# DYNAMICS
## IN AGRICULTURAL
### EXTENSION PROGRAMME PLANNING, MONITORING AND EVALUATION

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# CHAPTER FOUR

# COMMUNICATION FOR DEVELOPMENT

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## Introduction

Communication is the process by which two or more people exchange ideas, facts, feelings or impressions in ways that each gains a common understanding of the meaning, intent and use of message (Leagans, 1961). Communication for development provides a valuable condition for the execution of intervention projects or programmes which fostered improvement in the understanding of the culture and aspiration of the target audience in development. Oladosu (2003) views communication as a process of interaction to transmit ideas, information, feelings, technology e.t.c. from one person to another which results in a changed situation. Helping people at all levels to communicate empowers them to recognise important issues and find common grounds for action, and builds a sense of identity and participation in order to implement their decisions in the process of development.

Communication for development increases the quantity and accessibility of information to ensure the exchange of ideas, knowledge, feeling technology in appropriate ways and to elicit information that will guide development planning from stakeholders. Communication for development that involves exchange of knowledge and information are essential for people to respond successfully to the opportunities and challenges of social, economic and technological changes including those that help to improve agricultural productivity, food security and rural livelihood. Communication for development brings about positive change in the lives of the people. It should be able to influence the politics of development. Voice of the poor and the marginalized should be brought into the mainstream and the development debate (One World International, 2004). Communication for development approaches can

reveal peoples' underlying attitudes and traditional wisdom to help to adapt to their views and to acquire new knowledge and skills, and spread new social messages to others in the society in the process of development (FAO, 1994). Development for communication is not merely a matter of transmitting information about how things can be done better by using available facilities. It is much more than the exchange of problem-solving information. It also involves the generation of psychic mobility or empathy, raising of aspirations, teaching of new skills and encouragement of local participation in development activities. Development communication assumes the broader function of helping people to restructure their mental framework in interpreting specific events and phenomena, and to relate to the broader world beyond their immediate environments (Moemeka, 1989).

## What is communication for development?

Communication for development is about seeking change at different levels including listening, establishing trust, sharing knowledge and skills, building policies, debating and learning for sustained meaningful changes (FAO, 2008). According to Moemeka (1989)development communication is the application of the processes of communication to the development process. It is the use of the principles and practices of exchange of ideas to development objectives. However, Figueroa et al.(2002) viewed communication for development as a process of public and private dialogue through which people define who they are, what they want and how they can get it. It is, therefore, an element of the management process in the overall planning and implementation of development programmes. Development communication involves the airing and assessment of the perceptions, opinions, and knowledge of relevant stakeholders in planning and implementation of all development processes in a given community. In a very broad sense, development communication is the art and science of human communication applied to the speedy, transformation of a country (economic growth, modernisation, industrialisation) and the mass of its people (self-actualisation,

fulfillment of human potentials, greater social justice, etc.) through what the identification and utilisation of appropriate expertise in the development process that will assist in increasing participation of intended beneficiaries at the grassroots level. The transfer of information between Individuals or a group of individuals by human or technical means is to enhance systematic use of communication in the planning and implementation of development. According to this approach, communication for development is not only to transmit information to passive audience to facilitate active participation but to also integrates the power of media with local communication system to increase the involvement of rural populations in development initiatives. In this approach emphasis is given to local content and community media to foster dialogue and improve the capacity of local institutions and peoples' participation to plan and implement communication processes through different media (local radio, ICTs) and the empowerment of local stakeholders.

Communication for development strategies and activities are based on an initial participatory communication needs that prioritize horizontal information sharing and dialogue among development actors given the voice to those who are not always heard so as to facilitate access to locally relevant information about markets, new technologies, credit and rural services which will help to enhance food security, improve rural livelihood and foster new development policies (World Congress on Communication for Development (WCCD),2006). Any development programme that regards people as mere recipients, rather than as the actual creator for change and progress, usually fails. Consulting the people and actively involving them in making the decisions that will affect them virtually ensures the programme's success (FAO, 1994). According to UNICEF (2012) communication for development is defined as a systematic, planned and evidence – based strategic process to promote positive and measurable individual and social change that is an integral part of development programmes, policy advocacy and humanitarian work. According to this approach, communication is not creation of public relation or corporate

communication but rather a process of dialogue and consultation with, and participation of children, their families and communities. It gives privilege to local context and rallies on a mix communication tool, channels and approaches to increase knowledge and awareness, changing individual behaviour and practices, improving and building new skills, influencing attitudes, social norms and power relations, and changing national and local policies and legislation.

## Objectives of communication for Development

Communication for development goes beyond information dissemination that views targets as passive audience but rather facilitate active participation of stakeholders through the integration of power of media with local communication systems to empower local stakeholders and increase the involvement of rural population in development initiatives (FAO,2006). For development communication to contribute effectively to development it must strive to ensure the determination of the needs of the people and the provision of sufficient citizen access to the communication systems to serve as effective feedback to government, provide both horizontal and vertical (interactive) communication linkages at all levels of society, and communication channels through which people at all levels of society and in all regions and localities can have the capability to communicate with one another in order to accomplish the co-ordination necessary for human and material development, provision of local community support for cultural preservation; provision of local media to serve as effective channels, provision of relevant information, support for specific development projects and social services and raising people's awareness of development projects and opportunities, and helping to foster attitudes and motivations that contribute to development (Moemeka, 1989).

The ultimate objectives of national development (urban and rural) are economic development, equitable distribution of facilities and benefits, national cohesion and human development. In order to

achieve these ultimate objectives, both the new development paradigm and the new communication approach stress the need for:

1. Equality of the distribution of social and economic benefits, information and education;

2. Popular participation in development planning and execution, accompanied by decentralization of activities to the local level. Sustainability of social change is more likely if the individuals and communities most affected *own* the process and content of communication.

3. Self-reliance and independence in development with emphasis on the potential of local resources. Communication for social change should be empowering, horizontal (versus top-down), give a voice to the previously unheard members of the community, and be biased towards local content and ownership. Hence, communities should be agents of their own change.

4. Integration of traditional with modern systems, so that development is a concretisation of old and new ideas, with the exact mixture somewhat different in each locale.

5. Emphasis should shift from persuasion and the transmission of information from outside technical experts to dialogue, debate and negotiation on issues that resonate with members of the community.

6. Emphasis on outcomes should go beyond individual behavior to social norms, policies, culture and the supporting environment(Moemeka, 1989; Figueroa et al., 2002).

## Philosophy and Principles of Communication for Development

The main ideas which define the philosophy of development communication and make it different from general communication are: Development communication is purposive communication, it is value-laden; and it is pragmatic. In the development context, a tacit positive value is attached to what one communicates about, which shall motivate the people for social change. Development communication is goal-oriented: The ultimate goal of development communication is a higher quality of life for the people of a society by social and political change. We should not view the goal of

development communication purely in economic terms, but also in terms of social, political, cultural, and moral values that make a person's life whole, and that enable a person to attain his or her full potential. The goal of development communication in a specific society will be influenced by the ends and values of that society (Kumar, 2011). Motivation of the people: Development motivation and Development Awareness are essential aspects of development communication (Narula Uma, 1994). Participation in any development programme depends on the level of the motivation of people. The level of motivation depends on the perceived need-based programmes and sustained community interest in the development programmes. Motivation results from various supports which are built into the development programmes and for the development programmes such as support from traditional value systems, leadership of community, experts and change agents. The greatest support for sustained motivation comes from within the community. This can be achieved by "minimum critical concentration of efforts" which suggests training enough people in the community so that they can support each other and keep the motivation alive (Kumar, 2011).

According to World Bank (2008) report the basic principles of communication for development are based on the following:

❖ **Dialogic:** Dialogue is the heart of the new communication paradigm. The professional application of dialogue, the two-way model of communication, is widely endorsed by most development institutions and should be the basis of any initiative. Communication for development communication should foster on dialogue to facilitate mutual understanding, to assess the situation, and to seek wider consensus. Dialogic approaches guarantee that relevant stakeholders have their voices heard and that project priorities are aligned with people priorities. Professionally directed, dialog is an invaluable research tool and is absolutely to build trust, optimize knowledge, minimise risks, and reconcile different positions.

❖ **Inclusive:** Inclusion is a first step in any situation analysis, whereby communication for development identifies, defines, hears, and

understands relevant stakeholders. In this respect, inclusion of all the stake holders is one of the basic principles of the principles of communication for development. Omitting a group from the assessment on a basis that they might not seem relevant can cause problems further along and can increase the risk factors in the successful achievement of the intervention. Communication for development should pay special attention to groups that are marginalised or at a disadvantage in society and gender issues should also be of primary concern in this context, as well as issues related to the poor, or any other vulnerable group.

* *Heuristic:* The investigative use of communication to discover or solve problems during the initial phases of a development initiative is essential. Communication is often defined as a way of sharing meanings or "as a process in which two or more people share information and converge toward mutual understanding, mutual agreement, and collective action" (Yum, 1989). This definition denotes the sharing of information and knowledge, which usually generates more knowledge that in turn can lead to effective collective action. The heuristic and explorative scope of development communication, strengthened by its analytical and dialogic features, constitutes its main value-added in addressing and rectifying the past failures in development.

* *Analytical:* Assessment of political risks and opportunities could be a motto communication for development; in this context, the communication function is not about relating messages but about uncovering and generating knowledge to design better projects and programs that lead to sustainable change. The effectiveness of diffusion and dissemination activities depends significantly on how appropriately the analytical work is conducted and how effectively people are empowered to voice their perceptions and opinions.

* *Participatory:* Although rarely employed in practice to its ideal and fullest extent, participation is applied in different degrees according to the intervention. Its relevance is echoed in virtually all development organisations and communities, at the national and international levels. Only genuine communication can facilitate effective

participation, especially in its most advanced forms. The essence is to ensure full information sharing, consultation, collaboration, empowerment and dialogue sought for all stake holders is promoted and valued.

* *Contextual*: There is no precooked universal formula applied to a priority setting in development communication. Encouraging participatory processes that are necessarily rooted in the cultural context of specific countries and their socioeconomic reality should be bases on choice of development initiatives.

* *Interdisciplinary*: For communication for development to be effective, it should be a body of knowledge that borrowed and applied principles from other disciplines such as ethnography, sociology, political economy, adult education, and marketing. The specialist might be asked to assess political risks, conduct negotiations to reduce conflicts, or mediate between opposing views. While sector experts could address each of these areas with a specific and narrower focus, the cross-cutting nature of communication makes it an easier and more effective tool to acquire a comprehensive overview of the situation.

* *Strategic*: A strategy could be defined as a plan to achieve set objectives with available resources in a given time frame. The principle of strategy emphasises the professional and timely application of communication techniques and methods to achieve intended objectives. It is surprising how often the basics of a strategy are overlooked, not only by communication specialists, but by all sorts of decision makers. Often this occurs when practitioners jump into strategy design without making sure that the objectives are technically sound, well understood, and relevant to most stakeholders. The principles of "strategic" imply that all parts of the process, from setting the objectives to selecting the media, are carefully assessed, triangulated, and, if needed, modified to allow the design and implementation of an effective strategy.

* *Persuasive*: In development communication, persuasion can be used to induce voluntary changes in individuals. The legitimacy for its use is derived from this rationale and the definition of change. To avoid

the manipulation connotations of the past and be ethically appropriate persuasion should be based on accurate information and within a context of two-way communication. Each party can present its point of view with the intention of achieving the most appropriate change. Healthy two-way persuasive approaches ensure that the best available options among the various parties are considered and agreed upon, leading to sustainable change.

## Importance of communication for development

A decisive role can be played by communication in promoting human development in today's new climate of social change. As the world tends towards greater democracy, decentralization and the market economy, conditions are becoming more favourable for people to start steering their own course of change. But it is vital to stimulate their awareness, participation and capabilities (FAO, 1994). The areas of intervention and the applications of development communication extend beyond the traditional notion of behavior change to include, among other things, probing socioeconomic and political factors, identifying priorities, assessing risks and opportunities, empowering people, strengthening institutions, and promoting social change within complex cultural and political environments (World 2008). Many past project and program failures can be attributed directly or indirectly to the limited involvement of the affected people in the decision-making process (World Bank, 2008). The horizontal use of communication, which opens up dialog, assesses risks, identifies solutions, and seeks consensus for action, came to be seen as a key to the success and sustainability of development efforts. A planned use of communication techniques with intensified exchange of ideas among all sector of the society can lead to greater participation of people in development programme planning through which the parties involve can open avenues by which they may reach consensus for action. developing the knowledge and skills required to achieve development goals. FAO (1994) specified some importance of communication for development as follows:

I. Communication is required for better planning and programme formulation: effective planning must make deliberate effort to determine what people want to do, can do and can continue to do in a sustainable way. A meaningful interpersonal communication can help the community identify its true problems and priorities and where its capabilities and needs lie. The policy of communicating with people intensively before a development programme is drafted, and taking into account their views, capabilities and needs as they see them is the best insurance a planner can have, this can also guide prospective work plan and preventing the rural people from moving in the wrong direction.

II. Communication plays a vital role in gaining peoples participation and community mobilisation: the dynamic strategy behind people's participation and community mobilisation is to release the energy of rural people by building their confidence in sharing information and exchange ideas in positive and productive way so that decision can be taken and carried out according to their own fashioned plan.

III. A skilful communication improves training methods: the technical information is standardised and of high quality when especially audiovisual are used which improve mental retention enormously and build the confidence of the individual involved. The trainees – even if they are illiterate can see and discuss quite complex procedures before practicing them.

IV. Efficient communication leads to rapid spread of information: using skilful mass media can provide a powerful service to spread information on new techniques and issues of development to people in far and wide areas.

V. Communication helps in generating the support of decision – makers: communication tools can be a dynamic means to gain the attention and support of decision makers when taking decisions in respect to its sustainability and expansion, if they are well informed about the

progress and achievement of the programme it guides them in taking decision about people's needs.

## The Role of communication for Development in Agriculture Development

Ensuring the availability and access to relevant information will enhance agricultural production, improve market access through which individual and community capacity will be building and empowered. The need for relevant agricultural information can easily be accessed through proper documentation that can be implemented knowing its relevancy. According to information and communication technologies for development Wikipedia farmers with access to information and communication technology (ICT) are likely to have a better life because of the following reasons:

1. Access to price information- these farmers will be informed of the accurate current prices and the demands of their products, through this they will be able to competitively negotiate in the agricultural economy and their incomes will improve.

2. Access to agricultural information- farmers will have access to current varieties of agricultural information.

3. Increasing production efficiency- the flow of information regarding new techniques in production will open opportunities to farmers by documenting and sharing their experiences especially in areas of environmental threats such as climate change, drought, poor soil, erosion and pests.

4. Creating a conducive policy environment- through the flow of information for the farmers to policy makers, a favourable policy on development and sustainable growth of the agricultural sector will be achieved.

Efficient process of communication through the use of mobile phones does not only significantly reduce communication and information costs and as well provide new opportunities for rural farmers to obtain access to information on agricultural technologies in developing

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countries but can also serve as agricultural extension system through which information can be exchanged (Jenny, 2010). He further outlined the importance of mobile phone as a means of increasing access to agricultural information to include: Improved communication between farmers and traders could facilitate the provision of inputs rural areas, thereby avoiding costly stock-outs. By improving the communication flow, mobile phones could potentially strengthen the link between farmers, extension agents and research centres, and vice versa- thereby overcoming criticism of the "disconnect" between the two many developing countries. The use of mobile phones reduced communication cost which could not only increase farmers' access to varieties of information via agricultural extension services but will also increase the extension system's geographic scope and scale, and give room for contact between field agents and farmers at more crucial moments, this could in turn, improve the quality (or value) of the information services provided.

## Importance of Communication for Development in Governance
## Approaches to communication for development

Communication for development practitioners believe that sustainable and long –term behavioural and social change is the result of a participatory, human right- based process of social transformation. This process helps shift the rural people with the skills they need to advocate for long lasting changes (UNICEF, 2012). The common approaches of communication for development include:

**Evidence – based approach:** Communication for development uses social and behavioural evidence to plan, implement, monitor and evaluate communication initiates that help increase knowledge, understand and shift attitudes that will facilitate positive behaviour and social changes around issues that affect human development in all aspect rural livelihoods.

**Participatory approach:** The participation of all stakeholders throughout the communication for development strategic process allows for local and cultural specificities and perspectives to be included in the design, testing and implementation of communication

strategies. This is to ensure that the key principles of human rights, gender equality and results – based management standards are addressed. Participatory approaches require a shift in the way individuals are considered, from passive recipients to active agents of development efforts. One of the reasons for this is that if peasants do not control or share control of the processes of their own development, there can be no guarantee that it is their best interest that is being served (World Bank, 2008).

**Right-based:** creates awareness of peoples' own rights, empower participation on social and political issues and rights, so that they can successfully advocate for changes and policies that better their wellbeing and living conditions (UNICEF, 2012).

## Communication for Development and Rural Development

Rural communicationis an interactive process in which information, knowledge and skills, relevant for development are exchanged between farmers, extension/advisory services, information providers and research either personally or through media such as radio, print and more recently the new "Information and Communication Technologies" (ICTs). In this process all actors may be innovators, intermediaries and receivers of information and knowledge. The aim is to put rural people in a position to have the necessary information for informed decision-making and the relevant skills to improve their livelihoods (FAO, 2006).

In Communication for Developmentapproaches, rural people are at the centre of any given development initiative and view planners, development workers, local authorities, farmers and rural people as "communication equals", equally committed to mutual understanding and concerted action. Communication for development is used for people's participation and community mobilization, decision-making and action, confidence building, for raising awareness, sharing knowledge and changing attitudes, behaviour and lifestyles; for improving learning and training and rapidly spreading information; to

assist with programme planning and formulation; to foster the support of decision-makers (FAO, 2006).

Communication for Development is based 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. Rural development cannot take place without changes in attitudes and behavior among the people concerned. In any rural development process communication for development is planned and systematically used 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.
- Mobilise people for development action and to assist in solving problems and misunderstandings that may arise during development plan implementation.
- Enhance the pedagogical and communication skills of development agents (at all levels) so that they may have a more effective dialogue with their audience.
- Apply communication technology to training and extension programmes, particularly a at the grassroots level, in order to improve their quality and impact (FAO, 2006).

**Tools for communication for development**
Communication for development employs a mix of social mobilization, advocacy and behaviour, and social change strategies on issues of development that affect rural people (UNCEF, 2012). According to one World net work (2004) Communication for development utilises all available tools; including ICTs, traditional tools, and the convergence of old and new technologies. Communication for development choose their communication tools according to what is available to them within their context, and also what is accessible according to thin capacity, confidence and utility. Communication for development emphasises the use of all tools for

communication by people to break the major challenges of access and connectivity, increasing social mobilisation and distribution of local information on development programmes.

An increasing use of ICTs are being included in the menu of communication for development to offer new ways of communicating, and new ways to converge old communication tools with new tools in ways that communication can be amplified and to increase optimal use of creativity (folk art, theatre and visual media). For each aspect of communication for development different tools may be chosen such as letters and telephones, meetings, community media training, email, radio, video and other audio visuals, print media, public display space, websites and portals for capacity building, networking and dialogue, amplification and redistribution of information and for capturing of records.

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