

Communicating for Development

A New

*Pan-Disciplinary
Perspective*



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Development Communication:
Basic Approaches and
Planning Strategies

PREAMBLE

The task of determining which communication approach and planning strategy to adopt in development communication projects is expected to be a deliberate and systematic endeavor. It involves a continuous effort to organize human activity for the efficient use of communication resources and for the realization of communication policies, in the context of a particular social system's development goals, means, and priorities, and subject to its prevailing forms of social, economic, political, and cultural organizations. The execution of development communication programs and projects, therefore, takes as its starting point, both the "felt needs" at the social system level, and the "action needs as identified by development planners.

The operational strategy for meeting these two sets of needs follows four stages of activities (Boyd, 1975). The first, which Boyd

called "Diffusion stage" but which we think should be more appropriately called the "Formative Evaluation stage," is identifying and analyzing the innovations sought by the social system and those that development agents want to introduce: who is to do what; who is to benefit; when is it to be done; and with what material and human resources? In the second stage, known as the "Social Process stage," the thrust of activities is toward determining how existing social, cultural, economic, political, and environmental factors, as well as indigenous communication processes would help or hinder the adoption of new practices or structures in the social system. In the third stage, the "Consistency stage" efforts are geared toward identifying existing media facilities and how they relate to one another and to the people. Here, one looks at what combination of existing communication channels—traditional, interpersonal, and mass media—can be used for communication 'feed' both into and from the social system. Finally, after careful examination of these analyses, tailor-made communication programs are drawn up and implemented in phases with real action potential in the social system but also taking into account any available supplementary inputs from the outside.

BASIC APPROACHES

It is only after such careful and critical examination that one can make a realistic decision as to which of the three basic communication approaches (Moemeka, 1989) to communicating development messages within a social system would be most appropriate. These approaches are the Interpersonal, which has two methods—Extension and Community Development and Ideological and Mass Mobilization; the Mass Media, which also has two methods—Centralized and Localized; and the Integrated, which combines all the approaches (and methods) in an appropriate ratio, depending upon the identified felt needs and the sociocultural, economic, and political realities of the social system.

Interpersonal Approach

Extension and Community Development Method. This is the oldest method of using communication to generate development. It is basically oriented to rural community development although it can also apply to suburban and urban development efforts. The main thrust of this method is the communication of

useful and practical information on such issues as agriculture, home economics, health, civic responsibility, law and order, sanitation, and so on, through face-to-face and interpersonal (handbills, letters, telephone, etc.) methods of communication.

The utilization of the method is predicated on the assumption that the following basic conditions are present: (a) that the communities or social systems are interested in the new ideas and practices in order to improve their living conditions; (b) that there are necessary and sufficient resources to support the development endeavor, that is, to enable the people to apply available new information toward the development goals; and (c) that, as indicated in the Animation Rurale programs of Senegal, Togo, Ivory Coast, and Benin (Goussault, 1968), there is a crop of educated, intelligent, and public spirited leaders within the community or social system who can motivate the masses to positive development-oriented objectives.

The basic tenets of the method can be summarized as follows:

- that there are no solutions to problems that are imposed on local communities from the outside; that the people must be the principal actors in defining and finding solutions to their problems;
- that the development communicator (social animator) is to be as closely identified with the local community as possible
- that he/she is to be nondirective in his/her approach
- that communication's chief role is to help define the problem, not give the solution
- that community participation and social action is the goal, and therefore feedback from the community is an essential element.

One of the countries in which this method has been used is India. The country held, and rightly too, that the great mass of the illiterate and poor rural population is a highly valuable development resource (Rahim, 1976). The premise followed, therefore, that the individual rural family and the communities can be guided to the path of development if they were given practical knowledge of the social and natural sciences. The government decided that the best way to achieve the projected goals was to decentralize interpersonal communication to the community block level. Each community development block was served by a team of multipurpose village-level workers supported by the subject-matter specialists at the block level and supervised and coordinated by the

block development officer. The whole program was planned, guided, and supported by a national-level community development organization (Taylor, et al, 1965). The multipurpose village-level worker is the key communicator in this method; he/she serves as a mediator between the community and the development bureaucracy of the government, and as a facilitator for the community (Dubhashi, 1970).

Ideological and Mass Mobilization Method. This is the second communication method that makes extensive use of interpersonal channels. In this method, the channels are activated not by development agents, but by political party cadres. This is because this method holds that development begins with a radical change in the political orientation of a social system, the ultimate result of which is the formation of new social relations. The main function of development communication therefore is seen as that of promoting and heightening the political consciousness of the people. The primary goal of this method is ensuring the ability of workers and peasants to be self-reliant through the mobilization of internal resources, thereby creating conditions in which they can control their own future. Physical and human development is subsumed under political consciousness, because it is held that political awareness would motivate the people to participate in development activities that would lead to satisfying their needs and aspirations.

The operational structure of this method is virtually the same as that of the Extension and Community Development method, but the structure and direction of message contents are different. While the former deals directly with human and physical development problems, the latter lays emphasis on political awareness as a prelude to any other type of development. While the former is heavily geared toward horizontal and interactive communication, the latter places vertical communication first. Two countries that are best known for the use of the ideological and mass mobilization method are Tanzania and China.

In Tanzania, the ideological messages for rural development in particular and development in general are predicated on the tenets of the Arusha Declaration of the Tanganyika African National Union party, and the essays on African socialism and socialist education by the first president of the country, Julius Nyerere. (After the unification of Tanganyika and Zanzibar, the political party changed its name to Chama cha Mapinduzi.)

Chama cha Mapinduzi is the only political party in Tanzania. It assumes direct responsibility for national development, and therefore for development communication activities. It uses party cadres and government officials to constantly expose the rural and suburban populations to ideologically oriented development messages transmitted through face-to-face communication, village meetings, rural training centers and political meetings. The basic unit used as interaction base is called the cell, consisting of ten households whose main functions are:

- to bring the people's problems and grievances to the party and the government for critical examination and discussions on plans of action directed toward solution in the context of the country's overall development objectives
- to communicate to the people the purposes, plans, and problems of the government and the party
- to mobilize the people in appropriate groups for the implementation of development projects.

Tanzania has since recognized the very pervasive and important impact of new communication technologies, and has linked her ideological and mass mobilization method with the use of radio broadcasting (Greenholm, 1976; Hall, 1973).

In China, development communication messages are predicated on the socialist ideology of the Communist party. The basic unit for interaction and exchange is the commune, comprised of the village-level work teams and the brigades. The communication exchange is carried out along two approved lines of structure, organization, and action: the Mass Line, uses the vertical communication process that regulates the relationship between the top and lower level party officials and the members of the commune (work teams and work brigades); Criticism and Struggle uses the horizontal communication process that regulates ideological education, conflict management, and decision-making at different levels of development planning and execution.

The Mass Media Approach

The mass media have become instruments not only for information but also for education and development. Because of their unique characteristics of speedy delivery of messages and extensive reach (wide-area coverage), they have been found to be partic-

ularly useful in the dissemination of development messages to large and dispersed populations, and, when properly used, in immediate follow-up with opportunities for exchange of ideas on the information/messages provided. In the main, mass media approach to the use of communication for development finds expression in two methods: the Centralized Mass Media method and the Localized, or Decentralized, Mass Media method.

Centralized Mass Media Method. This method emphasizes the control of both mass media infrastructure and the direction and flow of mass media messages by a central authority. If we were to construct a continuum with Extension and Community Development method at one end, Centralized Mass Media method would be at the other end. The method relies almost wholly on the mass media for its message flow, virtually ignoring the interpersonal system. Because it uses the mass media for dissemination, its area coverage strength is extensive; and because the content of its messages is usually of a general nature, there is always something of relevance, no matter how small, to different segments of the society. It is based on the assumption (Gunter and Theroux, 1977) that a "good and relevant message" is capable of being accepted by the individual on his/her own, irrespective of the origin of the message, and that the best way to attract and hold a mass audience is to offer open, spontaneous, and continuous vicarious satisfaction as well as education.

This is the method used by most countries in developing societies, especially in Africa. Many scholars argue that developing countries adopt the method because it is the cheapest to finance and easiest to administer. However, research has shown (Heshmat, 1967; Moemeka, 1987) that it is also the least effective in ensuring intelligent understanding and effectiveness of development messages.

Centralized Mass Media method calls for the planning, production, and dissemination of development programs and messages by experts and program officers in the urban headquarters of media organizations with little or no reference to the need for involvement of the receiving audiences. It does not matter which medium is being utilized (whether it is radio, which is the most accessible medium, especially for rural audiences, or the newspaper whose content is almost meaningless to the illiterate, or television—the urban elite medium—whose impact in rural communities is minimal), the procedure is always the same. The programs

and messages are planned and executed without the direct participation of the audiences to whom the messages are eventually directed. The result of this noninvolvement of the target audience has been that message contents are always at variance with the felt needs of the people, and therefore have little chance of gaining the acceptance of the people. Not only is there no organization at the reception end, but also, because of the desire to reach the largest number of people, the messages are always of a very general nature, barely fitting any desired solution. Effective development messages demand some sort of organized action at the reception end, and also demand specificity in message content to ensure relevance.

Centralized Mass Media method appears to have derived its operational strategy from the Development Media theory (McQuail, 1983) which requires the mass media to join the government in the task of nation-building and development. While the theory makes no reference to the people—the target audience—it requires control and sanction of the mass media by the government “in the interest of national objectives.” This is why centralization of activities is seen by media personnel or organizations that use the method as *imperative*; such control helps to keep a sharp eye on everything that is done or not done, and therefore to avoid provoking the anger of the government.

The method is primarily concerned with what the government wants, and what ideas media personnel have to meet those wants, rather than with the construction of messages that would motivate the people to positive actions through intelligent understanding of their needs and of how to meet those needs. It is therefore no wonder that the result of using this method anywhere, especially in the developing world, has left much to be desired. It generally succeeds in generating *effectiveness* of messages, that is, getting the messages to reach the target audiences; but it almost always fails in ensuring *effectiveness* of messages, that is, creating an understanding atmosphere in which the target audiences would accept the demands of the messages and act according to those demands (Moemeka, 1981:85).

Localized (Decentralized) Mass Media Method. Also very mass media oriented, this method draws strength from the Democratic-Participant Media theory (McQuail, 1983). It lays strong emphasis on interaction with the target audiences, and on the establishment of local media channels to provide access for the

people. The starting point in this method is the identification of the problems of the people through personal calls, meetings, and discussions with the people by media personnel who are required to enter into the sociocultural contexts of the target audience or audiences. Because of the need for specificity in message content, Localized method calls for the establishment of local media—local radio stations, rural press, television production/viewing centers. Each of these provides direct access and opportunities for target audience participation in the planning, production, and presentation of development messages. The method appears to be an appropriately relevant response to Rogers (1966) warning that:

Unless a communication strategy includes a two-way flow of messages, makes sure that rural people have access to adequate channels and can express themselves in freedom, and unless the authorities are willing to listen to the messages which come from the country-side (the people) and to learn from them, the 'best' of such strategies will come to naught.

One of the most effective ways of creating opportunities for access and participation for the people is through the provision of local media channels through which their views, opinions and desires can be freely expressed for the attention and action of the authorities. Through local media the people can talk to themselves, talk to the authorities, and participate fully in the construction and dissemination of development messages meant for them. Such interaction creates an atmosphere based on correct interpretation of the needs and aspirations of the people, and an understanding climate in which confidence, credibility, and willingness to make personal and community contributions are at their best.

The Localized, or Decentralized, method is utilized mainly in developed societies. It is what these countries are using in their social change endeavors. The fact that media infrastructure is already decentralized in these highly literate and developed countries makes the Localized method easy to operate. The situation is practically different with regard the developing countries. Because of the cost involved in providing the necessary infrastructure to enable the method to operate successfully, and particularly because of the political implications of the method (creating an open and free communication environment for rural populations, most of whom are illiterate), most of the developing countries have not shown significant interest in the method. In the very few

developing countries (Colombia, Brazil, Nigeria) where the method has been used in development activities, evidence of strong commitment on the part of the governments was lacking.

In addition to the external problems associated with the utilization of the method in the developing world, there is an internally-oriented strategy problem. In operation, the method appears to have been used in isolation, that is, without sufficient linkage with existing traditional channels and modes of communication. The result of this has been that it tends to unwittingly alienate many of the people within the social system that it was set up to serve.

Integrated Approach

This approach combines the Interpersonal and Mass Media approaches and links the combination with traditional channels and modes of communication. The approach recognizes that, in spite of their strengths, both the Mass Media and Interpersonal approaches have limitations. Their combination into one is therefore intended to help eliminate their limitations while improving on their strengths.

The mass media have the power to disseminate information and development messages rapidly and throughout a social system. This makes for awareness creation within the population. But they are generally not able to change people's attitudes. The fact that someone knows about efforts being made to ensure positive changes in society does not mean that he/she will automatically change attitude or agree to participate in the change efforts. Without change of attitude, there can hardly be any change in behavior, and without behavioral change, there can be no development or social change. Mere dissemination of information and development messages is, therefore, not sufficient to cause positive personal and societal changes. The communication mode which helps to bring about such changes is the Interpersonal. But, even though it is relatively very effective in inducing attitude change and effective development behavior, it is highly limited in reach. It lacks the rapid and wide-area coverage abilities of the mass media. The thrust of the integrated approach therefore is to utilize the mass media in providing relevant information to the entire population, and through the Interpersonal method, generate exchange of ideas and positive discussions which would lead to intelligent understanding of development objectives and each person's role in

achieving those objectives. As research has shown (Rogers, et al, 1977:363) not only are two media better than one medium for effective communication, but also a combination of the mass media and interpersonal communication is better than using either alone.

In its use of the mass media, the integrated approach gravitates more toward the Democratic-Participant Media theory, even though it does not completely ignore the Development Media theory. In other words, the approach incorporates more of the elements of the Localized (Decentralized) Mass Media method than it does those of the Centralized method. While the Centralized method is very appropriate for dealing with development and social change at the national policy level, and helps to crystalize the national objective at the cross-ministerial planning level, the Localized method is more appropriate for putting policies and objectives into practice, especially at the institutional and community levels. To be most effective, however, integration of all the approaches and systems must take into account existing traditional channels and modes of communication which are always a reflection of the sociocultural, economic, and environmental state of the social system. This would appear to find additional support in the categorical statement by Yu (1977:185) that no communication policy or strategy (that intends to succeed) can afford to continue to concentrate on the mass media while ignoring traditional and other channels of popular culture.

PLANNING STRATEGIES

The structure of communication in any society is largely determined by the growth and development of technology and by economic and sociocultural institutions. To the extent that societies or social systems differ in their patterns of economic and sociocultural heritage, their communication patterns also are likely to differ from one another. For example, in traditional societies or rural communities, unlike in developed societies, direct face-to-face interaction is valued as the most reliable and authentic form of communication. In such societies or communities, the purpose of communication is usually to promote community identity and social harmony (communalism) rather than to promote individual well-being (collectivism or individualism); to reinforce stability and order rather than to bring about change and growth. But the

ultimate goal of development communication is to cause positive and effective change through the provision of necessary information (backed up with physical inputs) that would create understanding and build up self-confidence and motivation to change.

The planning of development communication must, therefore, take into account the sociocultural context, development environment, and the goals of the social system in which planning takes place. In addition, the system's political ideology, social issues, communication facilities and systems, as well as available resources must all be properly studied before planning the communication strategy that would suit the social system or community. This is not to detract from the fact that there are certain requirements which obtain irrespective of where the strategy is to be implemented and irrespective of the level of technological advancement of the social system. Such universals, which form the bulk of what follows are a necessity for effective development communication.

Unfortunately, communication is usually brought into the planning of development programs only as an afterthought, especially in developing societies. In these countries, emphasis is placed more on publicity. Provisions are usually made for publicizing development plans and objectives, but very little is done to provide opportunities for discussion and feedback. Hence a common complaint among communication researchers and practitioners is that communication policies and plans are all too often in the hands of those who do not know enough about communication to set up or contribute to the communication systems and strategies that would best serve the development needs of their countries (Boyd, 1975).

In the task of development, communication should not be seen only as a tool—a supporting mechanism—or as an independent variable not subject to the impact of changing circumstances. Communication should be seen both as *an independent and a dependent variable*. It can and does affect situations, attitudes, and behavior, and its content, context, direction, and flow are also affected by prevailing circumstances. More importantly, communication should be viewed as an integral part of development plans—a part whose major objective is to create systems, modes, and strategies that could provide opportunities for the people to have access to relevant channels, and to make use of these channels and the ensuing communication environment in improving the quality of their lives. The implication here is that in seeking

solutions to the problems of communication in development, not only must there be a general and in-depth study of the larger development process and needs of the social system, but also there must be a careful and critical evaluation of the role or roles of communication within the larger system. Such study and evaluation should involve examination of the following:

- the social system's development goals and objectives, particularly with respect to communication
- the consistencies that exist between the infrastructure and the institutions
- the consistencies between project goals and national goals
- the strong and weak points in the linkages among different levels of the development endeavor—project, community, and national
- the state of the existing communication systems
- the appropriateness and adequacy of existing communication systems in achieving identified objectives
- the possible new communication technologies that could be used to make the existing systems more efficient and effective

Information Need

Truthful and realistic answers to these questions can be more easily found through formative research, aimed at providing the information needs of communication planning. This is directed at establishing the condition of existing social, economic, cultural, political, human, and other contexts of the benefitting social system with a view to determining how each and all of them could affect the issues about which communication is to be planned, as well as how they might affect and be affected by communication strategies. The five major activities which UNESCO (1975) suggests would help in identifying the communication needs and resources of a social system would appear to also serve the purposes of helping to identify the information needs of communication planning in any social system.

1. The collection of basic data and systematic analysis of the country upon such bases as population densities, geographic limitations to communication, variety of social structures, ecology and agriculture, industrial capacity, manpower capacity, economic capacity, etc.

Data on such issues as age distribution, minimum wage, social strata, level of education, political climate, religious harmony, literacy, norms and mores, societal aspirations, major occupations, interpersonal and mate relationships, leadership types and styles, hierarchy of authority, decision-making processes, and relationship with surrounding and distant communities or countries, etc., are imperative. Also very important is obtaining correct information on the community's or country's development goals and objectives.

2. The production of an inventory of the present communication resources including modern and traditional media and analysis of the variety of present communication structures. Such inventory should include study of the audience, its communication consumption patterns, etc.

The information data sought here is concerned primarily with the relationship between the people and their existing communication systems. It requires answers to such questions as:

- What traditional communication structures and modes does the social system have and how are they utilized?
- How available and accessible are existing mass media facilities?
- Who uses what medium, when and for what purposes?
- What utilization capacities, receiving sets, literacy, purchasing power, etc.—obtain in the social system?

3. Critical analysis of present communication policies (or lack of it) including such considerations as ownership, structures, decision-making political control, etc.

The concern here is with policy decisions regarding what medium/media to establish, where to locate them and why, staffing, freedom of action for media personnel, availability of financial resources for maintenance and operation, ethics and equity in the distribution of communication content, feedback, openness, and audience participation in the communication process.

4. Critical analysis of communication needs of the social system especially in relation to the existing social and communication structures and the uses to which communication is put.

The demand here is to determine the state of the existing communication systems. And it is intended to find out if existing systems are adequate and appropriate for achieving identified objectives, and whether there is need for new communication technologies that could be used to make the existing systems more efficient and effective. Also required here is ascertaining the policy objective of communication content and how this affects and is affected by the existing social, political, economic, and cultural situations.

5. The analysis of the communication components in all aspects of national development plans and program in order to ascertain the communication requirements of the programs, and be in a better position to reconcile the needs with the means and capacities available.

This activity seeks to determine consistencies that exist between the infrastructure and the institutions, as well as the consistencies between project goals and national goals. Such reconciliations are wont to reveal any weak points in the linkages among different levels of development communication objectives—project, local, and national.

Determining the information needs of development communication planning is but one of the six tasks required to ensure articulate and relevant project plans. The others, generally known as elements of planning, are problem identification, goal clarification, strategy selection, and operational planning, "which are regarded as the 'soul' of development communication planning, and evaluation, which is both the searchlight for ongoing projects and the communication bridge between an executed project plan and future plans" (Moemeka, 1991:17/16).

Problem Identification

The thrust here is not so much pinning down social problems within a social system as it is making a decision as to which of the many social needs or problems of the system should receive priority attention. In any social system, there are various kinds of felt needs of the system and action needs of development agents. All the needs cannot be met at the same time. Common sense dictates that if success is to be achieved, needs must be tackled and problems solved in manageable bits. Therefore, it is important for the

development communicator to set agenda for action by sifting through all the needs identified and picking out those considered, in the light of available data and resources, most likely to succeed. Taking on too much would lead to failure. Not only will the effort not succeed, but more importantly, the failure would create aversion to development activities on the part of the people. This is why problem identification also requires the task of operationally defining the problem to be solved and narrowing down its scale to manageable size and in specific and unambiguous terms.

Goal Clarification

Of course, it is not enough to merely identify felt/action needs or social problems. The goal or goals aimed at in attempting to meet the needs or solve the problems must also be clarified. This, in the main, involves making or writing down clear and carefully worded statements of expected outcomes possible with the available and/or expected resources. However, it is important to remember that goals are usually transitional because conditions are always changing. Changes in goal orientation are usually necessitated by changes in prevailing circumstances. Be that as it may, goals have to be set and clarified to make actions towards meeting the goals better focused. When conditions change, set goals should change to meet the new situation. Many a time, efforts at clarifying goals lead to rewording of problem statements and the reordering of priorities.

Strategy Selection

This is selecting from among possible alternatives what is seen as the most appropriate way or ways of meeting the goals set in the plan. Strategies are best selected when the media, physical, and human resources, as well as the attitudinal and behavioral data collected under information needs, are fully taken into account. Sometimes, one strategy, for example, Localized Mass Media, may suffice; at other times, and for some project plans, more than one strategy is required. When more than one or two communication strategies are selected, then it becomes very important to carefully blend them together in such a way as to maximize their strengths and minimize their weaknesses, and to utilize them in positively complementary ways rather than to unwarily allow unnecessary overlap.

It is important to note here that just as there are communication strategies for development and social change, so there are strategies that take their roots from other disciplines. There are, for example, those strategies identified by Zaltman and Duncan (1977) which we have labeled "sociopolitical" strategies. There are four: facilitative, reeducative, persuasive, and power. Their classification is based solely on identified attitudinal and/or behavioral realities of the target group. When the target group acknowledges there is need for a change and is willing to work toward effecting the change but lacks the strength or initiative to take action, facilitative strategy would be most appropriate. When some acts or social situations seen as harmful have become so ingrained into the sociocultural environments of a people that they have begun to see them as inevitable or as necessary parts of living, the reeducative strategy is considered appropriate. When a people have been so disillusioned that they have given up hope of effecting desired change, or when they barely see any need for change, the best strategy to adopt is persuasive, which attempts to create change by reasoning, urging, and inducement. When there is need for social change considered very important to happen within the shortest possible time or when the desired change is one which most of the people within the target group do not even want to consider, then power strategy is generally seen as useful.

Although each of them raises questions of ethics, rights, efficiency, and/or effectiveness, and although they seem very narrow in perspective in comparison to communication strategies which take a holistic view of the environments of the people, the sociopolitical strategies offer some useful basis for planning social change and development. Selected communication strategies would be richer if complemented with carefully selected and relevant sociopolitical strategy.

Operational Planning

This is the planning stage at which actions and schedules of activities are specified in detail, showing what is to be done, where, by whom, and when and what resources are required in what quantity, where, when, and for what activity. Operational planning calls for recording in painstaking detail the sequential order of activities, the hierarchical order of authority or supervision, and specific assignment of responsibilities. It also calls for broad guidelines as to how the assignments are to be carried out with respect to tim-

ing, audience, content, context, and direction. Even more importantly, operational planning requires adequate briefing carried out both in written and oral communication. The oral form is particularly recommended because it offers the opportunity for asking questions and providing explanations, both of which are extremely important for correct adherence to guidelines and proper execution of assigned responsibilities.

Evaluation

In development communication projects, evaluation is and should be a continuous task. It is the first action to take (formative research) and the last task to perform (summative research). First, it is used to determine the prevailing communication circumstances within the existing sociocultural, economic and political conditions in a social system in order to have a basis for any meaningful planning, and to know what to plan for and with what resources. Secondly, evaluation is used to guide ongoing communication activities. In this regard, data are gathered and used to examine ongoing projects to see whether or not they are proceeding according to plan; whether they are succeeding or not; and to point up possible strengths and/or weaknesses in organization, implementation, and operation. This helps to identify and nip in the bud any errors or threatening problems before they become too difficult and expensive to solve.

Finally, evaluation provides the data necessary for future plans. The evaluation of the organization, implementation, available resources, and outcomes of completed development communication projects, provides data that could be very useful in the planning of future projects. Such evaluations do reveal both the limits and the strengths of the planning procedures adopted, of the implementation strategy employed, and of the operational guidelines followed, as well as the ease or difficulty with which necessary inputs were forthcoming. They also are likely to reveal the level and quality of audience reaction and involvement.

EPILOGUE

The major role of communication in development is that of "smoothing the path to arrive at development objectives by creating an enhancing atmosphere for the mutual exchange of ideas that would produce a happy balance between physical output or material advancement and human inter-relationships" (Moemeka,

1987:132). This is why development communication is not persuasion-oriented, but interaction-oriented. Selected approaches, strategies, and plans, to be effective, must be the joint decision of development agents, development communicators, and the beneficiaries of the development activity—the people based on available resources,—both human and physical.

As we have pointed out elsewhere (King, 1991), effective development communication is not merely concerned with providing information on development activities. Besides creating opportunity for the people to know about the technical nature of new ideas and how they work and with what effect, development communication plays the more important role of creating an atmosphere for understanding how these new ideas fit into the real social situation in which the people live their lives. Its ultimate goal is to catalyze local development activities, local development planning and implementation, and local communication to smooth the path to development. Communication here should not stop with conventional mass media. If development communication is to succeed, then it must include strong components of social organization and interpersonal as well as traditional modes and media. In addition, those in charge of planning development communication must be those who understand the social structure (those who have entered into the sociocultural contexts of the people) and how change can take place in it—not merely how development messages can be disseminated.

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