and early 1990s and the ICTs nowadays) and muffled down certain modes (such as public service broadcasting in the past 15-20 years in the name of media independence and pluralism) via their financing decisions.

2.1. THEORIES AND MODELS

After the Second World War, the founding of the United Nations Organization (UNO) stimulated relations amongst and between sovereign states, not only the North Atlantic nations and developing countries, but also the new states emerging out of a
colonial past. During the cold war period the superpowers—the United States and the former Soviet Union—tried to expand their interests in the developing countries.

In fact, the USA was defining development and social change as the replica of its own political-economic system and opening the way for the transnational corporations. At the same time, the developing countries saw the ‘welfare state’ of the North Atlantic nations as an appropriate one for their own development. These nations were attracted by new technologies and the advantages of State planning in agriculture, education and health as well as communication. They also viewed development as a unilinear, evolutionary process. Underdevelopment was seen in the quantifiable differences between so-called poor and rich countries on the one hand, and traditional and modern societies on the other hand (for more details on these paradigms, see Servaes 1999, 2003).

As a result of the general intellectual ‘revolution’ that took place in the mid-1960s, this Western- or ethnocentric perspective on development was challenged by Latin American social scientists, and a theory dealing with dependency and underdevelopment was born. The dependency approach formed part of a general structuralist re-orientation in the social sciences. The ‘dependistas’ were primarily concerned with the effects of dependency in ‘peripheral’ countries, but implicit in their analysis was the idea that development and underdevelopment must be understood in the context of the world system.

This dependency paradigm played an important role in the movement for a New World Information and Communication Order from the late 1960s to the early 1980s. During this period, the new states in Africa, Asia and the success of socialist and popular movements in Cuba, China, Chile and other countries were striving for political, economic and cultural self-determination within the international community of nations. These new nations shared the goal of independence from the superpowers and moved to form the Non-Aligned Nations. Contrary to the North Atlantic nations, which viewed development and modernization primarily in terms of economic growth, the Non-Aligned Movement defined development as political struggle.

Since the demarcation of the First, Second and Third Worlds has broken down and the cross-over between centre and periphery can be found in every region, there emerged a concept of development which emphasized cultural identity and multidimensionality. The present-day ‘global’ world, in general as well as in its distinct regional and national entities, is confronted with multifaceted crises. Apart from the obvious and on-going economic and financial crisis, social, ideological, moral, political, ethnic, ecological and security crises also have appeared. By the same token, the previously held dependency perspective has become more difficult to support because of the growing interdependency of regions, nations and communities. From the criticism of the two paradigms above, particularly that of the dependency approach, a new viewpoint on development and social change has come to the forefront. The common starting point here is the perspective of ‘bottom-up’ self-development at the community level. At the same time, it is assumed that there are no countries or communities that function completely autonomously or that are completely self-sufficient, nor are there any nations whose development is exclusively determined by external factors. Every society is dependent in one way or
another, both in form and in degree. Thus, a framework was sought within which both the Centre and the Periphery could be studied separately and in their mutual relationship.

More attention is also being paid to the content of development, which implies a more normative approach. ‘Another development’ questions whether or not ‘developed’ countries are in fact advanced and whether or not their achievements are sustainable or even desirable. It favours a multiplicity of approaches based on the context and the basic, felt needs, and the empowerment of the most oppressed sectors of various societies at divergent levels. A main thesis is that change must be structural and occur at multiple levels in order to achieve desirable ends.

2.2. DIFFUSION AND PARTICIPATORY COMMUNICATION

The above more general typology of development paradigms (for more details, see Servaes 1999, 2003) can also be found at the communications and culture level. The communication media are, in the context of development, generally used to support development initiatives by the dissemination of messages that encourage the public to support development-oriented projects. Although development strategies diverge widely, the usual pattern for broadcasting and the press has been predominantly the same: informing the population about projects, illustrating the advantages of these projects, and recommending that they be supported. A typical example of such a strategy is situated in the area of family planning, where communication media such as posters, pamphlets, radio, and television attempt to persuade the public to accept birth control methods. Similar strategies are used in health and nutrition campaigns, agricultural and education projects etc.

This model portrays the communication process as one of messages going from senders to receivers. This hierarchic view on communication can be summarized in Laswell’s classic formula, -- ‘Who says What through Which channel to Whom with What effect?’ --, and dates back to (mainly American) research on campaigns and diffusions in the late 40s and 50s. The American scholar Everett Rogers (1962) was the first to apply diffusion theory within a developmental context. Building primarily on sociological research in agrarian societies, Rogers stressed the adoption and diffusion processes of cultural innovation. The mass media were especially important to him in spreading awareness of new possibilities and practices. At the same time, he noted that interpersonal communication was instrumental in persuading people to adopt innovations.

Subsequent development communication theorists claimed that Rogers’ approach to development communication was severely limited. They argued that the diffusion model is a vertical or one-way perspective on communication, and that sustainable change occurs through people’s active involvement in the process. Research has shown that while people can obtain information from impersonal sources like radio and television, such information has relatively little effect on behavioural changes.

The participatory model, on the other hand, views change within a framework of multiplicity. It stresses the importance of cultural identity of local communities and of democratisation and participation at all levels—international, national, local and individual. It points to a strategy, not merely inclusive of, but largely emanating from,
the traditional ‘receivers’. Paulo Freire (1983:76) refers to this as the right of all people to individually and collectively speak their word: “This is not the privilege of some few men, but the right of every (wo)man. Consequently, no one can say a true word alone—or can he say it for another, in a prescriptive act which robs others of their words”. In order to share information, knowledge, trust, commitment and participation are required. Reflecting on this view, the International Commission for the Study of Communication Problems, chaired by the late Sean MacBride, argued that “this calls for a new attitude for overcoming stereotyped thinking and to promote more understanding of diversity and plurality, with full respect for the dignity and equality of peoples living in different conditions and acting in different ways” (MacBride, 1980:254).

Naturally embracing one or the other of these two conceptual perspectives carries a number of implications in the application of daily practices. Approaches close to the diffusion model are aimed at filling information gaps or persuading people to change behaviours through ad-hoc messages. Despite the refined level of feedback included in these models, the flow remains basically linear and the outcome is usually pre-determined (e.g. use condoms). Approaches in participation, on the other hand, have a heuristic connotation, using dialogue to build bridges between different groups of stakeholders in order to explore options and identify the best course of action for change. The communication flow is circular, as the sender and the receiver operate as a single entity, and the outcome is usually largely shaped by whatever the result of the interaction is. This is perhaps why they are most useful in exploring and assessing the situation at the initial phases of the intervention.

The adoption of a participatory model in communication does not lead to a model opposing its predecessor, but rather, it broadens the scope of communication. In some ways, it breaks out of the traditional boundaries of communication, since it not only aims to inform or transmit any specific message, but also uses its communicative and cross-sectoral nature to build trust, exchange knowledge and perceptions, investigate problems and opportunities and finally reach a consensus on the intended change among all stakeholders (Mefalopulos, 2005).

2.3. UNDERLYING PREMISES

The coherence of ‘communication for development and social change’ is expressed in its different common underlying premises which incorporate:

- **The use of a culturalist viewpoint**
  By means of such a viewpoint specific attention is given to communication in social change processes. By highlighting the importance of other social science disciplines can significantly contribute to the field of ‘communication for development and social change’.

- **The use of an interpretative perspective**
  Participation, dialogue and an active vision of human beings as the interpreters of their environments are of the utmost importance. Respect and appreciation must be shown for the uniqueness of specific situations and identities in social change environments.
The use of integrated methods and theories
In the field of 'communication for development and social change,' it is important that research methods are connected to one’s theoretical perspective. Development communication requires openness, diversity and flexibility in its methods and techniques. In practice it generally means triangulation and a preference for qualitative methods. This does not mean, however, that quantitative methods are excluded, and indeed an emphasis is placed on evidence-based scientific methodologies.

To show mutual understanding and attach importance to formal and informal intercultural teaching, training and research
Tolerance, consciousness-raising, acceptance and respect can only be arrived at when members of different cultures not only hear, but also understand each other. This mutual understanding is a condition for development and social change. In order to prevent all forms of miscommunication, intercultural awareness, capacity building and dialogue are deemed to be very important.

2.4. FROM THEORY TO PRAXIS

As noted throughout this section, a variety of theoretical models can be used to devise communication strategies for development. In contrast with the more economical and politically oriented approach in traditional perspectives on modernization and development, the central idea in alternative more culturally oriented versions of multiplicity and sustainable development is that there is no universal development model which leads to sustainability at all levels of society and the world, that development is an integral, multidimensional, and dialectic process that can differ from society to society, community to community, context to context. As each case and context is different, none has proven to be completely satisfactory. In other words, each society and community must attempt to delineate its own strategy to sustainable development. This implies that the development problem is a relative problem and that no one society can contend that it is 'developed' in every respect. Therefore, we believe that the scope and degree of interdependency must be addressed in relationship with the content of the concept of development.

Many practitioners find that they can achieve the greatest understanding by combining more than one theory or developing their own conceptual framework. Where previous perspectives did not succeed in reconciling economic growth with social justice, an attempt should be made to approach problems of freedom and justice from the relationship of tension between the individual and the society, and limits of growth and sustainability are seen as inherent to the interaction between society and its physical and cultural ecology.

The so-called Copenhagen Consensus Project is worth mentioning in this context. Though still dominated by economic perspectives and researchers (some of them Nobel prize-winners), the panel of experts evaluated a large number of development recommendations, drawn from assessments by UN-agencies, and identified ten core challenges for the future:

- Civil conflicts
• Climate change
• Communicable diseases
• Education
• Financial stability
• Governance
• Hunger and malnutrition
• Migration
• Trade reform
• Water and sanitation

The major challenge identified by this panel was the fight against HIV/AIDS. (For more details, see a number of reports in The Economist, April-June 2004; or visit www.copenhagenconsensus.com).

Distinct development communication approaches and communication means used can be identified within organizations working at distinct societal and geographic levels. Some of these approaches can be grouped together under the heading of the above diffusion model, others under the participatory model. The major ones could be identified as follows (for more details, see Servaes & Malikhao, 2004):

• Extension/Diffusion of Innovations as a Development Communications Approach
• Network development and documentation
• ICTs for Development
• Social Marketing
• Edutainment (EE)
• Health Communication
• Social mobilization
• Information, Education and Communication (IEC)
• Institution building
• Knowledge, attitudes and practices (KAP)
• Development Support Communication (DSC)
• HIV/AIDS community approach
• Community Participation

This report presents a summary of four themes which have been selected as the backbone of the First World Congress on Communication for Development since they are key for current communication for development initiatives, incorporating some of the above-mentioned approaches. The four themes are: (a) communication in sustainable development, (b) communication for development in health, (c) communication for development in governance, and (d) ICTs for development.

Though it is realized that there are many more themes which could be explored under the broad theme of ‘communication for development’, there are a number of reasons why the overview is limited to these four. Time pressures, intellectual limitations to cover such a varied and complex field, relevance in the development agenda, and academic considerations are the obvious ones. From a research perspective, different kinds of evidence exist for different types of outcomes. The evidence for social structural change (e.g. empowerment, equity, policy change) is largely of the anecdotal or qualitative type, and evidence for individual change (e.g. behaviours including participation, efficacy/self-confidence, gender attitudes, etc.) is
predominantly quantitative. There is nothing wrong with anecdotal and qualitative evidence, but they invite different inferences. On the other hand, quantitative evidence may provide short-term advice, which is not reliable for long-term or contextualised recommendations. It is possible to quantify higher order changes, but to do so requires methodological approaches that few projects have the time, resources or donor support to undertake.
3. CURRENT COMMUNICATION FOR DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES

3.1. COMMUNICATION IN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

“Communication for Development is “a social process, designed to seek a common understanding among all the participants of a development initiative, creating a basis for concerted action”

FAO (1984)

3.1.1. Perspectives and Challenges

Communication for Sustainable Development theory and practice have been changing over time in line with the evolution of development approaches and trends and the need for effective applications of communication methods and tools to new issues and priorities. Communication in sustainable development has addressed the specific concerns and issues of food security, rural development and livelihood, natural resource management and environment, poverty reduction and equity, and gender and ICTs.

In the last twenty years, Sustainable Development has emerged as one of the most prominent development paradigms. In 1987, the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) concluded that “sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (Elliott, 1994). Three dimensions are generally recognized as the “pillars” of sustainable development: economic, environmental, and social.

Different perspectives have, over the years, influenced the holistic and integrated vision of Sustainable Development. Nevertheless, a unifying theme is that there is no universal development model. Development, as indicated earlier, is an integral, multidimensional, and dialectic process that differs from society to society, community to community, context to context. In other words, each society and community must attempt to delineate its own strategy to sustainable development starting with the resources and “capitals” available (not only physical, financial and environmental but also human, social, institutional etc.), and considering needs and views of the people concerned. Sustainable Development implies a participatory, multi-stakeholder approach to policy making and implementation, mobilizing public and private resources for development and making use of the knowledge, skills and energy of all social groups concerned with the future of the planet and its people. Within this framework, communication plays a strategic and fundamental role by; (a) contributing to the interplay of different development factors, (b) improving the sharing of knowledge and information, and (c) encouraging the participation of all concerned.
3.1.2. **Approaches and Guiding Principles**

In line with this vision, at the end of the 1980s the participatory approach became a key feature in the applications of Communication for Development to Sustainable Development. Development Communication is about dialogue, participation and the sharing of knowledge and information. It takes into account the needs and capacities of all concerned through the integrated and participatory use of communication processes, media and channels. It works by:

- Facilitating participation: giving a voice to different stakeholders to engage in the decision-making process.
- Making information understandable and meaningful. It includes explaining and conveying information for the purpose of training, exchange of experience, and sharing of know-how and technology.
- Fostering policy acceptance: enacting and promoting policies that increase rural people’s access to services and resources.

Within this framework, communication is viewed as a social process that is not just confined to the media or to messages. Development Communication methods are appropriate in dealing with the complex issues of Sustainable Development in order to:

- Improve access to knowledge and information to all sectors of the society and especially to vulnerable and marginalized groups;
- Foster effective management and coordination of development initiatives through bottom-up planning;
- Address equity issues through networking and social platforms influencing policy-making;
- Encourage changes in behaviour and life-styles, promoting sustainable consumption patterns through sensitization and education of large audiences;
- Promote the sustainable use of natural resources considering multiple interests and perspectives, and supporting collaborative management through consultation and negotiation;
- Increase awareness and community mobilization related to social and environmental issues;
- Ensure economic and employment opportunities through timely and adequate information;
- Solve multiple conflicts ensuring dialogue among different components in a society.

**Guiding principles**

Approaches differ according to what development issues are involved. What they have in common is a set of guiding principles and steps to follow. The emphasis now is on the process of communication and on the significance of this process at the local level. Furthermore, according to the approach of different agencies, Communication for Sustainable Development coincides with the enhancement of local capacities and the appropriation of
communication processes and media by local stakeholders, and especially by vulnerable and marginalized groups. Capacity building in communication, including “bridging” of the digital divide is now seen as an essential condition for sustainable development and the fulfilment of the UN Millennium Development Goals.

Communication initiatives for sustainable development start with a participatory analysis of the needs of local institutions and stakeholders, taking into account local culture and values, and promoting a concerted action for development. Development Communication can achieve relevant impact and sustainability only if adequately inserted in national development policies and building on already existing experiences and capacities.

Nowadays, an increasing number of development initiatives emphasize the use of communication as a strategic tool and new opportunities are emerging for mainstreaming Development Communication into national policies for sustainable development, especially in agriculture and natural resource management.

3.1.3. Challenges for the Future

Communication for sustainable development has been facing new challenges in the last decade, as a consequence of globalization, media liberalization, rapid economic and social change, and the emergence of new information and communication technologies (ICTs). Liberalization has led not only to greater media freedom, but also to the emergence of an increasingly consumer-led and urban-centred communication infrastructure, which is less and less interested in the concerns of the poor and rural people. Women and other vulnerable groups continue to experience marginalization, and lack of access to communication resources of all kinds. The issue of ensuring access to information and the right to communication as a pre-condition for empowering marginalized groups has been addressed by several meetings and international conferences (World Summit on the Information Society, 2005 World Summit and World Social Forum).

Conserving environmental sustainability

One of the challenges faced by rural development programmes is how to alleviate poverty and stimulate economic growth while, at the same time, preserving the environment. Fighting land degradation and desertification, halting deforestation, promoting proper management of water resources and protecting biodiversity require the active participation of rural communities through communication processes.

Communication for Development focusing on participatory approaches can facilitate dialogue, increase the community knowledge base (both indigenous and modern), promote agricultural practices that are compatible with the environment, and develop awareness among policy makers, authorities and service providers. Furthermore, participatory communication approaches can
bring together different stakeholders and enable the poorest and most marginalized to have a voice in the use of natural resources (Ramirez 1997).

Today, Development Communications programmes address global environmental issues, such as biosafety and risk management in disaster prevention and mitigation. Within this framework, communication, education, participation and public awareness approaches are used in an integrated manner to reach out effectively to the key groups who are needed to protect the environment.

**Promoting food security, rural development and sustainable livelihood**

Food security and rural development policies have been revised in recent years placing more emphasis on holistic approaches to rural livelihoods and the sustainable use of natural resources. Furthermore, the spread of digital communication technology has made information and communication services increasingly cost-effective options for providing basic information to dispersed rural producers, in particular to those settled in remote and poorly accessible areas. The focus remains on the needs of rural people, rather than on communication media *per se*. The critical aim is to enhance the capacity of local stakeholders to manage communication processes, to develop local contents and to use appropriate media tools. Communication development strategies must be context specific and reflect the values, perceptions and characteristics of the people and institutions involved.

**Empowerment of women, girls … and senior citizens**

Communication can also play a decisive role in promoting the empowerment of women and girls with a more equitable framework of gender dynamics. Communication processes allow rural women a voice to advocate changes in policies, attitudes and social behaviour or customs. Through communication for development, women can take control of their lives and participate as equals with men in promoting food security and rural development. In a similar way, the power and expertise of senior citizens, who in many societies enjoy great authority and respect but are often left outside development efforts, should be recognized. Many societies may have to reconsider their contributions and potential anyway, given other social and demographic developments.

**Narrowing the digital divide**

The issue of equal access to knowledge and information is becoming one of the key aspects of sustainable development. Vulnerable groups in the rural areas of developing countries are on the wrong side of the digital divide and risk further marginalization. In the rush to “wire” developing countries, little attention has been paid to the design of ICT programs for the poor. The trend ignores many lessons learned over the years by Communication for Development approaches which emphasize communication processes and outcomes over the application of media and technologies. There needs to be a focus on the needs of communities and the benefits of the new technologies.
rather than the quantity of technologies available. Local content and languages are critical to enable the poor to have access to the benefits of the information revolution. The creation of local content requires building on existing and trusted traditional communication systems and methods for collecting and sharing information.

**Poverty reduction**

Communication can contribute to the effective reduction of poverty and offer better opportunities for the inclusion of marginalized groups and isolated population in the policy-development and decision-making process. Although poverty cannot be divorced from uneven power structures, and communication cannot substitute for structural change (Balit, 2004), the appropriation of communication for development processes and technologies by marginalized and vulnerable groups, including indigenous people (Yasarekomomo, 2004), can ensure that they have a voice in decisions that affect their lives.

3.1.4. Evidence and Value Added by Communication for Sustainable Development

**Indigenous forest management: ICTs and political engagement**

An example of a local level development communication project involved indigenous people living in the highland jungles of Cambodia’s Ratanakiri Province (FAI/CI 2003). The purpose of the project was to secure a livelihood from the forests they inhabited. The project arose out of a tense interface arising between the rising economic value of the highland jungles for timber and the threat of this economic resource to the indigenous culture and ecological importance of the highland jungles. Logging of the highland jungles was having dire consequences for the indigenous inhabitants of the jungle, who relied on it for their livelihood.

The project strategically used communication in two ways, through advocacy and participatory communication (ethnographic action research). Indigenous highlanders were removed from Cambodia’s social and political processes. The importance of the jungle to their culture and livelihood was not understood in Cambodian society. Advocacy at the political level was hindered further by an absence of documented research to explain the ecological, economic, cultural and social importance of the jungle to the indigenous people.

Cambodian researchers worked with community members to train them to map local resources and to document local knowledge. The community members were also taught participatory action research techniques to train other indigenous highlanders. The researchers then used ICTs such as global positioning systems to verify the indigenous land use maps. The documentation of this knowledge and resources proved to be useful in lobbying provincial and national governments for protection of the jungle for a host of reasons. The project documented the strategic and purposive use of
the forest resources by the indigenous highlanders and influenced sustainable forest management at governmental levels. Indigenous confidence in their management of the forest was improved by the project as information communication technologies, western research techniques and indigenous knowledge intersected to create a sustainable and viable forest management plan, one which balanced economic, ecological, cultural and social concerns across many stakeholders. In sum, the project created an integrated forest management policy and a transferable model for aligning indigenous with western ‘scientific’ knowledge in sustainable development.

*Video for Participatory Planning*

One of the most successful rural communication programs ever developed was created in Mexico within PRODERITH (Programa de Desarrollo Rural Integrado en el Tropico Humedo), a large integrated rural development program sponsored by the Government of Mexico, with support from the World Bank and FAO. The communication methodology developed in the ‘80s is still valid today.

In the 1960s the Plan Chontalpa had been a major initiative to develop the tropical wetlands in the Gulf of Mexico through drainage systems, roads, bridges and other infrastructures, including new settlement villages. However, the Plan was launched without first engaging farmers in the process. Not surprisingly the farmers never identified with the project, and failed to maintain the infrastructure. The result was an enormous investment in infrastructures that were never properly utilized or maintained.

When the first phase of PRODERITH was contemplated at the end of 1978, to avoid another Chontalpa, government planners decided that future development in the tropical wetlands would have to be planned and executed with the informed and active participation of the local people. When the project was launched without first engaging farmers in the process. Not surprisingly the farmers never identified with the project, and failed to maintain the infrastructure. The result was an enormous investment in infrastructures that were never properly utilized or maintained.

When the first phase of PRODERITH was contemplated at the end of 1978, to avoid another Chontalpa, government planners decided that future development in the tropical wetlands would have to be planned and executed with the informed and active participation of the local people. When the project was launched without first engaging farmers in the process. Not surprisingly the farmers never identified with the project, and failed to maintain the infrastructure. The result was an enormous investment in infrastructures that were never properly utilized or maintained.

Much research was done with peasants before designing any development action. Video proved to be an excellent tool to bring the local communities into the planning process, and reach their consensus on the development actions to be taken. At planning meetings, local people's attitudes and needs were elicited using video and audio recordings that were then played back as a basis for discussion. A true dialogue between the rural communities and planners stimulated a debate on the past history of the community, its present situation, the problems facing it, and possible options for development.
initiatives that could be supported by PRODERITH. The outcome was a local development plan about which a video was also made and which was passed on to management.

Peasants felt that they were listened to and they actively participated in PRODERITH's development strategy. This strengthened their sense of community and gave them a better understanding of who they were and how they could work together to attain improved livelihoods.

The old Mayan, Clotilde Cob, 82 years of age, spoke of his culture, his history, the history of his people, their traditions. All this was caught on tape by PRODERITH. Other peasants from other villages viewed the tape, again and again. It was the first time they saw themselves on video, speaking their own language, speaking about themselves. A door was thus opened. The peasants welcomed PRODERITH, as the cultural richness of the past spread through the communication technologies of the present.

PRODERITH had two phases, the first from 1978 to 1984, and the second from 1986 to 1994, under the newly created Mexican Institute for Water Technology. At the end of the first phase the methodology for rural development and communication was applied in a 1.2 million hectare area affecting 650,000 people. In the second phase the project was expanded beyond the humid and sub humid tropics and helped meet one of the greatest challenges ever faced by the Mexican agricultural sector: in 1989 the Government began to transfer the responsibility for administration and maintenance of large and medium-sized irrigation schemes to the producers' organizations that were using them. In 1994, after five years of intense institutional changes, around 300,000 farmers had received the technical and economic responsibility for the schemes, across an area of about two million hectares, thanks also to the rural communication system.

Executing the local development plans invariably called for orientation and training. During both phases more than 700 videos were produced and used with some 800,000 people, covering a wide range of agricultural and rural development topics. Videos became communication facilitators: farmers could analyze and identify problems and options for development; peasants and staff could be trained and receive education on several issues; and institutional information was also improved, resulting in better coordination and management of the program. The training videos were accompanied by printed materials for course participants and technicians.

Local people were trained and formed communication committees in many farming communities, and in some, Local Communication Units were established. These consisted of a loudspeaker system to reach the whole community and a covered meeting area where videos could be shown and discussions could take place. These were instrumental in many cases of social mobilization which led to concrete development actions in the
communities, especially concerning issues such as water supply, women's activities and health. No community with a Local Communication Unit had a single case of cholera during the epidemic which produced many cases in the nearby areas, and there were significant reductions in infant deaths caused by diarrhea.

The cost of the rural communication system remained below 2% of the global investment, and according to the former Director General of the National Water Commission, enhanced project implementation and rapid transfer of technology contributed to an internal rate of return 7% higher than initially planned by the project. The World Bank considered PRODERITH to be among the most successful projects it supported, and was on record as having stated that the rural communication system had been instrumental to that success.

In 1989, a senior FAO staff member visited the areas covered by the PRODERITH rural communication system and met many of the participating communities, organizations and individuals. At the end of the trip he discovered what, to his mind, was one of the most important methodological "secrets" of the Mexican experience. He said: "The main challenge faced by a good communication system in the field is not, as one might generally think, filling a social space with words, it consists in the establishment of an initial silence, where the actors present recognize each other as equals, with the same rights and possibilities for generating the new knowledge required to improve the quality of life and working conditions"  Santiago Funes, Former CTA UTF/MEX/027
3.2. COMMUNICATION FOR DEVELOPMENT IN HEALTH

Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.

Article 25
Universal Declaration of Human Rights

3.2.1. Health communication in brief

The field of development communication has evolved in parallel with changes in the broader concept of development. It is widely acknowledged that until the 1960s and 1970s most of the world's experience in the area of development communication was driven by the agriculture sector. During the last quarter of the century, however, the learning and knowledge curve shifted from agriculture to public health, where developments in the biomedical sciences (e.g., population and family planning, primary health care, maternal and child health, and most recently HIV/AIDS and infectious diseases) have increasingly focused attention on the role of communication in public health programmes. Evidence-based public health practice assumes that interventions must be grounded in empirical research that supports decisions about health promotion and policy, taking into account the complexity of human behaviour and social contexts (Kemm, 2005). In part because of its origins in medical and health science, health communication has been one of the most successful subfields of communication in terms of producing a body of empirical evidence that communication works.

Health communication interventions have been part of development efforts since the 1960s, especially in the area of family planning programs. The importance of health communication rose on the international public health agenda in the 1990s, mainly as a result of important conceptual changes in the 70s and 80s. The Declaration of Alma Ata (1978) and the Ottawa Charter (1986) represented a fundamental point of departure from supply-driven approaches centred on technology and hospital-based care to increased demand-driven participatory and empowerment based approaches. Recognition grew that individuals and communities could play an important role in determining their health. Following the Cairo and Beijing conferences in the 1990s, the public health field moved toward a rights-based approach. In the last decade, new momentum has built around these and other initiatives including the Millenium Development Goals, the “3 by 5” initiative, the UNAIDS HIV/AIDS Communication Framework, the Rockefeller Foundation Communication for Social Change Programme now being carried out by the Communication for Social Change Consortium, the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and others. These approaches establish principles that cut across health issues such as emphasis on rights-based approach,
leadership, participation, and empowerment as fundamental features of sustainable public health.

3.2.2. From behavioural to ecological approaches in health communication

For many years health communication focused on delivering messages about healthy practices to a variety of audiences: health workers, patients, community members, opinion leaders, policy makers. In earlier eras, healthier behaviour was the most commonly sought objective and often it was assumed that information and education delivered effectively would cause behaviour change and raise standards of public health. Health behaviour change strategies have become increasingly sophisticated and much more responsive to the needs and cultural sensitivities of stakeholders. The success of these strategies is indisputable and the overwhelming preponderance of evidence of the effects of communication on health comes from research at the individual level. But the assumption that individual behaviour change alone can solve public health problems is fundamentally flawed, particularly considering the structural and policy challenges of contemporary issues such as HIV/AIDS and environmental health and the cultural and political complexity of health inequities that disproportionately affect women and the poor.

Behaviour change communication continues to play an important role in public health programs, but as early as the late 1950s the World Health Organization was pushing efforts to define health and well-being away from a narrow disease prevention perspective to, "a state of complete mental, physical, and social well-being and not merely the absence of the disease" (WHO, 1958). Along these lines, Evans and Stoddart (1994) proposed their 21st Century Field model, an ecological framework that includes interactions among multiple factors that determine health: physical, family, and social environments; primary and secondary prevention systems, as well as individual characteristics and behaviours.

The World Bank, the World Health Organization, USAID and other organizations increasingly have focused on social determinants of health to help them prioritize investments (WHO, 2004). The ideal intervention strategies, therefore, do not just implore people to change, but help them live healthier lives from birth and make appropriate health decisions throughout life by building and strengthening healthy, participatory communities and effective health care delivery systems, supported by enlightened health policy.

One of the newer ecological approaches to health communication focuses on the concept of health competence as a way to link environmental influences, health systems, and human behaviour in an ecological model of health improvement (USAID, 2001). Communication is central to achieving and maintaining health competence. According to this perspective, health competent service delivery systems provide access to quality services and products; have adequate capacity in their workforce (leadership, management, training, professionalism); and have governance structures
through which stakeholders can access and be involved in the operation of health systems. Health competent environments allow decision making through debate and dialogue among the media, community and civil society, and provide access to health information. Communities are involved in setting health agendas, and policies create opportunities for the individual to flourish. At the individual level, people make health-enhancing lifestyle choices across a range of health issues (reproductive health, diet, substance use, child care, etc.), express appropriate demand for care-seeking/providing behaviours, and adhere to treatment protocols, because they understand the determinants of disease and health.

Other sources of conceptual guidance for the health competence framework include health literacy, variously defined as knowledge and comprehension resulting from health education (e.g., Simonds, 1974) and as a broad set of factors that empower and facilitate achievement of health (e.g., Nutbeam, 2000; IOM, 2004). Social capital refers to characteristics of social organizations that “combine to facilitate cooperation among people for their mutual benefit” (Kawachi et al., 1997). In terms of health, social capital facilitates social mobilization for health improvement, enhances access to and the flow of information, and increases the likelihood of social and emotional support for behavioural decision-making. The Integrated Model of Communication for Social Change (Figueroa et al., 2002) describes the relationships among many of these individual and social level processes. Built around the process of community dialogue leading to collective action, this model draws from a broad literature on development communication, particularly the work of Latin American theorists (Beltran, 1974; Diaz-Bordenave, 1994). It also incorporates theories of group dynamics, conflict resolution, and network/convergence, as well as less often considered perspectives on such topics as leadership (e.g., Senge, 1994; Stodgill, 1974; Lord and Brown, 2004; Tirmizi, 2002; Chemers, 2000) and equity (Gumucio-Dagron, 2001; White, 1994; Moser, 1993).

Similarly, the UNAIDS framework calls for greater attention to five contextual domains (1) government & policy, with a focus on the role of policies and laws in supporting or hindering intervention efforts; (2) socio-economic status, with a focus on issues such as income and its impact on communications interventions; (3) culture, with emphasis on positive, neutral or negative aspects of culture that may help or prevent the adoption of healthy practices; (4) gender relations, focused on the status of women in society and how it impacts their vulnerability to HIV/AIDS; and (5) spirituality, focused on the role of religion/spiritual practices in the adoption/rejection of certain healthy practices (UNAIDS, 1999; Airhihenbuwa, Obregon & Makinwa, 2000). Communication plays a specific role in helping produce change in one or more of these five contextual domains, which in turn affects behavior. Gender issues illustrate this point very well. While many HIV/AIDS prevention programs emphasize the use of condoms, a lack of focus on gender imbalances and the power men have in determining sexual practices would reduce program impact. Shifting gender norms associated with sexual practices can empower women and changes the dynamics of sexual negotiation.
In sum, more than 30 years of research and experience leads health communication away from a narrow focus on communication channels and technologies of information delivery for individual behaviour change and toward the socially and culturally embedded processes of dialogue and discussion that are fundamental to everyday life. As a result, more attention is being paid to the social and political environments (Deane and Scalway 2003, Vincent, 2003; Airhihenbuwa & Obregon; 2000; UNAIDS, 1999; Rockefeller Foundation, 1999) in which people live and earn a livelihood and the influence of communication within those environments on lifestyle and behavioural choices. “The individual is no longer a target, but a critical participant in analysing and adopting those messages most suited to her or his own circumstances” (Jacobson 1997).

It has become clear that no single approach is likely to achieve the goals of all health communication projects, programmes, and activities. Effective health communication must focus on identifying and utilizing the most appropriate approaches, methods and communication tools to stimulate and support a sustainable communication process that leads to social change at required levels – social, community, family individual. Determining which will work in a given situation requires skill, patience, and sufficient time to understand the economic, social and political situation and the health and communication needs of the people involved.

3.2.3. Evidence and Value-Added of Effective Communication for Health and Development

Through each of the eras of health communication and development outlined above, applied research and the evaluation of health communication programs across multiple cultural and geographic settings and under varied economic and access conditions has sought to improve the effectiveness of health communication practice. Fortunately, those efforts have produced a compelling body of evidence that the right kind of communication used in the right way will produce results.

For example, communication has been shown to have effects on the political and social environment through policy and media advocacy and through social activism and social movements, which create pressures on political leaders to respond to expressed needs. Coalition building and institutional coordination, both of which require responsive and transparent communication systems, and the development and implementation of national communication strategies facilitate efforts to address health and other development topics. Supportive environments are in turn more likely to provide broader access to health information and allow and encourage informed decision-making through debate and dialogue among the media, community and civil society.
Changing social norms related to female genital cutting in Nigeria

While more than half the women in Nigeria’s Enugu State have undergone female genital cutting (FGC), a cultural practice that involves removing some or all of the female genitalia, a successful multi-media strategic communication program called *Ndukaku* increased support for discontinuing the practice after just one year. A partnership between two Nigeria-based organizations — the National Association of Women Journalists and Women Action Research Organization — used a non-confrontational approach to begin discussing this highly sensitive topic with Enugu families. Based on the Community Action Cycle (CAC), the program consisted of community mobilization activities, advocacy, and mass media interventions. Community activities included viewing of the film *Uncut — Playing with Life* at group gatherings, while advocacy consisted of activist visits to traditional leaders, regular newspaper columns, radio call-in shows, and public forums on FGC.

Research found that support for FGC declined significantly after exposure to the program. In addition to a drop in support for FGC, the proportion of women who believe that FGC is beneficial declined from 42.1 percent to 24.6 percent after exposure to *Ndukaku*. Women participating in *Ndukaku* became empowered agents for change through the community mobilization activities, leading to increased support from cultural leaders, including a public pronouncement against FGC from the traditional leader of Eha Amufu, who also banned the practice in his domain. His action led to a health bill before the Enugu State House of Assembly that included language on the elimination of FGC (Babalola, 2005).

At the health service systems level, studies have shown that improving the communication skills of health care providers and the quality of job aides makes health systems more responsive to clients and increases the effectiveness of client-provider interactions, both in terms of clients’ informed choice and satisfaction with services, as well as in terms of uptake of and adherence to services and treatments. Increasing the communication skills of clients, such as question-asking skills and self-confidence, through client education and modelling of active client behaviour in the media, leads to clients being more demanding and proactive in seeking and choosing health services and treatments. Communication programs have also been shown to influence the motivation of providers and health service facilities to deliver on promises to clients and to be more client-oriented.

Improving reproductive health service utilization in Nepal

From 1998-2003, the Nepal Adolescent Project (NAP) (Malhotra et al., 2005) provided a community-based reproductive health intervention in two communities (one rural and one urban) that attempted to actively engage disempowered youth, such as those living in poverty, young women, and ethnic minorities, in activities to address social norms and inequities. Activities included peer education and counselling linked with adult education programmes and improved access to economic livelihood opportunities. Changes in the study communities were compared to changes in two control
sites that had not received an intervention. At baseline, both the study and control sites showed substantial differences between wealthy and poor young women's access to health facilities for pregnancy delivery. For example, before the intervention, an urban young woman in the study site was 16 times more likely to receive prenatal care than her rural counterpart. By the end of the project urban women were only 1.2 times more likely to receive prenatal care. The control sites did not show a similar improvement.

At the health service management level, the communication of consistent and up-to-date technical standards has been shown to improve service performance and professionalism. Communication among service providers and managers has been shown to increase peer pressure to perform and to adhere to standards. And communication systems linking health facilities and institutions have been shown to improve referral systems that increase client access to appropriate services as needed.

At the community level, communication within social networks has been shown to extend the reach and local adaptation of health information, resulting in changes in health behaviour comparable to those achieved through direct exposure to mass media campaigns (Boulay & Storey, 2002). Communities that have the opportunity to participate in community dialogue leading to collective action (Figueroa et al., 2002; Kincaid & Figueroa, 2004) are more likely to get the kind of health services they need because they can express their needs clearly and with a collective voice. They are also more likely to experience an equitable distribution of benefits from those services, because they set help set the agenda and determine how and what kind of services will be delivered. They are also better able to mobilize local resources, such as emergency transportation systems, that can reduce maternal mortality due to obstetric complications by conveying women to an appropriate service centre in a timely fashion.

### Community Mobilization and Life skills Education in Tanzania

*SiMchezo!*, a bimonthly Swahili language magazine for semi-literate rural out-of-school youth is an integral part of the multimedia and community-based HIP effort to involve stakeholders in HIV/AIDS prevention, bridge generational communication gaps, foster dialogue about culturally sensitive issues, build life skills and provide social support to vulnerable adolescents and their parents. Road shows, school-based activities and clubs, together with media campaigns and the FEMINA family of magazine, broadcast media and learning tools, provide entertaining life skills education. *SiMchezo!* itself is edited and produced partly in the field with community and NGO involvement in order to address issues of importance to its readers and in ways that they find appealing and useful. Since 2002, the magazine has become a popular discussion tool for peer educators and parents. Testimonials from youth and parents alike attest to the impact *SiMchezo!* has had: “*The magazine increases communication among people here in Njombe. According to African culture, men cannot talk to their daughters on issues relating to sexuality and*
The greatest body of evidence of communication effectiveness comes from research on communication at the individual level. That research is extremely diverse, ranging from work on micro-level psychological processes to relatively macro-level sociological processes. It is beyond the scope of this paper to review the evidence in detail. Suffice it to say that research over the past 40 years in both Western and Southern contexts has shown that communication programs can help people make health-enhancing lifestyle choices across a range of health issues (reproductive health, diet, substance abuse, etc.), express appropriate demand for care-seeking and providing behaviours, and adhere to treatment regimens, because they understand the determinants of disease and health and have participated in decisions about how to deal with them.

**Adolescent Reproductive Health (ARH) in Bangladesh**

The Adolescent Reproductive Health (ARH) Communication Program in Bangladesh (Center for Communication Programs, 2006a) addresses the gap between knowledge and practice through a multi-pronged communication strategy focusing on issues identified by adolescents themselves. The comprehensive program works to create an enabling environment that supports adolescent knowledge and service seeking behaviors. All ARH materials and media are identified by the logo and slogan, *NijekeJano* (Know Yourself), which provides a rallying point for youth and youth supporters. Adolescents were involved in all stages of program developments: formative research, character development and story writing for scripts and comic books, retesting, acting, and evaluation. Four Life Skills Facilitators' Guides with Videos are used in workshops where adolescents practice decision making, problem solving, critical and creative thinking and interpersonal skills. In addition, a 39-episode TV series and 52-episode radio series follow a variety-show format with adolescent anchors and field reporters who conduct interviews with adolescents, parents, teachers, service providers and community leaders on issues. The entertainment education program also features songs, poems, quizzes, and mini-dramas using the same characters as the comic book. About the program, Tanzila Khatun, an adolescent girl, says, "I was depressed and afraid of a deadly disease when I saw first blood dropping out of my body without any reason. Everything happened around me so dramatically that I was feeling distressed. At that time I heard about BCCP's video show at Chowdhury Bari which I attended. Through watching the video show and reading the booklet (My puberty), I knew about the changes that occur in the human body during adolescence and also I knew what should I do to take care of myself."

At the individual and interpersonal level, research has shown that health behaviour choices are made on the basis of perceived benefits, perceived social support and perceived barriers to action (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1997), on
the basis of social observation and learning from others in one’s nearby social environment (Bandura, 1986), on the basis of information about the benefits and consequences of action (Rogers, 2003), and on the basis of rational and emotional reactions to disease threats (Witte et al., 2001). It has been shown in a wide variety of social and cultural settings, that communication influences the social psychological and emotional factors that increase the probability of healthy behaviour, even under unfavourable and resource-poor conditions. The uses of and response to communication varies depending on where an individual lies on a spectrum ranging from relative apathy and isolation to engagement and social connection. An individuals’ position on this continuum determines the specific factors that are most strongly related to performance or non-performance of behaviour. (For an overview, see McKee, Manoncourt, Yoon & Carnegie, 2000).

Creating Space for Women’s Health and Gender Equity in Nicaragua and Peru

Every two months María Castillo and Esperancita Núñez travel long distances from their homes to the national capital, Managua. There, they make their way to Puntos de Encuentro (fig., Common Ground), a feminist non-governmental organization (NGO) that has specialized in the use of entertainment-education for social change since 1991. The women are typical links in a network of roughly 500 NGOs that Puntos has forged since its founding. Their goal is to pick up and help distribute 26,000 copies of the periodical, La Boletina which is designed to support and strengthen Nicaragua’s women’s movement and change norms around gender relationships and violence against women. Puntos de Encuentro builds this kind of commitment and mobilization for social change through publications like La Boletina, as well as telenovelas (e.g., Sexto Sentido), interactive radio programs, youth camps, newsletters and many other forms of communication, most of them produced for and by stakeholders. After one national campaign on violence against women in 1999, 85% of men surveyed said that they had changed as a result of exposure to the campaign (Rodriguez, 2005).

In Peru, the reproductive health radio program, Bienvenida Salud!, attempts to move sexual and women’s health out of the private arena and into the public sphere. Programs are written for and by rural indigenous women in the Department of Loreto in the Peruvian Amazon. Through interviews, news, testimonials, listeners’ letters and radio novellas, the infrequently heard voices of these women reach a wide audience. Listening groups, facilitated by locally recruited community promoters, listen to the programs together and have produced plays, community histories and other materials that are subsequently aired. A 2003 journal article on Bienvenida Salud! reports that the station has received hundreds of letters from both men and women and that the proportion from women is increasing with comments like: “In our community, everyone listens to Bienvenida Salud!...Thanks to your show, I participate in community activities so I can progress, together with our community, to build a better future for our children...”
Evidence from specific sub-areas of health

Population and Reproductive Health

Although significant gaps in reproductive health still exist between low and high income countries, there has been progress worldwide in the past 50 years in such areas as pregnancy care, family planning, unsafe abortion, sexually transmitted infections, adolescent risk behaviours, and access to health services (PRB, 2006). Piotrow et al. (1997) documented nearly 20 years of USAID-funded population communication efforts in more than 50 countries that have had measurable success in increasing contraceptive use and birth spacing, raising the age of marriage and age of sexual debut, shifting norms about childbearing and gender preference, and increasing interpersonal communication — both between spouses and in the community at-large — about fertility and reproductive health.

Political commitment to population and health communication in Egypt, 1980-2006

The Information, Education and Communication Center of the State Information Services (SIS) is Egypt’s lead agency in behaviour change communication for family planning and family health, with a mission to contribute to national development by using strategic communication to help all Egyptians plan their families and achieve better health. Founded in 1979 by the GOE, the SIS-IEC Centre has for nearly 30 years coordinated the talents of Egypt’s leading celebrities, artists, planners, media personnel, medical experts, religious leaders and NGOs in creating programs that have captured the imaginations of two generations of Egyptians.

Programs in the 1980s and 1990s built awareness of the link between population growth and family well-being. President Hosni Mubarak’s 1986 policy statement that, “Over-population swallows all development...Family planning is the solution,” created political commitment at the highest level. Endorsements of this policy came from religious and political leaders at all levels, and popular celebrity involvement helped put family planning on the public agenda. Entertainment education (e.g., the popular “Doctor’s Diary” featuring actress Karima Mochtar) focused attention on social norms and attitudes, most notably around husband-wife communication and increased male responsibility for reproductive health. Service quality improvement efforts, such as the Gold Star program, backed up rising demand for contraception, and in 1994 inter-ministerial collaboration were formalized with a partnership between SIS and the Ministry of Health and Population to provide quality improvement communication. Since the year 2000, the focus has been on supporting a new generation committed to households and communities as producers of health. The national Mabrouk (Congratulations!) initiative treats marriage as the entry point to a lifetime of good family health with media-based and community-based programs on nutrition, second hand smoke, hygiene, hand washing, avian flu prevention, hepatitis C prevention and HIV/AIDS awareness. Community outreach by NGO volunteers—both
male and female—links traditional male dawar councils and Arab Women Speak Out empowerment workshops with village health committee structures. Private sector pharmacies are linked through a national “Ask-Consult” network, as a first source of contact for basic health information, home health products and service referral.

The result is an increase in contraceptive use by married women of reproductive age from 24 percent in 1980 to 59 percent in 2005. The average number of children born in a woman’s lifetime dropped from 5.3 in 1980 to 3.1 in 2005 (EDHS 2006). Maternal and infant mortality rates have declined along with the fertility rate. There are 39 million fewer people today than were projected in 1979 and Egypt is on track to achieve replacement level fertility by 2017 (Robinson & El-Zanaty, 2006).

Child survival and Immunization

Enormous gaps in child survival still exist—under-five mortality is 7 per thousand in high income countries compared to 120 per thousand in low income countries—yet worldwide progress has been made in such areas as the use of diarrhoeal rehydration therapy and, particularly, immunization. Since the launch of the Expanded Program on Immunization (EPI) in 1974, vaccination programs have been one of the world’s most cost-effective public health strategies. As a result of universal immunization campaigns in the 1980s, over 70% of children globally received the basic six vaccines. Yet coverage has stagnated since then due in part to a decline in funding for immunization communication, and differences in coverage between lower and higher income countries continue to be severe (e.g. 17 countries in sub-Saharan Africa have complete immunization coverage levels under 50%).

Even when services are available, a substantial number of caregivers still fail to complete the immunization schedule in part due to a lack of communication about differences in types of immunizations, the introduction of new vaccine types and adherence to immunization schedules. In addition, health authorities in some countries have faced public scepticism about vaccine safety. All of this points to the need for continued advocacy for immunization and other child survival initiatives, particularly those that take into account local socio-cultural and political influences.

Growing popular support for children’s immunization in Colombia

The Puye campaign in Colombia was developed by the Ministry of Social Protection, the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), the Pan American Health Organisation (PAHO) and the National Health Institute in 2003, with the purpose of supporting the regular programme of vaccination and stimulating sustainable mechanisms of supply and demand for vaccination services. The name of the campaign is a play on words in which the term "puyar" refers both to the action of injecting vaccines and a popular expression meaning “to demand, to hurry up or to press for.”

On top of routine information campaigns about immunization, Puye tried to
motivate parents to be on the alert about the vaccines their children need; to motivate neighbours and friends, to remind parents about vaccination; and most importantly, to motivate authorities, to act in favour of vaccination of children of their municipality or department.

An evaluation of the program in 931 municipalities (526 that received traditional campaigns and 405 that received Puye) over a five month period found that immunization coverage improved monthly in 77% of the Puye areas compared to only 48% of the non-Puye areas (Salamanca, 2004).

**HIV/AIDS**

One of the brightest spots in global health communication has been in the area of HIV/AIDS prevention and care. Huge new communication initiatives have been launched to advocate for increased access to and use of AIDS drugs, accompanied by massive efforts to reduce risk factors (individual, social and structural) associated with heterosexual, homosexual, mother-to-child and other forms of transmission. Linkages between AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria, malnutrition and other diseases are being publicized and addressed through the Global Fund, leading to coordinated country-level plans, changes in national health policies and increased funding.

Much AIDS research during the 1980s and early 1990s focused on counting such things as the number of sexual partners and the frequency of sexual practices. But more recent research experience with sexually transmitted diseases has shown that the relationship between positive attitudes and healthy behaviour is neither simple nor linear (see Terry & Gallois 1993; Maticka-Tyndale, Elkins, Haswell-Elkins, Rujkarakorn, Kuyyakanond & Stam 1997, Sandfort 1998, Sukda 2000). Behavior change models based largely on rational, volitional thinking overlook the importance of emotional and contextual factors related to sexual practices (Servaes & Malikhao, 2004; Malikhao, 2005).

Information about HIV/AIDS is more effective if exchanged through dialogue and debate, rather than merely transmitted, and healthy behaviours are more likely if decided through negotiation. Consequently, since the 1990s, research has shifted toward a perspective in which people are seen as the agents of their own change, but in relation to social norms, policies, culture and supportive environments. AIDS communication programs are more likely to take these factors into account—and in locally appropriate ways—when they are developed and implemented through partnerships with stakeholders and local infrastructure (Panos, 2003:10).

**Young Empowered and Healthy in Uganda**

In Uganda a current youth reproductive health program, *Young Empowered and Healthy* (YEAH), uses a radio serial called *Rockpoint 256* to raise questions about culturally-based attitudes toward transactional sex, the quest for multiple partners, sexual coercion and alcohol abuse (Center for
Communication Programs, 2006b). The serial also models not just individual behavior but also community response to and adult support for changes that will protect the reproductive health of vulnerable women and youth. A second phase of the program focuses on creating public dialogue about what it means to Be A Man, thereby shifting gender norms away from male control and toward male responsibility and gender equity (YEAH, 2006). At the launch of the YEAH radio serial in December 2005, youth writers and producers successfully defended the serials’ frank treatment of youth sexuality against threats by the First Lady of Uganda to cancel the program. They argued successfully with the First Lady that open public discussion was necessary to break through taboos and shift social and gender norms that put Uganda youth at risk of unplanned pregnancy and HIV/AIDS.

Using their own resources, local and regional youth groups that collaborate under the YEAH program organize and implement community activities with schools, clubs, and church groups. Through these activities, young men and women explore traditional male and female gender norms, their impact on sexual relationships, health and social well-being and encourage adult community leaders to confront tradition and support youth in their quest for respect and better reproductive health. After only 3 months of program activity, survey research shows that gender norms are already beginning to shift. Young men aged 15-24 years old who have been exposed to the Be A Man program are less likely to say that men should make the decisions about sex, that men need to have other women, that women who carry condoms are easy, and that there are times when a woman should be beaten.

Mass media campaigns, using appropriate communication strategies and local idioms, are an essential element of strategy, but need to foster—sometimes in conjunction with other communication approaches—inclusive public discourse about the complexity of and differing views around HIV/AIDS and the fundamental normative and structural changes necessary to reduce AIDS and care for people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA). Coordinated behaviour change and other communication efforts, supported by a positive policy environment, must be integrated into national HIV/AIDS programmes that engage government, local and national media, and civil society (DFID, 2004).

Stigma continues to be a major impediment to progress in preventing and treating HIV infection, a problem that is readily addressed by communication programs. Approaches such as the ongoing Treatment Action Campaign (www.tac.org.za) have moved from merely disseminating messages to fostering an environment where the voices of people living with HIV/AIDS can be heard and their needs moved to the centre stage of dialogue and action. Increased representation of PLWHA and of their perspective on living with HIV in the mass media can help bring previously taboo subjects into the light of day and raise the importance of HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment and care efforts on public and policy agendas. And modelling community dialogue and discussion among partners through mass media has been shown to increase
public discussion about AIDS, disclosure of one’s HIV status, and utilization of voluntary counselling and testing (Kelly et al., 2006).

### Integrated communication campaigns inspire collective action and reduce stigma in South Africa

*Soul City*, a South African NGO, employed national television and radio entertainment-education programmes, complemented by newspaper supplements and a national advocacy strategy involving lobbying of government and decision makers to address a wide range of issues from HIV/AIDS and youth sexuality, domestic violence and sexual harassment, and hypertension, to small business development and personal finance. Evaluation data from two points in time (1999 & 2000) measured 80% reach among members of the intended audience. Public marches mobilized by Soul City helped support passage of anti-domestic violence legislation in 1999. Anecdotal evidence suggests increased collective empowerment and collective action as a result of community action modelled in an entertainment education series, including one case in which a township was inspired to fight back against economic exploitation and renamed itself “Soul City” in recognition of the source of their motivation (Scheepers et al., 2004).

The evaluation of another HIV/AIDS-related television serial, *Tsha Tsha*, produced by the South Africa Broadcasting Corporation, Curious Pictures, and another local NGO, the Centre for AIDS Development Research and Evaluation (CADRE), found large differences between viewers and non-viewers even after controlling for factors that predict access to and exposure to the drama. Viewers were more likely to have positive attitudes about HIV issues addressed in *Tsha Tsha*, including stigma towards people living with HIV/AIDS, were more likely to practice HIV preventive behaviors, such as abstaining from sex, being faithful to one partner, having sex less often, using a condom to prevent HIV, or using a condom at last sex, and were more likely to undergo Voluntary Counseling and Testing (VCT) to determine their HIV status. Viewers also reported an increased sense of responsibility for the well-being of others as *Tsha Tsha* portrayed the dynamics of living openly with HIV and the problems and challenges involved in sharing one’s status with others. It provided strong, positive images of young people confronting their HIV positive status (Kelly et al., 2006).

### Applying health communication to policies & practices

Challenges remain ahead for the health communication community, including practitioners, academics, and policy makers.

**Valuing and using different types of evidence**

This selective research review illustrates how communication can be mobilized to influence individual behaviours, as well as shift power relations, cultural practices and norms, policy frameworks, economic status and other
social and political realities affecting health. However, different kinds of evidence exist for different types of outcomes with the evidence for social structural change (e.g., empowerment, equity, policy change) more likely to be anecdotal or qualitative and evidence for individual change (e.g., behaviours including participation, efficacy/self-confidence, gender attitudes, and social norms) more likely to be quantitative. Both types of evidence are important and both support the conclusion that communication, properly employed, is a powerful force for social change. Anecdotal and qualitative evidence invite different kinds of inferences than quantitative evidence and may resonate with some audiences better than others. And while it is possible to quantify higher order changes, such as cultural and structural shifts over time, to do so requires methodological approaches that few projects have the time, resources or donor support to undertake.

**Working across sectors**

Complex health issues have forced health practitioners to address a number of issues that cut across different sectors. The HIV/AIDS component of the Danida health and education sector programs in Mozambique is an example of bi-sectoral collaboration that is now being expanded to include the agricultural sector.

**Working within regions**

Natural disasters and emergencies have demonstrated the need to design and implement region-wide strategies. The Tsunami disaster showed lack of cooperation both in the immediate emergency and the subsequent responses. On the contrary, the international response to the potential avian flu pandemic suggests increasing coordination and cooperation to implement regional plans and strategies. Several international initiatives (e.g., GAVI, PEPFAR, Roll Back Malaria) have provided strategic guidance for global and regional responses to health challenges such as immunization, HIV/AIDS, and malaria. However, the communication component within these regional and global strategies is often limited to dissemination efforts and it lacks specificity on the role of communication.

**Addressing broad societal issues that affect health**

Lifestyle and urban planning issues are two key entry points to public health in the modern world, whereby communication cuts across a number of issues that have society-wide implications. The transformation of Colombia’s capital, Bogotá, and its implications for health, are a good example of this. Through an intervention focused on three components: citizenship and culture, moral values, and a renewed regulatory framework, the city went from being a chaotic metropolis to the prime example of urban development in the region.
Monitoring, evaluation and indicators

There has been an increased emphasis on moving from a focus on behavioural impact to a focus on process and how that affects both individual and population level health outcomes. Increased focus on process will provide deeper understanding of the nuances and particularities of development and health, especially those that remain embedded in cultural practices. A focus on context and communities as units of analysis has emerged as critical to an understanding of the effectiveness of interventions in health promotion and (communication). Unfortunately, the politics and economics of public health communication leave little room and resources for longitudinal approaches, particularly under the realization that health changes take time. Two initiatives that may help overcome this short term perspective include: (1) engaging universities to develop longitudinal and external monitoring and evaluation as an academic and scientific challenge and (2) encouraging donors to consider funding longer (5-10 year) initiatives rather than shorter (1-3 year) initiatives.

The discussion on monitoring and evaluation also has brought increasing attention to issues of indicators in health communication. The most significant change over time is the increased attention given to process indicators, such as the ones outlined in the Communication for Development and Social Change Framework and to the role qualitative approaches could play in this context and move from impact to also include process and from effects to also assess leadership, accountability and other dimensions.

Increasing the focus on human resources and capacity building

Over the past decade, many developing countries have moved toward increasing decentralization of their health systems; thus, availability of human resources at national, regional, and local levels have emerged as a central element to ensure effective health interventions, including health communication. The theme of the 2006 World Health Day highlighted this issue as it focused on human resources as its theme. Health communication capacity needs to be developed both in service and pre-service settings as well as across disciplines in public health.

Developing health communication competencies

The discussion on human resources highlights the importance of focusing on competencies needed to develop effective health communication interventions. This is true both for practitioners originally trained as communicators, who, generally speaking, come to the field with little understanding of social mobilization, social and behavioural theories, and sustainable change, and for practitioners trained in public health and other areas, who come to the field with little understanding of communication issues. Training institutions, particularly universities, should play a central role in this effort. Efforts made in the past have aimed at identifying and operationalizing key competencies for development and health communication (AED/CFSC, 2004). These contributions might be brought more intensely before academic institutions in efforts to create training
programs that could train a critical mass of practitioners with core competencies in health communication.

Refocusing funding priorities

A realistic approach dictates that the challenges could only be met if sufficient and adequate funding is available to implement necessary programs. While the international public health community has allocated significant resources to a variety of areas in public health, resources allocated to health communication are limited and/or earmarked for specific health themes which complicate cross-sectoral or cross-cutting approaches. Increased funding should be aimed at assessing the value added by health communication to public health efforts (especially those linking health and social outcomes), exploring new methodologies to monitor and evaluate interventions, and strengthening long-term efforts for human resource development.

Making a distinction between typologies of health problems

Carefully tailored communication interventions emerge based on a profound understanding of the health problem encountered and at the same time draws on the generic options about individual behaviour, policies and environmental factors. For example, in the case of a communicable disease such as malaria versus a cardiovascular disease, malaria requires handling the problem of individual behaviour vis-à-vis the risk of mosquito bites. However, it also requires attention to policies on access to both prevention (bed nets) and treatment. Malaria requires some attention given to the waters where mosquitoes breed, while cardiovascular diseases are linked to lifestyles acquired over time such as physical activity, smoking patterns, food patterns, etc. However, cardiovascular diseases will also require attention both to individual behaviours, policy, and environmental factors.

Making a distinction between emergency diseases and development-oriented health problems

Emergency diseases such as SARS or avian flu require very different communication responses compared to the long-term development-oriented health challenges posed by HIV/AIDS. Typically, responses to emergency diseases are vertical and mass-media borne, containing high proportions of information dissemination and social mobilization in response to the immediate needs demanded by the emergency. Participatory approaches take the form of social mobilization, and less as longer-term empowerment strategies. HIV/AIDS contains both elements of urgency, due to the lethal dimension linked to each HIV transmission, but also to strong elements dealing with fundamental issues of poverty, gendered power imbalances, lack of voice of people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHAs), issues of stigma and denial, etc. Despite all the differences, we see in both long-term and short term responses the need to deal with a mix of individual behavioural patterns, policy issues, and environmental factors.
Making a distinction between a broad-based (horizontal) versus a narrow-based (vertical) definition of the health problem

Taking sexual and reproductive health and rights as an example, this is a crucial issue to be addressed in young nations and/or countries in transition. The broader based definition of the issue would lead to a rights-based approach and move into issues of power and gender relations, socio-economic determinants of the problem, and both collective and individually-oriented responses. Furthermore, while vertical approaches focus on a specific health problem, the horizontal approach entails a cross-cutting view that may tackle tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS, malaria and diabetes in one specific area. A good example of a communication vehicle with the necessary flexibility to cater for the breadth of a horizontal and vertical approach, with each of the specific diseases is the Tanzanian FEMINA Health Information Project. It deals broadly with sexual and reproductive health and rights of young Tanzanians, while managing to treat the specificities of the individual diseases and contextual factors related to them. The distinctions in definition of a health problem result in the need to define differing strategies, which again reflect different criteria for strategy development.

Choosing the appropriate level of intervention

The strategic communication response may be defined in relation both to local community-based constituencies, but also to national forum of either ordinary people or decision-makers in parliament. Furthermore, the transnational, regional and often global response mechanisms are gaining growing attention. For example, there has been, in recent years, increased recognition of HIV/AIDS not only being defined as a local or national problem, but also requiring transnational response mechanisms, which have been developing over the last five years.

Choosing the appropriate thematic emphasis of intervention

This ranges from focus on individual behavioural determinants to a broader socio-economic, cultural and political focus. In the example of polio, there has been a significant change in focus from the grand vaccination campaigns focusing on social mobilisation in the late 1980s to today’s broader-based campaigns with strong advocacy components. Most often, however, many organisations remain focused on behavioural interventions. Lifestyle-related health problems, such as Diabetes Type II, call not just for addressing behavioural dimensions, but also for considering the overall development process touching upon urbanization and the consequential changes this has upon everyday life.

Focusing on content, not channels

Strategic communication, as it is understood in behaviour change communication, is embedded in logic of producing messages directed at target audiences. However, as a consequence of not only focusing on behaviour change communication but increasingly on advocacy
communication, participatory communication, and communication for social change, it is resulting in altered communicative strategies. From a focus on messages, we now witness a growing emphasis on showing/representing social problems and situations, inviting the audience to engage in collective reflection and action. For example, sexual and reproductive health and rights have moved away from the narrow focus on messages of family planning to a broadly defined rights-based strategy encompassing women’s empowerment and gender roles.
3.3. COMMUNICATION FOR DEVELOPMENT IN GOVERNANCE

“The World Bank Group has come a long way in recent years in recognizing the power of communications as an integral development tool, but we have further to go. Communications must be part of everything that we do, from our operational work in projects, to our policy research, to our engagement with clients and other partners”

Paul Wolfowitz, President World Bank
Remarks before the Global Communications Forum (2006)

3.3.1. Approaches, Themes and Levels

The critical importance of a free and balanced flow of information to an engaged and active civil society, through an independent media and transparent government, has long been acknowledged. Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights guarantees that “Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media, and regardless of frontiers.”

Implied in Article 19 is the connotation that the media are potential champions of the poor, oppressed, and politically suppressed. However, in the 60 years since the Declaration of Human Rights was promulgated, reality has often been sadly at variance with these intentions. Now, in a 21st century society where the means of communication have developed exponentially, possibilities for community empowerment and access to information have also expanded. The furtherance of media and communication processes in support of increased information flows, accountability of governmental authorities, transparency, anti-corruption measures, and increased democratic reform that guarantees political participation for all citizens are all now firmly on the governance agenda.

Communication plays a pivotal role in improving governance in developing countries. Governance may be defined as (1) the process by which governments are selected, monitored and replaced, (2) the capacity of the government to formulate and implement sound policies effectively, (3) the respect of citizens and the state for the institutions that govern economic, political, and social interactions among them, and (4) the capacity for active and informed economic, social, and political dialogue among citizens within a public sphere.

Communication also enhances public participation. Participation and monitoring mechanisms may be situated in national efforts to improve public sector performance, increase transparency and reduce corruption. A system of checks and balances, in which communication is one of the key elements, is designed to achieve accountability among and within various agencies of government, manage conflicts of interest in the public sector, effectively
disperse power through increasing public participation, and limit situations conducive to corrupt behaviour. The effective management within the public sector relies upon these systems of accountability (World Bank, 2006).

Governance also incorporates attention to the public sphere, in which informed citizens actively engage in dialogue on political matters. Communication enhances the potential for civil society to hold governmental authorities accountable as well as to engage in political decision making. Empowering citizens to demand accountability and participation in decision making is critical to good governance. Participatory communication can only foster in an environment of freedom from political, economic, and social pressures.

The Governance theme may be further categorized in terms of the following issues: a) Public Institution Governance, b) Local Government and Communities, c) Anti-Corruption, Accountability and Institutional Transparency, d) Economic Reforms and Infrastructure for Service Delivery, and e) Role of the Media in Monitoring Institutional Governance.

Public Institutions Governance

Active participation of citizens and civil society groups in policy-making is now widely considered a sound investment and a core element of good governance, as it allows governments to tap wider sources of information and improves the quality and participation of the decisions reached by institutions at all levels. Citizens’ participation and civic engagement takes several forms, but each of them has at its core interactive communication models.

According to a number of international organisations including the OECD and the World Bank, in strengthening their relations with citizens and their participation to policymaking, governments should ensure that information flows and communication channels are complete, objective, reliable, and accessible. More importantly, consultation, participation, and dialogue with citizens should foster active political participation.

Effective communication in public sector institutions is a primary function of institutional performance as well as its leadership. It is through clear and consistent communication of the practices, values, and objectives of the various public sector bodies to staff, management and external stakeholders that the public sector most effectively supports good governance outcomes and contributes to stakeholder confidence in the public sector. In particular, openness, integrity and effective communication are vital pre-requisites of good governance. These qualities contribute to, and are implicitly linked with, other principles such as disclosure, commitment and integration, to ensure accountability in the use of public assets in the quest to achieve stated goals and objectives and required performance levels.

Communication can significantly improve public sector performance and policy formulation when members of institutions convey information and engage in dialogue with citizen groups. Moreover, communication can play a
vital role in facilitating new public sector dynamics such as cross-agency governance arrangements and policy design, which are becoming more common as public sector organizations and governments seek to address increasingly complex and/or wide-ranging policy issues. Such arrangements are also facilitated by the application of new information and communication technologies that enable the rapid formation of virtual organizations to perform specific policy or operational tasks.

Commitment to information technology, however, should be based on a critical assessment of local conditions and needs. It should be realistic and not intrusive so as to operate in harmony with existing communication channels in promoting popular participation.

Access to public sector information

Governance entails public debate and open participatory decision-making; hence, the organization of interest groups and the free exchange of ideas, opinions and information are essential to good governance. Addressing the information and communication needs of the poor and other oppressed groups is also essential, particularly when basic information concerning human rights and entitlements, public services, health, education, employment etc., is lacking. These groups also lack visibility and defining policy priorities and accessing resources.

The public sector is the single biggest producer of information in the developing world. Examples are demographic data, economic statistics, geographic information, business information, and local level government information. This information resource has a considerable social and economic potential which is untapped most of the time. Public sector information is an important economic asset: it constitutes raw material for new services, improvement of already existing services, and facilitation of commerce and trading. The presence of readily available information products based on public sector information could greatly facilitate the functioning of society as a whole. There are, however, a number of barriers that hamper the realization of the full economic and social potential of public sector information in developing countries.

Local Government and Communities

There is a growing consensus among development agencies, NGOs, and development practitioners that good local governance creates the conditions for sustainable development and poverty reduction by increasing citizens’ participation in the local development process. Local authorities and civic groups can be influential in delivering quality services to local citizens. If they are to fulfill these roles effectively, good communication is essential to manage and answer the most pressing questions of local development: Do these local government reforms offer new spaces and significantly increase popular participation in governance? Do local governments appreciate the potential embedded in local media? What are groups working on participation doing in relationship to governance? What participatory methods can be used? A growing body of literature demonstrates ways citizen input can be
linked to policy making processes and can improve perceptions of local government legitimacy (Renn, Webler, and Wiedemann, 1995).

Local governments and citizen participation play a major role in this effort by ensuring more effective and accountable local infrastructure and service delivery for the poor and by improving dialogue among different entities, including the state, local communities and the private sector. For the last twenty years, the concept of participation has been widely used in local development, referring primarily to community activities. This concept has now been enhanced to incorporate citizenship rights and local democratic governance. Nowhere is this seen more clearly than in the multitude of new programmes for decentralized governance that are found in both southern and northern countries.

Part of the international donors’ and NGOs’ local development strategies involve building partnerships and communication channels with and between national institutions, local authorities, community organizations, civil society, private sector, and citizens. These strategies also involve promoting policy and institutional reforms to enable the transfer of powers and financial resources to more effective and accountable local spheres of government. Popular education and communication activities methodologies are needed to strengthen citizens’ awareness and responsibilities under new local governance legislation.

Monitoring and evaluation of the communication activities should be undertaken at multiple levels and particularly in local communities. Fortunately, local authorities have increased their monitoring and evaluation activities in recent years, although most of such work is still conducted in-house.

**Anticorruption, Accountability and Transparency**

Civil society organizations and citizens play a key role in fighting corruption. In so doing, they constitute an effective self-governance tool. The OECD, World Bank, EU, Transparency International, and other bodies widely recognize the role that an informed civil society plays in fighting corruption and advocating for more accountability and transparency in government. But what does this mean from a communication standpoint?

Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and the general public have taken advantage of multiple communication channels, both to support the monitoring processes and to denounce corrupt government practices. They have done so through various practices, including the encouragement of ombudsmen and whistleblowers.

The EU placed communication as one of the linchpins of anticorruption efforts in countries seeking accession to EU. “Communication on a Comprehensive EU Policy Against Corruption” ensures that independent media and the free flow of information are among the most important anti-corruption efforts a country can make. Communication also helps the process of demystifying
and depersonalizing government—opening up information, informing citizens of their legal rights in dealing with government and publishing staff manuals which are easily accessible to department users, contractors, and think tanks. An increasing number of studies suggest that media prevalence can be linked to improved delivery of government services because media coverage creates pressure for accountability (Adsera, Boix, and Payne, 2000; Besley and Burgess, 2003).

Efforts to fight corruption and realize transparency, however, have mainly concentrated on economic transparency at the level of governments and projects. Of equal importance is attention to transparency at the policy formulation level of development goals and projects. In as much as development goals are mostly determined by international agencies that are largely influenced by the North, the funding of development projects in countries of the global South are mainly based on Northern constructs of development. Development is primarily viewed within economic and political points of reference that are often in conflict with economic, social, cultural, or political points of reference of countries in the South. Transparency at the policy level requires the adoption of universal constructs of development that take into consideration cultural as well as societal particularities.

**Economic Reforms and Infrastructure for Service Delivery**

Economic reforms and infrastructures constitute a significant part of the donors' lending and technical assistance programs to developing countries. Such reforms go to the core of the norms around which societies are organized, thus affecting the relationship and informal interactions between institutions and citizens. Such reforms therefore require all parties to accept a significant change in beliefs and perceptions about the nature of public goods and a new balance between government responsibility, public investment, and private-sector activities.

Economic reforms require a shift in the rights and responsibilities of all players and call for national mobilization of civil servants, ministries, businesses, academics, media, unions, consumers, civil society, and nongovernmental organizations to move the economic reforms and infrastructure-building programs forward.

In this highly complex socio-political environment, economic reforms and infrastructure projects are under increased public scrutiny. Performance of communication activities based on product outputs (e.g., number of radio and TV spots, advertisements, etc.) is no longer sufficient to meet these new demands. Constituencies want to know more about how reforms can have a significant impact on poverty reduction and the economic participation wellbeing of all citizens. Traditionally, many infrastructure projects have often been accompanied by controversy. In this respect, a communication role has often been that of damage-control. Within the current development context, however, communication is expected to anticipate and prevent problems, not just chronicle their efforts.

**Role of the Media in Good Governance**
The role of the media is critical in promoting good governance through institutional monitoring. The media are critical elements on a country’s institutional accountability and anticorruption efforts. They have a dual role to play: they not only raise public awareness about corruption, its causes, consequences and possible remedies, they also investigate and reports incidences of corruption. The effectiveness of the media, in turn, depends on access to information and freedom of expression, as well as a professional and ethical cadre of investigative journalists.

When the media are working well, they prevent corruption via their monitoring activities. Investigative journalism may reveal inequities and violations and, by doing so, reinforce social values. In a very practical sense, they may also reduce incidences of corruption in both the public and private sector. By the same token, in an environment of free speech and a free press, the media perform a watchdog function and expose social injustices wherever they occur. In an open, pluralistic, and developed society, the media are a particularly effective tool for exposing and preventing corruption; they are successful at this, because corruption cases usually make the news.

In recent years, the word ‘governance’ has been integrated into the language of development and social change. The term has a wide range of connotations and understandings, often depending upon the stance of the organization, body or authority involved.

In one example, Australia’s overseas aid agency, AusAID, has a broad view of the subject (www.ausaid.gov.au/keyaid.gover.cfm 2006):

“Effective governance means competent management of a country’s resources in a way that is fair, open, accountable and responsive to people’s needs.

Good governance is the basic building block for development. It is the most effective investment that Australia can make in promoting sustained growth, improving living standards and reducing poverty.

Support for good governance is not restricted to central governments, but must be adopted by service delivery areas of partner governments, local administrations, civil society and the private sector.”

In addressing the various constituencies and improving governance, AusAID has targeted five key areas:

- Improved economic and financial management
- Increased public sector effectiveness
- Strengthened law and justice
- Development of civil society
- Strengthened democratic systems.
The World Bank has made governance its central plank in lending decision-making, while some country programmes consist entirely of funds for this sector. In 2005, World Bank lending for governance, public sector reform and rule of law totalled some $2.9 billion, constituting 13% of the bank’s new lending for the year.

Apart from specific lending programmes, governance and anti-corruption measures are mainstreamed in all World Bank country strategies, especially in those countries prone to corruption. The Bank’s work on governance covers anti-corruption, administrative and civil service reform, decentralization, public financial management, tax policy, legal and judicial reform. Demands for good governance are expressed through media development, participation and social accountability measures.

The role of media in good governance initiatives is a relatively new area of concentration for international agencies and donors. In 1999, the World Bank’s Vice President for East Asia and the Pacific, Jean-Michel Severino, put it this way.

“We have seen the need for clean, open and effective institutions, and we recognise the corrosive effect of corruption, both on investor confidence and also on those institutions and investment decisions. A free press, informed and well trained in the skills of analysis and investigation, may be one of the best resources a country can have in managing the challenges and taking advantage of the opportunities presented by the globalized economy.”

The difficulties facing international agencies, donors and NGOs in assisting the strengthening of communication processes to better combat poor governance issues, are manifold. The World Bank itself has admitted that it “does not have the authority to demand press freedoms in its borrowing countries” (Severino, p.2. in AFR, 5/4/99).

UNESCO is another international organization with an on-going programme supportive of press freedom and governance. Its 2005 World Press Freedom Day theme was devoted to the subject. The Final Declaration of the global conference stressed that “independent and pluralistic media are essential for ensuring transparency, accountability and participation as fundamental elements of good governance and human-rights based development.” It also called on UNESCO’s Member States to “respect the function of the news media as an essential factor in good governance, vital to increasing both transparency and accountability in decision-making processes and to communicating the principles of good governance to society.” (http://portal.unesco.org/ci/en/ev.phpURL, 2005)

The dilemma facing the international community in this domain is in translating words into actions through a positive interface with national governments and in-country authorities, and in combating attempts to derail the process and deny the citizenry access to the information needed to improve lives.
3.3.2. Evidence and Value Added by Governance and Development

Relative to other development themes, such as health, communication in support of good governance represents a relatively new field and one with a unique set of challenges. Further study will be required to provide evidence of successful practices in different development sectors. The following cases illustrate the promise and potential of development communication in the governance arena.

Voices on the Breeze - Communication for Empowerment in Zambia

Until 2003, when Breeze FM came on air, the people of Chipata in eastern Zambia, had little involvement in the content of their local radio broadcasting. Information came from two main sources: government radio stations, which broadcast from the capital city, Lusaka, located some 600 kilometres away; and civil society and religious sources. The communication was largely one-way and was about issues that the government, civil society and church organizations thought were important for the people. Two things were missing: relevant and localized information on the issues that most affected and most concerned people in the region; and the opportunity to discuss and bring to public attention their concerns and perceptions.

When Breeze FM opened in the provincial town of Chipata in 2003, the situation changed. The commercial station prided itself on serving the community. It hired a retired school teacher who soon became known as “Gogo” (grandfather) Breeze. Gogo Breeze is pioneering a new type of journalism. Every day he travels on his bicycle from township to township and village to village, meeting and talking to people about their lives and problems. In addition to recording their long-ignored folklore and music, Gogo Breeze follows up on people’s complaints and grievances. He covers distances of up to 70 kilometres responding to the requests from villagers to visit their areas. When at the station he spends a lot of time receiving ordinary folk who come into town.

Other programmes include the most popular ‘Letters from Our Listeners’ in which people, young and old, ask for his assistance in resolving issues ranging from family and community conflicts to poor governance and service delivery at central, provincial, local and traditional levels. The government is slowly waking up to the fact that the local radio station is more effective in communicating important information to the public than its own national station and, as a result, it is beginning to work with the Breeze station on agricultural, education, environment and health issues. (UNDP)

Not just radio: India and the rural newspaper revolution

India has undergone more dramatic and rapid change in its media landscape perhaps than any other country, characterized particularly by a dramatic liberalization and an explosion of satellite television. A less documented, but no less significant, revolution is taking place in its rural newspaper industry.
In many countries, people living in rural areas are considered to be a low priority for newspapers. Distribution is expensive, newsgathering difficult and advertisers are often uninterested in a population with so little purchasing power. In India, however, rural areas are increasingly important business for newspapers. In many Indian states, including Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, Chattisgarh or Uttar Pradesh, newspapers have fine-tuned their publication and delivery schedules to deliver newspapers by six a.m. to villages (or at least those that are close to roads), in every district of the state. A market for newspapers has been created by growing literacy rates, improved roads and other communications, increased purchasing power and by increased hunger for information of all kinds. Newspapers which have found their urban markets declining or stagnating, and advertising income leaching to television, have been forced to look for new markets.

Local newspaper editions are now important information channels for development agents at the village level. Civil society organizations have been able to get community news, including women’s news, as well as to publicly raise these issues in the wider society. This development has been reported to add transparency to the dynamics of political parties, generating discussion on given policy options. On the other hand, Sevanta Ninan, an Indian media researcher who has written extensively on this revolution, argues that the revolution has its drawbacks. “Rural scribes are loose cannons. They inform, but they also sensationalise and trivialise.” The newspaper revolution has also tended to be driven by profit-maximizing, rather than development concerns. The Indian government is resisting pressure to liberalize radio broadcasting and this in turn has prevented the emergence of a vibrant community radio sector. Rural newspapers are in some respects filling this gap, providing an obvious point of engagement for those working to improve governance.

(UNDP)

Communication for Empowerment in Peru: Citizens’ Media Watch

Citizens’ Media Watch brings together eleven civil society organizations to monitor the quality of the mass media in Peru. Founded in 2001 and hosted by the NGO, Calandria, it consists of the National Association of Advertisers (ANDA), UNICEF, communication faculties of several different universities and a web of interested specialists and opinion leaders. There is also a group of volunteers from seven cities: Lima, Arequipa, Cusco, Puno, Iquitos, Trujillo, and Chimbote. The principal objectives of Citizens’ Media Watch are to: mobilize civil society institutions to work towards better quality mass media content; make visible citizens’ opinions regarding the media; educate and mobilize citizens to achieve the right to voice their opinions; and influence the authorities, entrepreneurs, and media themselves to see their responsibility in communicating with Peruvian audiences. Citizens’ Media Watch claims that it is currently the only institution in Peru dedicated exclusively to monitoring media for better quality and to offering mechanisms for citizen participation. Through Media Watch, citizens can express their opinion about media.

(UNDP)
**Ter Yat: The Ugandan Mega Forum**

Ter Yat is a weekly political talk show broadcast on Mega FM, a community based radio station in Gulu, northern Uganda. It was established explicitly to increase dialogue and public understanding in order to defuse tensions. Supported by DFID, but run on a commercial basis, the station broadcasts 24 hours a day, and has a strong emphasis on development programming. Unlike most other radio stations accessible in the region, it broadcasts in Luo, the local language. Audience research suggests that it is listened to by more than half a million people. Ter Yat is one of the most popular programmes on the station. It is broadcast on Saturday mornings. Political leaders and opinion makers discuss issues of regional and national importance. Ministers, members of parliament, religious leaders, politicians and rebels talk in the studio or by phone and give their views on the way forward to peace and development. (UNDP)

### 3.3.3. The Potential for Development Communication in the Field of Governance

Communication provides the foundation necessary for the facilitation of good governance, through promotion of effective government, accountability and the active engagement of participants in civil society. The above examples illustrate how local radio and newspaper systems can engage citizens in relevant political dialogue and decision making.

It is important to note that good governance and good government are not the same. Good governance is based on the participation of all people concerned. Focusing on the operation of governmental institutions, such as decentralization, does not go far enough. Decentralization does not always signify democratization. In reality the motives for decentralization may hide a central authorities’ desire to dispense with certain obligations while tightening their control in other areas.

In order to promote participation, it is important to reinforce independent and pluralistic media. For media to be able to offer a critical view of government, political and economic systems must enable the media to operate in as open a public sphere as possible. Press freedom is never guaranteed, particularly when media industries are commercialized, even in a democracy. Apart from creating the appropriate political and economic environments for a free press system, it is crucial to educate journalists to the highest ethical and professional standards possible.

These issues are relevant to all media systems, but especially print and broadcasting. They also address ICTs potential to promote governmental transparency and to engage civil society in yet to be defined ways. Discussions of relevant media systems must take into account the expectations and aspirations of the communities involved. For the media to provide a useful public sphere for political dialogue, the technological systems, content, and language need to be accessible by local communities.
In addition, although most of this discourse tends to focus on the importance of news and information systems, the critical role of popular culture in political socialization should not be overlooked.
3.4. THE ROLE OF ICTs IN COMMUNICATION FOR DEVELOPMENT

“We, the representatives of the peoples of the world, assembled in Geneva from 10-12 December 2003 for the first phase of the World Summit on the Information Society, declare our common desire and commitment to build a people-centred, inclusive and development-oriented Information Society, where everyone can create, access, utilize and share information and knowledge, enabling individuals, communities and peoples to achieve their full potential in promoting their sustainable development and improving their quality of life, premised on the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and respecting fully and upholding the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.”

Declaration of Principles: WSIS, 2003

ICTs are vital tools in efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals in health, education and community development. They can deliver a range of services, help capacity-building, empower communities, and bridge social divides. For example, rural artisans in Thailand are now able to use the internet to market their crafts to a global audience. Urban women in Senegal use the power of technology to advocate gender policies on employment and to increase support for environments more conducive to entrepreneurial activities by women. Access to and use of affordable information is critical to human survival – be it access to information on public services and the delivery of health services, the price of agricultural commodities or the latest information on the weather. How to access and leverage information in the planning and execution of development remains a key issue that has been prioritized by governments, non-governmental agencies and civil society.

With the benefit of hindsight and based on evidence from the field, it is now clear that the success of ICT projects is conditioned by an integrated approach to development and social change. ICTs cannot solely contribute to sustainable development. ICTs require enabling environments and supportive infrastructures in order to succeed. Projects need uninterrupted supplies of electricity along with technical and logistical support, the availability of technical know-how and back-end services. The success of e-governance projects, for example, may rest on the availability of government information, adequate turn-arounds of response and the availability of accessible hardware and affordable services. In other words, ICT projects require an integrated approach, an enabling environment and the required capital expenditures. All too often, ICT projects are stand-alone initiatives that remain at a pilot level, unable to replicate and network progressively and extensively.

While governments, non-governmental agencies, such as the World Bank and the FAO, the private sector and civil society continue to invest in ICT projects, there is also a vital need for comparative studies and assessments of the impact of ICT projects and their contribution to development and social change. This is essential – for without adequate benchmarks and an appreciation of successes and failures, the potential of ICT projects will
remain a mystery. Agencies therefore need to continue to support ICT projects and the ancillary services they require. ICTs offer an opportunity for equitable development. The more participatory an ICT project is, the better the chances are that it will achieve the Millennium Development Goals. An enabling environment must include opportunities for women and marginalised sectors of society to effectively use ICTs for their development. Such involvement in the planning and delivery of ICT projects along with other stakeholders is a strategic choice that needs to be made by organisations involved in the sector.

3.4.1. The Proliferation and Promise of ICTs

In recent years, much of the world has experienced exponential growth in the distribution and use of advanced information and communication technologies (ICTs). Their diffusion has accelerated rapidly in recent decades due to the convergence of what were once distinct technologies (e.g., the telephone, radio, television and the computer). The appearance of cable and satellite transmission systems has also sped the diffusion of ICTs. In turn, such developments have spawned powerful media industries that now employ millions of people in an “information society” of global proportions.

Wireless telephone and internet access have grown the most dramatically of all ICTs, with subscriber increases of over 15,000 % and 8,300 %, respectively, between 1991 and 2003 (see Table I). In fact, mobile phones are now the preferred technology among communication planners intent on providing basic telephone service to neglected populations. China, for example, is modernizing and expanding its telecommunication sector by “leapfrogging” its established land-line phone systems in many areas.

Table 4.1: Global Access to ICTs: 1991 – 2003

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1991</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>% Increase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Main telephone lines</td>
<td>546 million</td>
<td>1.21 billion</td>
<td>222</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobile cellular subscribers</td>
<td>16 million</td>
<td>1.33 billion</td>
<td>8,306</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal computers</td>
<td>130 million</td>
<td>650 million</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet users</td>
<td>4.4 million</td>
<td>665 million</td>
<td>15,045</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Data derived from International Telecommunication Union (2003) and cited by Hudson (2006).

In addition to the scientific and engineering innovations that have made ICTs affordable to increasing numbers of people worldwide, many governments have de-regulated their telecom sectors and, in the process, privatized what were formerly state-run industries. As a result, urban consumers in wealthy nations are now connected to sources of information and entertainment that were once beyond their means and even their imaginations.

Although the connectivity and multimedia features of ICTs have increased access to information of all kinds, the provision and sharing of such information on a global scale remain major challenges. Copyright and censorship policies restrict the flow of information, both within and across
national borders. Vested interests, public as well as private, seek control of ICTs for their own purposes. Fortunately, forces dedicated to expanding people’s access to and use of ICTs have emerged. The “open source movement” is one such force. It consists of a growing number of computer programmers, software designers and content providers who wish to expand citizens’ access to information of all kinds through online collaboration and sharing (DiBona et al, 2006). Open source advocates are dedicated to the proposition that media content should be made available to people everywhere through existing network-enabled distribution systems.

3.4.2. Overcoming Obstacles to ICT Access and Use

Although ICTs and the information resources that accompany them are expanding at exponential rates throughout the world, they are doing so in uneven and discriminatory ways. Telecommunication and computer services still are restricted to the urban centers of most developing countries. Rural, poor and disadvantaged persons in these nations are denied access to ICTs because they are poor and often marginalized, both geographically and politically. The fact is the vast majority of people in developing countries have never made a telephone call, much less used a computer. African nations are the most underserved by ICTs. Together, they have only six telephone subscribers per 100 people. Such density is less than one tenth that found on other continents. As a result, while Africa is home to approximately 13.5% of the world’s population, less than 2% of all Internet users reside there (International Telecommunication Union, 2003).

In its 1997 Statement on Universal Access to Basic Communication and Information Services, the United Nations Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) concluded that most developing countries, especially the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) are not reaping the benefits of the communications revolution since they lack the following basic services:

- affordable access to core information sources, cutting-edge technology, and sophisticated telecommunications systems and infrastructure;
- the capacity to build, operate, manage, and service the technologies involved;
- policies that promote equitable public participation in the information society as both producers and consumers of information and knowledge; and,
- a workforce trained to develop, maintain and provide the value-added products and services required by the information economy (United Nations Administrative Committee on Coordination (1997), cited by Hudson, op. cit.).

Whereas increasing numbers of people in North America, Europe and parts of Asia are privileged to have telephones and computers in their homes and in their places of work, residents of poor countries are denied access to these technologies and hence the essential connectivity that they provide. To date, neither governments nor private companies have invested adequately in the
infrastructure - trained personnel, reliable power supplies, and technical support systems – required for ICT networks to operate on a large scale. With the exception of radio, the costs associated with the installation, maintenance and continuous upgrading of communication technologies are considered to be prohibitively high. They are likely to remain so for the foreseeable future. For this reason, the challenge of “mainstreaming” ICTs for the benefit of neglected and underserved populations in developing nations is best viewed from a community as opposed to an individual consumer or even household perspective.

3.4.3. ICTs as Catalysts for Community Development and Social Change

For over 40 years, the mass media - print, radio and television - have been addressing development needs in education, health, agriculture, family planning, etc. Customarily, such initiatives have relied on the mass media to inform, educate and persuade large numbers of people. By the same token, such programs have often been criticized for being techno-centric and “top-down” in their approaches to community development and social change. As a result, programs incorporating new and inherently more interactive ICTs are gaining favor insofar as they connect people and communities to one another and to previously unavailable information resources.

Unquestionably, wireless telephones and other ICTs are a promising means for meeting the information needs of rural people and other underserved populations. Cell phones typically are less costly to install and maintain than fixed-line technologies. They can be expanded incrementally, they can provide a range of voice and data services, and they can access open-source content. When planned in a coordinated way, they can also have a powerful multiplier effect on development. For example, within the past three years, the small nation of Macedonia succeeded in linking all of its 460 primary schools and all of its 100 secondary schools to the internet. At the same time, it trained 80 master trainers and all 2,500 of the nation’s secondary school teachers in internet usage. (The DOT-COM Alliance, 2006).

On an international scale, ICTs are now used to supplement traditional classroom instruction by providing students and teachers with worldwide access to educational materials of all kinds. The networking of schools within and across regions via the internet is also increasing rapidly. One such network, World Links, was founded by the World Bank in 2001. Now a private entity, it provides internet access to over 1,000 school-based learning centers. Comparable internet services have been supported in recent years by other regional and international consortia, including Schoolnet Africa, LearnLink and the DOT-COM Alliance.

ICTs also are being deployed increasingly within the health sectors of many nations, both to extend coverage and to improve the quality of medical care in remote areas. Telemedicine services now include: satellite-based emergency communications; training of medical personnel (i.e., doctors, para-professionals and village health workers) via the web; and remote diagnosis,
the virtual treatment and monitoring of patients. In many respects, the communication protocols associated with these innovations are modelled on the two-way radio services established by Australia’s “Flying Doctor” program, which began in 1928, and by Alaska’s Rural Health Service, which was launched some 40 years later.

While ICTs are directly increasing people’s access to education and health services, they also are enhancing the value of other communication media. For example, radio remains the most accessible mass medium in rural areas of many nations and is likely to remain so for years to come. Community radio stations are the prime source of information and entertainment for millions of rural listeners in Latin American countries. Stations affiliated with the Asociacion Latinoamericana de Educacion Radiofonica (ALER) and the World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC) have “reinvigorated” their service to village audiences by: (1) providing local programmers access to internet materials; (2) downloading audio files from portals with radio content; and (3) providing online training and other distance learning opportunities.

Telecenters have proven to be another popular means of supporting for development initiatives at the local level. They have done so by facilitating citizen access to ICT services. Telecenters typically are located in municipal buildings or in space purchased or leased from private owners. Depending on the way they are structured and the time of day, they may operate either as government and/or as commercial enterprises (i.e., cybercafés). “Embellished” telecenters, in addition to fulfilling citizens’ private information and communication needs, are community-driven and frequently provide a range of services in education, health and other sectors. For example, Mali’s Community Learning and Information Centres (CLICs), operates 13 telecenters, which last year provided telecommunication services to over 25,000 paying customers and training to over 500 individuals in commercial and development-related subjects.

Unfortunately, the promise of community telecenters has not been fulfilled in many rural communities. Failure to establish adequate revenue streams is mostly to blame for their demise in most cases. Staff recruitment and retention, unreliable power supplies, problems with internet connectivity, difficulties maintaining and replacing equipment, and lack of consumable materials such as paper and toner for computer printers have compounded the centres’ precarious financial circumstances. To address such problems, partial government subsidies, perhaps derived from universal service funds or other funding mechanisms, will likely be required if telecenters are to survive in rural and other underserved areas. In other words, the local community is crucial both in the running of both local radio stations and local telecentres, because they demand continuity in resources in order to become sustainable. Otherwise they end up being -- as it has happened in several countries -- kind of "relay stations" for substance produced outside the community.

The fate of telecenters illustrates the persistent temptation within many development agencies – both national and international - to regard the latest
generation of ICTs as panaceas for deeply-rooted social and economic problems. The power and pervasiveness of the media are such that they can and do promote wishful, even utopian thinking, among their advocates. When manifested in “build-it-and-they-will-come” pilot projects, such thinking produces costly and disappointing results. In order to avoid such outcomes, experience suggests that tough issues and questions must be posed at the outset of any ICT planning exercise. These include: (1) the degree to which the presumed recipients of new information services are involved in their design and implementation; (2) the level of commitment, organization, training and technical support present at different levels to sustain a program beyond its pilot phase; and (3) the ability and willingness of program participants to learn from their mistakes, to experiment with alternative funding schemes and, when necessary, to adjust their goals and operations to meet changing circumstances.

For ICTs to have a positive and lasting effect on community development and social change, they must be controlled as much as possible at the local level. The planning of new services requires the articulation of a shared vision; one that is arrived at by negotiation among all potential stakeholders (e.g., community representatives, service providers and development sector officials). Such a vision should also set priorities on how new ICTs are going to be used - to increase access to the internet and communication services, to provide instruction and/or training, to extend the reach of regional health clinics, etc.

Once a new ICT network or service has been launched, the challenge is to integrate its technical and human components and to define the management, financial and accounting procedures required to sustain it. Such arrangements and the training that accompanies them are crucial to any program’s success. It also is true that programs rarely develop exactly as they were planned. For this reason, time and flexibility are required to modify ICTs to fit changing circumstances and to continue meeting community needs.

### 3.4.4. ICTs for Development Evidence and Value Added

As noted above, ICTs are used in a wide variety of contexts around the world. These include: education, job-training, e-governance, e-commerce, capacity-building, healthcare, business services, advocacy and networking, and agricultural development. Increasingly, ICTs are being used to accomplish a range of objectives – from behavioural change to education and advocacy. Projects vary in their aims and objectives, and are based on different paradigms of communication and social change. Many are motivated by the need to bridge the ‘digital divides’ existing in many societies.

The following examples of ICT-based projects illustrate different mixes of technologies and the various paradigms of communication for development, incorporating top-down as well as participatory models of social change.
HIV/AIDS Prevention in Cross Border Areas of the Greater Mekong Sub-Region.

An example of current ICTs for development project delivering a range of objectives is UNESCO’s *ICT and HIV/AIDS Prevention in Cross Border Areas of Greater Mekong Sub-Region*. Using ICTs, the project focuses on three areas: 1) high-risk behaviours, 2) trafficking of women, 3) drug abuse among minorities.

This project uses both directed and participatory communication to achieve its objectives. While certain components of the project, the Geographic Information Systems for example, facilitate the mapping of cross-border migration flows and are expert-led, the radio drama is produced within a participatory paradigm and involves sections of the community in the planning of story lines, and the production of the radio dramas.

Expected outcomes:

- Develop ICT learning materials for HIV/AIDS preventive education in the local languages of the GMS communities.
- Build the capacities of teachers, health workers, multimedia providers, and other stakeholders for HIV/AIDS preventive education.
- Expand the use of ICT interventions in HIV/AIDS preventive education.
- Deliver ICT-based interventions to isolated, marginalized, and vulnerable populations.


*The World Bank Institute’s ‘Virtual Souk’*

An example of ICTs in e-commerce is the Virtual Souk project for rural artisans in the Middle East and North Africa. The livelihoods of a variety of rural artisans are under threat from the lowering of demand for traditional arts and crafts. The Virtual Souk provides people with the opportunity to maintain their traditional livelihood as craftspeople. “The Virtual Souk is a system of locally controlled web e-commerce which aims to provide artisans from the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), often isolated from the most lucrative national and international markets and constrained in their production mechanisms by the demands of the tourists, with access to a wider market and the chance to safeguard their traditional techniques of production”. The Virtual Souk is based on a user-friendly and multi-lingual web database catalogue of products and artisans. This has enabled artisans to sell their products to anybody over the internet. ICTs are used to facilitate:

- international trade in traditional craft
- the livelihoods of traditional rural artisans,
- the creation of awareness of traditional culture,
- capacity building and
- networking

The project is based on a partnership between multiple stakeholders, including NGOs, rural artisans and ICT providers.

Outcomes

More than 1,000 artisans have benefited from this project. Despite this, the lack of infrastructural capacities, shortfalls in ICTs training, lack of NGO support and availability and access to technology remain key issues that are barriers to the region-wide implementation of the 'Virtual Souk'. (source: http://www.elsouk.com/)

The Gyan Ganga Telecentre Project, Gujarat, India

This project jointly supported by the government of Gujarat and a private organization n-Logue is founded on 3,000 information kiosks used to fulfil multiple functions in a variety of locations in rural Gujarat. Using an indigenously manufactured WLL (local loop) technology, the project envisages the delivery of a range of services including economic information, e-education, e-governance, computer-mediated training, public services information. The project is based on the co-operation between three tiers, N-Logue – that is the overall project implementer, the local internet service provider and the operator of the local ICTs kiosk. It is hoped that connectivity will lead to ‘wealth creation’, increases in urban-rural skills and educational opportunities, better health through telemedicine and e-governance enabled through the availability of variety of online resources supportive of citizenship. The communication model used in this project is a combination of directed and participatory models.

Outcomes

While this project has definitely improved access to the use of ICTs and played a key role in bridging the digital divide, its implementation has been a learning experience for all concerned. The larger lessons from this project have universal validity and can be used to illustrate the strengths and weaknesses of contemporary telecentre projects. Such projects tend to be capital intensive, require infrastructural support, long-term political backing, investments in training and the maintenance of technology and most importantly the digitalization of backend services. In other words, the success of ICTs projects such as telecentres is based on key investments in multiple support elements – from the technology itself to the software and in the ‘attitudes’ of all stake-holders. (source: http://www.iimahd.ernet.in/ctps/pdf/Gyan%20Ganga%20Report.pdf).
Women’s Voices in Kenya

This project, which is supported by the Intermediate Technology Development Group (ITDG) and the Department for International Development (DFID), focuses on the use of ICTs for the empowerment of women in Kenya. It is part of a larger, three-nation (Peru, Zimbabwe, Kenya) project on women’s representation and advocacy for social change. In Nairobi, the project is based in two shanty towns, Mathare and the Redeemed Village. In each of these villages, women have been trained (in scripting, shooting and editing) to use video technology to record a variety of stories on issues and problems in their lives. These stories range from the plight of AIDS orphans, shelter, land tenure, alcohol, drug abuse and crime. These 15-minute ‘Telling Our Story’ features have been shown on national TV, on German TV and the BBC. The programmes have also been used in the context of advocating for better government support schemes aimed at dealing with the issues faced by these women and the communities that they are a part of.

The communication paradigm used in this project is specifically oriented towards empowerment and advocacy for structural change. Changing the system and life opportunities are seen as essential to human development.

Outcomes

One of the major outcomes of this project has been the creation of self-confidence in women who are empowered to take hold of their lives, to realize the benefits of such control, to strengthen community and to re-centre their place at the heart of the family. Furthermore, the programmes have directly led to government interventions aimed at rectifying some of the more obvious shortfalls of development in these two shanty-towns in Nairobi. (source: http://www.itdg.org/?id=womens_voices2).

Lessons Learned: Knowing How Much it Really Costs - Total Cost of Ownership

All projects with an ICT component should consider the Total Cost of Ownership (TCO) to ensure that appropriate measures are taken to 1) budget necessary resources; and 2) maximize the benefits of technology use. While TCO is not a new concept, it has not yet been integrated fully into project design and implementation.

Source: http://www.dot-com-alliance.org/newsletter/article.php?article_id=161

3.4.5. Creating Enabling Environments for ICTs

Experience across a broad spectrum of development initiatives suggests that ICTs function best as catalysts for change when they are accompanied by policy reforms and infrastructure investments at various levels. The latter include: (1) the articulation of national development goals by sector that
acknowledge and define the contributions ICTs are expected to make; (2) the enactment of regulatory reforms that facilitate the deployment of ICTs in cost effective and sustainable ways, whether by public and/or private agencies; (3) the development of innovative financing and investment schemes, which recognize that the private sector is unlikely to expand services to rural and disadvantaged groups without appropriate incentives; and (4) the enhancement of communities’ capacity over time so that they can assume prime responsibility for the design, maintenance and expansion of ICT services and networks.
4. CONCLUSIONS

4.1. THE NEED FOR NEW THINKING

The collapse of the Soviet Union, coupled with the rise of US-power and globalization necessitates a re-think of the meaning of development. The breakdown of the demarcation of the First, Second and Third Worlds and the presence of the Global North and Global South in every region of the world is a stark reality that simply cannot be ignored.

Consequently here is a need for a new concept of development which emphasizes cultural identity and multidimensionality or multiplicity. The present-day 'global' world, in general as well as in its distinct regional and national entities, is confronted with multifaceted crises. Apart from the obvious economic and financial crisis, we could also refer to social, ideological, moral, political, ethnic, ecological and security crises. In other words, the previously held traditional modernization and dependency perspectives have become more difficult to support because of the growing interdependency of regions, nations and communities in our globalized world.

From the criticisms of both the modernization and dependency paradigms, a new viewpoint is emerging which we have referred to in the past as 'multiplicity'. This perspective argues that considerations of communication needs to be explicitly built into development plans to ensure that a mutual sharing/learning process is facilitated. Such communicative sharing is deemed the best guarantee for creating successful transformative projects.

The new starting point is examining the processes of 'bottom-up' change, focusing on self-development of local communities. The basic assumption is that there are no countries or communities that function completely autonomously and that are completely self-sufficient, nor are there any nations whose development is exclusively determined by external factors. Every society is dependent in one way or another, both in form and in degree.

Thus, a framework is needed within which both the Centre and the Periphery could be studied both separately and in their mutual relationship (at global, national and local levels).

Attention is also needed to critically analysing the content of development agendas. An understanding of the way in which development projects both encounter and transform power relationships within (and between) the multiple stakeholders who are impacted by such projects; and an understanding of the way in which communication plays a central part in building (or maintaining or changing) power relationships is needed.

4.2. NO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT WITHOUT COMMUNICATION

Communication for development has become multi-faceted, multi-dimensional and participatory, and should be seen in its socio-political, economic and cultural contexts to be relevant for people.
In essence, communication for development is about the development of people. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) should be addressed and assessed from a people’s perspective. It is therefore essential to start from the perspective of local communities and to cooperate with organizations (UN, governmental, NGOs, the public and the private sector, and civil society) that have developed a trust within a community.

In practice and in view of both globalising and localising pressures communication for development is becoming even more necessary within the context of the 21st century, bearing in mind the new political, economic and communications landscapes.

This includes listing and defining its various domains, such as project-related and community communication, development journalism, development communication in the mainstream media, educational communication, health communication, environmental communication, social marketing, social mobilization, advocacy etc.

However, communication for development should not be technology driven. It should be based on social issues and concerns. Technology is at best a facilitator and a tool.

Instead, culture is central to development and deserves greater emphasis in communication for development programmes.

4.3. MAIN CHALLENGES FOR THE FIELD OF COMMUNICATION FOR DEVELOPMENT

Main challenges for communication for development to be recognized as a field in its own right and to be adopted systematically in development initiatives:

1. Good governance, transparency, accountability and development communication go hand in hand. Good governance and a good government are not the same. Good governance is based on the participation of all people concerned. Decentralization of governmental institutions does not necessarily imply people’s participation. Decentralization does not always mean democratization. In reality the motives for decentralizing may hide a wish of central powers to get rid of certain responsibilities while tightening their control. This blurs the lines of accountability. For this reason, local media have a crucial role to play in facilitating a mutual understanding between those in power and the communities.

2. Participatory concepts in the context of communication for development can be complex and challenging. Communities consist of fluid interests and shifting relationships.
3. Participation can take place at different levels: (a) decision making; (b) benefits; (c) evaluation; and (d) implementation. Participation is about changing power relations. While empowering one group, it may do the opposite to another. Meaningful participation requires organization around common interests and awareness on how to handle power relations.

4. It is important to reinforce independent and pluralistic media to foster good governance and transparency. Print media can play a special role in society as they are sometimes more independent and pluralistic than radio and television. However, all media need to be sensitized and become more participatory. Currently there is often a gap between what media report and the realities of a country. Pure commercialism avoids tackling the crucial issues of a country because such issues do not sell. It undermines the role of media as watchdogs. Press freedom is never guaranteed, not even in a democracy.

5. Communication for development has not made full use of the potential of radio, which in some regions could be the most effective participatory tool. Radio has the highest penetration in many rural areas in developing countries. It is not too late to rediscover radio. In particular community radio (often linked to the global world through the Internet) has proven its ability to make participation effective and sustainable. Therefore, also ICTs are an important tool to facilitate good governance provided that application and operation systems are made available in local languages.

6. Policies and resources - communication for development initiatives need to be properly enabled by concerted actions, and adequate policies and resources. These should consider longer timescales. It is essential to bridge the digital divide by supporting community access to relevant information in their own language and at an affordable cost, for example through community telecentres/multimedia centres. This should also involve support for the production of content by the local communities. It is crucial to encourage the production of diverse local content in local languages for the media and ICTs, bearing in mind the potential of interactive technologies to carry multimedia content.

7. National governments should implement a legal and supportive framework favoring the right to free expression and the emergence of free and pluralistic information systems, including the recognition of the specific and crucial role of community media in providing access to communication for isolated and marginalized groups. There is a need to influence policy on communication for development through advocacy, not only with governments and international agencies but also within development agencies, private corporations and civil society partners, for communication for development to be successful.

8. Building alliances. There is a need for effective linkages which give
voices to the poorest and have the ability to engage with policy and influence decision making on sustainable development. To this end, special attention should be given to fostering local, national and regional communication for development processes.

9. New global partnerships are necessary with the media, development agencies, universities and governments. It is important to identify possibilities for convergence and for complementing existing work and to coordinate and document such work via a truly independent scientific body.
5. REFERENCE LIST


Center for Communication Programs. (2006a). The Adolescent Reproductive Health Program in Bangladesh. http://www.hcpartnership.org/Programs/Asia/bangladesh/ARH.php


DiBona, Chris, Danese Cooper and Mark Stone, eds. (2006). Open Sources 2.0: the continuing evolution, Sebastapol, CA.


UNESCO, Media and Good Governance, www.unesco.org


Yasarekomo (2004), Una experiencia de Comunicacion Indigena en Bolivia, Rome: FAO.