6.

Threads of Development Communication

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

1. Capital Doctor - Uganda - A call-in radio show that reaches a general audience of 5 million, physically covering approximately 75% of the population, and 65% of these are believed to be outside of Kampala. As of March 1998, 2,200 questions had been answered on-air. 70% of respondents at an STD clinic had listened to Capital Doctor. 91% of reported condom users were listeners to the programme, 71% of those who reported to 'always' use condoms were listeners. Those who listened to Capital Doctor were more likely than non-listeners to use condoms. http://www.comminit.com/id01-7of99/sld-485.html
2. Sanjeevani - Nepal - Attitudinal changes occurred due to this TV drama on child health issues and gender equality in education. 57.6% of respondents said that they learnt that female education is of primary importance for the development of the community. 22.5% learnt that health education is necessary, 12.5% learnt that there should be no gender discrimination and that daughters and sons should have equal rights. 5.8% learnt that knowledge should be shared with others in the community. http://www.comminit.com/idmay15/sld-2307.html
3. Mass Media Family Planning - Turkey - A national multi-media project. 10% of married women visited a clinic as a result of the programme, 20% said they intended to. Modern contraceptive use increased from 38.6 to 42.8%. IUD use increased from 16 - 22%, condom use decreased by 2%, oral contraceptive decreased by 3%, withdrawal method decreased by 3%. http://www.comminit.com/idmay15/sld-2296.html
4. Measles Communication Programme - Philippines - A national multi-media project. Proportion of fully vaccinated children of ages 12-23 months increased from 54% to 65%. Average number of vaccinations that a child under 2 years received increased from 4.32 to 5.10. 64% of mothers who knew of the campaign had their children immunized, 42% of mothers who did not have the knowledge of the campaign had their children vaccinated. http://www.comminit.com/idmay15/sld-2293.html
5. Accessing Mass Media on Reproductive Behavior - Africa:

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

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

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

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

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

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

6. Social Marketing of Vitamin A in West Sumatra - Indonesia - Daily consumption of dark green leafy vegetables increased: 19% to 32% among pregnant mothers; 14% to 33% among nursing mothers; 10% to 21% among 5- 12 month olds; 17% to 27% among 13- 60 month olds. http://www.comminit.com/usaidimpact/sld-1931.html
7. Music Project - Nigeria - Included the production and commercial launch of 2 family planning songs, 6 TV PSAs and 6 radio PSAs. Respondents who were highly exposed to the campaign were 3 times more likely to communicate with their spouses about family planning, 5 times more likely to have positive family planning attitudes, and almost twice as likely to use family planning when compared to those who were unexposed. Rural respondents with high exposure were 7 times more likely to have positive family planning attitudes when compared to those who were unexposed. http://www.comminit.com/idmay15/sld-2358.html

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

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

1. The UNDP Thread and Erskine Childers

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Urquhart well sums up this side of Childers' character:

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

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

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

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

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

Development Support Communications for Project Support

Erskine Childers & Mallica Vajrathan, 1968

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Types of Development Support Communications

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

1. Broad Public Motivation

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

2. Motivation-orientation of Project Implementers

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

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

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

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

3. Specific Elite and Government-level Information

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

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

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

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

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

4. Project Cadre-training Communication Needs

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

5. Applied Research Dissemination

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

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

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

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

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

6. Close Project-Support Communications

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

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

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

National Capability for Development Support Communications

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Conclusions from the Above Appraisal

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Methods and Systems for UN Development Support Communications Aid

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

2. The Extension Thread

Extension as a Development Communication Approach

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

2. *Relevance of information.* Information often is not relevant because the scientists/researchers do not respond to farmers' needs. The extension system is driven by the assumption that relevant technical knowledge is available.
3. *Character of agricultural information.* The messages tend to be narrowly suited to production of a few particular commodities rather than to the issue of farmers' profitability which may come through mixed agricultural systems.
4. *Overall character of extension information.* Extension packages concentrate on technical and production aspects of agriculture ignoring the "whole" farmer who is likely to have other important concerns such as his and his family's health and education.
5. *Clientele.* Extension efforts ignore particular agricultural populations such as women, tribals, operators of very small holdings, and non-landed agricultural workers.
6. *Control of the system.* Managers and scientists control the agenda of the research and extension system to the exclusion of being farmer-centered.
7. *Methods used to reach farmers.* Emphasis is often on face-to-face contact, with relatively little attempt to integrate communication media and distance learning into the process.
8. *Cost of system.* Especially where extension is dominated by the Training and Visit (T&V) approach that was strongly advocated by the World Bank, a labor-intensive face-to-face contact system is very costly to sustain.
9. *Lack of results.* While there is evidence of better management in some extension operations as a result of T & V, evidence of consistent success of extension programs in increasing agricultural productivity is elusive.
10. *Inadequately trained extension agents.* Extension personnel tend to be trained in technical areas but have not been effectively trained in communication.

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

11. *Incentives for extension personnel.* Extension agents ("village extension workers" - VEWs) are generally poorly paid and are given few incentives to perform at the level expected by the system. "Professionalization" has sometimes removed the VEW from providing input supplies (an income producing activity), and, consequently, from status and earning power.
12. *Evaluation and monitoring of extension.* Better training, planning and computerization are necessary to effect better monitoring.
13. *Extension funding.* Extension is under-funded, and that results in unfilled extension lines which results in inadequate coverage of farm populations.
14. *Linkage to research.* The link itself is weak, and, where it exists at all, the relationship tends to be dominated by scientists. Their higher status results in putting their priorities first which may not reflect the needs in the field.

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

3. The Community Participation Thread

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

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

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

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

- to collect and exchange information among all those concerned in planning a development initiative, with the aim of reaching a consensus on the development problems being faced and the options for their solution.
- to mobilize people for development action, and to assist in solving problems and misunderstandings that may arise during project implementation.
- to enhance the pedagogical and communication skills of development agents (at all levels) so that they may dialogue more effectively with their audiences.
- and last but, by no means least, to apply communication technology to training and extension programs, particularly at the grassroots level, in order to improve their quality and impact.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

- illustrate new ideas and techniques more effectively than by word-of-mouth alone, and thus improve the impact of extension and training;
- compress time (a whole crop cycle can be shown in a short presentation);
- compress space (events and practices in distant locations can be transferred to other places where they can be useful testimonials);
- standardize technical information (by creating audio-visual materials that illustrate the best available advice to farmers and having these materials used throughout the extension and farmer training chain, thereby ensuring that the technical information will not become distorted during its passage from its source to the smallest and most remote farmer).

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

What types of development initiatives require communication inputs?

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

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

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

What are the overall considerations when planning communication inputs?

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

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

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

Who should plan communication inputs?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Building a Bridge or People?

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

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

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

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

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

4. The Population IEC and Health Communication Threads

The significance of IEC

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

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

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

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

Changes affecting IEC

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

- changing audiences
- changing channels of communication
- changing behavioral science theory and research
- changing values and mandates
- changing organizational structures
- changing political environments and resources (Piotrow, Kincaid, Rimon II & Rinehart, 1997:187-188)

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

Reproductive Health and Communication in Ethiopia: An Example of Planning

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

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

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

Reproductive health:

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

Population and development:

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

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

Thematic area: Reproductive Health

Programme Component: Safe Motherhood

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Dimensions of Communication in Reproductive Health

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

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

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

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

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

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

(6) Build intra-organizational professional communications.

5. The Social Marketing Thread

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

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

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

Lessons for Development Communicators

The lessons gleaned from the oral rehydration projects in Honduras and The Gambia underscore the importance of comprehensive communications planning to the success of social marketing campaigns. The crucial importance of audience research and the integration of media, especially interpersonal interactions and community-oriented promotional activities, was borne out by the results of longitudinal studies in both countries. The knowledge gained from these two research sites concerning the complexity of behavior change, the importance of sustained communication efforts in maintaining new behaviors, and the challenge of institutionalizing systematic health (or, any other) communication strategy, has guided the expansion of such approaches in other countries.

Building upon their experiences in Honduras and The Gambia, AED and USAID expanded their health communication programs to different settings during the 1980s.The Communication for Child Survival Project, or HEALTHCOM, was designed to improve health practices (for example, diarrhoeal disease control, immunization, child nutrition, maternal health and birth spacing, and control of acute respiratory infections) in selected sites throughout the Third

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

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

Sustained Behavior Change

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

Improved Consumer Research

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

Media Selection

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

Community Focus

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

Narrowing Communication Gaps

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

Structured Interventions

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

Prevention Messages

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

Institutional Capacity

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

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

Long-term Planning

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

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

6. The Institution-Building Thread

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

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

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

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

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

The UNESCO role

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

7. The ICT Thread

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The International Development Goals

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

- Reduce the proportion of people living in extreme poverty by half between 1990 and 2015.
- Enroll all children in primary school by 2015.
- Make progress toward gender equality and empowering women by eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005.
- Reduce infant and child mortality rates by two-thirds between 1990 and 2015.
- Reduce maternal mortality ratios by three-quarters between 1990 and 2015.
- Provide access for all who need reproductive health services by 2015.

- Implement national strategies for sustainable development by 2005 so as to reverse the loss of environmental resources by 2015.

(DOT Force, 2001)

The report detailed four major thrusts for concerted international action:

1. Fostering Policy, Regulatory and Network Readiness—through establishing and supporting both developing country and emerging economy *National eStrategies* including *eGovernment*, and universal participation in new international policy and technical issues raised by ICT and the Internet.
2. Improving Connectivity, Increasing Access and Lowering Costs—through establishing and supporting a range of targeted interventions as well as dedicated initiatives for the ICT inclusion of the Least Developed Countries.
3. Building Human Capacity—through a range of targeted training, education, knowledge creation and sharing initiatives, as well as promote ICT for healthcare and in support against HIV/AIDS and other infectious and communicable diseases.
4. Encouraging Participation in Global e-Commerce and other e-Networks—through enterprise and entrepreneurship for sustainable economic development, including poverty alleviation, and promote national and international effort to support the creation of local content and applications.

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

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

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

- Infrastructure—deploying a core ICT network infrastructure, achieving relative ubiquity of access, and investing in strategically-focused capacity to support high development priorities.
- Human capacity—building a critical mass of knowledge workers, increasing technical skills among users and strengthening local entrepreneurial and managerial capabilities.
- Policy—supporting a transparent and inclusive policy process, promoting fair and open competition, and strengthening institutional capacity to implement and enforce policies.
- Enterprise—improving access to financial capital, facilitating access to global and local markets, enforcing appropriate tax and property rights regimes, enabling efficient business processes and stimulating domestic demand for ICT.
- Content and applications—provide demand-driven information that is relevant to the needs and conditions experienced by local people.

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

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

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

The World Bank and ICT in the New Century

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

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

E-readiness

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

Country Gateways

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

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

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

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

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

The Telecenter Movement

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

organizations supporting the diffusion and adoption of ICTs and telecenters.

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

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

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

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

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

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

1. Focus on beneficiaries: instead of starting with an innovation or a behavior or an organization's priorities, increasingly communication interventions are emphasizing the individual or family or community as the center of the development process. Childers referred to this as "people-centered" as compared to agency or ministry-centered approaches.
2. Consideration of various stakeholders: in addition to focusing on those who are expected to be the primary targets for change-inducing communication, others are considered as targets because of their influence and their control over essential resources. These range from political and opinion leaders to clinic staffs and those in outreach systems such as the mass media and extension. Even those initiating a program/project may also be considered as stakeholders. Hence the concept of advocacy reflects the importance of looking beyond mass -oriented strategies.
3. Participation: the ideas of "targeting" and "receivers" are modified (but not eliminated) so that *interactivity* and *sharing of power* within and among stakeholders' groups is an operational model guiding communication planning.
4. Emphasis on outcomes: what and how many messages are sent out is less important than what is perceived by stakeholders and what changes take place in stakeholders' behavior relative to development objectives.

5. Data gathering and analysis: while intuition and creativity continue to be valued these are driven and inspired by systematic data collection and analysis. For example, an early step in a communication plan is to do a situational analysis that includes research on a variety of subjects related to behavioral change and communication resources. In the incubation of telecenters, we have already found that doing research on a community's information needs is vital to a telecenter's sustainability. Evaluation is another process that permeates the communication program, with information being collected for pre-testing materials, monitoring progress, and measuring impact.
6. Systematic models: The communication process involves specific and explicit sequential steps including situational analysis (research), planning, pre-testing, implementation and evaluation.[7] The sequence is iterative and dynamic: results of the evaluation are fed back into the situational analysis to register changes in conditions upon which the original planning was based so that adjustments can be made in the steps that follow.
7. Strategy: Most development programs deal with *voluntary* behavior of stakeholders: farmers *choose* to adopt different varieties of seeds; families choose to change diets or visit health clinics; couples choose to accept or reject family planning. These kinds of situations challenge communication people to design strategies for providing appropriate information, through appropriate channels, at appropriate times, for the appropriate people. Thus a quality professionally-driven development communication program is characterized by having a rational means for selecting communication objectives, content, channels and target groups that fit the voluntary nature of the behavior change being proposed.
8. Multi-channel versatility: As the examples in the opening section and the ICT thread at the end illustrate, development communication is equipped with a broad range of information

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

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

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