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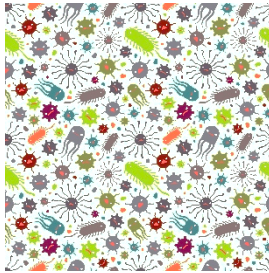
Cover of the issue

Disasters, either natural, technological or man-made, affect in a most traumatic way both the society and the economy of a country, causing the loss of many lives. The Covid-19 pandemic that we are facing currently is a clear testimony. Disaster-stricken populations suffer a great deal and need prompt assistance. In order to alleviate the trauma and the damage during a crisis and prepare for the unexpected, organizations practice crisis management and an important aspect of crisis management includes crisis communications. The main papers in this issue are dedicated to research and reviews on crisis communications relating to polio, cholera, sexual exploitation and cyclone. The cover for this issue of JDC carries an illustration by Andrei Rybalko/123RF.com.

Text by: Md Sidin Ahmad Ishak
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CONTENTS

ARTICLES

CASE STUDIES

REVIEWS

RAGING PANDEMICS AND TAMING EPIDEMICS: THE ROLE OF BEHAVIOUR CHANGE COMMUNICATION IN INDIA'S POLIO ERADICATION[1]

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Abstract

This article, drawing upon the author's past research and scholarly writings on communication strategies to prevent, contain, and mitigate pandemics and epidemics, including HIV/AIDS, analyses India's march towards polio eradication, focusing on the relentless implementation of its macro and micro-level social and behavioural change communication strategies. It discusses the micro-targeting and messaging interventions to achieve large-scale vaccine adherence and behaviour compliance, especially in the states of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar—the last sanctuaries for polio in India. It also analyses how India eradicated polio with relentless social mobilisation, involvement and engagement of local opinion leaders, and an adaptive data-driven strategy. No country, at any time, has utilised the art and science of social and behavioural communication for a greater public good as India did to wipe out polio. This article represents a modest attempt to analyse the communication-centric elements, focusing on the interpersonal and ground-based elements of the polio communication strategy, that contributed to this public health triumph of epic proportions, and represents India's gift to the world.

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[1] This article draws upon my past research and scholarly writings on communication strategies to prevent, contain, and mitigate pandemics and epidemics, including HIV/AIDS (Singhal & Howard, 2003; Singhal & Rogers, 2003), Methicillin Resistant Staph Aureus (MRSA) (Cohen, Gesser-Edelsburg, Singhal, Benenson, & Moses, 2019; Kim, Singhal, & Kreps, 2014; Singhal, Buscell, & Lindberg 2010, 2014; Singhal & Dura, 2017; Singhal & Greiner, 2011); and Polio (Singhal, 2013). I was privileged to have many encounters with India's polio program, including vivid memories (in the late 1960s) of imbibing the oral polio vaccine, drops straight out of a refrigerator in a doctor's office in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh (UP) state, and then in Chakradharpur, Jharkhand State. Decades later, I witnessed at close quarters India's polio eradication program in western UP in 2008, under the auspices of UNICEF, the agency that led the on-the-ground social mobilisation and communication actions. My activities included field visits to several blocks and villages of Meerut District and in-depth interactions with officials and community mobilisers of UNICEF's SMNet, local health officials, and polio resistant families. Further, I reviewed archival records (in Delhi and Meerut), both historical and current, of India's march toward polio eradication. Especially golden were in-depth personal interviews in 2008 with Michael Galway and Naysan Sahba, both officials in UNICEF's Programme Communication Unit in New Delhi, and Dr. Hamid Jafari, WHO's project manager for Polio Surveillance in India. Robert Cohen, Ketan Chitnis, Rina Gill, and Neha Kapil of UNICEF's C4D unit and Jeffrey Bates of the Polio Team, New York, helped enhance my understanding of the macro and micro communicative elements in India's polio strategy (see Singhal, 2008). Between 2010 and 2016, I was privileged to serve on the Independent Monitoring Board of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative, which has helped to further sharpen my understanding of the vital role of communication and social mobilisation in the prevention, containment, mitigation and eradication of infectious diseases. I learned quite a bit from participating in on-the-ground polio activities in northern Nigeria (especially in Sokoto and Zamfara states) and in Pakistan (including Lahore and vicinity in Punjab state and areas in and around Peshawar in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa). An important disclaimer: The views that I express here are solely mine – in my capacity as a scholar and sense-maker of communication strategy, and not to be attributed to either UNICEF or the IMB.

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Introduction

In mid-June 2020 as the present article goes to print, the COVID-19 pandemic rages worldwide. In a span of a few months, 7.8 million cases of the infectious novel coronavirus have been detected worldwide, and over 430,000 people have lost their lives. With no cure, therapy, or vaccine in sight, these numbers will rapidly rise in the next year or two. With a botched national response, the United States leads the world in both the number of confirmed cases (2.1 million) and the number of deaths (116,000). India, even with over nine weeks (March 25 to end-May, 2020) of draconian country-wide lockdown measures that caused unprecedented hardship to tens of millions of its most vulnerable population, is catching up fast with 325,000 confirmed cases (fourth highest after the U.S., Brazil, and Russia) and 9,200 deaths. (For current COVID-19 numbers, see the website of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/).

While the COVID-19 pandemic makes deep inroads on the global landscape, and that too with unprecedented rage, some infectious diseases have been tamed and are close to eradication. Polio is one of them. It has been a long arduous journey to eradicate polio even though a vaccine has been around for 65 years. While it is impossible to predict the short, medium, and long-term impacts of COVID-19, one awaits the time, perhaps several years or decades from now, when we will be writing the epitaph of the novel coronavirus and the disease it causes—COVID-19. Meanwhile, perhaps there are some lessons to be learned from the taming of polio.

In the long roster of documented polio cases in India, Rukhsar Khatoon of Howrah District in West Bengal has a coveted place: she is the last entry, dated January 13, 2011. Two years later, on January 13, 2013, with no other polio cases reported, the World Health Organization declared India as being free of the wild poliovirus. India's Rukhsar Khatoon is one among many "lasts" in the annals of global polio eradication: In 1991, a child in Peru represented the last case in the Americas; in 1997, a child in Cambodia was the last case in the Pacific region; and in 1998, a child in Turkey was the last case in Europe (Ferris, 2013).

With India's name off the list of polio-endemic countries in 2013, and Nigeria being certified as having eradicated polio in 2019, only two countries remain that have yet not eliminated the stranglehold of the wild poliovirus – Pakistan and Afghanistan. India's triumph over the wild poliovirus demonstrates that it is possible to wipe out polio from this world. Not since 1979, when the smallpox virus was completely eradicated from nature, has the world come so close to eradicating another infectious disease -- no small feat for a disease whose recorded history goes back several thousands of years. An Egyptian stele, a tablet employed as a tombstone, from about 1500 B.C, for instance, depicts an individual with an atrophied leg, signifying polio's long-stand in history.

The purpose of the present article is to analyse India's march toward polio eradication, focusing on the relentless implementation of its macro and micro-level social and behavioural change communication strategies. In the present article, we discuss the micro-targeting and messaging interventions to achieve large-scale vaccine adherence and behaviour compliance, especially in the states of UP and Bihar — the last sanctuaries for polio in India. We analyse how India eradicated polio with relentless social mobilisation, involvement and engagement of local opinion leaders, and an adaptive data-driven strategy. No country, at any time, has utilised the art and science of social and behavioural communication for a greater public good as India did to wipe out polio. This article represents a modest attempt to analyse the communication-centric elements that contributed to this public health triumph of epic proportions, and represents, truly, India's gift to the world.

In this article, however, we focus more on the interpersonal and ground-based elements of the polio communication strategy (see also Obregon et al. 2009), while acknowledging the important role of mass-media

polio campaigns, include the long-running one featuring Bollywood superstars, Amitabh Bachchan and Shah Rukh Khan, promoting the two miracle drops.

Towards a Polio - Free World

It may come as a surprise to many that prior to 1955, until a vaccine for polio became available, the worst outbreaks of the disease were reported in Western Europe, Canada, Australia, and the United States (Oshinsky, 2005). Prior to, and post-World War II, polio was deeply feared globally and second only to the atomic bomb in the US because it hit indiscriminately, causing panic akin to present-day terror attacks. Polio spared no one, not even American President, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, and worse, it was insidiously partial to children, especially boys. One of the worst polio epidemics in the U.S. occurred in 1952 when 58,000 healthy people in the U.S. contracted polio, of which 3,200 died, and 22,000 were left with deformed limbs, braces, crutches, and wheelchairs (Gould, 1995). An all too familiar sight in US hospitals were polio wards with endless rows of patients hooked to iron lungs, ungodly mechanical ventilators that breathed for people who lost muscular control (Black, 1996).

The tide against the scourge of polio began to turn when Jonas Salk announced the development of a safe and effective injectable vaccine on April 12, 1955. It was immediately put to use for the greater public good. When famed television reporter Edward R. Murrow asked Salk about who owned the patent to the vaccine, his response was: "The people I would say. There is no patent. Could you patent the sun?" While the Salk polio injectable vaccine has been available since the mid-1950s and the Sabin oral polio vaccine (OPV) since 1962, polio still has no cure. Vaccine-based prevention is the only cure!

Some 20 million people are living today who have been crippled by the poliovirus. Polio is spread through the oral-fecal route from one person to another. The virus enters the body orally, multiplies in the intestine, and then spreads through feces in places besieged by poor hygiene and sanitation, high population density, and inadequate health services. The virus usually strikes children under the age of five and can cause death and permanent, irreversible disability through paralysis of limbs. For every one case of paralysis that is reported, roughly 200 people carry the virus, 90 percent of them without symptoms. (Polio Global eradication Initiatives, n.d., at polioeradication.org/ Polioandprevention.aspx#sthash.4TMsKhbV.dpuf. Once a substantial number of children in a community (80 to 85 percent) are fully immunised against polio, the virus finds it difficult to find a host and dies out.

In 1988, some nine years after the world had eradicated the scourge of smallpox, the World Health Assembly established the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI). It should be noted that the only other infectious disease that has been eradicated is rinderpest (a German word meaning "cow plague"), a viral, highly contagious, and deadly disease afflicting cows. In June of 2011, the United Nations FAO confirmed the disease was eradicated.

The triumph over smallpox was a phenomenal global public health feat, given the highly virulent disease killed an estimated half-a-million Europeans annually in the early 19th century (Hays, 1995). A killer without comparison, smallpox took 300 to 500 million lives during the 20th century, rendering tens of millions blind all over the world, and leaving hundreds of millions of pock-marked survivors (Hays, 2005; Koplow, 2003; Henderson, 2009).

After eradicating smallpox, the global public health community turned its attention to polio eradication. When GPEI was established in 1988, polio was endemic in 125 countries and some 350,000 cases of infant paralysis occurred each year. In 2019, the number of countries with endemic polio dropped from 125 to two (Figure 1).

Source: WHO (Public Domain)

Figure 1: The Tremendous Progress Made in Polio Eradication in the Past Three Decades. Nigeria Was Declared Polio-Free in 2019.

The GPEI, spearheaded by national governments, WHO, Rotary International, UNICEF, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and more recently the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation is the largest public health initiative the world has known. Since 1988, some two billion children have been immunised against polio in more than 200 countries involving over 20 million vaccinators and volunteers. The number of polio cases has spiraled downward – by 99.9 percent -- from 350,000 in 1988, to less than a hundred in 2019. An estimated 10 million children have been spared paralysis (see http://www.gatesfoundation.org/What-We-Do/Global-Development/Polio). Of the 3 types of wild polioviruses, the last recorded wild case of type 2 was in 1999, and of type 3 in November 2012. Only type 1 wild poliovirus persists.

Towards a Polio - Free India

With its billion-plus people, squalid urban slums and remote rural communities, India was expected to be the last sanctuary for the wild poliovirus (Paul, 2007). However, backed by strong political will, a country as huge and diverse and poor as India managed to stop polio in its tracks (Chaturvedi, 2008). Completing the "last mile" called for every ounce of human effort, ingenuity, and data-driven macro and micro strategy (Obregon et al., 2009) (Figure 2).
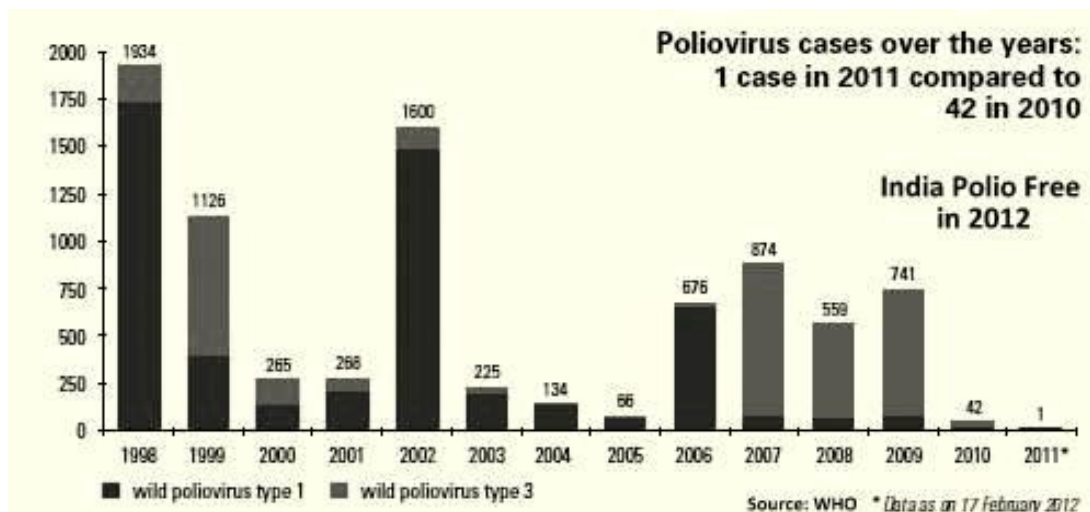
Source: UNICEF

Figure 2: India's Long Road to Polio Eradication

Beginning in the mid-1990s, the polio eradication efforts in India were intensified around National Immunisation Days (NIDs) and "pulse polio" campaigns to reach every child under the age of five in every round.   A National Polio Surveillance Project was established in 1997 to closely track the evolving epidemiology of the disease, and target efforts accordingly. The NIDs yielded good results in many states as immunity increased over time and the number of polio cases declined. The strategy changed accordingly, moving from a focus on a general population to more intensive engagement in localised geographic areas with particular communities where the children were at the highest risk.

Despite this focused targeting, in the two most populous and poorest states in north India -- Uttar Pradesh (UP) and Bihar – the poliovirus was resilient and relentless, finding new hosts amidst poverty, high population density, and poor hygiene and sanitation (Cheng, 2004).   Especially troubling were some 107 Blocks (an administrative unit within a district) of western UP and the Bihar States which represented "polio factories" (endemic reservoirs). In 2003, an estimated 80 percent of the world's new polio cases originated in these locations (Figure 3). To rid these two states of polio would require sustained and highly coordinated social mobilisation campaigns.

Source: UNICEF
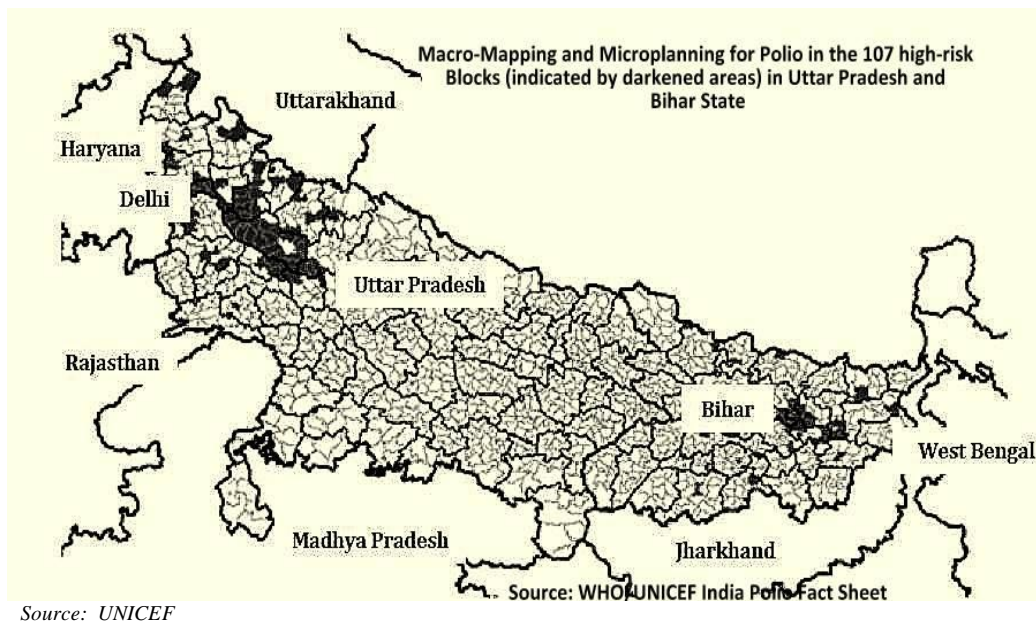
Figure 3: The Dark Areas Represent the 107 Polio Reservoirs in Western UP and Bihar State.

Data-Driven Macro and Micro Communication Strategies

By any measure, the scale of the polio eradication effort in India was staggering. In the last decade leading up to eradication, more than 170 million Indian children under the age of five were being vaccinated in two national immunisation campaigns, involving the mobilisation of 2.5 million vaccinators (UNICEF, 2012). Additionally, up to 70 million children in the highest-risk areas were vaccinated multiple times during Subnational Immunisation Days (SNIDs). The on-the-ground mobilisation was of epic proportions.

UNICEF, in cooperation with various international, national and state-level partners, led the implementation of intense social mobilisation and behaviour change communication campaigns (Chaturvedi, 2008; Mittal & Matthew, 2007). While UP and Bihar were the last bastions of the poliovirus in India, West Bengal, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, and Delhi were always at risk, because of migration (of labourers and their families) from UP and Bihar to work on construction projects and in agricultural fields. What made the polio communication activities extraordinary, especially in UP and Bihar state, were the mapping and record-keeping associated with the macro-plan (at the state, district, and block level) and a relentless drive to reach each child as per the micro-plan (at the village, locality, and household level). Mapping and monitoring of

Figure 4: A Micro-Plan Detailing Households within a Locality in a Polio-Endemic Village.

each household was developed into a precise art (or "German engineering"), where the room for error was minimal given the goal was complete eradication (Singhal, 2008).

More importantly, these macro and micro-plans for reaching every child under the age of five were continually refined, strengthened and benchmarked to measure their efficacy and effectiveness (Singhal, 2008). Michael Galway, Chief of Programme Communication at UNICEF in New Delhi, who guided UNICEF's communication and social mobilisation efforts during these crucial years in India, emphasised: "The polio communication effort on the ground came with tremendous accountability to both donors and clients. Therefore, the communication strategy had to be evidence-based, data-driven, epidemiologically-guided, adaptive, and localised" (Michael Galway, personal interview, January 9, 2008).

Achieving Compliance, Overcoming Resistances and Rumors

The organisation of NIDs and SNIDs would mean little if caregivers did not know *when* and *where* these polio rounds would take place, and if they were not convinced that these drops were essential to protect their children (Athar, Khan, & Khan, 2007). While it may seem that the central communication message is simple (immunise your child) and needs to be reinforced repeatedly without variation, challenges existed in reaching isolated communities, migratory populations, and every child during every round, as also in countering rumors about vaccine safety.

Tracking the immunisation status of every child under the age of five was crucial in the NIDs and SNIDs, especially in the high-risk areas. If a child went unvaccinated during polio round – at the neighborhood immunisation booth or during the door-to-door visit, the reasons for missing the child (e.g., a child was sick, in school or the playground, or out of town) were noted, and at least three additional attempts were made within the following week to make sure the child was immunised.

Another challenge involved continued compliance by families in each round, spaced once every five to six weeks in the 107 high-risk blocks of western UP and Bihar state. How to convince families that polio can still cripple children who have been immunised several times? Michael Galway noted in a personal interview: "People live difficult lives in this part of the world and they, understandably, get angry when we are back in their house every six weeks with a polio vaccine. What they want is electricity, water, schools for their children, sanitation, and better health care" (Michael Galway, personal interview, January 9, 2008).

An even tougher challenge was convincing those who were misinformed and resisted vaccinations for reasons that were personal, local, cultural, and frequently changing. To do so, frontline workers developed new tools to engage with families, to record the reasons for refusal, to better understand the complexities of multiple community identities even within the same village or urban slum, and to overcome deeply-rooted social and cultural barriers, such as the practice in UP and Bihar of not allowing newborns to be immunised. When questions were raised or resistances detected, answers were researched, messages pre-tested in the field, and the social mobilisation team, composed of local health workers and volunteers, would rope in key influencers – whether imams, school teachers, community leaders or medical doctors – to engage and convince the families.

Efforts to eradicate polio globally and in India, received a big setback when a 2003 *fatwa* issued by influential Muslim clerics in the West African nation of Nigeria warned their communities to avoid polio

vaccination for it would, they said, make children sterile (Sulaiman, K. 2014). Heeding the *fatwa*, members of some Muslim communities in northern Nigeria stopped vaccinations. A minority of Muslim leaders in India also supported the *fatwa*. UNICEF and other partners joined hands with premier Muslim institutions (e.g. Aligarh Muslim University, Jamia Milia Islamia University, and others) to address and overcome misguided *fatwas* or other ostensibly faith-based opposition. In addition, local religious leaders were engaged in mosques and madrasas (religious Islamic schools) to support polio eradication. Many of them signed appeals and provided printed testimonials during prayers, festivals, and community events. Countering rumors without delay, and that too in close partnership with credible and influential religious and local leaders, help put the Polio program back on tracks.

Influence of Social Mobilisers and Local Opinion Leaders

In 2008, during one of the SNIDs, I spent several days in western UP to witness the social mobilisation activities first-hand. I met dozens of community mobilisers belonging to the Social Mobilisation Network (SMNet), which UNICEF helped launch in 2001. At the time of my visit, some 4,300 community mobilisation coordinators (CMCs) actively worked in 44 districts in UP, supported by an umbrella of block, district, and sub-region coordinators, who continuously liaison with local administration, public health officials, stakeholders, and partner agencies to utilise resources optimally. The CMCs were strategically placed in high-risk areas (HRAs) concentrated around western UP and select eastern and central pockets of the state, forming the link with the underserved community most at risk. On average, each CMC tracked 440 households and about 375 under-5 children, covering about 1.85 million households and 1.6 million children during each of pulse polio rounds (once every 5-6 weeks), in addition to routine immunisation of children (Singhal, 2008).

In western UP, the frontline social mobilisers that I met were mostly women, who lived and worked in communities that are at high-risk for ongoing transmission of the poliovirus. With some training, these mobilisers maintained and updated extremely complicated data and records of children in their area, which is consolidated upward during each round through multiple levels (community, locality, block, district, and State), analysed, and fed back with amazing alacrity.

What made these on-the-ground social mobilisers tick was the personal rapport, credibility, and trust they brought to an interpersonal encounter. As Chaturvedi (2008, p. 5) noted: "Nothing beats the familiar face, the lilt of the local dialect and the genuine concern of the friendly neighbourhood aunt who may say: 'He looks a little pale today, have you taken him to the doctor? Don't neglect your health while looking after the babies and don't forget to come to the polio booth on Sunday'". Such personalised, localised interaction with a locally-respected woman, backed by a network of local influencers and opinion leaders, provided an opportunity for iterative dialogue, discussion, and decision-making, leading to the imbibing of the two miracle drops of the oral polio vaccine.

Opinion leadership is the degree to which an individual is able to influence informally others' behaviour in a desired direction (Rogers, 2005; Singhal & Dearing, 2006). SMNet's social mobilisers worked very closely with local "influencers" (religious, occupational, and societal) to actively engage them in convincing resistant households. Between January 2006 and April 2007, the percentage of local influencers who accompanied vaccination teams during house-to-house activities doubled in high-risk pockets of UP, significantly boosting immunity in the community (Figure 5). Further, the presence of local *pradhans* (chiefs of local government), medical practitioners, imams, and shop keepers, visibly demonstrated that polio eradication was not an imposition from the outside, but a goal that the community-owned.
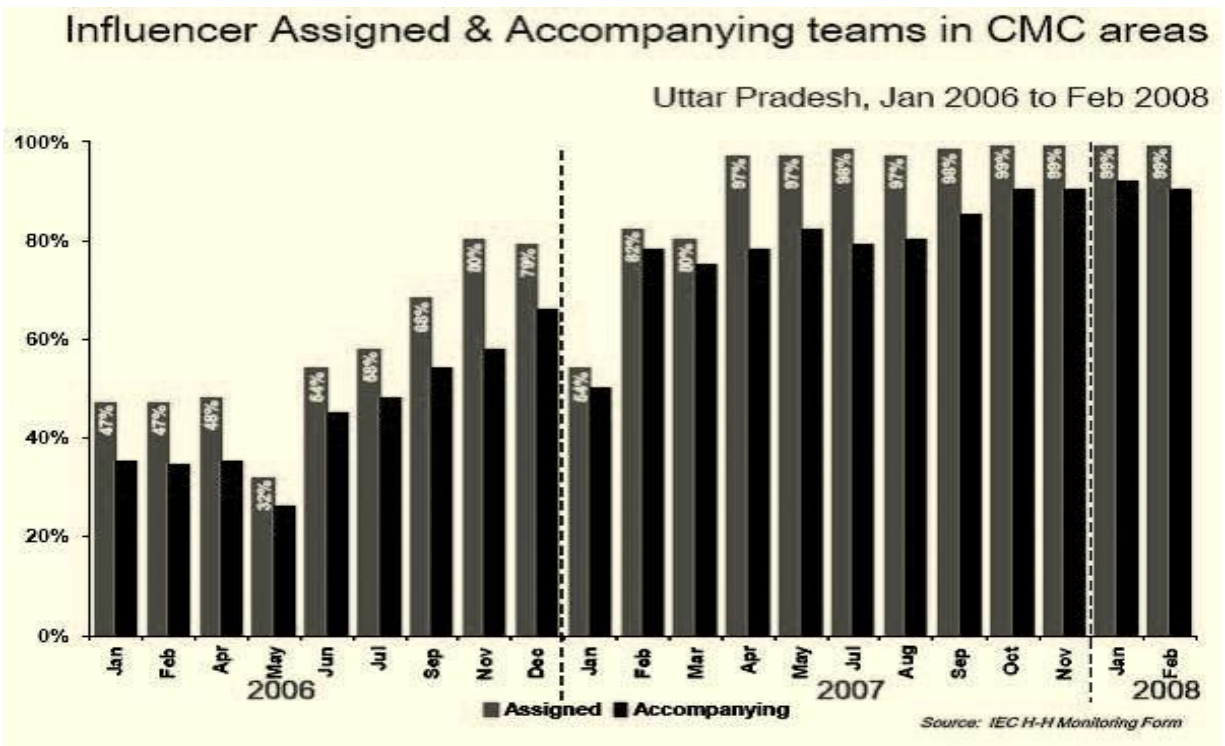
Source: UNICEF

Figure 5: The Rising Engagement, Over Time, of Local Influencers in UP State.

The cumulative effect of community influencers working shoulder-to-shoulder with community mobilisers is evident in Figure 6, showing the number of households resistant to immunising their children in Uttar Pradesh dropped by half in within six months.
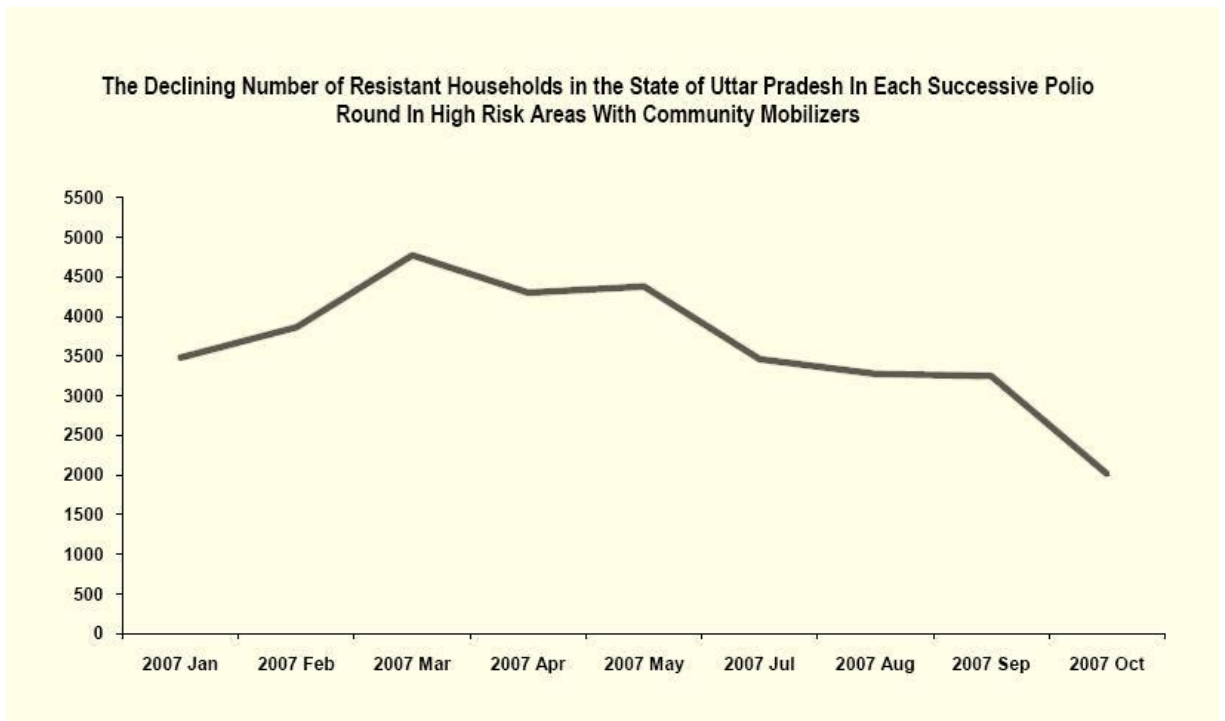
Source: UNICEF

Figure 6: The Declining Number of Resistant Households as Community Influencers Work Shoulder-to-Shoulder with Community Mobilisers.

Adaptive Communication Strategy

The on-the-ground mobilisation and vaccination strategy in western UP and Bihar was dynamic and nimble, guided by emerging data, and responding to the evolving epidemiology of the poliovirus. For instance, as immunity levels began to rise in communities for children under the age of five, it was imperative to increase the vaccine coverage of newborns. Newborns were especially at risk for polio, given the established social norm in rural and semi-urban households in UP and Bihar to shield the newly-arrived from "evil outside eyes," – a cultural response to cope with high infant mortality. Immunising newborns was critical in UP and Bihar, the two most populous Indian states with a combined population of 300 million, where some 18,000 babies were delivered each day. No newborn could be missed.

This shift to target newborn households is evidence of how the communication strategy was continually adapted to keep pace with the epidemiological data. As polio in north India became more clustered in the youngest children, getting to these newborns before the poliovirus was imperative. Community mobilisers were on location with alacrity, convincing mothers of newborns and their husbands and in-laws to immunise their child within hours (or days) of their birth (Figure 7).

Source: UNICEF
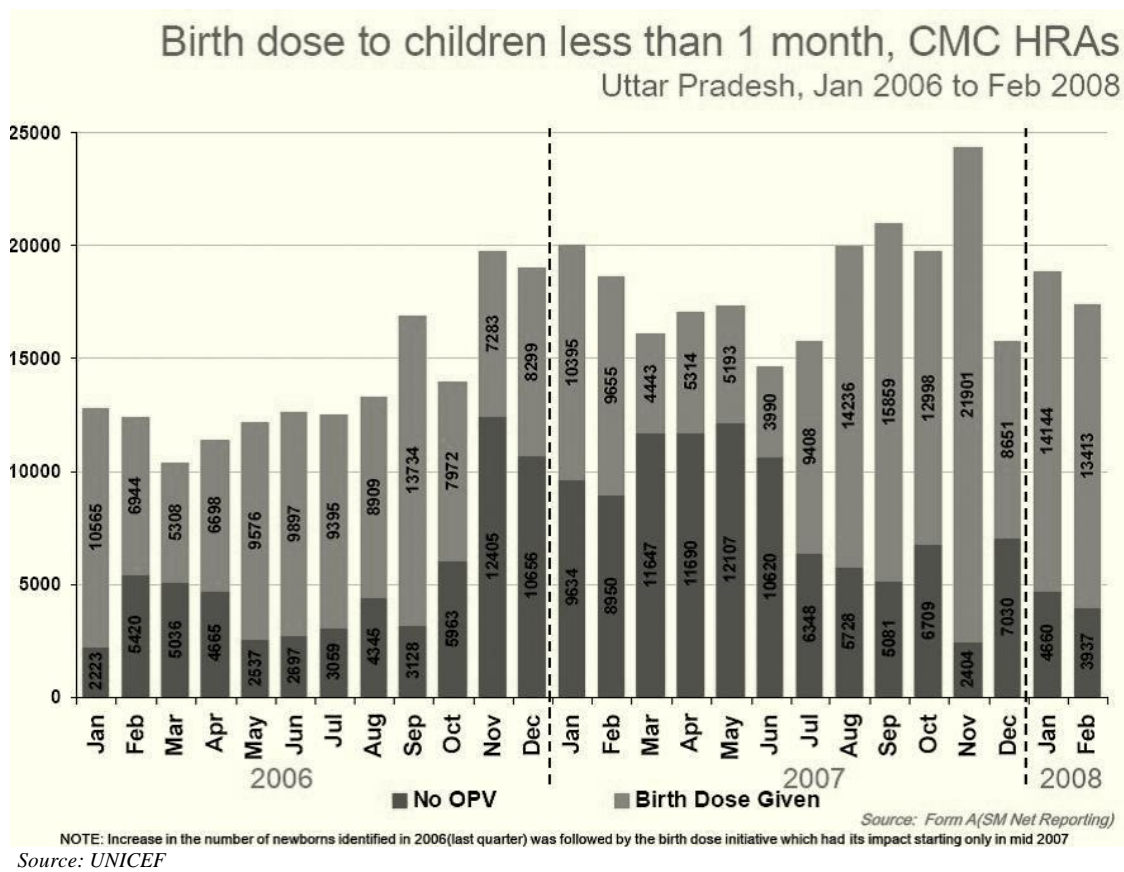
Figure 7: The Rising Coverage of Newborns to Keep Pace with the Evolving Epidemiology of the Poliovirus.

Discussion and Conclusions

While there exist important differences in transmission patterns and risk profiles, COVID-19 and polio have important commonalities (McRobbie, 2020). Both are infectious diseases, can be transmitted by silent and asymptomatic carriers, and can be deadly. While a vaccine exists for polio, the transmission of COVID-19 at this time can only be prevented through a cocktail of behavioral practices: regular handwashing, wearing a mask, physical distancing between people, and avoiding crowded indoor settings. Adoption of this cocktail of

behavioural practices is the only vaccine available. Hard to believe but up until the mid-1950s when the polio vaccine became available, families sheltered in fear of polio at home, public gathering places were closed or had restricted hours, and normal life was on hold for many. The present-day lockdowns and shelter-at-home policies for COVID-19 are reminiscent of those bygone polio times. Hope is pinned on the discovery of an efficacious vaccine.

While the story of COVID-19 pandemic is just getting underway, there is much for the world to learn about the role of behaviour change communication in eradicating polio. The lessons include:

- the relentless implementation of macro and micro communication strategies.
- the micro-targeting and micro-messaging to achieve compliance, overcome resistance, and counter rumors.
- large-scale and intensive on-the-ground social mobilisation and active and purposive involvement of local religious and opinion leaders.
- an evidence-based, data-driven, epidemiologically guided, adaptive communication strategy.

The room for error with polio eradication or even COVID-19 is next to zero, given that it takes only one individual to transmit the virus. India's journey toward remaining polio-free needs is equally relentless until Pakistan and Afghanistan eradicate the wild poliovirus.

It has been nearly a decade since Rukhsar Khatoon's name was recorded on India's polio roster. That is an epic triumph in the annals of global public health. It has brought the world a step closer to eradicating polio. We all await the day when the final entry will be made in the global roster of polio eradication. Meanwhile, the roster of COVID-19 is growing by leaps and bounds.

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RISK COMMUNICATION IN THE FIGHT AGAINST CHOLERA OUTBREAK: THE CASE OF AMHARA NATIONAL REGIONAL STATE HEALTH BUREAU IN ETHIOPIA

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Abstract

In developing countries such as Ethiopia the outbreaks of pressing health problems (epidemics) has posed significant challenges. Unable to properly communicate during such risks results in countries paying social, economic and political costs. This study tries to understand the risk communication practice of Amhara National Regional State Health Bureau (referred to below as the Bureau) during the outbreaks of AWD (Acute Watery Diarrheal Disease)/Cholera in 2016. The study employed qualitative research method using focus group discussion, in-depth interview and document analysis as data gathering tools. The findings show that the Bureau for the most part did not employ risk communication on the basis of its basic principles. The Bureau does not clearly understand the very idea of risk communication and has been found to have no risk plan at all before the prevalence of the pandemic. The Bureau has been found to have no organised means to collect feedback from the audience. In addition, there is no proper evaluation and analysis of feedback coupled with lack of honesty during the process. What is more, the recovery phase was found to have not been communicated properly. To be effective, the Bureau is advised to apply risk communication as an important weapon in the fight against cholera epidemic.

Keywords: risk communication, cholera, health communication, Amhara region, Ethiopia

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Background and Justification of the Study

Cholera remains one of the greatest challenges of health across the globe. WHO (2014), mentioned that in 2012 it was estimated that annually 502,000 diarrheal deaths were recorded due to inadequate drinking water, and 280,000 deaths were caused as a result of inadequate sanitation, and another 297,000 deaths were due to inadequate hand washing. Developing countries have been affected by sudden cholera outbreak at different times in history. For example, historical evidences have shown that Ethiopia encountered at least five cholera epidemics in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Several outbreaks were reported between 1831 and

1836, in 1856 and 1866-7, during the great famine of 1889-1892, and, finally, in 1906 when the disease appears to have brought relatively little damage (Pankrust, n.d).

According to Gemechu, Tesfaye and Zayeda (2016), cholera/Acute Watery Diarrhoea (AWD) is an acute bacterial infection of the intestine caused by ingestion of food or water containing bacteria called Vibrio cholera, serogroups O1 or O139, there are about 200 serogroups of V. cholera, but only two, V. cholera O1 and O139 are known to cause the specific disease known as cholera.

According to Fisseha (2017) Cholera is one of the priority diseases and events that are reportable in Public Health Emergency Managements system in Ethiopia. He also pointed out that from July 2008 to June 2009, there were a total of 9,485 cases and 193 deaths of acute watery diarrhoeal in six regions including Addis Ababa.

In the year 2016 Acute Watery Diarrhoea/cholera outbreak was a very big threat for Ethiopians. According to the report of world vision (2016), at the middle of the 2016 more than 33,500 Ethiopians were under the threat of cholera/AWD. People living in Amhara region were included in this data. A cholera/AWD outbreak across Amhara region has already been reported to affect more than 5,000 people from this number the Bureau reported that 64 people died (Tsegaye, 2016).

WHO (n.d.) pointed out that communication is an unavoidable and integral part in the effort to prevent and curb the magnitude of the epidemic. Communication has thus been considered to have a central role in risk management. According to Centre of Disease Prevention and Control (CDC) (2012), risk communication is used to help individuals adjust to risky events that have already occurred. Risk communication would prepare people for that possibility and make them feel protected and, if handled properly, the communication would lower their chance of dying from the threat (CDC, 2012

AWD/Cholera outbreak threatened Amhara region for a year, killing 64 people and affecting more than 6 thousand people, though the process of controlling the outbreak in the region cost more than 200 million birr (Tsegaye, 2016). This amount of money could be used to build many health centers and schools. The people under the threat were anxious and diverted from their daily activities. The problem continued for months. Every part of the region was not safe from resultant problems.

Evaluating the practice of risk communication in Amhara National Regional State Health Bureau is the focus of this study. In this study, the way the Bureau approached to the risk and how people understood and perceived the approach have been analysed based on the principles of risk communication. This will also pave the way to correct some flaws in the future. As far as our reading is concerned, there is no any other research conducted in Ethiopia other than those aforementioned.

Objectives of the Study

General Objective

The general objective of this study is to understand the risk communication practices of Amhara National Regional State Health Bureau in the case of 2016 Cholera outbreak.

Specific Objectives

Specifically the purposes of this study are:
- To point out the risk communication practices of ANRS Health Bureau during the 2016 cholera outbreak.
- To find out the perception of the local community about the cholera outbreak and its related communication practices.
- To identify the major communication strategies and channels used during the 2016 outbreak.

Research Questions

To examine the communication approach of the regional bureau the following questions
- How was the risk communication practice of the Bureau applied?
- What was the perception of the local community about the 2016 cholera outbreak and the communication practices?
- What communication strategies and channels were used?

Scope/Delimitation of the Study

The scope of this study is confined on examining the risk communication practices of Amhara National Regional State Health Bureau in the period of the 2016 cholera outbreak. The reason for selecting cholera is for its sudden nature. For being the major accountable body, the organisation chosen by this study is Amhara National Regional State Health Bureau.

Literature Review

Risk Communication and Its Importance

Risk communication is any kind of focused exchange of information about risks between interested parties (Lang, Fewtrell and Bartram, 2005). At the early time, risk communication was about motivating people to abandon smoking, use their seat-belts while driving, evacuate homes during emergencies, avoid drinking and driving, avoid living under power lines, avoid living near power plants, and become aware of passing on genetic risks (Ejiugwo, 2013). Therefore it was about giving information to the risk vulnerable society. As Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (2001) states, health risk communication is about communicating with various interested parties about the nature and level of risk and the controls that could be changed. Hence Ejiugwo (2013) expressed the idea behind health risk communication as pointing out potential health hazards to the public in order to motivate them to take actions.

According to European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (2013) risk communication refers to an exchange of information about risks caused by environmental, industrial, or agricultural processes, policies, or products among individuals, groups and institutions. Exchange of information enables two way communication. Therefore, effective risk communication should entail feedback. According to WuqiQiu, Rutherford, Chu, Mao and Hou (2016) defined risk communication as an interactive method of exchange of information among individuals, groups and institutions.

Risk communication motivates stakeholders' engagement and community participation and supplements the information needed by decision makers (WuqiQiuetal, 2016). Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (2012) explained that it is possible to provide the audience with information about the expected type and the extent of an outcome from a behaviour or exposure, through risk communication. According to WuqiQiuetal (2016), risk communication will push decision makers to understand what the experts and the public are really concerned about and in turn, the outcomes, policies or strategies, may better help the target community to minimise the adverse impact of a risk. Typically, risk communication involves a discussion about adverse outcomes, including the possibilities of those outcomes recurring (CDC, 2012).

Principles of Risk Communication

World Health organization (2006) mentioned that the risk communication strategies applicable to outbreak communication with the public can be grouped into four overlapping categories. The risk communicators are expected to take part in guiding, developing, implementing, and evaluating communication efforts (Ng and Hamby, n.d). Based on evidence and experience, the global experts agreed on the four best strategies to achieve the outbreak communication goal (WHO, 2008). Those strategies are the following:

a. Trust, credibility, accountability, honesty, and transparency.
b. Message content issues -agreement and debate.
c. Emotion, empathy, and compassion.
d. Planning, public assessment, evaluation, message development, and internal communication.

CDC (2012) put the following six principles of effective risk communication:
1. Be First: Transmitting information quickly is almost always important because for members of the public, the first source of information mostly becomes the preferred and trusted source.
2. Be Right: Accuracy can make credible.
3. Be Credible: Honesty and truthfulness should be given due attention during risk time.
4.   Express Empathy: For the harms occurred by risks the suffering should get an acknowledgment in words which means addressing what people are feeling, and the challenges they face and this builds trust and understanding.
5. Promote Action: Telling people basic things to do reduces anxiety, helps rebuild order, and promotes a re-established sense of control.
6. Show Respect: Communicating with respect is particularly important when people feel anxious.

Theoretical Framework

The Risk Perception Model

As Covello et al. (2001) assert, various risk perception factors have been identified that have direct relevance to risk communication. These factors play a large role in determining levels of concern, worry, anger, anxiety, fear, hostility, and outrage, which in turn can significantly change attitudes and behaviour. According to Ejiugwo (2013), based on the cultural, linguistic, ethnic/racial, gender, and geographical differences seen around the world, it should be understood that the perception of risk will differ from region to region, person to person, and culture to culture respectively. Covello et al. (2001) also pointed that an individual's perception of risk is based on a combination of hazard (e.g., mortality and morbidity statistics) and outrage and specific activities should ideally be undertaken as part of a risk communication effort therefore first, it is important to collect and evaluate experiential information obtained through surveys, focus groups, or interviews about stakeholder judgments of each of the risk perception factors (particularly trust, benefits, control, fairness, and anxiety). Sustained interaction and exchange of information with stakeholders about identified areas of concern are also necessary. To plan and organize effective risk communication strategies, understanding of interested or affected parties regarding stakeholder perceptions and the expected levels of concern, worry, fear, hostility, stress, and outrage is necessary.

Ejiugwo (2013) put risk perception factors as follows:
*   Voluntariness: Risks from activities supposed to be unintentional or imposed are less accepted than risks supposed to be voluntary.
*   Trust: risks related to credible and trustworthy institutions are more accepted when compared to risks which are attached to organisations.
*   Reversibility: Risks seeming to have irreversible adverse effects are expected to be greater than risks considered to have reversible effects.
*   Equity: Risks expected to be unfairly distributed are less accepted than risks which are fairly distributed.
*   Human vs. natural origin: Risks originated from nature are more accepted than risks originated by human.
*   Familiarity: Risks which are not familiar are thought to be more serious and less accepted than risks that are familiar.
*   Victim identity: Risks which bring specific and identifiable victims are thought to be greater than risks from activities that produce statistical victims.
*   Uncertainty: Risks thought as relatively unidentified are less readily accepted than risks that are already known to science.

- Media attention: Risks which gets much media coverage are expected to be greater and more serious than risks that receive little or no media coverage.
- Effects on children: Risks that have a greater impact on children are thought to be greater than risks that do not.
- Catastrophic potential: Risks that are expected to cause significant numbers of fatalities, injuries, and illness grouped in time and space are less accepted and judged to be greater than risks from activities that have random and scattered effects.

The Trust Determination Model

A basic thing in all risk communication strategies is the need to establish trust. Only when trust has been established can other goals, such as education and consensus building, be achieved (Covello et.al, 2001). When the people feel that they have been unfairly treated, exposed to threats, and lied to, their natural instinct will be distrust towards the authorities, but trust is achieved gradually through actions, listening, and communication skill (Ejiugwo, 2013). Because of the importance of trust in resolving risk controversies, a significant part of the risk communication literature focuses on the application of a trust determination model to particular scenarios (Covello et al, 2001). If there is a communications gap between the risk communicator and the public, the gap will be filled by speculation, rumours, or misinformation (Ng and Hamby, n.d.).

Cholera Outbreak Communication

UNICEF (2012) stated that actual and planned communication in different forms (media and external relations, advocacy, hygiene promotion, behaviour change communication, communication for social change and social mobilisation, etc.) very pertinent measures to the control of cholera. When disease outbreaks such as cholera occur, planning how to communicate, building trust, making early announcements, being transparent, and respecting public concerns are very important measures to be taken (WHO, 2005). Successful cholera communication strategies achieve five main criteria: they are based on research and evidence, are measurable, integrate a variety of different channels, mobilise a width of different actors and involve communities at different levels (UNICEF, 2012). While practising communication during a cholera outbreak, understanding the public is serious and it is usually difficult to change pre-existing beliefs unless those beliefs are clearly addressed, which means it is impossible to design successful messages that bridge the gap between the expert and the public without understanding what the public thinks (WHO, 2005).

Methodology

The study used qualitative research method. Qualitative research enables researchers to understand people's interpretations of their experiences (Vanderstop and Johnston, 2009) in this case the experience of cholera communication. To assess the risk communication practise of the Amhara National Regional State Health Bureau, the study selected Bahir Dar City and Andassa Holy Water site (an area which was the source of the outbreak in most parts of the region and within the boundary of Bair Dar Zuria Wereda). The reason behind selecting the two research sites (Bahir Dar and Andassa) was that the areas were highly affected by the 2016 cholera outbreak an hence worth being studied in order to learn about the practice of cholera communication.

Study Population and Setting

The study was conducted in Amhara region West Gojjam Zone, Bahir Dar and the surrounding area, Andassa. Geographically, Bahir Dar is located 565 km from Adiss Ababa, the capital city of Ethiopia. According to central statistics agency's population projection (2013) Bahir Dar Zuria Wereda's population is 206,684. The population of Bahir Dar city is reported to be 282,017 (Central Statistics Agency, 2013). The study population mainly included the surrounding villages of the Andassa area. There is a holy water source inside St George Monastery at Andassa. Different Orthodox Christians undertake a pilgrimage to this monastery in the belief that it will cure various diseases. This pilgrimage custom resulted in the monastery being a shelter for thousands of

people. Several people move to the holy water site every day and the same number moved out after receiving the holy water.

According to the terminal report on outbreak response of AWD in the region (2018) the outbreak which occurred in Western part of the region started from the Andassa area and spread widely and affected 400 people within 72 hours. The reason that makes the Andassa area a source of the outbreak is related with the holy water users. The settlement of holy water users is much overcrowded, which is conducive to any epidemic being disseminated rapidly. There is also evidence of poor hygiene and sanitation. There is a shortage of pure drinking water in the area, so people mostly drink Andassa and Abay/Nile River water. Most of the holy water users lodge inside the monastery. The monastery's large lodge is not capable of sheltering all holy water users, and thus there are also holy water users who get baptised and pass the night renting out housing from villagers. This facilitates contamination from holy water users to the resident society spread rapidly. The holy water users have been defecating and puking in the field expecting to see their disease extracted from their body. People were moving to Andassa Holy Water to get a cure from their illness, but they were dying of AWD outbreak.

Sample Size and Sampling Technique

Four persons who participated in message development about cholera pandemic from the Health Bureau were selected for the interview. These research participants were selected to see how the Bureau communicates during an epidemic. Four persons living in Bahir Dar and who were directly or indirectly affected by the 2016 outbreak were selected by using qualitative snowball sampling technique. These people were selected to understand the perception of the people about the outbreak around the city and the communication works. For the focus group discussion people who live in Andassa kebele and health professionals at Andassa health centre were purposefully chosen. Because Andassa kebele was the source of the outbreak and the people living there were highly affected by the outbreak and health professionals at the health centre were the first professionals to experience the outbreak. The focus group discussion contains three groups constituting 19 persons.. Those who were included in the first two focus group discussions were all householders and 6 males and 6 females. The first group of the discussion comprises all men and the second group comprises all women. Individuals selected for the focus group discussion were selected because they observed the scenario during the outbreak and they at least know one person affected by the outbreak and health professionals were there to teach and treat the society. The third focus group is a collection of health professionals working in Andassa Health Centre.

In addition**,** the researcher critically examined the Regional Bureau documents to study how effective their risk communication strategy was. These documents were reports related with the outbreak, Ethiopia's guideline on cholera outbreak management and Health Workers Quick Guide for Public Health Emergency Management of Amhara Region and the outbreak response plan and the terminal report of AWD outbreak response in the region.

Data Collection Instruments

The data was collected by individual in-depth interviews, focus group discussion and ddocument analysis.

Data Analysis

The participants were given a pseudonym before their responses were transcribed. This makes the research preserve the confidential status of the study. All individuals who participated in the research are informed and aware of the nature of the research. The interviews were transcribed to allow the researcher to code and analyze the information received. The research analyzed data by using open, axial and selective coding. Grounding basic theories and principles from the literature review part, the data gathered from documents, in-depth interview and focus group discussion were interpreted and analyzed using qualitative method.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Risk Communication Practice of Amhara National Regional State Health Bureau

The Amhara National Regional State Health Bureau has a department which mainly works with public health emergency management. This department is responsible for forecasting, preventing and controlling public health emergency risks. The department exchanges information with all parts of the region regarding public health emergency. When disease outbreaks occur the department investigates the case and releases early warning messages to the community. The respondent from the Amhara National State Regional Health Bureau explained it as follows:

> *We have four case teams in our department (public health emergency department). Public Health Emergency Communication Case Team is one of four teams within the department and which is responsible for the communication activity. The public health emergency communication case team receives weekly information from every part of the region. When the department gets a new information regarding public health emergency we start to investigate the case and disseminate early warning messages. The messages are sent to health professionals and the public.*

The public health emergency department then tries to communicate with the Bureau and health professionals grounding on the information collected by the public health emergency communication team. The task force comprises different concerned governmental and non-governmental organisations. When the cholera outbreak occurred in the region in 2016, the responsible task force was organised. One of my respondents in the Amhara National Regional State Health Bureau said,

> *"When the outbreak occurred we organised a task force which was called Rapid Response Team. This team includes governmental and nongovernmental organisations. Rapid Response Team had four sub teams, one of which was Social Mobilisation and Public Relations team. This team mainly worked in awareness creation and information giving. To achieve its mission the team mainly worked with the mass media. Each team evaluates its activity. I was leading the whole team and we controlled the outbreak that way."*

Rapid Response Team was primarily directed by the public relations department. Therefore the public relations department was the member of the task force. This means the communication process was under the command of the public relations department. Though the public relations department has a very limited number of personnel (only two public relation officers and one audio visual technician are working in the department), they included the participation of stake holders (World Health Organization and United Nations Children's Fund) in message mapping and awareness creation process. According to one of the respondent from the public relations department:

> *"The Regional Health Bureau organised a task force. The task force includes a social mobilisation team. Our department played a coordination role for the social mobilisation team. We also included non-governmental organisations to play their stakeholder role in our team. When we start the communication task we prepared a plan. For the outbreak had occurred in Andassa holy water we mainly focused on giving information and educating people at the holy water area."*

As mentioned by the above respondent, the Rapid Response Team directly started to inform the people about the outbreak and its treatment. However, one key factor was forgotten. The perception of the people at the outbreak area was not taken in to consideration. According to Ejiugwo (2013), based on the cultural and geographical differences seen around the world, perception of risk differs from region to region, person to person, and culture to culture respectively. Therefore before starting informing the public they were expected to understand the perception and culture of the outbreak area. Unable to understand the perception and culture of the risk area exacerbated the situation and the communication process failed. During the epidemic outbreaks at Andassa holy water area, the society was very disturbed and some residents left the area. On the other hand,

some of the holy water users were reluctant to move out or to stop defecating in the area. The scenario when the outbreak occurred was expressed by the focused group 1 discussants:

FGD 1 Discussant 2:

Before AWD happened we didn't have any awareness about the case. When we see people dying and we felt that some poisonous fluid was added to the holy water.

FGD 2 Discussant 3:

Because of AWD outbreak, we lost people in our village and those who came for holy water have also died. That was devastating. People living in our village were exiled from the area observing the death caused by AWD. A mother has died breastfeeding her child and the child was sent to her relatives. Everybody in the village was traumatised by the deaths. We lost our trust between us, fearing the disease transmission.

Oltedal, Moen, Klempe, and Rundmo (2004) also noted that understanding the basics of risk perception may give a clue about efficient countermeasures to reduce the extent of the damage. Then attempting to understand the feeling and perception of the society about the risk was a way which leads to success in the communication process.

The other portrayal of the risk perception failure is the hesitancy of the holy water users to stop defecating in the holy water area. They believed that defecating at the open field (not in the toilet) gave them the opportunity to see their disease extracted through their excreta. This cultural belief challenged the communication practice of the Bureau. In an article regarding the 2016 AWD outbreak *Bekur* (2016) newspaper reported the challenge the people in the holy water area were experiencing: not willing to use toilets for defecation, the preference for using fields around the holy water, and expecting to see their disease extracted. One of my respondents from the Amhara National Regional State Health Bureau had the following to say pertaining to this problem:

"People were not willing to use toilets to defecate because they expected to see their disease extracted through their excreta"

FGD 3 discussant 6:

"The holy water users were defecating and vomiting at the area. They were deliberately doing it to see some insects/ disease extracted from their body. Then when we taught them to use toilet they were not accepting our advice. But AWD contamination was very high because they vomit and defecate in the area."

Therefore, there was an opportunity to understand the risk perception of the society before starting the communication. This means assessing the feeling and perception by using different mechanisms. European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (2013) recommended that risk communicators can overcome the challenges of perceptions of risk by implementing specific activities such as obtaining information through surveys, focus groups and interviews on public judgments and perceptions of risk for particular scenarios, and supporting an interactive exchange of information with stakeholders about the identified areas of concern.

Planning Risk Communication

Missing the risk perception of the society was related to planning. Basically, risk communication is unthinkable without planning. According to World Health Organization (2005) effective risk communication plan allows for a practical, quick and effective response during an emergency since many of the necessary communication decisions are predetermined. Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (2002) also mentioned that the planning

should systematically address all of the roles, lines of responsibility, and resources one is sure to meet as one provides information to the public, media and partners during a public health emergency. One of the respondents from the public relations department of the Bureau admitted that there was a limitation in risk planning:

> *"Understanding risk communication and preparing a risk plan was our weak part. But as soon as it outbreaks, the Bureau organised a taskforce which was led by deputy head of the Bureau and together we prepared a plan to stop the problem."*

The respondent admitted that there was no proper understanding of risk communication; therefore the Bureau was unable to prepare an appropriate risk communication plan. The Bureau tried to prepare a response action plan hastily having an intention to control the outbreak sooner. This failed. The task force tried to prepare the response action plan after the outbreak has occurred and its most part was about treatment and health care provision. Certain parts of the response action plan included basic things to be done regarding communication and awareness creation, but the plan was not prepared based on principles of risk communication.

Another respondent from the Bureau also believed that trying to control the risk after the outbreak has already happened is all about risk communication. He understood that each steps of risk communication should be applied after the risk is identified. But risk communication planning entails more factors. In order to have an effective risk communication plan, it is important to form a risk management team that will create and be able to implement the plan, inspires the team to not only think about what could happen to the society, but also to plan what will be done if those risks do occur (Fry, 2012). A respondent explained risk communication as follows:

> *"We register expected health risks every time. First we base on rumours. Then experts move to the area and investigate the case and when they suspect the danger they immediately report it. This is risk communication. Then the Bureau starts to assure the case and moves for action."*

Therefore, the public relations department overlooked preparing risk plans. This oversight was related to misunderstanding and ignorance about the notion of risk communication.

Health Workers' Quick Guide for Public Health Emergency Management (2014) is a publication by the Amhara National Regional State Health Bureau. This publication listed the expected disease outbreaks in the region, Cholera is number one. The publication included brief explanation about the disease and recommends the basic things that are needed to be applied by health professionals. The issue of risk communication is totally missing. There is no risk communication plan in the publication. It reveals that the people who prepared the book had no any understanding and knowledge about risk communications. As far as the guide book is concerned, it is expected to be used as a reference by the public health emergency management in which the issue of risk communication was expected to be a major theme.

Communication Channels Used During Risk Time

The Bureau ordered a task force to control the Cholera outbreak, believing the outbreak was affecting the lives of the people. Therefore, the task force attempted to communicate with the public to tackle the problem, however this response had started after the outbreak had occurred. According to most of interviewees from the Bureau they have tried to communicate with the society by using different approaches. Several public discussions were conducted, messages were disseminated via Amhara Regional radio and Amhara TV and FM Bahir Dar. The regional Radio and TV channels reported the case starting from the occurrence of the cholera outbreak. Members of the task force were their sources of information for the reports of those regional media. Amhara TV has a live show which connects health professionals with the public to create awareness on different health issues. This program broadcast the issue of AWD outbreak twice. The outbreak was also reported by news and other programs. FM Bahir dar also did the same as Amhara TV. Radio and TV spots were presented to the public frequently.

Pamphlets from the Ministry of Health and by the Bureau were disseminated; billboards were also other ways of communication. According to one of my respondents from the Health Bureau:

"We used different methods to reach the community. We tried to use the media broadly. First we announced the case via Amhara Radio, FM Bahir Dar and Amhara TV. And we arranged group discussions with the community and disseminated pamphlets for those who can read. We also used billboards. For those who were affected by the outbreak and their families health professionals were teaching face to face."

Most of the discussants of the FGD (inhabitants of Andassa Kebele) expressed that their major sources of information were health professionals. This ensures that group discussion and face to face communication better addressed the local area. Some of the respondents also said radio was their source of information during the outbreak. One of the discussants from FGD 1 had the following to say:

Discussant 6:

"In different public gatherings, we have been learning about hygiene and sanitation to be free from the outbreak. Radios have also been teaching us about the basic things we should do to be free from the outbreak."

Health professionals of Andassa Health Center (discussants of FGD 3) said that they were teaching the society about AWD and hygiene and sanitation. The first thing they did was treating people who were affected by the outbreak. One of the FGD discussants had the following to say regarding the efforts they were trying to exert so as to curve the magnitude of the problem:

Discussant 7:

"For the first time two men who were affected by AWD came to our health centre. They came from the holy water area. Before that time, we didn't experience such scenario. After the coming of two patients a lot of people came to Andassa Health Centre. The Health Centre became full of AWD patients. It was very challenging to treat such a large number of people. We asked the Bureau to send us additional man power and medication, then immediately the Bureau responded. After we got additional man power, we started to treat and teach people. We have been teaching them to drink clean water. We taught them how to treat water. After two weeks the outbreak became reduced. We also tried to teach the people in the holy water area."

The Bureau was not prepared for such risk. Health professionals were busy treating patients. Therefore, no one was there to communicate to the society about the risk. When the situation stabilised, the organised health professionals themselves started to teach the society about AWD and mechanisms to protect the society. These professionals are not specialists of risk communications. Hence they do not have the knowledge and the experience on communication in risk situations. This shows that the Bureau did not understand the role of risk communication. Health professionals in the area tried to communicate face to face with the public, though it was not professional in the field of communication.

The Issue of Trust and Public's Perception

The messages disseminated through the mass media and face to face communications were majorly focused on prevention and control. Most of the discussants of the FGD said that the messages presented by health professionals were clear and understandable. According to one of the discussants:

"When someone starts to observe the symptoms of AWD it was advised to go to health centres sooner. Till he/she arrives to health centre we were taught how to prepare homemade liquid to

substitute the extracted fluid from the patient. By doing so, some patients were rescued. Public gatherings were the best places to learn about AWD."

There were indicators for the failure of communication. For example one of the discussants expressed the outbreak as *Tesibo* (Epidemic Typhus). The disease called *Tesibo* is not AWD. According to Health Workers' Quick Guide to Public Health Emergency Management (2014) *tesibo* is a disease called *epidemic typhus*. When the discussants were asked about AWD before the outbreak one of the discussant from FGD 2 expressed her understanding as follows:

Discussant 5:

"Of course I know about the issue before. It is called Tesibo. It is related with inappropriate hygiene and sanitation. So I didn't feel anxious."

The discussant misunderstood the outbreak. She thought the disease as *epidemic typhus*. This shows that the communication was not handled properly. Some parts of the society are still having a wrong attitude about the cholera outbreak.

The other indicator of the failure of communication is the understanding of the respondents from the Health Bureau. Most of the respondents expressed that convincing the people around the holy water site of proper hygiene was a challenge. For example, one of the respondents had the following to say:

"The basic challenge of the communication was that the people were not applying our advice. The information was easily understandable, but they were not applying our advice. They started to apply what we have said after the outbreak made them suffer, losing their siblings and falling ill. Of course it may be related with the way we tried to communicate. But we tried to make our messages easy and understandable."

The upper respondent misunderstood what risk communication is about. Instead of trying to understand the feeling, attitude and perception of the society, he simply judged them as change resistant. He even said that the messages were easy and understandable without trying to understand the reaction of the community about the messages. What he believed as simple and understandable may not be as simple as he thinks for the society.

The other respondent from the Bureau said that people in the holy water area were unwilling to use toilets; rather they used fields around the holy water to defecate. This is because they wanted to see their disease removed from their body. He said that they prepared a convincing message for those people. A discussant from FGD 1 mentioned that the people inside the holy water were expelled by the police forcefully, for the holy water cite was to be cleaned and closed for a month. The discussant expressed the case as follows:

Discussant 2:

"There was a debate between the people who came for the holy water and health professionals. They were reluctant to get out of the holy water area. But after a strong disagreement they were forced by the police to move out."

Discussants of FGD 3 also mentioned that holy water users and religious leaders at the holy water site were the main challenges to the communication process.

Here we can understand that there was a significant communication failure. Instead of convincing those people inside the holy water site, the expelling of them by force is a portrayal of failure of communication. According to Centre for Disease Control and prevention (2012) understanding the needs, cultural background, community history, location, and values of your audience is one of the most important factors in effective communication which allows you to match your message to audience characteristics.

The terminal report on outbreak response of AWD in Amhara region (2018) also stated that one of the major challenges in the intervention and control process was the reluctance of religious leaders to not fully engage in the operation of the cholera outbreak response. The task force misunderstood the role of religious leaders. The attitude and perception of the holy water users could be easily changed by using religious leaders, because religious leaders are the basic communication references for the beliefs and perceptions of holy water users. The religious leaders themselves were not agreeable to accepting the message from the Bureau, for the Bureau failed to understand their needs and perceptions. The bureau simply perceived those religious leaders to be change resistant. Since they ignored the messages from the Bureau, religious leaders needed a different kind of communication.

Evaluation of Communication

Without having a systematic plan for evaluating risk communication activities, it is impossible to know whether disease control information reached the intended audience, was communicated effectively, or inspired behaviour change or other outcomes (Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, 2001). Many respondents to the interview from the Bureau answered that there were frequent process evaluations, commencing with the task force that began working on its responsibility. The respondents said that they got feedback through telephone, from the media and from public discussions. Feedback is a the most important part of the communication process which creates an opportunity to understand how the message is received and how it is being interpreted, then the sender will have the ability to adjust the message and improve its effectiveness (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2012). But one of my respondents from the Amhara National Regional State Health Bureau stated that the feedback receiving mechanism was not well organised. According to the respondent:

> *"To get organised and ample feedback, we had a very limited number of man power. We were very busy in mapping messages and addressing the society. There was no organised way of feedback reception practice."*

There are two basic points here. The first point: there was no proper and organised way of feedback reception. The second point: they had a very limited number of man power. The Bureau seems to misunderstand the role of communication during risk time. But World Health Organization (2005) said:

> *"...the difference between emergency and non-emergency communication is often one of staffing and workload in media communications leadership, media relations, message and materials development, partner and stakeholder outreach, web sites, administrative and technical support, studio and broadcast, research and media monitoring, hotlines, community health education, workforce communications, clinician communications, policy-maker and legislative communications, and information management."*

There are two public relations officers and one audio visual technician in the department of public relations. These employees were working in collaboration with the task force. Trying to achieve message development without having ample feedback is not effective. Feedback facilitates evaluation and improvement. Most of the misunderstandings between the people and the Bureau seemed to be related to the unavailability of effective feedback reception methods. The Health Workers' Quick Guide for Public Health Emergency Management (2014) does not mention feedback and evaluation. This Guide only presented basic actions to be undertaken for the prevention and control of emergency diseases. The report about the cholera outbreak also did not include how feedback was used in improving the communication process.

For the upper respondent, risk communication is all about telling the people what to do. This is also related with lack of proper evaluation. The evaluation could give them a chance to understand the result of their risk communication activity. The evaluation of the risk communication should base the basic principle of risk communication. The report about outbreak response by the task force showed that the evaluation was conducted mainly in relation to the establishment of treatment facilities and supplying of essential logistics.

Discussion

Based on the data gathered, the Amhara National Regional State Health Bureau has a very poor understanding of risk communication. It cannot differentiate risk communication from non-risk communication. As cited in Kelay and Fife-Schaw (2010), Breakwell (2007) stated that practising a proper risk communication is necessary in order to ensure that people and institutions behave in ways that support their wellbeing and safety, and it ensures people and institutions accept changes that others think necessary. Unable to respond quickly to a health emergency (by using basic principles of risk communication) meant that the Bureau failed to achieve successful communication. The first and major action that the Bureau missed when applying risk communication was starting the communication without having organised risk communication plan. According to World Health Organizations (2005) when carefully designed, a media communication plan can save precious time when an emergency occurs, it can enable leaders and spokespersons to focus on the quality, accuracy and speed of their response and, once completed, the communication plan should be evaluated, revised and updated regularly. Planning risk communication before the risk enables communicators move effective as soon as the risk occurs. This was the major thing the Bureau missed. The task force organised by the Bureau started working after the outbreak occurred. One of the responsibilities of the task force was managing the communication practice in relation to the disease outbreak. The public relations department was the part of the task force and coordinated the communication activity. The communication process started after the disease outbreak was investigated and confirmed. The task force attempted to prepare a general plan which includes communication and other control methods. The plan was not prepared based on basic principles and theories of risk communication and it was not timely.

According to Ejiugwo (2013) based on the cultural, linguistic, ethnic/racial, gender, and geographical differences seen around the world, it should be understood that the perception of risk will differ from region to region, person to person, and culture to culture respectively. This notion emerged from the notion of risk perception model. When starting risk communication we should be concerned about the culture and perception of the target society. The Amhara National Regional State Health Bureau did not consider the perceptions and beliefs of the public concerning the risk. While practising communication during cholera outbreak, understanding the public is serious and it is usually difficult to change pre-existing beliefs unless those beliefs are clearly addressed, which means it is impossible to design successful messages that bridge the gap between the expert and the public without understanding what the public thinks (WHO, 2005).

The Bureau used mass media and non-mass mediated communication approaches. It is beneficial to use both communications platforms in a combined manner. The people from remote parts of the region could get a message and education from group discussions and face to face communication. It was effective to use different approaches to address such a broad audience.

As stated in the data analysis part of this discussion, there was a controversy between holy water users and the task force of the Amhara National Regional State Health Bureau. The Bureau wanted to clean the holy water area, and then needed holy water users to leave the place for a month. The holy water users were not willing to leave the place. Finally, the Bureau expelled the holy water users by using police force. This is the evidence that the communication itself was at risk. The Bureau could not convince the holy water users and religious leaders. The Bureau employees could not understand the pilgrims' perceptions and beliefs and force was used to evict pilgrims from the contaminated area.. In such situations CDC (2012) advised that it is good to express empathy and support and reduce emotional confusion. The Bureau ignored the perception, feeling and emotion of the community.

The local community was confused and misunderstood the real cause of the disease outbreak. According to Ng and Hamby (n.d.) to be a good risk communicator and build credibility it is good to make actions consistent with our words, and showing, over time, respect for the perspectives of others. The Bureau was simply releasing information believing that it was all about risk communication. The Bureau could not identify the miscommunication between the public and the organisation. As the feedback reception mechanism was poor, the Bureau as not receiving appropriate feedback and evaluation resulting in a failure of effective

communication. The Bureau ignored the public's perceptions and beliefs and chose only forceful top-down approaches.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Conclusion

This study attempted to see how the risk communication practice has been practiced in the Amhara National Regional State Health Bureau regarding the 2016 cholera outbreak. This study attempted to view the practice starting from the planning up to evaluation stages.

Failing to prepare proper risk plan, unable to get ample feedback and perception of the community, unable to address clear and non-confusing messages, lack of proper evaluation of the communication process made the risk communication of Amhara National Regional State Health Bureau ineffective. As evidence, the outbreak response report stated that the outbreak recovered after it was stopped. According to the terminal report on AWD outbreak in Amhara region (2018) the disease outbreak ceased in November 2016, and it occurred again in February 2017. When the cholera outbreak occurred for the second time it affected 4,917 people and killed 71 people. This showed the failure of risk communication. The fear that the outbreak will recur is also another portrayal of the failure of communication. There is still fear and anxiety in the area because the communication was not based on basic principles of risk communication. Especially important: the recovery phase communication was not handled. The people working in the Bureau are also sceptical about the stoppage of the outbreak.

People of Andassa *kebele* are not yet secured from cholera outbreaks. Though the disease outbreak has stopped, there is still a fear that it may recur. The recovery phase communication was not well practised.
The research concludes that the marginalisation of risk communication and its poor practice contributes the re-emergence of cholera outbreak.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the research the following recommendations can be made. Most of the problems that have emerged are the result of misunderstanding of the notion of risk communication. Therefore, professionals working in the public relations department should get adequate training on the area of risk communication. Employees in the public relations department should improve their understanding and knowledge about risk communication through reading. Organising risk plan and anticipating that a risk will happen should be implemented. Every activity of the risk communication should base the risk plan.

The Bureau should release clear and non-confusing messages to sustain its effectiveness and to gain the trust of the target community. The Bureau should be honest to its target audience. Before addressing messages about the risk, there must be a culture of researching the perception of the target society about the risk and mapping the message based on their perception. Proper feedback and evaluation in the risk communication process is also advisable. At the recovery phase, people should be treated well based on principles of risk communication, to make the risk area stable and enable a return to normal life.

Acknowledgement

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SAFEGUARDING VULNERABLE PERSONS: COMMUNICATION APPROACH AS A WAY FORWARD

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Abstract

Safeguarding is a critical yet often neglected issue in development and social services sectors. It is especially relevant for organisations serving vulnerable individuals or communities. The safeguarding policies and practices have gone through some major changes over the past several years in response to incidents where organisations failed to protect vulnerable individuals from sexual exploitation and other types of abuses. This article analyses some real-life cases, draws lessons from them and argues that organisations particularly the development agencies, social service providers and charities must invest more resources in order to protect vulnerable individuals or groups irrespective of (but not limited to) age and gender from sexual exploitation and other forms of abuse. The article underscores the need for an enabling environment and a communication approach as a way forward to create better institutional safeguards. It emphasises preventive measures based in multi-stakeholder engagement, education of relevant staff members, volunteers, government stakeholders as well as the beneficiaries and local communities.

Keywords: safeguarding policies, abuse, exploitation, development, human resources

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What is Safeguarding

Before going into further discussion it is essential to understand what is meant by safeguarding. The term safeguarding is generally used to define the intent and measures taken to prevent and protect vulnerable groups from abuse, exploitation and maltreatment - verbally, non-verbally or physically at any time. An individual's age, gender, class, identity, location, legal status, physical or mental condition might make a person more vulnerable than the others. The idea of safeguarding is embedded in various international human rights instruments such as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) as well as International Humanitarian Law (IHL).

UK's Care Quality Commission defines safeguarding as "protecting people's health, wellbeing and human rights, and enabling them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect" (Care Quality Commission, 2019). Working for vulnerable groups comes with responsibilities to protect their safety and basic human rights. Safeguarding children and young people and promoting their welfare means: a) Protecting children from maltreatment. b) Preventing wherever possible impairment of children's health or development. c) Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care, and d) Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes (Government of UK, 2015).

Safeguarding can be seen as a range of measures in place to protect people in the care of a charity or those coming into contact with persons suffering from abuse, maltreatment and gender based violence of any kind. It is

done by putting processes in place to ensure that the vulnerable groups of people are not abused in any way and are protected from any harm. It also refers to the process of protection by providing safe and effective care and service.

As per the Care and Support Statutory guidance issued under the Care Act 2014. Department of Health in UK, safeguarding adults means: a) protecting the rights of adults to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. b) people and organisations working together to prevent and stop both the risks and experience of abuse or neglect. c) people and organisations making sure that the adult's wellbeing is promoted including, where appropriate, taking fully into account their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs in deciding on any action. d) recognising that adults sometimes have complex interpersonal relationships and may be ambivalent, unclear or unrealistic about their personal circumstances and therefore potential risks to their safety or wellbeing (UK Department of Health 2018). Situations such as conflict, displacement and refugee crisis can exacerbate the level of vulnerability and therefore requires special safeguards (Donnelly and Muthiah, 2019).

Key Concepts Related to Safeguarding

The idea of safeguarding involves certain terms which needs to be clarified and understood. Terms like "child/children", "vulnerable adults", "sexual exploitation", "exploitative relationship", "abuse" etc. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child defines "child" as "a human being below the age of 18 years unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier" (United Nations 2010). Vulnerable adults are generally those aged 18 or over who are particularly unable to protect and take care of themselves from significant harm, exploitation or abuse due to situational factors. Adults may be at risk due to issues related to gender, age, frailty, mental health, physical capabilities, religion/socially excluded, minority groups, disasters or conflict. (National Health Service 2017). Any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another person (United Nations, 2019). An exploitative relationship is a relationship that constitutes sexual exploitation, i.e. any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another. (United Nations, 2016) Abuse is the harming of another person, usually by someone in a position of power, trust or authority. Abuse can come in many forms: Physical (including hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, injuring, restraint or inappropriate sanctions), Sexual (including rape, sexual assault, molestation, sexual acts through coercion), Psychological (including emotional abuse, threats of harm or sanction, verbal abuse, isolation, intimidation, humiliation, restricted movement), Financial or material (including theft, fraud, exploitation, misappropriation of property), Neglect and exclusion (including ignoring medical or physical needs, failure to provide appropriate care, withholding of care or basic services), and Discrimination (including racism, sexism, ageism, faith, based on disability).

To give an idea regarding abuse and exploitation several examples are provided below.

Example 1: Meena (not a real name) is a 13-year girl who is a student of a middle school. Her grades are not up to the mark. Meena's teacher asking Meena to help him grade papers after school, promising to help her bring her an excellent grade, if she wants. Meena believes her teacher. So she begins going to his class each day after school is out. Her teacher gets physically closer to her every day, often standing right behind her, and soon begins touching her in ways that make her uncomfortable. As the touching becomes more intimate, her teacher warns her that she shouldn't tell her parents about this as they would not want their teenager to be so grown up. Her teacher has used his position of authority and dependence. He committed child sexual abuse, or sexual exploitation of a child (Meena). This is an offence.

Example 2: Mtoto (not a real name) is a 22 years old mother of three children who has fled persecution in her home country and become a refugee in a neighbouring country. Mtoto and her children live in a refugee camp and depend on food supply from a humanitarian agency. One day an authorised humanitarian aid distributer tells her that her supply for the week will be cut into half, but if she sleeps with him, he will ensure that her food

supply remains the same. This is an offence. Because aid is free for refugees and displaced persons and authorised distributers should not set any condition on this. International donors, government agencies and collaborators are working jointly on safeguarding issues to ensure the protection of beneficiaries and vulnerable groups.

Example 3: Layla (not a real name) who is 11 years old, lives in an orphanage run by a charity. She works as a domestic hand and carer for the younger children at the orphanage. She used to clean the unit of the priest. After she finishes her work, the she has to sit on the lap, and he used to play with private parts of her body. Then she gets chocolates. She is sexually abused by the priest. The priest is using his position of authority and power. He is committing sexual exploitation of a child (Layla). This is violence.

Case Studies

Several case studies are given below to develop in-depth understanding of safeguarding issues. Moreover, these incidents improved, developed and implemented better safeguarding monitoring policies of the relevant organisations.

Case 1: Failure of a Charity to Protect a Vulnerable Community

One of most widely covered case of a charity's failure to protect vulnerable community took place in Haiti after the 2010 earthquake. Oxfam GB faced scrutiny criticism by the Charity Commission of U.K. for the way it dealt with claims of sexual misconduct by its staff in Haiti. Furthermore, the development world also shocked by the Haiti humiliation. It led to further revelations about the use of sex workers by aid professionals at various organisations, alongside other cases of sexual misconduct. After this incident, international donors scrutinised the situation and withdrew huge amounts of allocated funds from various projects of Oxfam GB. On the other hand, Oxfam GB has developed a list of steps the organisation plans to take in response to the "crisis management", implemented significant improvements to its safeguarding procedures and established mandatory safeguarding training for all staff members. Moreover, the organisation also reviewed recruitment policy and procedures such as pre-employment screening, and global reference checks (Edwards, 2018).

Case 2: Conditional Protection

The United Nations upholds a policy that does not tolerate sexual exploitation and abuse in any form. The organisation explicitly prohibits the exchange of money, recruitment, goods or services for sex, and prohibits any relationships between UN staff members and those who are under their care and protection. Any misconduct in this area violates everything the UN stands for. However, an enormous number of cases of sexual abuse and exploitation by members of UN peacekeeping missions were documented in various reports and in media coverage as well.

i. United Nations peacekeepers deployed in Haiti were involved in interaction sexual relationships for food and medicine with women and girls. In 2015, a UN report interviewed a large number of Haitian women. As per the interviewee, they were forced to have sex with UN soldiers in exchange of material aid. However, several victims were aware and knew about the United Nations policy prohibiting sexual exploitation and abuse (RT, 2015).

ii. Forced into Bestiality: In 2014, French peacekeepers had four girls tied up and forced them to have sex with a dog in the Central African Republic. According to AIDS Free World report, the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) conducted an interview session with almost 10 girls in one province. The all interviewees said they had been sexually abused by international peacekeepers (Oakford, 2016).

Case 3: Sexual Abuse Scandal

Catholic priests abused thousands of children in Germany: In 2018, a report explained that 1,670 church workers were blamed of molesting 3,677 children throughout Germany between the years 1946 - 2014. The victims were mostly male and more than 50 per cent of them were 13 years of age or younger. Moreover, each sixth case involved a rape, and in three-quarters of the cases, the sufferer and the person responsible for the offence knew each other through the church. A number of the priests who committed crimes were also relocated to other parishes to avoid scrutiny and additional files containing more reports of sex abuse were also destroyed by local archdioceses. (Deutche Welle, 2018).

Case 4: Other Side of Sir Jimmy Savile

Sir James Wilson Vincent Savile (1926 - 2011) was a renounced English media personality who was well known in the UK for his unconventional behaviour. During his lifetime, he was widely praised for his charity fundraising and voluntary activities as well as his entertainment work. Savile raised approximately £40 million for charity. After his death, Meirion Jones and Liz Mackean from the BBC programme Newsnight began to investigate reports that he had sexually abused children. As a result of his celebrity profile, his generous volunteering activities, and his charity fundraising activities he had exceptional access to a number of hospitals and took the opportunities that access gave him to abuse patients, staff and others. His suspected victims ranging from prepubescent girls and boys to adults. Moreover, he had sexually assaulted victims aged between 5 and 75 in NHS hospitals. Furthermore, Savile obtained access to teenage girls through his television programmes Top of the Pops and Clunk and his charity work. Several women interviewed by the media said that, as teenagers, they had been sexually abused by Savile. One of his former colleagues said he made no attempt to hide his interest in girls from them. He had committed sexual abuse against hundreds of individuals throughout his career (BBC, 2013).

Case 5: Sexual Abuse of Nursing Home Residents

Residents in long-term care settings are especially vulnerable to abuse, and exploitation. Because they often are increasingly dependent on others. Sexual abuse of nursing home residents is unthinkable. A study conducted by Burgess et al. focused on sexual abuse of long-term care settings in 2000. They picked 20 nursing home residents reported to Burgess et al. as part of their study analysis. From their investigation, they discovered that the victims were predominately older, had cognitive deficits, and exhibited rape-related suffering indications. In 14 cases, the persons behind these symptoms were nursing home staff members. In three cases, the offenders were residents of the long-term care home. As per the study, 11 of the 20 victims died within 12 months of the physical attack (Burgess, 2000).

Another research conducted by Teaster et al. regarding abuse of male nursing home residents. Teaster et al examined cases from 50 to 93 years who had been subjected to sexual abuse. More than 80% of the victims had decreased self-care with cognitive disability. The found that types of abuse were unwanted sexual attention, rape, and anal penetration. 75% were offenders were staff members and 25% were other nursing home residents (Teaser, 2007).

Case 6: 'Sex for Aid'

As per the report on 'Sexual violence and exploitation: the experience of refugee children in Liberia, Guinea and Sierra Leone' of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and Save the Children 2002, the researchers found that not only was sexual exploitation widespread, it was also committed by relief workers/distributers, peacekeepers, and local community leaders as well. Humanitarian workers traded food and aid items for sexual favours (United Nations, 2002). Educators in camp based schools exploited children in exchange for passing grades. Moreover, medical care and medicines were given in return for sex. Furthermore, parents forced their children to enter sexually exploitative relationships in order to secure aid items for the family. The report also documented the types of sexual violence included rape, the abduction and abuse of

children by military forces, female genital mutilation, and rape as a weapon of war. The team wrote the report after a field mission by the team which conducted interviews and focus groups with approximately 1,500 individuals (both children and adults) in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone (UNHCR and Save the Children, 2002).

Case 7: Community Leaders Exploited Cyclone Victims

More than 1,000 people died (BBC 2019) and tens of thousands were displaced (Bhalla, 2019) due to cyclone Idai in one of worst climate disasters in April 2019 in Mozambique. As per a published report of Human Rights Watch (HRW), female survivors said that they were abused by local leaders. HRW report details also mentioned that hunger and damage caused by the cyclone have left hundreds of thousands of women vulnerable to abuse. Victims, residents, and aid workers reported that local community leaders demanded money from people affected by the cyclone in exchange of sex for food. In some cases, women without money were instead forced into engaging in sex with local leaders in exchange for a bag of rice (Human Rights Watch, 2019).

Changes of Development World in Safeguarding Policy Statement Awareness and Training

After some of the biggest charities' misconduct scandals involving aid distribution and development works, many international development organisations are more conscious about the institutional safeguards and establishment of the safeguarding policies that cover areas like recruitment and talent acquisition, code of conduct harassment and anti-bullying. Thus, they endeavour to create a strong and effective enabling environment and a safeguarding culture to support the rights and protection of beneficiaries, volunteers, community members, workers or anyone else impacted by development organisations' work and its subsidiaries.

Recruitment, talent management and policy of employment of the international development organisations currently focus on global recruitment and selection process such as interviews, pre-employment criminal record checks and the use of local checking services (i.e. police checks). The reviewed recruitment policy focused on how to attract, select and verify new staff members, consultants, collaborators, stakeholders and volunteers in the context of its approach to safer recruitment and secure work environment. Moreover, upgraded policy provides guidance on the policies and procedure of full-cycle of global recruitment and selection, conjunction with the equal opportunities and dignity at work place and the safeguarding. It includes a number of key techniques to apply when seeking to appoint someone who will work with children, vulnerable adults and other beneficiaries.

In recent years many international development organisations are emphasising on appropriate and quality training on work policy and safeguarding. It helps to ensure that employees or anyone acting on their behalf can carry out their responsibilities justly and also ensuring the safety of persons receiving assistance. The training includes helping the development professionals, trustees, volunteers, consultants, partners and other acting on behalf and communities to understand which individuals are at risk of harm or are particularly vulnerable. Moreover, the policy guidelines mention the prevention and suitable response to sexual exploitation and abuse. Measures of development agencies force the workforce to become aware of appropriate behaviours and develop their understanding on how to safeguard individuals.

Challenges

Safeguarding of vulnerable groups affected by abuse and exploitation is a key responsibility for all professionals working with vulnerable persons. It can be hard to achieve in practice. However, development agencies are improving their policies and practices to develop local arrangements in different countries. Safeguarding has now getting more attention. However, there are many challenges.

Firstly, a key challenge many originations working in international development find it difficult to reach the partner organisations' volunteers and collaborators of consultants to provide the necessary awareness, information and training sessions related to relevant policies.

Secondly, the terms of policies are often not easy to explain to all levels of people delivering care or aid to vulnerable persons.

Thirdly, the involvement of government, local agencies, NGOs is still inadequate in most of the countries as a result a large number of social service providers including those in healthcare and education sector are not under any mandatory safeguarding implementation requirement.

Safeguarding: Quest for a New Communication Approach

Safeguarding in practice presupposes a significant awareness, or, in some cases, behavioural change in the conduct of social services providers, aid workers or healthcare professionals as well as the beneficiaries. Sexual abuse and exploitation can happen in anywhere and can be perpetrated by anyone. However, age, gender, or disability or situational factors or environment can be made a person more vulnerable. Safeguarding in essence is a development communication issue aimed at influencing human behaviour at both individual and societal level. To achieve this goal a wide variety of development communication tools can be used.

The crucial step towards safeguarding is to ensure an enabling environment at the national level through appropriate legal and policy support for making safeguarding in general a legally-binding requirement for all types of social service providers. This then goes down to the organisational level where every organisation can come up with specific organisational policy to ensure safeguarding against exploitation and abuse.

Safeguarding policies especially at the organisational level should be drafted by subject matter experts with in-depth knowledge and understanding of beneficiary communities as well as the organisation and the cultural contexts in which it operates. Cultural sensitivity and awareness are key eliminates of formulating a sound safeguarding policy. In their article Sarah Blakemore and Rosa Freedman emphasised on "organisational development through allocating staff time to safeguarding, and through ensuring that all personnel are trained and that there is effective and accessible communication on safeguarding." (Blackmore and Freedman 2019).

Once the organisations have their safeguarding policy in place, they should deploy qualified human resources (HR) professionals into forefront of implementation. HR professionals are key actors as they are the one who deal with recruitment, induction, people management and defining organisational policies and compliance issues, and positioning and overseeing the employees of the organisation.

The implementation of safeguarding policies requires rigorous training and standard evaluation of staff members including those from the HR, partner organisations, collaborators, stakeholders, interns, volunteers, and consultants. Standardised as well as role-specific training modules can be used. It is essential to ensure that training materials are appropriate and easy to understand for the target audience. These materials can be suitable combination of texts, images, videos, flow-charts, diagrams etc. Case-studies are usually useful in such trainings and they keep the audience engaged.

There are a number of training methods to provide effective training to learners. Such methods include role playing, an active learning system in which learners act out situations under the guidance of a trainer. Management game technique is another training method which is useful for all types of trainees including active, practical and reflective workforce. Management game technique helps instructors to find creative ways to solve problems in the workplace, or to implement innovative ideas.

There is a perception that safeguarding is an in-house matter. It may be asserted that safeguarding is not an internal or in-house issue. For example, there are clearly situations where the beneficiaries also need training or at least are well-informed and aware of their rights and entitlements and personal boundaries for mutual respect.

When an organisation deals with a large number of persons especially with vulnerabilities, there are higher chances of lapses of regulations, exploitation and abuse. The safeguarding policies can be published by using mass media such as community radio, internet, television, and newspaper or any other social media or even through educational stage performance. The most important aspect of communication on safeguarding is the clarity of the message and the attraction of the content.

It is an area where development communication practitioners can contribute by producing content accessible and comprehensible by a population which may or may not be aware of the safeguarding policies and practices. It is also necessary to ensure the safeguarding publicity content caters to special group such as children or persons with disabilities.

Why a Greater Partnership and Collaboration Needed to Manage Challenges of the Concern

Collaboration and cooperation among government, development agencies and communities are essential to help decrease the risk of violence and prevent maltreatment occurrences. While the charitable and donor organisations are maintaining regulatory oversight, governments of developing countries should emphasise a neutral multi-agency response team to protect the vulnerable groups from abuse and exploitation, rapidly responding to their issues and priorities. Furthermore, public sector organisations can play a significant role in this regard by providing the appropriate level of training and support to the communities and to prevent vulnerable groups experiencing abuse.

Moreover, governments of developing countries should extend a distinct agenda of safeguarding training that is planned and implemented every year. This will help those professionals involved in the delivery of training and ensure that training is scheduled for in an efficient way. Additionally, to oversee and coordinate safeguarding training delivery, multi-agencies should consider creating a committed resource to supervise this activity.

Way Forward

This article has discussed the concept of safeguarding, discussed several cases, implementation challenges and highlights the need for adopting a communication approach. It underscores that safeguarding of vulnerable individual should be a social priority and that it requires a co-ordinated and multi-stakeholder response. The paper emphasises on the urgency of adopting and implementing policies for safeguarding in the social sector as it deals directly with the vulnerable individuals. There should be a zero-tolerance policy towards misconduct and maltreatment and there should be a functioning system to investigate abuses and exploitations and to ensure redress for the victims. Implementation of safeguarding lessons and policies are still in early stages and is still evolving. It is a long and challenging journey for the development sector. Safeguarding involves significant areas of action, monitoring techniques, changes of culture and progress in human behaviour and attitude. There are three key way forward:

Firstly, to ensure support for victims, survivors and whistle-blowers. Every organisation must ensure accountability and transparency especially if their work caters to vulnerable individuals. The responsible team must clarify the meaning of safeguarding, abuse and exploitation to the beneficiaries and vulnerable groups to prevent any occurrence and strengthen the reporting process. The authority should create and nurture an organisational culture that encourages the reporting of, and dealing with, exploitative situations or events. (Olusesea and Hingley, 2019) The authority could create small working groups to focus on safeguarding training. Moreover, mandatory training to build staff members' and relevant persons' confidence and ensure that everyone knows their responsibilities on abuse and exploitation. Engagement, training and support of a safeguarding focal point is necessary to co-ordinate and implement the policy and handle reports of abuse initially. In addition, organisations should establish and ensure that systems for reporting sexual exploitation and abuse are easy to get to the safeguarding focal point, particularly for beneficiaries of the aid programmes.

Safeguarding focal point personnel are responsible for receiving complaints, and understand how to undertake their duties as well.

Secondly, community awareness is necessary to make sure that beneficiaries are conscious of their rights and their entitlements regarding safeguarding. Cultural transformation through efficient leadership, organisational accountability and better human resource processes play a significant role to prevent any offence and crime. Organisations must adopt minimum standards to improve the safeguard policy across the employment cycle, and ensure collaborators and partners meet those values as well.

Thirdly, both internal and external auditing is necessary for any organisation to maintain the safeguarding standards. Proper auditing on safeguards is a valuable tool for managing risk appropriately and an organisation can thereby demonstrate all the financial exchanges, safeguard compliance agenda and ethical issues addressed by that organisation.

Finally, recruitment is a vital part to prevent people who are not suitable for working with vulnerable persons. Employers should emphasise the safeguard issue on job posting, ask specific questions regarding safeguarding issues during interviews, conduct pre-employment checks of candidates, and utilise appropriate induction techniques. Prior to hiring an individual as a development professional, it is necessary to verify pre-employment screening such as appropriate background and criminal reference checks, and then use of employment references - one should be from the person responsible for human resource management from a recent employer.

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COMMUNITY RADIO AND PEOPLE'S SAFETY FROM CYCLONE IN BANGLADESH

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Abstract

This study has assessed the capacity of four community radio stations, located along the coastal areas of Bangladesh in regards to campaign strategies of cyclonic disasters. Examining the programme contents, effects of messaging, and drawbacks of their broadcast strategy this study reveals that although radio listenership has been dropped dramatically among commoners, poor people living in isolated coastal areas and nearby islands have trust to community radio campaign in preparedness and evacuation activities to avert deaths and property losses from cyclone and tidal bore. This evidence notes that campaign by community radio has potential in averting immediate danger from cyclone and tidal bore but the capacity of community radio stations are yet to demonstrate disaster friendly readiness due to want of adequate training for broadcasters. It then recommends that a communications plan for disaster campaigns combined with maintaining a network amongst community radio stations before, and during the cyclonic hit would significantly contribute to community safety, a decrease in property damage, and overall morale in the shadow of cyclones.

Keywords: community radio, cyclone, disaster campaign, Bangladesh

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Introduction

The densely populated disaster-prone, South Asian country of Bangladesh has always considered early warnings and alerts to be important tools for mobilising resources to manage cyclone emergencies. Raj et al., (2010) for instance, argue that broadcasting information about available emergency aid resources, especially through warning bulletins, help people protect their lives and property from cyclones. The most devastating cyclone *Gorky* hit Bangladesh coast in April 1991, where material damage was about USD 2.4 billion and human casualties numbered around 138,000 (Rahman,1999). Earlier, a similar catastrophe claimed half a million lives in 1970 (Begum, 1993). Although two deadly cyclones similar in size to *Gorky* hit the south-west coast of Bangladesh (super-cyclone *Aila* in 2009 and *Sidr* in 2007) resulting in casualties of 190 and 3,406 lives respectively, owing the lower casualty rate to the early issuing of warnings and the evacuation of around a half million people to safe cyclone shelters.

Evaluating the *Sidr* experience, Rahman (2011:52; quoted in Akhter and Ullah, 2014:4-5) claimed "further lives could have been saved had it not been for the failure to take adequate motivational calls by the warning agency in terms of sheltering until it was too late." The Bangladesh Disaster Management Bureau (2008) also reported that, in spite of repeated dissemination of warning messages, people opted to stay at home in an attempt to save their belongings. The lesson learned from cyclone *Sidr* regarding their warning is that the information about the severity of the cyclone was not properly understood by everyone. This official statement indicates that although Bangladesh has success stories in terms of cyclone preparedness, community response was not always forthcoming to take shelter after the issuance of warnings during these two cyclones.

Similarly, cyclone *Mohasen* hit the Bangladesh coast in 2013 killing 12 people only. Bangladesh NGOs Network for Radio Communication (BNNRC) (2013) reports that during cyclone *Mahasen*, six community radio stations in the coastal region broadcasted 514 hours of programming for five days continuously and states that the local community would be able to know all the details related to the cyclone and how to take precautionary measures. The report claims this approach saved lives and property, and again proved the essential role of community radio at a grassroots level. Although Bangladesh faced cyclones *Roanu* in 2016, *Mora* in 2017 and *Titily* in 2018 with limited casualties, international bodies such as the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent, UNDP and UNISDR claimed that around seven and a half million coastal people are so vulnerable that they have few defences when facing an imminent cyclone that regularly hit along 710 km coastal areas. In such a situation, media have the power to motivate people to take shelter in cyclone centres[1] built along the coastal region after issuing warnings. Studies and surveys by Raj et al., (2010) and Ullah (2003) reveal that cyclone warning transmissions through radio and television play a significant role in limiting the number of deaths as affected populations adequately prepare after listening to regular and special weather bulletins. After observing Cyclone *Mora,* experts (e.g., Khan, 2017; Morshed, 2017) state that community radio as local media can be a catalyst in minimising the language gap between broadcast and the wider community in the context of cyclonic preparedness.

Evaluating community radio effects in Bangladesh Hasnat and Steyn (2018:74) claim, 'the benefits are self-evident of educating communities to better prepare for severe weather conditions, to better use weather realities … [and] to protect themselves and their belongings from natural disaster.' Using the VOICE standard as a framework to examine capacity, this study looks at the programme content relating to the disaster campaign of four community radios located in the coastal region and evaluate the impact of those programmes in preparedness and evacuation related measures. In addition, observation of the impact of programmes among poor people and in-depth interviews from station managers, volunteers and users are used as tools for this study. This study argues that community radio has a positive role in motivating 20 million vulnerable people to take refuge in cyclone shelters and saving lives from deadly cyclones who are living isolated coastal villages.

Cyclones in Bangladesh: A Brief History

Bangladesh is ranked as one of the world's most disaster-prone countries, with 97.1 per cent of its total area and 97.7 per cent of the total population at risk of multiple natural disasters, including cyclones. The World Risk Report 2018 ranks Bangladesh as 9th amongst 172 countries and Coastal Risk Index (2014) put its coast at 7th. The START Network and ACAPS (2018) prepared the Bangladesh tropical storm/cyclone *Disaster Summary Sheet* (8 April, 2018) which states that Bangladesh was hit by 154 cyclones, including 53 severe cyclonic storms, 43 cyclonic storms, and 68 tropical depressions between 1877 and 2017. Between 1970 and 2018, the country experienced significant devastation due to 38 severe cyclones. In addition, storm surges, an unusual rise in sea water associated with a tropical cyclone originating in the Bay of Bengal, have also caused major devastation in the coastal region (Alam 2018:28-29; UNDP, 2014; Wikipedia, 2019).

To address disasters from community level, the UN Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015–2030) highlights the importance of local level institutions as a means for communities to self-organize and build resilience in the face of natural disasters (UNISDR, 2015). Following this framework, Bangladesh has made significant changes to national disaster management policies, including the decentralisation of disaster management to local-level institutions. These restructuring efforts are evident in the National Plan for Disaster Management (2016–2020), Standing Orders on Disaster (SOD) (MoDMR, 2017) and Comprehensive Disaster Management Programme. In fact, over time fewer people have died as a result of cyclones as Bangladesh has focused on resilience-building, preparedness and early warning measures. For instance in 1991 the cyclone *Gorky* killed 138,000 people in Cox's Bazar and Chittagong, but less than 25 people have been killed in each cyclone since 2015 (Choudhury, Uddin & Haque, 2019).

It seems there have been significant improvements in cyclone preparedness, resulting in reduced mortality rates, but Alam (2018) state that areas in coastal Bangladesh are still at risk and people remain vulnerable. Despite good progress in cyclone preparedness, exemplified by the existing comprehensive disaster management policies of the Government of Bangladesh, Alam and Collins (2010) study claims

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1 As of 2018, the Disaster Summary Sheet (April 08, 2018) estimates 3,763 cyclone shelters (each reportedly capable of sheltering up to 5,000 people) are located along Bangladesh coastal and offshore islands.

localised vulnerability factors in cyclones are only partly considered. Studies (e.g., Alam & Collins, 2012; Raj et al., 2010; Paul et al., 2010) claim that community involvement (for instance Cyclone Preparedness Programme -CPP volunteers) in evacuation remains a major focus and self-reliance is considered the key to preparedness, response and recovery. According to Raj et al., (2010) people consult several sources for cyclone announcements with volunteers getting top priority (82.2%), neighbours second (73.8%) and radio coming in at a close third (72%). Meanwhile, some 86.3% of those studied agreed that radio announcements could decrease casualties and loss of property. The study also found 65.3% respondents understood the warning messages, 22.3% said that they could understand partially and just 9.3% answered that they failed to understand the messages due to lack of familiarity with the technical language used, along with general confusion regarding the message and carelessness.

Though around 43 thousand CPP volunteers from the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society played a significant role in the evacuation of vulnerable people prior to the cyclone, Alam, (2018), Choudhury, Uddin and Haque (2019) observe that the early warning and evacuation system is vital in saving lives in Bangladesh from cyclones. However, studies (e.g., Dasgupta et al., 2012; Raj et al., 2010) show that greater precision in forecasting is still needed, particularly regarding cyclone landfall locations and the location of specific inundation depths; broadcasting of warnings in local dialects; and raising awareness to promote timely and appropriate evacuation. Paul, et al., (2010:89) consider the key variables influencing a positive evacuation decision to include (i) a hazard warning system; (ii) the credibility of warning message; (iii) perceived personal risks; and, (iv) the logistics of evacuation.

The aim of the Disaster Management Bureau (BDMB) of Bangladeshi Government is to achieve a paradigm shift in disaster management: from conventional response and relief to a more comprehensive risk reduction culture. In doing so, it underscores capacity building of affected people to create resilience to disasters. This reflects the adoption of the UN's 'Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015' in national policies, emphasising the need to reduce vulnerability and promote resilience (Choudhury, Uddin & Haque, 2019). To ensure the effective participation of local communities in compliance with the Hyogo Action Framework, the Government of Bangladesh formulated the Standing Order of Disaster in January 1997 (last updated in 2010). This is primarily a guideline providing detailed descriptions of the roles and responsibilities of all organisations (from national Ministries to the local level) involved in disaster management. Although these initiatives contribute significantly to minimising losses, researchers (e.g., Alam, 2018; Paul et al., 2010) without an in-depth understanding of the underlying vulnerabilities to natural disasters, the basis of local people's perceptions and behaviour, and the goals that they set, disaster reduction strategies are considered unlikely to succeed. The significance of this study therefore lies in how community radio, as grassroots media, contributes to minimising deaths of people and losses of property from cyclone and tidal bores in Bangladesh through broadcast warning and advice on sheltering.

Media, Disaster Campaigns and Community Radio

Media announcements play a significant role in disaster management procedures in regards to the mobilisation of resources in emergency situations. For instance, Nahak's (2018:259) study in Odisha, India reveals that 91% of respondents feel media announcements help them prepare to move to safer locations during the cyclone *Titily* that hit the Odisha coast in October 2018. SEEDS Asia (2009) claims that media can provide timely and factual information, a situational analysis, secondary risk, information about missing people, rescue, relief goods etc; advice about evacuation, tips to get water, address the needs of survivors, medical aid and relief goods; as well as encourage survivors, provide entertainment etc.

Raj et al., (2010) study similarly observes that the dissemination of warning messages relayed via broadcast media have had positive outcomes in terms of reducing casualties in emergency situations. This study however, indicates that attitudes towards mediated warnings held by Bangladeshi citizens differ depending upon their access to media, type of dwelling and differing levels of literacy and suggest, within a Bangladeshi context, that cyclone warning messages must be culturally and linguistically mindful. Lei Guo (2017:127) also asserts that while people are losing faith in mainstream media and becoming increasingly suspicious of online content, they consider community radio as the most trustworthy. The use of community radio in cyclone warning dissemination is a good practice in coastal India (Sanjivani, 2012), rural Indonesia (Birowo, 2009) and islanders in Japan (Kanayama, 2007).

BNNRC (2017) in this context claims, as the urban-based conventional media have limited scope to address cyclone issue adequately during the severe weather condition, community radio can fill that gap. Hibino and Shaw (2014:131) also argue that 'community radio is the ideal tool because it has deep roots in the community' and that it 'has built bonds among the people, and maintains a community identity.' The presence of the community radio in every phase of a disaster is essential for the exchange and sharing of information and dialogue among residents, as well as the enhancement of the community's capability and of self-government ability. Similarly, Hasnat and Steyn (2018:76) consider community radio as an important medium through which communities have 'a voice' through becoming better informed, educated, and more aware about cyclones.

Despite the scope of contribution, Akhter (2018) opines that community radio warnings have not received adequate research attention for understanding disaster campaigns. For example, Kaioum (2019) focused on the role of community radio during the post disaster recovery phase only. Similarly, evaluating the role of Radio Naf in cyclone campaigns, Hasnat and Steyn (2018:74) claim that community radio stations in disaster-prone coastal areas play a significant role for people. These studies, however Akhter (2018) claims, did not focus specifically on evacuation and preparedness and community radio's role, except in observation without any apparent evidences. This study therefore focuses on the effectiveness of community radio announcements and preparedness, mainly evacuation and seeking shelter, immediately before and during the cyclone.

Research Questions and Study Framework

The Government of Bangladesh has placed the media at the centre of their disaster preparation plans to avert causalities from cyclone and tidal bore. A number of chartered responsibilities under the Standing Order for Broadcast Media 1985 replaced by the Standing Orders on Disaster in 1997 (updated in 2010) are vested in the broadcast media immediately before, during, and after disaster situations. Community radio includes radio and television operators who are expected to comply with these responsibilities during various phases of cyclone disaster management. This order specifies that all special weather bulletins, issued by the Storm Warning Centre and broadcast by radio and television channels, should contain information about the location of the cyclone, the estimated central pressure, direction and speed of movement, maximum sustained wind speed, radius of maximum sustained winds, areas likely to be affected, approximate time of commencement of gale force winds (speed of more than 32 mph or 52 kph), maximum wind speed, expected storm surge height and areas most likely to be impacted (MoDMR, 2017).

Empirical studies (e.g., Dasgupta et al., 2014; Raj et al., 2010; Paul et al., 2010; Stevenson, 2013) show that besides the warning announcement, the motivational warning call is the most important factor in the context of evacuation and sheltering. Following the example from Japan, Hibino and Shaw (2014:122) identified four goals of community radio station in disaster management. These four are: (1) the circulation of emergency information (disaster warnings, evacuation advisories, etc.) to secure the safety of disaster victims, (2) providing relief and support related information of local authorities and NGOs, (3) providing information related to recovery plans in the disaster-hit area and promoting the exchange of residents' opinions, and (4) contribute to maintaining the mental and physical health of disaster victims.

Typically, the efficiency of warnings is measured in terms of lives saved and reduction in losses, which are directly related to the execution of an anticipated response by people and institutions once a warning is issued. The Bangladesh Disaster Management Bureau considers the key purposes of creating awareness through radio and television to be: preparing people mentally for the challenges of disaster; reducing panic amongst citizens; and alleviating trauma after a cyclone. Studies by Talukder et al., (1992), Chowdhury et al., (1999) and Ullah (2003) on perception and disaster-related behaviour in Bangladesh reveal however, that lack of self-evacuation and few nearby shelters are the major causes of death. Considering this context the first research question is:

RQ-1: What can community radio do to increase residents' knowledge of disasters immediate before and during a cyclone?

Raj et al., (2010) study results indicate the need for a greater use of media in the task of preparing cyclone warning programmes in order to better connect citizens with disaster prevention infrastructure (e.g.,

the maintenance and use of cyclone shelters during an impending disaster). For them, media still has great potential for the promotion of awareness through transmitting emergency evacuation announcements in a reassuring and calm manner and dispelling myths and rumours through providing timely and accurate updates of an impending cyclone. This study argues that awareness is still the most important variable in reducing the collateral damage associated with cyclone disasters, but also views the broadcast media as retaining an important role in catalysing this awareness and in motivating the community to realise their vulnerability in the face of these extreme climate conditions. This study therefore considers:

> *RQ-2: How do the selected Bangladeshi community radio stations address preparedness and evacuation of the public in cyclone disasters?*

Successful public awareness programmes aimed at changing the mindset and developing the capacities and skills of people will, it is hoped, reduce substantially the number of lives and property lost. Claiming *Bangladesh's early cyclone warning and evacuation system is vital to save lives* Dasgupta et al., (2014:106) admit that the overall quality of cyclone and storm-surge forecasting has improved in recent years; however, the general consensus is that further improvements are needed. These include the need for greater precision in forecasting, especially with regard to cyclone landfall location and location-specific inundation depth; broadcasting of warnings in local dialects; and raising awareness to promote timely and appropriate evacuation. This study intends to assess the capabilities, strategies and effectiveness of community radios in enhancing peoples' engagement in disaster preparedness, the cyclone in particular through asking the question:

> *RQ-3: What strategies do the community radio stations apply in cyclone campaigns aiming to encourage evacuation and seeking shelter?*

Findings arise from scrutinising a weeklong programme content, texts, characteristics of those programmes, capacity of station managers and volunteers in four community radio stations namely, Lokobetar, Radio Krishi, Radio Sagordwip and Radio Naf, situated along the coastline. Besides analysing the programme content and texts, a total of eight in-depth interviews from station managers, listeners' club members along with non-listeners of the studied stations are included in this study. Positioning the VOICE strategy as a theoretical framework, multiple rounds of emic coding of documented data, interview transcripts and field notes are used to frame the results.

Community Radio Stations Studied

The following provides a brief overview of each of the four community radios stations included in this study.

Lokobetar

Lokobetar is the first Bangladeshi community radio station in Barguna going to air on May 27, 2011 with the aim of building public opinion around development issues. Massline Media Centre, a non-profit media training and research organisation engaged in the development sector established this station in Barguna, a deadly cyclone-prone southern district of the country. According to official claims, *Lokobetar* reaches around three million listeners in Barguna and also its two surrounding districts. The station broadcasts six hours of programming between 3.00-9.00 pm daily and continues broadcast round the clock on special occasions, such as during a natural disaster. Hourly, the programme includes (six) news bulletins, live radio shows *Mogo Barguna* (our Barguna), audience participation in the program (over telephone and via SMS) Hello Barguna, *Dokhina Hawa* (Southern air-wave), *Roshalo Adda* (funny gossip). Six paid staff members run the daily activities with help from 207 volunteers. *Lokobetar* has 75 listener clubs.

Krishi Radio

Krishi Radio (Farm radio-official name is 'Community Rural Radio') started its journey on January 01, 2012, under the supervision of the Agricultural Information Service (AIS) of the Government of Bangladesh with the financial support of the Food and Agricultural Organisation. The station broadcasts eight hours of programming (9.00 to 11.00 am and 3.00 to 9.00 pm) with an average of 25 different types of programming

every day and a 17 km radius broadcast capacity. The major programming content includes agriculture, trade, fisheries, livestock, forests, environment, education, nutrition, folk entertainment, information technology, local news bulletins, women and children issues, rural development, climate change, and natural disasters. Featured programmes include; *Khet Khamar* (Farm land), *Gowal Ghor* (House of Livestock), *Motso Jibon* (Fisher's Life), *Chader Kona* (Hub in the Moon), *Alor Chhoa* (Touches of Light) and *Ekanto Alapon* (Exclusive Discussion).Ten AIS officials and employees along with 60 volunteers are participate in the running of this station. *Krishi Radio* has 25 listeners clubs and has approximately 175,000 listeners.

Radio Naf

Radio Naf which is named after a river that runs through the area and forms the border between Bangladesh and Myanmar, is located at Teknaf, the farthest locality in the extreme south-east corner of Bangladesh under the sea beach district of Cox's Bazar. The community radio station was launched by the Alliance for Cooperation Legal Aid Bangladesh, a local NGO. This station also broadcasts to approximately one and a half million Rohingya refugee camps across Kutupalong, around a 10 km radius. Currently the station broadcasts development and entertainment programmes for 4 hours a day in two sessions (9 am - 11 am and 7 pm - 9 pm). The station is run by eight staff members and 35 volunteers with 29 listeners' clubs. Approximately 800,000 people listened to Radio Naf programmes during cyclone *Mora*. The featured programmes on Radio Naf (roughly translated from Bangla) include Sound from the Sand, Old Melody, Know How to Save Self, and On the Way to Light.

Radio Sagor Dwip

Radio Sagor Dwip has been established to address the social issues such as poverty reduction and social exclusion at the community level, empower marginalised rural groups in disaster management and catalyse democratic processes including ongoing social development efforts in the island Hatiya. Dwip Unnayan Songstha started the Radio Sagor Dwip project (2014-2017) in collaboration with Japan International Cooperation Agency. Community radio Sagor Dwip was set up on the premises of Songstha with an aim to impact disaster risk reduction practice and capacity building of vulnerable communities on Hatiya Island.

Established on 12 November 2015, the station broadcasts development and entertainment programmes for seven hours a day. The station is run by four regular staff (all female) members and 12 volunteers. The station has 150 listeners clubs, mostly situated in high risk (within two km from the sea shore) zones of the cyclone. Immediately before initiation of this radio a survey among nine hundred inhabitants reveals that 89% of respondents did not listen to radio (Changemaker, 2013:9), but intend to listen to cyclone announcements from mass media. Featured programmes on Radio Sagor Dwip include Few Moments with Music; Come, Know and Save Us, Our Health and Safety etc.

Research Findings

Findings reveal that community radios broadcast people-friendly cyclone alert, preparedness messages and evacuation instructions immediately before and during the hit. Discarding the regular broadcast schedule, all radio station studied keep in operation round the clock with the hourly warning updates and broadcast faith sermons (*Humd* and *Naths*- religion issues). Despite these initiatives, due to inadequate logistics and want of the programme production experience, the VOICE standard could not be followed duly. Thus, the broadcast programmes could not draw ample attention among coastal people. Observation and in-depth interviews from the respondents confirm that campaigns by community radio have potential in averting immediate danger from cyclone and tidal bore but the capacity of community radio stations are yet to be disaster friendly due to want of adequate training for broadcasters. These findings arise from four key issues that comprise - (a) community preparedness and evacuation practice, (b) community radio intervention through programme contents and disaster campaign strategies, (c) capacity building on safety measures, and, (d) community radio and safety from cyclone.

Community Preparedness: Evacuation and Safety Measures

It is observed that people in general follow media announcements for primary information (awareness) about impending cyclones. It is also observed that people in high-risk zones (within 1 km from sea shore) have a

greater fear than others and start preparedness activities (for instance, storing drinking water bottles, tying dry food in plastic bag, and charging torch light batteries and mobile telephones) ahead of those living further inland. Moreover, it has been found that vulnerability is greater amongst people in isolated and scattered settlements rather than clustered villages. People living outside the cross dam (a protected earthen dam that averts surge water) are the most vulnerable across the areas studied. People in those areas follow a 'wait and see strategy' to move towards shelters, considering cyclones to be an act of Allah. For instance, Abul Khair (46) a fisherman at Teknaf bazaar, who often navigates Ravali area (a well-known fishing area 50 km away from his sea shore residence), expresses his opinion this way:

> *I know the risk of cyclones (tufan) whenever navigating in the deep sea. But what can I do except depend on Allah who is the controller of my life and death. ... I always ask my family to move to cyclone shelters and leave behind all belongings when the danger signal number reaches seven. Because, this number is really dangerous; but I don't bother about my own life; I am experienced within this kind of calamity.*

In addition to this strategy, vulnerable people living just outside the cross dam, know that they are living in danger areas. To avert any casualties, many of them follow instructions from government and non-government cyclone management authorities. People remember the instructions of disaster volunteers as their safeguard during the previous cyclone. Halima Begum (37) a widow living in Rehania at Hatiya island says:

> *Immediately after hearing the cyclone (ghurnijhor) warning, either from a neighbour or any other sources [she mentions mobile phone calls from her paternal family], I tie up all my valuable belongings (mainly national ID card, mobile phone charger, cash posses in her copper) in a bag and wait for the neighbourhood's action in case I need to move to the cyclone shelters. In most cases, I feel no need to move to shelters since one of my neighbours has brick-built house [the nearby cyclone shelter is around a km away from her house while the neighbour's house is a10 min walk]...[but] only when the Red Crescent volunteer asks to move from home, I start moving immediately.*

These experiences ascertain that preparedness activities and the use of cyclone shelters depend on the availability of warning messages and availability of places for refuge.

Preparedness and Campaign Strategies: Community Radio Intervention

The programme content analysis reveals that all the studied community radio stations focused on cyclone preparedness and evacuation related programmes in their daily schedules. Lokobeter for instance, includes weather bulletins in news and broadcasts special programmes (30 min duration) on cyclones such as (roughly translated) – Tales Between Grandma and Grands (*Nani Natir Kischa*) Saturdays 4.45-5.30 pm and Talk of the Shore (*Upokuler kotha*) Sundays 7.45-8.30 pm. In addition, immediately after receiving a cyclone warning from SWC, the station continues broadcasting special weather bulletins in half hourly intervals, keeping other regular programmes on schedule. When the SWC issues warning signal number four and higher, the station discards scheduled programmes and starts providing evacuation instructions along with hazard risk perceptions, pre-cyclone decisions (whether to go to cyclone shelters), intensity of wind speeds, and the probability of dangerous cyclone events. The station also starts religious programming (mainly *hamds* and *nath*) along with the preparedness precautions.

Radio Sagor Dwip focuses its activities mainly on cyclone and river erosion year round. The station broadcasts feature programmes (15 minutes duration) every Saturday and Wednesday at 11.30 am. The same episode repeats on Sunday at 2.35 pm. The programme 'Come, learn and stay safe' (*Esho Jani O Bachi*) includes the experiences of cyclone victims, their strategies to cope, ways of taking shelter and highlighting community radio's role in preparedness. This station broadcasts weather bulletins in the evening due to listener demand. Papiya Sultana, the station manager says, 'most Hatiya people are fisher folk went early morning for fishing into the bay, they return home [shore] before sunset; we broadcast weather bulletins in the evening instead of morning following their lifestyle.' The station constantly collects cyclone related information during danger periods from volunteers who are scattered across the island by using mobile phones and broadcast live. This station also halts all regular programmes after receiving a danger signal

number four from SWC and starts broadcasting the evacuation techniques and instructions for safety measures including religious programmes keeping people's morale high in facing an impending cyclone.

Kirshi Radio however, focuses different aspects on agriculture including the safety of seed and seedlings, planting, soil erosion, safety on insecticides and fertiliser. The station broadcasts special programme on cyclones – We and Disaster (*Durjoge Amra*), Fisher's Life (*Motso Jibon*). The station follows the SWC instructions broadcasting the special weather bulletins during a cyclonic period. Dr. Md. Zahangir Alam, the national coordinator of the station recalls the station's contribution to cyclone preparedness 'remarkable'. He states, 'Krishi Radio FM 98.8 [at the time of cyclone *Mohasen*] broadcast 92 consecutive hours' special programmes for those victimised, to seek shelter and especially to save their agriculture.'

Radio Naf broadcasts the 30 minutes programme 'Learn and live' (*Jene Nijeke Roksha Kori)* on Tuesdays at 4.30 pm, repeating on Wednesday at the same time, Talk-show on disaster (30 minutes duration), mainly on landslides and cyclones. Saturday programme focus on landslides (30 minutes duration) at the same time with the same title and repeats on Monday at the same time. According to Harun-ur-Rashid, the station manager, "our station broadcasts regular weather bulletins both in the morning and the evening ... during the cyclonic period, we take special care in broadcasting news and bulletins. Along with our coast, we pay special attention to the inhabitants of the island Saint Martin and the Rohingya refugees as well through local dialect." He further says, 'As our upazila (sub-district) is situated in the farthest south-east of the country, people don't have television signals, so they depend on radio. Radio Naf, fills the gap for information hungry locals'.

The programme format and language and textual analyses reveal that news bulletins are being broadcast in polished Bangla, following the state-run radio - Bangladesh Betar and commercial radio station's format. Lokobetar, however, broadcasts news bulletins in local dialects every Friday. Explaining why the news in local language is not broadcast regularly in community, Lokobetar station manager, Munir Hossain Kamal states that it is truly difficult writing news in local dialects, his wife translates news into the local dialect voluntarily for the station, which is then broadcasts once a week. Similarly, all cyclone related features broadcast in the local language (for instance, Naf use Chittagonian and Burmese language, Sagor Dwip uses Noakhalian and Lokobetar uses Barisal language). Krishi radio, in being a state-sponsored station, uses the formal language programming except in special cases. All programmes relating to cyclones are a blend of instructions, popular songs, folk tales, and drama. As such, the news and programme format is just a replica or clone of conventional radio. Radio Naf station manager Harun-ur-Rashid explains the reasons by saying, "we follow conventional radio weather bulletin structure and training experience from BNNRC in preparing the weather bulletins. The community radio policy [Clause 8.10] also instructs us to broadcast programme in polished Bangla blending with local culture and tradition".

Community Radio and Capacity Building

The field observation shows that BNNRC provides a series of capacity building workshops to operators and volunteers of the studied community radio stations. Official data shows that content development workshops on cyclones and other issues were held where the focus was on community engagement and participatory formats. It has been found that around 300 volunteers (mostly college youths) are engaged with the community radio stations in the study. Though there is no data available at what level their engagement with these stations is, it is assumed that many of them work voluntarily and their engagement is not particularly notable. Most left locality after having initial training, realising that their service is unpaid. Similarly, audiences comprise students, senior citizens, farmers, small traders, day labourers, rickshaw puller, women, fishermen, children, and NGO activists. However, when the local areas were studied in-depth, it has been found that except for the volunteers and member of listeners' club, locals express curiosity and surprise about the existence of community radio in their area. It is, however, notable that those living in townships (Upazila headquarter) watch television, but people living further away and without electricity use radio as a life-saving instrument during cyclones and in other instances. Madhobi Bala Sheel (45) a Sagor Dwip listeners' club member and a resident in Purba Laxmidiya village at the island Hatiya says:

> Once our predecessors (murubbi) depended on fate; people become conscious now and try to follow the radio's instructions. Here, in our Laxmidiya, there is no electricity yet; I follow instructions from Radio Sagor Dwip during cyclone (ghurnijhor) season. Even my neighbours

who don't have a radio in their houses follow me to know about the condition of the bay (sagor). We are around three hundred families in this village depending on radio announcements and leave after instructions to evacuate from our homes.

A dozen people mainly farmers, makeshift vendors, boatmen, fishermen, tea stall owners, votvoti (locally made vehicle) drivers and students from *Lotabaria* and *Kakchira* villages, some 15-20 km and *Dhalbhanga,* a village of eight km away from district town Barguna including those in townships stated they are aware of Lokobetar and often listen to programmes on this station. However, young people are more enthusiastic about Lokobetar programmes, while the elderly and women know little about the station. Nizam Mridha (38), a day labourer at *Dhalbhanga,* says, 'I need mobile head phones to listen Lokobetar. It is boring and I do not listen to it in general; … I follow its instructions during cyclone. The programme broadcasted boosted my morale during such a traumatising situation.' Similarly, Shahan Ara (32), a housewife from *Urashitola* village, 15 km away from *Krishi Radio* station says:

I listen to the [Krishi Radio] programme always. Instructions relating to cyclone disasters are amazing. May Allah live long the people of this station, because through these instructions, I [as a woman] know now what needs to be done to prepare during a cyclone and in other cases like standing against dowry, domestic violence etc.

Listeners' clubs put radio transistors at village makeshift shops and keep transistors on during the cyclone period for better reach among the most vulnerable. When this researcher travelled a good number of radios had a loudspeaker in Nalchira *Haat* [weekly market place] at Hatiya and Kachuptra bazaar (market) of Amtoli (Krishi Radio coverage area) but those were not used and maintained properly. 'The maintenance training for listeners' club member and special bulleting preparation training for volunteers including us [station manager] are necessary', says Sagor Dwip station manager Papiya Sultana.

Community Radio and Safety from Cyclone

The importance of community radio announcements for cyclone preparedness is acknowledged by people, volunteers, listeners' club members, and station managers. It is observed that dependency on community radio for cyclone campaigns is highest in coastline areas where electricity is not available. In addition, women are generally more concerned about the safety of the family members and belongings. Madhobi Bala Sheel, Sagor Dwip listeners' club member from Purba Laxmidiya village at Hatiya acknowledging the importance of radio announcement, says:

My husband asks me to keep this radio safely; [and] repeatedly advises me not to hand it over to anybody. … If the Dwip Unnayan take it [the radio set] back, I must buy one to keep myself up to date regarding cyclone preparatory activities.

Besides the lack of electricity, people living in isolated locations consider community radio to be one of the best options for cyclone warning messages. Halima Akther (21), living at Dhokkinpara on the far end of Teknaf says:

Radio is a valuable source of modern [scientific] information for cyclone preparedness activities. I appreciate radio announcements very much. Every moment, I keep my radio [Naf] on to listen for instructions for tides and during cyclones; radio is like my friend as it provides information in Bengali language [local dialect].

Typically, it is believed that the credibility of a cyclone warning messages depend on the warning messages' content, characteristics, sources, compatibility of the message with the receiver's existing beliefs, and past experience with similar warnings. In every case, it has been noticed that cyclone bulletins through community radio bears strong credibility and people living in the coastal areas studied consider community radio to be a good source for immediate information on the ground. The field data shows previous experience and has a strong influence in evacuation, and bulletins broadcast in the local dialect become more trustworthy amongst people. Papiya Sultana, Sagor Dwip station manager asserts;

People trust our radio, they can even understand the formal Bengali language; people never complain about the language though we know that local dialect is more effective. We prepare programme content as needed by all of our people. We have survey reports on the characteristics of our listeners. More so, all volunteers and I myself were born and brought up in Hatiya, which is always a victim of cyclone [bonna]. Our commitment towards our people is the asset.

Although SOD specifies that all special weather bulletins should contain the location of the cyclone, estimated central pressure, direction and speed of movement, maximum sustained wind speed, radius of maximum sustained winds, areas likely to be affected, approximate time of commencement of gale force winds (speed of more than 32 mph or 52 kph), maximum wind speed, expected storm surge height and areas most likely to be impacted. In reality, the special weather bulletins of community radio often fail to provide all of this information. Mr. Shameem Khan, executive producer of Krishi Radio, says:

I have no option except to follow the SWC instruction. If I bring any change to those [instructions], it might confuse people. I must follow the same bulletin that our national radio stations [to some extent television stations] prepare. ... It would be good if we can have a report of people's needs from us [in regards to cyclone bulletin].

Discussion and Conclusion

The VOICE standard guidelines are practical and are based on concrete suggestions for broadcasters (BRCS & IFRC, 2017). In VOICE standard V-stands for Value - the programme values listeners from small and marginalised communities, both male and female, and presents disaster-affected people with special honour (as they are fighting for their survival); O for Opportunity - the programme provides disaster-affected people the opportunity to speak and be heard on all matters; I for Information - the programme presents timely, specific, and practical information in a simple and clear manner; C for Consistent and Convenient - the programme maintains a sequence in its presentation and is aired at a time when both male and female listeners can take part; and E for Entertaining - the programme is memorable and is created to attract audience attention from beginning to end. The Bangladesh Government and IFRC/BDRCS recommends following these guidelines in cyclone preparedness related programme planning and broadcast bulletins. Similarly, the National Disaster Management Policy 2015 stressed on outcome based efforts for disaster preparedness and mitigation matching with local culture, context and values, which are mostly relevant to the role of community radio in Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR).

Earlier, the studied coastal belts community radios (except Sagor Dwip) have played significant role in dissemination of cyclone warnings and full time updates on the movement of *Mohasen* in 2013 (Morshed, 2017). Previous studies (Choudhury, Uddin & Haque, 2019; Paul, et al., 2010: 89-90) also provide significant insights into cyclone victims' inability to participate in evacuation initiatives. Paul, et al., (2010:89-90) classify the inabilities into three categories - (a) factors related to cyclone preparedness and infrastructure, (b) socio- demographic and socio-economic factors, and (c) factors related to hazard perceptions and attitudes. Firstly, among the factors related to cyclone preparedness, a large number of comments were related to the credibility of the warning systems. Some respondents felt that the warning systems were overly complicated; others complained that no warning was issued; while many simply did not believe the warning. In such a situation, it is recommended that community radio stations provide adequate airtime for victims' reception of emergency messages, their participation in emergency communication and the broadcast of warning bulletins in local dialects.

Field data shows that although the studied community radio stations provide space for volunteers from within the community to participate and share their voice, this does not yet include disaster-affected people. Only experts have the opportunity to speak on behalf of victims. Studied stations tried their best to value listeners but due to financial considerations, and travel allowances, station managers cannot always provide listeners space to participate. However, all the feature programmes contain entertaining content. For instance, Lokobetar magazine programme 'Tale of Grands' (*Nani Natir Kischa*) provides preparatory instructions comprising jokes and humour and people recall the name of the programme instantly. *Dhokkina Hawa* and news broadcast in the local dialect are also well accepted amongst listeners. The Radio Sagor Dwip programme Come, learn and keep safe (*Esho Jani O Bachi*), Radio Naf programme 'Learn and live' (*Jene*

Nijeke Roksha Kori) and Krishi Radio programme We and Disaster (*Durjuge Amra*) though very informative, still struggle with popularity due to their monotonous nature. These programmes include both experts and locals in providing scientific opinion regarding the evacuation and preparedness instructions.

Community radio stations need to focus more on participation of those who are more vulnerable in disasters within the broadcast range of the station. Participation, from programme planning to management levels, ensures the level of understanding necessary for all of the community to inform content and delivery of programmes and bulletins to broadcast. In addition, to prepare content and boost the morale of vulnerable people, VOICE standard is one of the ways to enhance access amongst people and increase participation. More so, the wider need for engagement with community radio needs to be addressed by station managers through training with a standard disaster broadcast manual to function as a permanent resource for the station.

Preventing cyclone and other natural disasters is almost impossible. It is possible to minimise the damage to property and loss of lives by learning how to respond to these catastrophes. This study admits that as community-driven, volunteer-run, not-for-profit organisations operated community radio stations in Bangladesh position themselves differently in their process, approach, style, and content in comparison to the state-owned and commercial broadcasters dealing with cyclone disasters. It is possible for community radio stations to challenge the hegemony of the mainstream, both commercial and state-owned media and its programming methods through developing rigorous and appropriate broadcast approaches to cyclones through adequate training and planning. More in-depth research is necessary to unpack those constraints and develop the way out of those constraints. A manual for station managers and volunteers would be a great resource to understand the nature of cyclone-related community radio broadcasting and how to issue programming effectively to better support public safety.

Acknowledgement

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CASE STUDY

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DEVELOPMENT COMMUNICATION AND PROJECT SUSTAINABILITY: EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS OF EJURA SEKYEDUMASE MUNICIPALITY IN GHANA

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Abstract

Communication and development are perceived as closely intertwined phenomena in which one is believed to guarantee the other. This paper argues that, sustainable development initiatives are those that guarantee the participation of those who have some interest in the intended change. The paper further argues that, communication facilitates community participation in development projects. However, development interventions at the community level seem to ignore the important role communication play in sustaining development projects. This paper highlights the importance of communication in sustaining development projects in the Ejura Sekyedumase Municipality in Ghana. The research adopted the exploratory case study approach using four communities and three purposively selected projects. The data for the study were obtained from a survey of institutional and household heads and focus group discussions. The results show that development communication facilitated the participation of communities in development projects and increased their willingness to commit resources such as money, accommodation, information, labour etc. to sustain projects. Also, projects with effective communication had good operations and maintenance culture with better prospects of sustainability than those without effective communication. Therefore, Development Communication facilitates the effective operations and maintenance of development projects which ensures that the intended benefits of the projects are realised over the entire project life. Development communication is also effective in building local capacities through training and sensitisation to initiate, implement and take ownership of local level projects. The study recommends that communication should take center stage in the planning, implementation and monitoring of rural projects for their sustainability.

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Introduction

Communication is necessary for the achievement of development projects. In project management, communication is perceived as the foundation or lifeblood for effective project planning and management (Lester, 2007; Kerzer, 2009; Muller and Turner, 2010; Olsson and Johansson, 2011; Jahannessen, 2012; Milićević, Tomašević and Isaković, 2014). A study by Mintzberg (1989 cited in Sońta-Drączkowska, 2015) revealed that American executives spent 78 percent of their working time on communication. Therefore, communication serves as the backbone and the glue that holds an organisation together (Olsson & Johansson, 2011). Good communication is important for trading information, coordinating activities, creating mutual understanding, socialising and influencing outcomes (Weldearegay, 2012). Communication also promotes the engagement of stakeholders in a project (Tonnquest, 2008) and in the workplace, promotes job satisfaction, performance and retention of project employees. The project management components such as change management, human resources management, project integration management, stakeholder management and several others, rely on communication strategies as well as the project manager's communication skills (Sońta-Drączkowska, 2015). It has been argued that, in order to resolve problems and disputes, it is imperative to maintain open lines of communication between project stakeholders during and after a project (Anthoney, 2002; William, 2010).

Poor communication is a contributory factor to project failure (Project Management Institute, 2013). Effective communication contributes to about 17 per cent increase in finishing projects within budget, on the average, two out of five projects fail to accomplish their original goals and business intent out of which one-half are related to ineffective communications (ibid). Consequently, organisations that practice good communication are five times more likely to perform better than organisations without effective communication.

Three components characterise the most basic level of communication: a transmitter/sender, a transmission channel/medium and a receiver (Zulch, 2014). The message moves from the sender via the medium to the receiver who finally decodes it. The process flows in a cyclical fashion beginning with the sender who has a purpose to communicate (Zulch, 2014). All the components must function to avoid misunderstanding (ibid). A feedback loop is essential to prevent delay and to affirm the receiver's understanding of the message. Communication may occur within the project, in other areas within a project department, in areas outside the department, in areas in the larger organisation, in external operational areas and among external professionals outside the parent organisation (Tushman & Katz, 1980, in Weldearegay, 2012). Communication may occur before, during and after a project. Thus, communication occurs in all the stages of a project; initiating, planning, executing, controlling or monitoring and closing (Weldearegay, 2012). Communication enables project managers to identify and formulate development programmes, to dialogue with stakeholders in order to take into account their needs, attitudes and knowledge (Diouf, 1994). In this way, project beneficiaries become the principal actors in the development process (FAO, 2004).

Development Communication or Communication for Development (ComDev) is the systematic and planned practice of communication through inter-personal mediums and mass media for social change (del Castello & Braun, 2006:3). ComDev is premised on the idea that development is about change, and if development initiatives are to be sustainable they should start with mechanisms that ensure broad participation by all those who have some interest in the intended change (Mefalopulos, 2008). In ComDev, rural people are at the centre of development initiatives and so communication is used in this sense for community mobilisation, participation, building confidence for awareness raising, decision making and action, knowledge sharing, changing lifestyles, behaviour and attitudes (Adedokun, Adeyemo & Olorunsola, 2010). Communication can be used as a tool to facilitate community participation in a development planning initiative (Adedokun et al., 2010; Quebral, 2012).

The idea of project sustainability has been tackled by several authors. For instance, Silvius and Schipper (2010) have described sustainability in project management as getting the right things done right. This paper argues that, though a plethora of research exists on project communication, there is a paucity of literature linking development communication with project sustainability in the rural context in Ghana.

Literature

Development communication has its roots from Nora C. Quebral, an academic and a pioneering figure in the discipline of ComDev in Asia (Servaes, 2012). She has since been accredited as the "Mother of Development Communication" in recognition of the inert contribution to the development of the concept (Garcia, 2007 cited in Vivar-Zurita and Garcia-Garcia, 2012). Quebral (1971) defined development communication as the science and art of human communication purposed to rapidly transform a country or redeem the majority of its people from poverty to a robust state of economic growth that guarantees social equality and the realisation of human potential (Quebral, 1971:69 cited in Servaes, 2012:65). Quebral's classical definition brazenly states the nature of ComDev as well as its essential role in economic growth and poverty reduction in developing countries. The World Bank offers an alternative definition of development communication in the context of project management. Development communication is perceived by The World Bank as the mainstreaming of strategic communication in development projects from the understanding of indigenous realities (Manyozo, 2006). The idea of local or indigenous context captured in the World Bank's definition resonates with Mefalopulos (2003) who argued that development projects that fail to internalise local realities cannot succeed in bringing about change. The Rome Consensus also perceived ComDev as a social process that is anchored on dialogue applying a wide range of methods and tools (Servaes, 2012:66). It further explained that ComDev is all about seeking change at multiple levels inter alia, building trust, listening, sharing skills and knowledge, making policies, learning and debating for sustained and meaningful development (ibid). Consequently, the empowerment of local people is the distinguishing factor that separates ComDev from other forms of communication (Table 1). ComDev is not corporate communication or public relations (Mefalopulos, 2008; Servaes, 2012).

Table 1: Types of Communication in Organisations

Type	Purpose/Definition	Main Functions
Corporate Communication	Communicate the mission and strategies of the organisation, mostly for audiences.	Use media products and outputs to advance the mission and strategies of the organisation; communicate relevant activities to selected audiences.
Internal communication	Facilitate the sharing of information within an organisation/project.	Ensure effective and timely flow of relevant information within the staff and units of the organisation. It evades duplication and boosts synergies.
Advocacy communication	Promote change at the policy level and facilitate issue-based development	Raise awareness of on communication methods and media to influence specific audiences and support the intended change.
Development communication	Support sustainable change in development operations by engaging key stakeholders.	Establish conducive environments for assessing risks and opportunities; disseminate information; influence behaviour and social change

Source: Mefalopulos (2008:5)

Based on the aforementioned definitions this paper considers development communication as a conscious effort of sharing information between stakeholders using appropriate techniques to reach a common understanding, thus support and sustain the goals of socio-economic, political and cultural development.

Development communication has gone through a checkered history and its essence is in its history (Mefalopulos, 2008). According to authors such as Agunga (1997), Anyaegbunam, Mefalopulos, and Moetsabi (2004), Fraser and Restrepo-Estrada (1998), Mefalopulos (2003; 2008) and Servaes (2012) the history of development has revealed disappointments and failures which are attributable to two interrelated factors: lack of participation and failure to use effective communication. Other recommendations to integrate communications into development projects included the treatment of communications as a resource, thereby integrating communications with economics (Jussawalla and Lamberton, 1982; Manyozo, 2006). The foregoing point is emphasised by Servaes (2003; 2008), who argues that communication and participation are major determinants of the success or failure of development projects.

Mowlana (1990) and Servaes (2012) revealed that ComDev programmes started with a focus on nationalism and patriotism. However, in the post-World War II period, a theoretical ideology was formed based on modernisation paradigm. This ideology tried to resolve 'Third World' problems by facilitating the transformation through information transmission in mass media of pre-modern and "backward" attitudes and practices of "traditional" societies into modern, rational and Western ways of life (Mowlana, 1990). The modernisation approach in communication was epitomised by Daniel Lerner's influential passing of traditional society thesis (1958), which posited that mass media exposure allowed people to develop a sense of "empathy"; the ability to envision and accept new ideas beyond one's local conditions and traditions (Deane, 2004).

Communication for Development (ComDev) or development communication originates from modernisation theory; the dominant development thinking in the post-Second World War era (Fraser & Restrepo-Estrada, 1998). The existing assumption at the time was that 'traditional' practices in developing countries should be displaced by the norms of modern societies. Mass media were seen as having the potential to act as key agents of change by spreading modernisation to the remote traditional populations and transforming the structures of life, values and behaviours to mirror modern Western Societies (FAO, 2014).

Antagonists of the modernisation paradigm started to criticise the ideology in the 1960s which led to an alternative theoretical model rooted in political-economy: the dependency theory (Mefalopulos, 2008). The proponents of dependency theory criticised the basic assumptions of the modernisation epoch mainly because it blames the causes of underdevelopment exclusively on the recipients neglecting external, social, historical and economic factors. They also accused the modernisation epoch of being Euro-centric, neglecting other alternative paths to development (Mefalopulos, 2008). Dependency theory was aimed at lobbying for a more balanced flow of information at the international level but could not yield the objectives the proponents envisaged. There were however, little indications that they lobbied for more horizontal forms of communication within countries (UNESCO, 2007).

The dependency theory perceived mass media as a means of communicating the values and practices of the developed nations to the underdeveloped countries. They argued that media helps induce change. As noted by Mefalopulos (2003), dependency theory gained popularity in the 1970s and the 1980s but started to loose relevance gradually. By the late 1970s, it was evident that members of the public were not passive recipients of information, and that media alone could not change people's mindsets and behaviours (FAO, 2014).

At this time, another development perspective began to influence communication thinking and practice (Rogers, 1976; FAO, 2014). This is participatory development. Proponents of participatory development argued that community participation in the design and implementation of development programmes had become essential as communities experienced the reality of development (UNESCO, 2007). Mefalopulos (2008) opined that the participatory approach is more rooted in the cultural realities of development, a reflection of the emerging development paradigm which advocates for the consideration of social dimensions in development.

UNESCO (2007) disclosed that by the late 1980s the notion of participatory development, particularly participatory rural appraisal, in which poor communities are directly engaged in defining their own problems and solutions, had gained root within many development organisations, especially non-governmental organisations (NGOs). FAO (2014) revealed that, a horizontal multi-directional communication method that made use of a mixture of channels and emphasised the importance of dialogue. This new method stressed the need to facilitate trust, mutual understanding as well as to amplify the voice of poor people and to empower them to identify ways of overcoming problems in order to improve their own well-being.

Development communication depends on the synergistic application of three components; social mobilisation, behavioural change communication and advocacy (UNICEF, 1999). Advocacy is communication that targets the existing leadership and the powers to take actions to achieve programme objectives (UNICEF, 2008). "Leadership" includes political, business and social leaders at national and local levels. The advocacy component according to UNICEF (2008) informs and motivates leaders to establish an enabling environment for the programme by taking measures such as changing policies, allocating resources, speaking out on critical

issues and initiating public discussion. Participation is relevant in this context as the voice of the community helps direct advocacy objectives and activities. Mefalopolus (2005) defined advocacy as a means to promote a specific issue or agenda, generally at a national level which is often directed at changing policies or supporting policy-making changes, either addressing policymakers directly or winning the support of public opinion. The first task of advocacy as stressed by UNICEF (1999) is often to raise awareness in general, yet its ultimate objective is to spark action either from decision-makers or their constituents. The aim is to gain commitment and active support for a development objective and prepare society for its acceptance over the long-term.

The primary aim of advocacy, indicated by Servaes (2000), is fostering public policies that support the solution of an issue or problem. It involves organised attempts to influence the political climate, policy and programme decisions, public perceptions of social norms, funding decisions, community support and empowerment towards specific issues. Again, Servaes (2008) viewed advocacy at the policy level, as that which is used to assure the high level of public commitment necessary to undertake action by fostering a knowledgeable and supportive environment for decision making, as well as the allocation of adequate resources to attain the campaign's goals and objectives.

Social mobilisation as defined by UNICEF (2008) is a process of harnessing selected partners to raise demand for or sustain progress towards a development objective. Social mobilisation solicits the participation of institutions, community networks, social and religious groups to use their membership and other resources to strengthen participation in activities at the local level (UNICEF, 2008). Consultation with the community is needed here to ascertain which institutions, social, political and religious groups will have the most influence on the primary participants. The Centre for Development and Population Activities (CEDPA) opined that "Social mobilisation involves planned actions and processes to reach, influence, and involve all relevant segments of society across all sectors from the national to the community level, in order to create an enabling environment and effect positive behaviour and social change" (CEDPA, 2000:9). According to McKee (1992), social mobilisation differs from social marketing because it aims to muster national and local support for a general goal or programme through a more open and uncontrolled process with the idea of using as many channels as possible at an accelerated rate.

Behaviour change communication (BCC) involves face-to-face interaction with individuals or groups to motivate, inform, plan or solve a problem, with the aim of promoting behaviour change (UNICEF, 2008; Sascha et al., 2014). BCC according to the International Labour Organisation (ILO) (2008) is an interactive process for creating messages and approaches using a combination of communication channels in order to facilitate and sustain positive and appropriate behaviours. ILO (2008) further reveals that BCC has evolved from information, education and communication (IEC) programmes to support more tailored-made messages, greater interaction and increased joint ownership with a focus on aspiring and achieving health-enhancing results.

Communication for behaviour change aims to foster positive behaviour; promote and sustain individual, community and societal behaviour change; and maintain appropriate behaviour. Its underlying assumption is that individual attitudes and behaviours can be changed voluntarily through communication and persuasion techniques and the related use of effective messages. BCC shifts the emphasis from making people aware to bringing about new attitudes and practice; it tries to understand people's situations and influences, develops messages that respond to these concerns and uses communication processes and media to persuade people to increase their knowledge and change risky behaviour (UNICEF, 1999).

Study Area

Ejura Sekyedumase is one of the Municipalities in the Ashanti region of Ghana. The Municipality was carved out of the former Sekyere and Offinso districts and was thus created as a result of the implementation of the decentralisation programme on 29 November 1988. The district was established by a Legislative Instrument, PNDC L.I 1400, 1988. The Municipality is located within Longitudes 1°5W and 1°39' W and Latitudes 7°9' N and 7°36'N. It has a large land size of about 1,782.2sq.km. (690.781sq.miles) and is the fifth largest of the 27 districts in Ashanti Region. It constitutes about 7.3% of the region's total land area with about one-third of its

land area lying in the Afram Plains. With the creation of new districts, the Ejura Sekyedumase Municipality, located in the Northern part of the Ashanti Region, now shares borders with Atebubu-Amantin District in the North-West, Mampong Municipality in the East, Sekyere South District in the South and the Offinso Municipality in the West (See Figure 1).
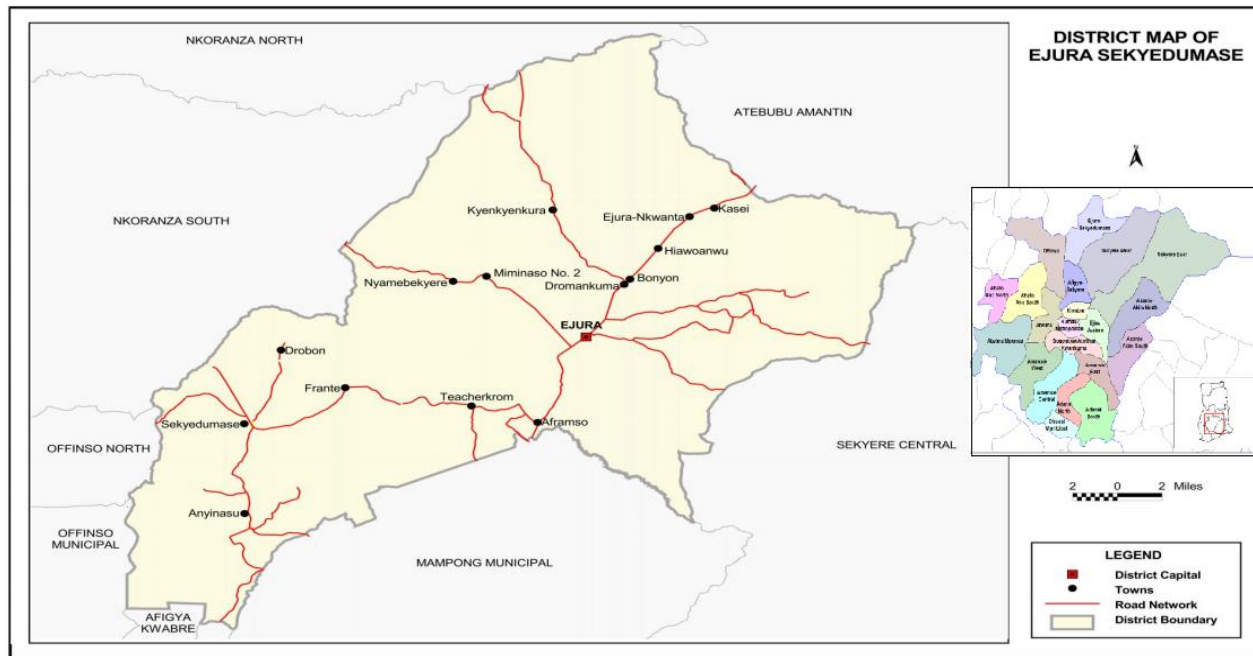
Source: Adapted from Ghana Statistical Service (2013)

Figure 1: Map of Ejura Sekyedumase Municipality

The population of the Municipality is about 101,826 (Ghana Statistical Service, 2013). The Municipality is predominantly rural - 57% of the population live in rural areas. Out of the 130 settlements, only Ejura, Sekyedumase and Anyinasu are considered urban. The Municipality has five sub-districts; Ejura and Sekyedumase as urban councils and Kasei, Bonyon-Dromankuma and Ebuom as area councils.

Traditional Authorities command the respect of people in the communities, particularly in rural areas. They provide land and materials for infrastructural projects, mobilise community members for communal labour and arbitrate disputes. There are three traditional divisions in the Municipality namely, Ejura, Sekyedumase, and Anyinasu, with Ejura being the largest. The relationship between the Traditional Authorities and the Municipal Assembly is cordial.

Ejura Sekyedumase Municipality is one of the districts in the country that has benefited from most projects from both government and development partners. Some of these projects include the construction of boreholes, pipe water system, clinics, schools, rural electrification projects, warehouses and other farming projects. These projects have provided the basis to assess the role of communication in project sustainability. how communication was adopted to achieve sustainability.

Methods

The research follows the exploratory methodological approach. This was chosen because of the novelty of the research issue. An exploratory approach is ideal for situations where the topic of investigation is new or unclear, or the research variables cannot be clearly defined (Cooper and Schindler, 2003). The study adopted a case study approach which seemed more appropriate as it helps to understand complex issues through the analysis of a number of events or conditions and their relationships. As indicated by David and Sutton (2004) and Asamoah

(2010), the case study approach is an explanatory method which makes it easy to answer the 'what', 'why', 'when' and 'how' questions associated with the research. A detailed research design is presented in Figure 2.
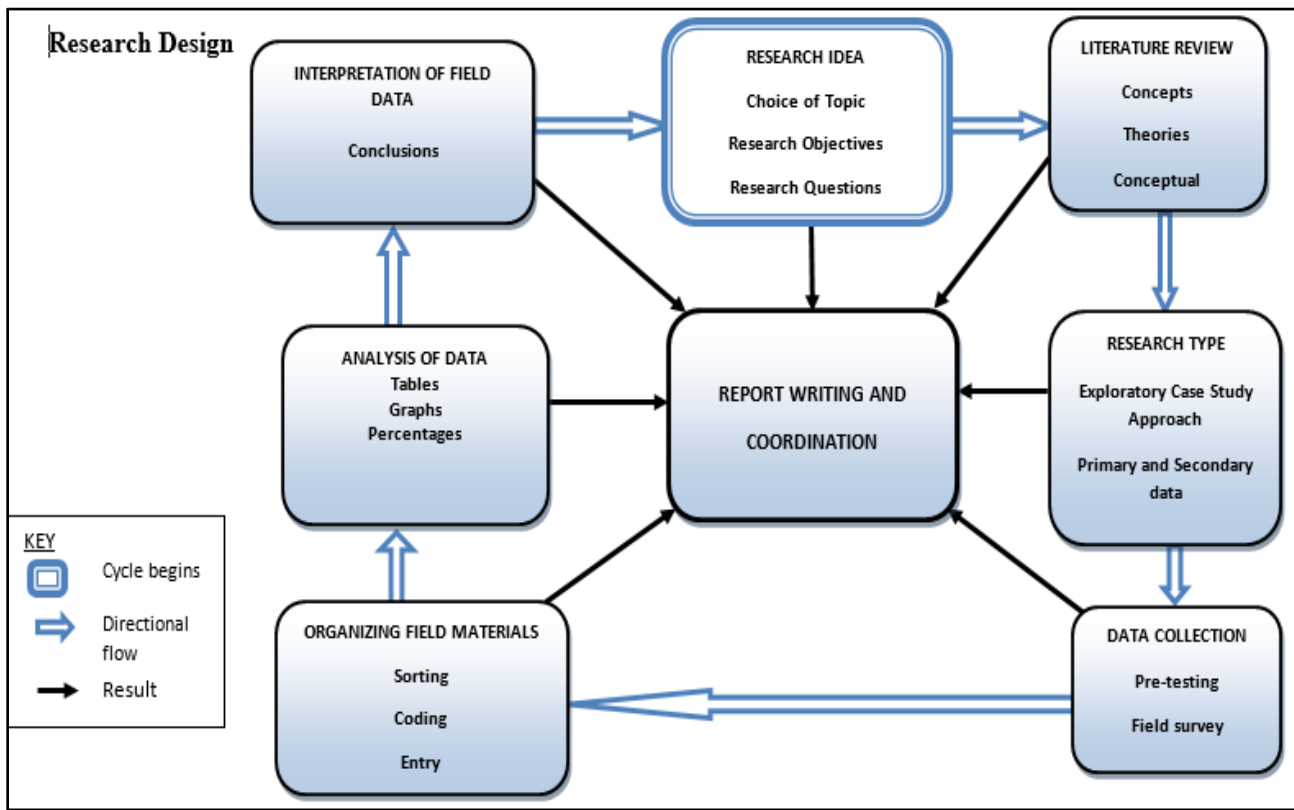
Figure 2: Research Design

A preliminary interview with the selected development implementers revealed that most of the communities have received development interventions in the form of electrification and water supply to help curb developmental problems. Based on this information, the study focused on rural electrification and rural water supply. From the list of nine communities provided by the Municipal Office, four were selected randomly. This was to establish the short and long term sustainability concept reviewed in the literature. For ease of generalisation, multi-stage cluster sampling was used to divide the Municipality into two geographical units, thus, North and South, using the Municipal capital (Ejura) as the reference point. Simple random sampling was used to select two communities, the communities that fall in the category above was selected from both units. The communities selected in the northern sector are Nkwanta and Kyenkyenkura, and those in the southern sector are Aframso and Ebuom. Nkwanta and Ebuom are the communities that had projects especially the electrification for more than 5 years and Kyenkyenkura and Aframso had projects that have been implemented for at least 3 years.

Primary data for the study was gathered through a survey using a structured questionnaire, and Focus Group Discussions. The survey was conducted using an institutional questionnaire which was administered to the heads of the Planning and Coordinating Unit (PCU) of the Municipal Assembly, the District Water and Sanitation Team (DWST), the Department of Community Development, Northern Electricity Department (NED) of the Volta River Authority (VRA) and World Vision, Ghana. These institutions were contacted in lieu of the roles they play in bringing development projects such as potable water and electricity to people in rural communities. Besides these, a total of two hundred and thirty-four (234) (Table 2) household heads were included in the survey. The sample size was prorated to the population of each of the four selected communities (Table 2) which were selected based on the availability of projects particularly water and electricity. The systematic selection of households was done using the mathematical method to select, for instance, every second household in the Aframso Community.

Table 2: Sample Size for Selected Communities

Selected Communities	Sample Size for Population	Total	Systematic Selection of Households
1. Aframso	(252/563) x 234	105	234/105 = 2.2 Approximately after every 2nd household
2. Nkwanta	(165/563) x 234	69	234/69 = 3.5 Approximately after every 4th household
3. Kyenkyenkura	(71/563) x 234	30	234/30= 7.8 Approximately after every 8th household
4. Ebuom	(75/563) x 234	31	234/31 = 7.5 Approximately after every 8th household

Four research assistants were trained to help in the collection of the field data by administering the questionnaire. They were initially taken through the rationale and the main objectives of the study. They were also trained on how to go about the data collection, which areas to visit and how to identify their respondents. One basic criterion used to select the research assistants was their understanding of the local languages spoken in the study area and how they could translate the questions in order to get the right information. The research assistants were monitored to ensure that the work was done accurately.

The questionnaire was pre-tested in two of the study areas, namely Aframso and Nkwanta to check its reliability and validity. As a result, some questions within the questionnaire had to be rephrased in order to make them clearer and other questions had to be totally taken off the questionnaire. It also enabled the researchers to appreciate some of the problems that were most likely to be encountered during the actual data collection.

Focus group discussions were also held in two communities (Kyenkyenkura and Nkwanta) with Water and Sanitation (WATSAN) committees. These were committees which were active and well organised. The focus groups discussions provided a means to verify data collected from households and the institutions.

Data gathered was analysed using both quantitative and qualitative approaches. The data gathered via questionnaires were displayed to enable a diagrammatical and pictorial representation in order to show what those data signify (Coffey and Atkinson, 1996). Quantitative data gathered through the structured questionnaires and interviews were analysed with the aid of SPSS Version 16 and presented in tables of frequencies and cross-tabulations. Also, data obtained from focus group discussions were qualitatively analysed.

Results and Discussion

The study examines the role of communication in sustaining development projects in Ejura Sekyerdumase Municipality in Ghana. Sustainability of development projects was considered by the level of community contribution to the project, operations and maintenance as well as training and capacity building. These factors were derived from available literature on project sustainability and development communication.

Communication, Community Contributions to Projects and Project Sustainability

The contributions of a community towards a project is essential for the sustainability of development projects. Alemneh (2002) has argued that some contributions from users build commitment to the sustainability of a project. The results in Table 3 show that community contributions vary according to the types and stages of a project. For instance, contributions before and during the project implementation are lower for electricity but higher for the water system and borehole projects. Discussants in the focus group discussions indicated that electricity projects unlike the water systems and boreholes did not require initial contributions from beneficiaries. Although the rural electrification projects came as a result of the demands made by some communities, the project concept was developed and implemented with little participation from members.

Generally, the contributions made by members include money, sharing information, providing materials such as gravel and stones, providing moral support, operations and maintenance and communal labour (see Table 3). Discussants in the Focus Group Discussions indicate that communal labour was used in the borehole and water systems where communities mobilised themselves to undertake tasks such as clearing and weeding as

well as cleaning of the surroundings. Monetary contributions were also common in the borehole and water systems where the beneficiary communities were required to honour a counterpart funding of between five percent and twenty-five percentof the total cost of the project.

The contributions made by communities were facilitated by communication between implementers and communities (Table 3). In the case of the water projects, information about the opportunities at the Assembly and the processes for applying for the water systems and the boreholes were made available to communities through their local representatives at the Assembly. Discussants at the focus group discussions indicated that the information about the availability of and processes involved enable them to prepare to meet the counterpart funding requirement and the management arrangements of the water systems and the boreholes.

Table 3: Community Contributions Before and After Projects

Project	Contribution Before (%)		Contribution During (%)		Contribution After (%)		Type of Contribution	Role of Communication
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No		
Electricity	23.4	76.6	35.6	64.4	93.5	6.5	Support (labour, food, accommodation, information), connecting & usage	Sensitising, mobilising & transparency
Small Water System	85.2	14.8	83.0	17.0	70.4	29.6	Financial, information, morale, operations & maintenance	Sensitising, mobilising & transparency
Borehole	78.3	21.7	70.1	29.9	66.7	33.3	Financial, information, materials, morale, operations & maintenance	Sensitising, mobilising & transparency

Source: Authors' Construct

Operations and Maintenance of Projects

The effective operations and maintenance of a project affect its sustainability over time (Sohail, Cavil & Cotton, 2005). It is argued that projects survive when the beneficiaries are able to operate and maintain them. Results from the survey and the focus group discussions revealed that the operations and maintenance of electricity infrastructure were at the behest of the Electricity Company of Ghana (ECG). Communities were, however, expected to monitor and provide feedback to the ECG for sustained services.

On the contrary, the borehole and water system projects were managed and maintained by communities with or without assistance from implementers. Consequently, the implementation of the water projects involved the formation, training and commissioning of Water and Sanitation (WATSAN) committees. The main responsibility of the WATSAN committees is to ensure that the boreholes and water systems function effectively. It was further revealed that, not all communities had WATSAN committees that were functioning. In Ebuom for instance, the implementer World Vision Ghana was said to have repaired most of the boreholes. Under this arrangement, some boreholes were abandoned because of inadequate funds and expertise to repair them.

In all the communities that had functioning WATSAN committees, repairs and maintenance were financed mainly through monetary contributions from households and the use of communal labour. However, in Ebuom it was observed that the commitment of beneficiaries in repairs and maintenance was lacking due to poor communication. In a focus group discussion, a discussant remarked that he was not bothered about a broken down borehole located close to his house because he knows that "they will come and repair it", meaning the implementers will repair it. This indicates that the community had developed dependency syndrome which affected the sustainability of the projects.

Training and Capacity Building

As noted earlier, the WATSAN committee members in all the selected communities received training in repairs of boreholes and the water systems. However, households were only sensitised on the need to maintain the facilities and to keep personal hygiene to avoid diseases. Yet, it was observed that some of the WATSAN

committee members were teachers who later were affected by transfers and thus were not available to play their roles. This affected the capacity of some WATSAN committees to repair and maintain the facilities. It was, therefore, proposed that there should be continuous training and transfer of knowledge among community members on the repairs and maintenance of water system and borehole projects.

In the case of electricity projects, respondents argued that the repairs and maintenance were done by professional electricians licensed by the Ghana Energy Commission. However, it was revealed that the implementers did not include in the project, the training of local electricians to manage the household wiring and households were not sensitised about the use of the electricity. Because of these impediments, discussants indicated that some poor households who had received electricity connection, later had their lines disconnected because they could not manage their consumption of electricity leading to the accumulation of heavy bills. There were also reports of some workers selling ECG meters to households while some demanded money from households before connecting them. Because of lack of information, some households who were yet to be connected were also angry about the process and could not understand why they were left out. Training and capacity building of project beneficiaries is directly linked to the project utilisation and sustainability.

Conclusion

The purpose of this paper was to highlight the important role development communication plays in sustaining development projects at the local level in Ghana. The results show that communication is vital for project sustainability at the community level in Ghana. Development communication is important in mobilising local resources for project implementation which contributes to project sustainability. Also, Development Communication facilitates the effective operations and maintenance of development projects which ensures that the intended benefits of the projects are realised over the entire project life. Development communication is also effective in building local capacities through training and sensitisation to initiate, implement and take ownership of local level projects. The results have shown that development communication engenders local participation in development which enables communities to own the development process and contributes to the sustainability of development projects.

The study, therefore, recommends that community-level projects should encourage the full participation of beneficiaries for project success and sustainability. Also, development communication processes should include interactive mechanisms for effective participation.

Declaration of Interests

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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CASE STUDY

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RE-ENACTING THEATRE FOR DEVELOPMENT: EXAMINING THE UNIQUE ROLE OF THEATRE IN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNICATION

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Abstract

The concept of development communication is a clear pointer to the interrelationship between communication and development and the fact that the process of communication can be effectively applied to achieve development purposes. In development communication, the major aim of communication is to bring about the process of development. Theatre as a communicative art is a highly dynamic and powerful conscientisation medium, and as such, integral to communication, as it is to development, establishing its importance and unique role as an invaluable development communication instrument. Anchoring on the truism of the above statement, and reinforced by the participatory development communication model, the paper refocuses the Esuk Ewang and Ibaka Communities of Mbo Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria's Environmental Theatre for Development Project, to highlight the true nature of theatre in the context of development as well as the interrelationship between communication and development.

Keywords: communication, development communication, development, theatre, theatre for development

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Introduction

Development communication emphasises the use of communication for the promotion of development in human society. It refers to the practice of a systematic application of the processes, strategies and principles of communication to achieve positive social change (Srampickal, 2006). It is an attempt at informing, creating awareness, educating, and enlightening the people so that they can improve their lives in every possible way. Therefore, it places people at the centre of development and galvanises them to work out their development. The concept of development communication is a clear pointer to the indispensability and indisputability of the interrelationship between communication and development, and the fact that the process of communication can be effectively applied to achieve development purpose.

Communication is the key to human development. It is necessary for development because it helps to mobilise people's participation in the development process. In development communication, the major aim of communication is to bring about the process of development. Nora Quebral (1975) defines development communication as the art and science of human communication applied to the speedy transformation of a

country and the mass of its people from a state of poverty to a more dynamic state of economic growth which makes possible greater social equality and the larger fulfilment of the human potentials. Quebral sees it as the art and science of human communication as directed towards the transformation of society. Coldevin (1987) also defines development communication as the systematic utilisation of appropriate communication channels and techniques to increase people's participation in development and to inform, motivate, and train rural populations, mainly at the grassroots level. He recognises the potentials of development communication in mobilising people to participate in development activities, and as such corroborates Balit's (1988) definition which sees development communication as a social process aimed at producing a common understanding or a consensus among participants in a development initiative.

A critical consideration of theatre as a communicative art and a highly dynamic and powerful conscientisation medium, will reveal the fact that theatre is indeed integral to communication. It is unequivocally integral to communication as it is to develop, thus establishing its importance and unique role as an invaluable development communication tool. This study in theatre for development ((TfD) is, therefore, anchored on the participatory development communication model which emphasises a two-way communication process and focuses on encouraging community participation with development initiatives through strategic utilisation of various communication strategies. This participatory model is a departure from the one-way communication approach that involves disseminating messages, transmitting information, or persuading people to change their behaviour, in preference to a horizontal approach that encourages dialogue among stakeholders in development initiatives with a focus on problem analysis and search for solutions. The model emphasises the involvement of target recipients in the creation, content and conduct of a project or policy designed to affect their lives, and involves conscious planning of activity based on participatory processes built around a common development problem or goal, intending to develop and execute a set of activities geared towards its solution or realisation.

The Place of TfD in Theatre and Communication

The interrelationship between theatre and communication is inseparable. Theatre is a unique communicative art. As a communicative art, and indeed a highly dynamic one at that, theatre in its intrinsic behavioural nature as a social phenomenon, established itself as a veritable communication tool in the human society, one with a long history too. For instance, the Classical theatre from which today's theatre emerged was a veritable medium of expression and communication in the Athenian society. Greek theatrical developments were in firm connection with the feasts in honour of Dionysus (the Greek god of wine and fertility) through which the people were able to come together and forge a common bond of unity to tackle their problems with communal spirit. This, perhaps, may not have been made possible without the inherent communicative rhythms that suffused the evolving process. Theatre also served as a significant communication tool in the medieval era "as long as Latin remained the universal language of Christendom", which made the continuous use of "liturgical or ecclesiastical play" inevitable as "the chief means of religious instruction for a largely illiterate" Christian population (Hartnoll, 1980, p.35) of the period. The African setting is not exceptional in this historical highlight on the communicative role of theatre. In Africa, the theatre played a remarkable fundamental role in religion, ritual and social practices of the people, not only as an art form but also as a medium of communication and expression of thoughts among the people.

Hence, Theatre for Development (TfD), an increasingly burgeoning development practice, especially in contemporary society, remains a significant aspect of the theatre. Its evolution, while effectively filling the gap of the failures of the mass forms of communication to reach the rural populace, was in conscious response to the imperative need to take theatre to the grassroots – the people, majority of which were hitherto alienated from its abundant transformative potentials on the conventional platform as in the mass forms of communication. In other words, unlike the conventional theatre which people have to access by themselves for performance nay communicative experience, TfD is a people-oriented theatre that accesses the people right where they are by itself for a participatory communicative experience to address their needs. It is a development model that emphasises marked shift from a top-down approach that had characterised hitherto development plans towards a bottom-up approach which, according to Chukwu-Okoronkwo (2012), "recognises the 'creative' potentials of the people, their worldview, cultural background, and experiences, and the necessity to engage them in active

participation to chart the course of their collective destiny" (p.692). It was an attempt not only targeted at representing the common man's reality, but also the genuine interest of the majority. Its pre-occupation was the promotion of development ideas among the people and to enable them to participate in the development process. Although the majority of TfD's activities seem to have been directed toward the rural populace, TfD can be applied in a broader development context spanning "across sections, categories and classifications of human settlements – rural, urban, cities, metropolis or megapolis" (Ingang and Ime, 2016, p.123). TfD, therefore, remains a powerful communication tool, drawing on its communicative potency to arouse the consciousness of the disadvantaged in the society, to the challenge of their limit situations, and in leading them to take steps for the solution. The paper, carefully examines the unique role of Theatre for Development in Development Communication discourse; and explores relevant case study to highlight and affirm the theatre's invaluable communicative role in this context.

Nature of Theatre for Development

Theatre for development is a development practice that utilises performance as a participatory tool in awakening the consciousness of the disadvantaged in the society for real action in finding the solution to their problems. It is a burgeoning performance tradition and a virile conscientisation medium, that seeks the awakening of the consciousness of the disadvantaged towards their understanding of "societal configurations", empowering same also to "have faith in themselves as vectors of change" (Gbilekaa, 1997, p.v). For any TfD effort to be considered successful, its capacity to effectively impact the target audience is non-negotiable. It must be able to arouse enough critical consciousness and sensitisation in the audience as to understand their situation and the need to take action to redress it. It is integral, therefore, that such an effort must satisfy the concept of conscientisation. This term which is widely used by Paulo Freire in the developmental context, as Daniel Knight Were observes, means:

> *The active participation of people in transforming themselves. It is largely dependent on participatory methodologies that promote dialogue. This is because communities need to dialogue and through that identify their problems and reflect on why the problems exist. The outcome is community engagement in decision-making on the course of action to take to solve the problems. Conscientisation is, therefore, the outcome of this process where people emerge with a deepened attitude of awareness over a particular issue and a commitment to change. (p. 7)*

The implication of the foregoing is that conscientisation is a process by which the people try to understand their present situation concerning the prevailing social, economic and political relationships in which they find themselves. Hence, any TfD effort that falls short of triggering conscientisation among the people, could not be said to have satisfied the true essence of TfD. Documentary shreds of evidence abound, therefore, regarding the conscientious and unrelenting efforts of TfD practitioners in utilising this potent development medium to bring positive transformations in the lives of individuals and community groups over the decades, both in the African continent and beyond (Ebewo and Sirayi, 2010; Obadiegwu, 2009; Nwadigwe, 2007; Abah, 2005; Kerr, 1995; Mda, 1993; Kershaw, 1992; Etherton, 1982).

In using performance as a participatory tool in TfD, the central focus is on the performance production process with emphasis on the inclusive nature of this process in integrating the target community. Consequently, in the light of the foregoing, TfD's efficacy in engendering transformation or development in its ramifying dimensions is what invariably underscores the essence of its impact in any theatre for development process, since development as construed in this context emphasises "a comprehensive process of change that is primarily concerned with people's freedom, their social, economic, environmental and political relationships" (Iorapuu, 2008, p. 4). In other words, this transformation, this change, this development is people-oriented, and relates, "to the widening of the people's intellectual horizon, the raising of their consciousness and encouraging dialogue and participation among them in addressing issues that relate to their economic, political and social realities within their environment" (Gbilekaa, 1990, p. 28).

It is instructive to note that TfD's transformational nature in involving the people is never a process that just terminates after the raising of critical consciousness; rather it is one that leads to the subsequent action. What this means is that TfD is a process of awakening of consciousness aimed at galvanising the people towards real action in finding the solution to their problems; but for this transformation to occur, the real action, as Boal (2000) argues, lies with the people, for whom this "theatre" is certainly a powerful "weapon, and it is the people" themselves "who should wield it" (p.122). This is to say, therefore, that this theatre is an empowering process; while the people's liberation and development are only consequent upon their action based on their awakened consciousness.

Methodology and Process in TfD

A pertinent point worthy of note in discussing methodology and process in TfD is that there are no rigid blueprints of operation, as methodology and process have largely been determined by the approaches to development adopted by the individual practitioner (Daniel and Bappa, 2004), or practitioners as the case may be. They are only products of constant experimentations by practitioners. Okwori (2004), however, has approximated an approach which incorporates the following steps: preliminaries, community research, data analysis, scenario building, rehearsals, performance and post-performance discussion, and follow-through which could be applied in a wide range of TfD experiences. These steps would be thoroughly analysed and emphasised.

Step one is the preliminaries which involve the theatre animateurs (or facilitators) linking with project communities to discuss the project, its modalities and logistics. Once the consent for the project is certified by the community given all considerations in communication channels, tradition and cultural factors that may impede on its realisation, the organisational and operational arrangements are also determined and handled by the people or jointly with the group. Chukwu-Okoronkwo (2012) observes that in contemporary practice, the necessity to raise a representative group of the community at large to work in conjunction with the resource group also arises at this inception. This is important to ensure participatory representation and eventual continuity in the process.

Step two is community research which is invariably borne out of the necessity to appropriately articulate the problems and issues in the community as seen by the people themselves. It involves a rather informal research and homestead approach in which the team of participants associating freely with the people, living with them, eating with them and sharing in their daily activities, engaging them on one on one discussions while observing and respecting their traditions and values in the process. It is a participatory approach in which the people are involved in their research rather than outsiders coming to determine their problems for them.

Generally, this is a period of information gathering and perhaps the most crucial in any TfD process. It is the primary source of data collection which helps to achieve a broad understanding of how problems manifest in society. It also helps to stimulate involvement on the part of the community and ensures the presentation of a balanced view, a level of community consensus, a sense of involvement and participation by all beneficiaries (Daniel and Bappa, 2004, p. 20).

Apart from the above homestead approach, through which trust and confidence are established between the research team and the people, others such as interview and flooding can also be employed.

• Interview: This is rather a journalistic approach as information or electronic gadgets are often brought to the disposal of resource persons to conduct and record interviews with members of the community to find out what their problems are. It involves a series of formal targeted interviews with individual members of the community.
• Flooding: In this method, resource person flood or spill into the target community in large numbers in search of information that relates to the problems of the community. They interview people anywhere they can be assessed in their houses, farms or other locations with each resource person assigned a particular area of coverage.

Daniel and Bappa advise that whatever method of research chosen should not be such that intimidates, but rather that which elicits and sustains participation in generating as much useful information as possible for and about the development of the community.

Step three is data analysis where information gathered from the research are presented at an open community forum and extensively discussed by everyone as to how the issues came about, their effects, what can be done and possible consequences. Through this process, the people come to a critical understanding of their problems, prioritise them, and articulate strategies that may be used to overcome them.

Step *four* is scenario building where the outcome of the data analysis forms the bedrock for play creation and anchored around stories that will highlight and link the problems in a dramatic way, using appropriate cultural forms as determinants for the style of performance, such that it provokes discussion and challenges the people to take action. Care is always taken to allow the story to evolve from the sensibilities of the people. The scenario is also seen as a plan of action which is amenable to change at any time according to the changing perspectives of the people.

Step five involves rehearsals. The process which normally takes place in the open involves the people trying out how to play the character and dramatise the story. They are encouraged to discuss actions and ideas being tried out as well as play [exchange] roles, with the problems being dramatised being blended with the artistic forms of expression used to formulate them. In doing so, they increase their awareness and understanding of the issues at stake; are conscientised/educated and empowered. Hence, the rehearsal process is a process of collective creation and articulation which is capable of forging group solidarity and throwing up challenges in provoking action among the people.

Step six is the actual performance and post-performance discussion. As soon as the play-making process crystallises, performance ensues. It is an extension of the rehearsal process, and also allows for intervention from members of the community. The performance draws the audience into the play as participants by engaging them regularly, as actors throw actions and debates to them, ask questions, call them as witnesses, request their support for arguments, and conspire with them. Actors are always encouraged to lead the audience: tell them what they are about to do, distinguish between their personal and characters they are portraying, ask for their comments and opinions over an issue, reach out in their mist, touch them and take sides with them. At the end of the performance, issues of the play are re-examined by all and strategies are planned for action.

Through the relationship between the drama and their lives, the consciousness's of the community members are awakened to new realities about their problems, and from the discussions, they are made to realise their potentials and ability to initiate action to improve their situation (Chukwu-Okoronkwo, 2012, p.694).

The seventh and last step in the list is follow-through (or follow-up). Because the initial enthusiasm that usually greets such theatre experience is easy to just fritter away, perhaps, out of lack of will or motivation or resources to carry through with action-strategies agreed upon, their arises the need to revisit the communities to encourage and re-motivate them; as well as examine new areas of cooperation; or assess the impact of previous or on-going action.

It is instructive to note here that there appears to be a debate on the appropriate term (follow-through or follow-up). Follow-through proponents argue that follow-up connotes a strictly supervisory stance while the former indicates a more participation stance. However, this involves going back to the community to assess the steps taken to address identified problems of the community or assess the steps taken to sustain already initiated efforts at addressing the people's problems.

Case Study: The Esuk Ewang/Ibaka Environmental Theatre Project

Background

This case study is an environmental communication theatre intervention that focused on water pollution carried out in Esuk Ewang/Ibaka Community, Mbo Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria between 2011 and 2013, employing theatre for development as a medium of participatory learning and action as reported by the facilitator, Ofonime Inyang (Inyang, 2015; Inyang and Ime, 2016). Esuk Ewang and Ibaka villages are twin settlements located just off the riverine coast of the Mbo River, flanking and adjoining each other. The population estimate of Esuk Ewang and Ibaka is put at 1000 households with higher female ratio to men. The Esuk Ewang/lbaka environment like most coastal communities was seriously challenged by many environmental problems, among which included fuelwood exploitation, the rise of sea levels, invasion of water hyacinth, gully erosion, oil spillage and soil fracking from extractive activities and water pollution. The causes of these environmental problems are, therefore, attributable to a combination of years of neglect by the government, the ignorance of the people about their poor environmental attitude and the utter state of poverty that is prevalent in the area, all of which contributed to the extent of the prevailing devastation. However, Inyang has particularly noted that the environmental attitude of the community is undesirable as it contended with different dimensions of water pollution, ranging from direct defecation into the river (which also served as a source of drinking water), dumping of plastic materials including net accessories in the river, harvesting of raw wood for firewood, use of the harmful chemical in fishing, indiscriminate and careless handling of petrol (which had resulted in several deaths in the community) and excavation of sand and gravel for commercial purposes. It was the urgent need, therefore, to address these challenges anchoring on the imperative to integrate development communication using theatre for environmental awareness targeted at water pollution that prompted the facilitator to embark on the project. This motivation is borne out of the facilitator's conviction that drawing the attention of the members of the community to the need to take action to protect and safeguard their environment from degradation will go a long way to forestall the development crisis of the future.

Preliminaries

Several preliminary meetings were led by the facilitator with the leadership of the community before finally mounting the project with his team consisting of students of the Department of Theatre Arts, University of Uyo and the project management officers. All the meetings generated further insights into the project while also expanding knowledge of the culture and way of life of the people generally.

Players

According to Inyang, some community members volunteered and took on the different roles they created along with the students. Being a story that emerged out of the familiar context of the community as a fishing enclave with relative closeness to what had been experienced in the past; it was therefore not difficult for the people to express the nuances of the characterisation to suit the thematic goals of the performance. The use of local cultural idioms further enhanced the aesthetic particulars of the play and guided it down the heart of the people. There was also active sensitivity to gender configuration as some female members of the community took active roles playing along with the men and enjoyed the atmosphere of creative interaction without any form of hindrance. That the community members themselves handled the casting and decided on who would best idealise the characters aided their assimilation of the roles and produced committed and nuanced portrayal of the characters and the events in the performance.

Scenario Development

The performance was not structured on a written script, rather it was based on an improvised scenario developed by the students and community volunteers, while the facilitator only acted as a guide. The atmosphere of this collective imagining of the script and the obvious collective ownership of its copyright energised the process in tremendous ways and set the stage of expectancy in other community members who did not only identify with

their relations involved in the project but were also eager to see them perform for the community. The key component of the project – participation – began to increase in tempo from day to day to such a level that even the few selected days of rehearsals graduated into mini-performances.

The Story

The story was a simple narrative which revolved around a clan member who went missing while on a fishing expedition. This development threw the entire community into disarray and created deep fear in the environment which affected the economic life of the community for weeks as fishermen refused to go on a fishing expedition for fear of meeting the fate of their kinsman. As was usual with such development in the community, soothsayers and witchdoctors were consulted to find out the cause of the man's disappearance and all of them were unanimous in declaring that the man's boat was capsized by an angry water goddess who felt maligned and disrespected by the community by denying her of regular sacrifice. This narrative was popular with the community as they considered it an age-old practice tied to the very foundation of the community. The community offered the needed sacrifice as directed by the local priests, but a surprising development took place two days after the communal feast in that the purportedly drowned man returned to the village to disclose that he was not taken by the water spirits but rather that he was arrested and detained in a distant island by patrolling naval officers who caught him harvesting fish with harmful substances in addition to defecating into the water. This created some confusion in the community as some people believed the man was released by the marine powers while others believed he was truly detained by naval officers and so they should desist from polluting the river. This open-ended structure of the story offered a good template for discussion in a community meeting styled arrangement.

The Play

The dramatic scenario was improvised from the story above and executed with dialogue, dances and songs drawn from the local cultural repertory. The storyline was deliberately made simple, straight forward, short, captivating and arranged to be open-ended (unresolved conflict).

Rehearsal

The rehearsals and general packaging of the play took three weeks of intensive activity, with Inyang playing the role of guide-facilitator. However, since it was an improvised performance, a little premium was placed on rehearsal as is the practice in a formal theatre set up. The context of rehearsal, according to Inyang, was not actually "rehearsal" in the sense of the word as applied to conventional theatre practice; but more of "playing" nuances. So, the more the participants advanced in their "playing", the more they realised the need to integrate issues that would capture the issues in more graphic details as well as situate the problem on the public space to be confronted in that sort of way, knowing that most "life-relating" issues touching on matters like defecation are seldom given very broad and open discussion as it is seen as humanly debasing.

Performance

The performance dates and venues were agreed upon by the facilitator, the participants and the leadership of the host community. The performance proper took place at the community playground in Esuk Ewang, with an invitation extended to the councillor representing the ward and community members at large. There was a direct correlation between the issues highlighted in the play and the environmental practices regarding water pollution in the village. The various moments of pointed reference to some polluting practices resulted in open courts of self-appraisal as community members turned to ask each other if they truly had been engaging in such practices without seeing anything wrong about it. There were also openly expressed diehard positions of unwillingness to change by persons who reasoned that defecating into the river was an age-old practice that had not done any harm to the river but a world of good as fish fed from the excreta. This presented a mixed bag of issues that formed topical subjects for the post-performance evaluation.

Post-Performance Discussion and Evaluation

The end of performance activated diverse dimensions of reactions to the scenario depicted in the play. Community members could not hide their excitement about the presentation and opinions across various spectrums of the community including women, youths and leaders registered the impact of the communication initiative and particularly the acceptance of the fact that there were environmental problems in the community orchestrated by poor attitudes as well as the need for change. There was also a noticeable extension of discussion touching on issues like drug and substance abuse, infant mortality and teenage pregnancy which crept into the discussion even when they were not part of the original focus of the project. The community discussion session, which the facilitator moderated, extracted commitments from community members to implement actions and behaviour that would ensure environmental sustainability in their area.

Consequent upon the level of engendered interactive discussion, the community was able to contextualise the outcomes of the performance into three areas of response namely: personal behaviour change, corporate responsibility and government intervention. Against this background, community members unanimously accepted their complicity in the situation and resolved to make amends. Hence, each family was admonished to desist from excreting into the water, dump materials incessantly into the water and or fish with chemical, failing of which they would be heavily fined. A decision was taken by all the men of the community to construct a latrine for each household and to dispose of excreta carefully and in the most hygienic way possible. On the corporate level, the leadership of the community resolved to take responsibility for the protection of the water, the community as well as be committed to the best possible practice in safeguarding the health of community members, especially the most vulnerable. An environmental task team was constituted to ensure the implementation of the agreed resolutions while appeals were made to the government for assistance in terms of transportation, health facilities and bridge construction to enhance access to the communities.

Inyang reported that findings from a follow-up/monitoring visit to the community yielded the following results:

• Community members' behaviour of defecating on the beachfront had ceased. Tremendous progress had been made in disposing of human waste in a manner that enhanced the safety of people by way of construction and usage of family latrines.
• The use of harmful substances had been outlawed as there was clear evidence of cessation of practice reinforced by a huge fine imposed on defaulters by the village council.
• The dumping of plastic materials into the water continued as some of the materials were still spotted on the beachfront.
• There was noticeable awareness of environmental issues in the community marked by a signpost erected by the community youths to call people's attention to the issues raised during the campaign.
• The local government was yet to fulfil any of the demands presented to it by the community as a measure of enhancing environmental health in the community.
• More commitments were implored from the community members to keep their environment in good condition and to intensify efforts in completely mitigating incidences of water pollution.

Conclusion

Unarguably, the concept of development communication is a clear pointer to the inseparable linkage between communication and development. In development communication, the major aim of communication is to bring about the process of development. This reinforces the fact that the process of communication can be effectively applied to achieve development purpose. Communication is indeed the key to human development. It is necessary for development because it helps to mobilise people's participation in the development process. Theatre, therefore, as unique communicative art, and a highly dynamic and powerful conscientisation medium, is unequivocally integral to communication as it is to develop; thus establishing its importance and unique role as an invaluable development communication tool. In the light of the foregoing, the unique role of theatre as a veritable development tool in development communication has been firmly established in this paper as

reinforced in Theatre for Development – a development practice that utilises performance as a participatory tool in awakening the consciousness of the disadvantaged in the society to take real action in finding possible solution to their problems, as evidenced in the x-rayed case study.

Acknowledgement

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REVIEWS

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CREATIVITY: FUEL FOR THE FUTURE OF THE FIELD OF DEVELOPMENT COMMUNICATION

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Abstract

This article emphasises and argues for the importance of purposeful creativity enhancement and its strategic role in communicative actions (i.e. Phase P conceptualisation of the POD framework) to fuel the future of the field of development communication for social justice in directed change. Development efforts, in the last 80 years has yielded a mixed bag of results. Development communication has moved and progressed from many dominant conceptual frameworks such as modernisation, participation, empowerment, and most recently social justice to best facilitate critical social change. The POD framework is an up-to-date and robust framework for understanding the complex and dynamic field of development communication for social justice in directed change. This conceptual article argues for incremental advances by systematically including creativity into the equation and justifying its relevance and importance to fuel the future of development communication. Phase P brings together the traditional as well as radical communicative actions from areas such as participatory action research, community organisation, action research, and other related models. At the core of all these communicative actions is the creation of communicative content or messages that are highly impactful. This essay will elaborate and detail how creativity and creative skills are central to various aspects of these communicative actions. Creativity is commonly perceived as the ability to come up with novel and useful solutions. However, creativity is more than that. Creativity has an inherent enriching attribute. This sort of enrichment is enabling and empowering, and therefore, the inclusion of creativity and systematic enhancement of creativity in the field of development and social change is conceptually and theoretically crucial. In simpler words, to further the car named world development, we have no choice but to inject the fuel of creativity.
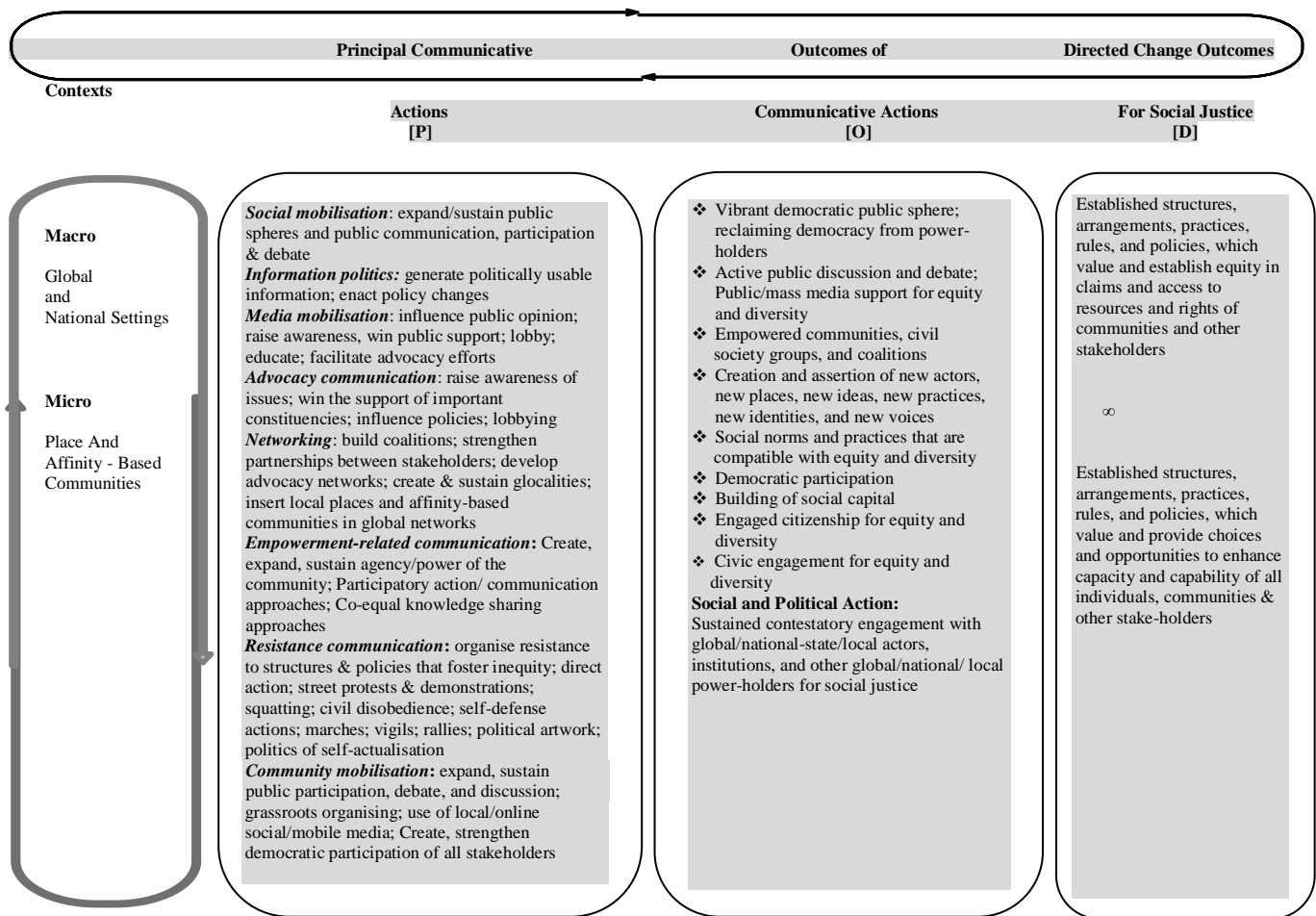
Keywords: communicatice action, communicative content, social justice, creative skills

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Introduction

This article aims to argue for and emphasise the vital role creativity can play in the field of development communication for social justice in directed change. Over the past 80 years, development communication has progressed from many dominant conceptual frameworks such as modernisation, participation, empowerment, and most recently social justice to best facilitate social change. This article emphasises and argues for the importance of purposeful creativity enhancement and its strategic role in communicative actions to fuel the future of the field of development communication for social justice in directed change.

To elaborate and explicate our argument, we will look at the POD framework (Figure 1), which is a robust framework for understanding the role of media and communication for social justice in directed change. Phases O and D elaborate the outcomes for the communicative actions and outcomes for social justice. A new avatar for development communication is operationalised in phase P of the POD framework where we develop specific communicative roles for development toward social justice. Phase P brings together the traditional as well as radical communicative actions from areas such as participatory action research, community organisation, action research, and other related models. These include social mobilisation, media mobilisation, community mobilisation, advocacy communication, information politics, empowerment-related communication, networking for social and political action, and resistance communication. At the core of all these communicative actions is creativity fueling the creation of communicative content that is highly impactful for the achievement of social justice in development.

Creativity is the key to producing high quality and impactful content. This essay will elaborate how creativity and creative skills are instrumental in various aspects of communicative actions. Commonly, creativity is the ability to come up with novel and useful solutions (Runco & Jaegar, 2012). However, creativity has an inherent enriching attribute. "Creativity comprises the drive and ability to make something new or to connect the seemingly unconnected in significant ways to enrich our understanding of ourselves, our communities, the world, and the universe that we inhabit." (FAQ, MacArthur Foundation, 2019). Such enrichment is enabling and empowering. Creativity is not only needed for individuals and groups to create high-impact messages and content, which essentially fuel the radical communicative actions, but also for battling one's own entrenchments enabling one to ask "questions that open onto fields of inquiry as yet unexplored; developing innovative solutions to perplexing problems; inventing novel methods, tools, or art forms; fusing ideas from different disciplines into wholly new constructions; producing works that broaden the horizons of the imagination." (FAQ, MacArthur Genius Website, 2019). Such abilities may only be developed through getting in touch with one's inner creativity, enhancing one's creativity and letting one's actions and decisions be inspired by creativity.

Principal Communicative	Outcomes of	Directed Change Outcomes

Contexts

	Actions [P]	Communicative Actions [O]	For Social Justice [D]
Macro Global and National Settings **Micro** Place And Affinity - Based Communities	*Social mobilisation*: expand/sustain public spheres and public communication, participation & debate *Information politics:* generate politically usable information; enact policy changes *Media mobilisation*: influence public opinion; raise awareness, win public support; lobby; educate; facilitate advocacy efforts *Advocacy communication*: raise awareness of issues; win the support of important constituencies; influence policies; lobbying *Networking*: build coalitions; strengthen partnerships between stakeholders; develop advocacy networks; create & sustain glocalities; insert local places and affinity-based communities in global networks *Empowerment-related communication***:** Create, expand, sustain agency/power of the community; Participatory action/ communication approaches; Co-equal knowledge sharing approaches *Resistance communication***:** organise resistance to structures & policies that foster inequity; direct action; street protests & demonstrations; squatting; civil disobedience; self-defense actions; marches; vigils; rallies; political artwork; politics of self-actualisation *Community mobilisation***:** expand, sustain public participation, debate, and discussion; grassroots organising; use of local/online social/mobile media; Create, strengthen democratic participation of all stakeholders	❖ Vibrant democratic public sphere; reclaiming democracy from power-holders ❖ Active public discussion and debate; Public/mass media support for equity and diversity ❖ Empowered communities, civil society groups, and coalitions ❖ Creation and assertion of new actors, new places, new ideas, new practices, new identities, and new voices ❖ Social norms and practices that are compatible with equity and diversity ❖ Democratic participation ❖ Building of social capital ❖ Engaged citizenship for equity and diversity ❖ Civic engagement for equity and diversity **Social and Political Action:** Sustained contestatory engagement with global/national-state/local actors, institutions, and other global/national/ local power-holders for social justice	Established structures, arrangements, practices, rules, and policies, which value and establish equity in claims and access to resources and rights of communities and other stakeholders ∞ Established structures, arrangements, practices, rules, and policies, which value and provide choices and opportunities to enhance capacity and capability of all individuals, communities & other stake-holders

Source: Melkote and Steeves, 2015

Figure 1: Development communication for Social Justice in Directed Change: The POD framework

Development Communication

The history of development communication would go back to the post World War II years when western-style modernisation was a preferred model all over the world. The whole enterprise of modernisation in which development communication was situated was influenced by the quantitative and empirical social sciences philosophy, theory, and methodology, in particular, it had a strong economics orientation. Development communication operations, in general, were tasked with the responsibility of preparing individuals in developing countries for a rapid social change toward modernisation. Mass media such as the radio were used in top-down models of communication to diffuse modernising and westernised innovations to the people. Communication was considered as the missing link in the development chain and it was considered the task of the media and development communication to inform and educate the masses. The communication models tended to be linear, one-way, top-down and prescriptive from the change agency to the people.

Toward a Participatory Mode: Much of this began to change, starting in the 1970s. The concept of development and change expanded to include many more types of change guided by different paradigms, theories, disciplinary influences, geographical considerations and methodologies. Change now included a widely participatory process of social change in a society and also included social and cultural aspects besides the economic. This was the first major interdisciplinary encounter in development communication, bringing together the positivist and the interpretive paradigms; they are the guiding forces of the modernisation and participatory models respectively.

Many development communication activities that were influenced by modernisation, diffusion of innovations research, social marketing or even entertainment education approaches to development and change used a behaviour change communication model based on the positivist philosophy and methodology. The rules and methods of the quantitative empirical social sciences were applied and the outcomes of development and change were mostly quantitative, such as indicators of the economy or statistics about rates of infant mortality or maternal deaths, etc. in the health-related areas. On the other hand, more participatory approaches such as the participatory rural communication approach, participatory action research, or the liberation theology of Paulo Freire were influenced by the social change communication model based on the interpretive/critical theory and methodology. The rules and conventions of the interpretive and critical studies were considered more important and the outcomes of change included many non-quantitative dimensions such as independence, cultural and personal growth, participation, and emancipation.

The different disciplinary and methodological imperatives of the positivist and interpretive disciplines posed a challenge to the identity of development communication theory and practice. Many observers contend that it changed the way communication was conceptualised and used in development and change work. Behaviour change communication models of the past were now complemented with newer communication for social change models. In these newer models, a participatory approach between the sender and receiver communication structure was used and the bias was toward horizontal participation (subject to subject), critical awareness and dialogic communication processes (Ascroft and Masilela, 1989; Mefalopulos, 2008). Both the behaviour change model and social change model were useful for different contexts and objectives. Media information campaigns or strategic communication programmes would be best served by the behaviour change communication framework, while directed social change activities that involve participation, collaboration, capacity building, and empowerment are informed by communication for social change model (Melkote and Steeves, 2015).

From Participation to Empowerment: While the participatory mode of communication for development programmes and activities was a welcome addition to the development communication toolbox, the definitions of participation reflected a wide variety of approaches. In many contexts, the level of participation required by the people were low and perfunctory. Toward the end of the 1980s, the concept and practice of empowerment expanded upon the earlier objective of participation in development communication models and practices. This was the second major interdisciplinary thrust in development communication research and practice.

The construct of empowerment identifies the underlying constraints in directed social change such as the lack of power among the people at the receiving end of development programmes. The disciplines such as community organisation, critical education, women's and gender studies, and community psychology, among others, now offered concepts and practices that could be readily incorporated in development communication models and programmes. The concept of empowerment is frequently referenced in the disciplines noted above but was missing or inadequately explicated in development communication.

The newer disciplinary and methodological imperatives posed a challenge to the identity and practice of development communication. It changed the way communication was conceptualised and used in development and change work. Development communication in an empowerment paradigm has the goal of empowering the people, and building local capacity and equity. The objectives of development communication activities are now expanded to include the activation and the sustainability of social support systems, social networks, empowerment of local narratives, facilitation of critical awareness, and facilitation of community power.

The role of the development communication worker now moved from being just a communication expert to a collaborator, facilitator, participant, an advocate for individuals and communities, a risk-taker, and even an activist on behalf of the people (Melkote and Steeves, 2015). The challenges to development communication with the extension of participation to include empowered participation have been profound. Also, the differences between the earlier modernisation approach and the empowerment approach are stark. Modernisation utilises the

transmission model in which communication involves sending a message through some channel; the process is usually linear and top-down, while the messages are prescriptive and technical in nature. The transmission approach or the delivery of information in the modernisation approach is insufficient to the task of development and change. Empowerment objectives also require building understanding, empathy, and partnerships with the people. The emphasis of development communication work now expanded to also value communication for its organising value (Melkote and Steeves, 2015).

Quest toward Social Justice in Social Change: As we entered the 21st Century, fresh challenges have sprung up. For example, the challenge of unequal development in our communities and in our world continues to be intractable (Piketty, 2014; Stiglitz, 2012). This brings new challenges to the role and place of development communication in social change. This juncture is another major transformation period for the identity and role of development communication. Today, we face grave risks and dangers to our ontological security. For 'devcommers' the greatest threat to progressive change is that risks and dangers are differentially distributed around the globe between the privileged and marginalised individuals and communities (Tufte, 2012). Examples are the widening inequalities between people and communities on several life-giving resources, women's empowerment, environmental degradation and climate change, among others. The overarching goal of change is now framed as a quest toward social justice in development and change.

The Millennium Development Goals and the Sustainable Development Goals have clearly put the focus on the most deprived individuals and communities in the world today. Therefore, a central concern among scholars, development professionals, and activists is the increasing inequality between the haves and have-nots globally. These developments and challenges have made us increasingly critical of the place and role of development communication in progressive change. The scope of development communication needs to be broadened. Scholars, practitioners, and administrators are putting an increased emphasis on social justice in directed social change. Social justice should serve as the anchor for the work and activities of development communication professionals. An important objective is to redefine how development communication could play a useful role to address and counter inequality and injustice in development and social change.

Development can be re-conceptualised as a process of directed social change with the establishment of social justice as its objective. The main reason why unequal and discriminatory development prevails around the world is because the definitions and practices of development have not captured important facets of social justice However, while the term *social justice* connotes a fairly common understanding in the conceptual domain, its operationalisation has been a challenge. What is social justice in directed social change and what are the ways in which it may be operationalised? Achieving social justice would constitute the elimination of persistent and endemic deprivation of individuals and communities in areas basic to survival and enhancing the capacity and capability of individuals and communities to live effective and meaningful lives.

POD Framework: Innovative Way to Redefine Development Communication

Melkote and Steeves (2015) proposed a conceptual/operational model as shown in Figure 1. In this model, the attainment of social justice outcomes is the goal. Social justice outcomes are operationalised under the broad categories of *freedom from* inequality and *freedom to* explore one's individual or group potential to live a meaningful and satisfying life. Thus, the outcomes of directed change include emancipatory politics and the politics of self-actualisation in contexts that range along a local-global continuum with social justice as the ultimate goal. Social justice outcomes are defined and operationalised for macro and micro level contexts. The macro level would constitute the national or a global context comprising other nation-states, supranational bodies, multinational businesses, global civil society groups and coalitions. The micro context would include spatial and interest-based communities.

The POD model (see figure 1) presents goals expected in directed change efforts that facilitate social justice outcomes (phase D); outcomes expected from media and communicative actions (phase O), (which would constitute the means or processes by which directed change goals (phase D) may be achieved, sustained or strengthened); and, principal communicative means (phase P) by which the outcomes desired by media and

communication (phase O) may be realised. The new avatar for development communication is operationalised in phase P of the POD framework. It brings together the traditional as well as radical communicative actions from areas such as participatory action research, community organisation, action research, and other related models. These include social mobilisation, media mobilisation, community mobilisation, advocacy communication, information politics, empowerment-related communication, networking for social and political action, and resistance communication.

The POD model represents a dynamic process. Therefore, throughout the model, the interactivity between the different phases (P, O, and D), and the overlap between macro and micro contexts are implied and stressed. The overlapping, reinforcing, and cyclical nature of the actions and outcomes between the various phases of the model and between the macro and micro contexts indicate that the process is neither linear nor teleological. The process is open-ended, multi-contextual, dynamic and ongoing.

The POD model (Figure 1) is conceptualised broadly and is useful for its heuristic value, framing a critical discussion of the concepts, processes, and outcomes of directed change for social justice, especially the role of development communication actions in this contested and never-ending process. First, the model rejects the methodological nationalism bias of the earlier development programmes and discourses. This bias in the social sciences in general and development theory, in particular, valorises the national space at the expense of the cosmopolitan or global (Beck, 2002). Globalisation scholars contend that the nation state is an inadequate frame of reference for understanding all aspects of mediated social and cultural life (Curran and Park, 2000). Yet, there has been a deliberate framing of the functionalistic paradigm invoked in the social sciences to fit a nation-centered framework. Consequently, media policy has always been exclusively nation-centered and further reified the imagined identity of 'nation-ness' (Chalaby, 2005). As an alternative to methodological nationalism, Beck (2002) suggests a cosmopolitan perspective, which emphasises *dialogic imagination*, that is, new ways of imagining the world that is not prefaced by just a national consciousness but by alternative lifestyles, beliefs, and experiences. The process of directed change as shown in the POD framework assumes cosmopolitan politics that posits global, national, and local connectivity, thus setting up a platform for the interaction of varied communicative ideas and strategies in multiple sites that include offline and online contexts and circumstances (Robins and Aksoy, 2005).

The POD framework (Figure 1) also avoids the teleology bias, which is frequently encountered in earlier models of development and change. Teleology is a causal process where phenomena move naturally and inexorably toward certain goals of self-realisation, and eventually reach an apex. In the earlier evolutionary models of social change and development, this thesis implied that the history of the development of societies is not a progression of semi-random acts and events over time, but a carefully scripted storyline that moves in an orderly way, has a definite direction, and tells a story of orderly progression amidst the jumble of general change (Tomlinson, 1999; Harvey, 2005). Giddens termed this as the "Grand Narrative" (Giddens, 1990:2). Causality is implied since the earlier stages are presumed to give rise to specific later stages in this social evolutionary process. The POD model does not suggest that the process is causal or even predictable, given the differential contexts and power positions of the actors and the contested nature of the process of directed change. While the ultimate objective is the achievement of social justice, the indicators of social justice are not universally defined for all times and contexts. They will vary across time and contexts because the outcome of directed change is never a universal end state of everlasting development, but is actually a protracted, sustained, and contested engagement and struggle between varied actors for achieving specific goals in overlapping local, national and global settings.

The goal in the model is to articulate alternate futures that ensure equity in claims and access to rights and resources, especially the commons, as well as provide credible choices and opportunities for individuals and communities to live expressive and meaningful lives. Stakeholders of change will exhibit different value positions, have different visions of alternative futures, and hold differential power positions. Since there are no permanently privileged agents or constituencies in the process of directed change, the struggle to articulate and establish social justice is an ongoing process. The specific meanings and scope of social justice articulated by the stakeholders will vary in each instance according to historical contexts, opportunities, and potentialities.

Thus, structures, policies, rules, arrangements, conventions, and practices will need to be constantly monitored and tweaked by stakeholders to meet social justice goals in multiple settings during different epochs in history. This takes us back to the start of the model, thus, the process is never-ending.

Principal Communicative Actions (Phase P)

Real progressive change is not possible unless we directly address power inequities among different constituencies in society. Communication strategies under the participatory model often do not challenge the hegemonic structures of societies where inequality is rampant. Therefore, development communication professionals should help extend people's environment by acting as collaborators, facilitators, and importantly, as advocates. We believe that media and communication must probe the unequal distribution of power in a society and strive to increase the countervailing power of the vulnerable and marginalised populations. The communicative actions grouped under Phase P of the model are fundamentally different from the normal role of media and communication as transmission agents of a message and instead they are focused on how the media can be dynamic agents of change in society. Given below are examples of principal communicative actions of Phase P of the POD model.

1. S*ocial mobilisation*: Expand/sustain public spheres and public communication, participation & debate.
2. *Information politics:* Generate politically usable information; enact policy changes.
3. *Media mobilisation*: Influence public opinion; raise awareness, win public support; lobby; educate; facilitate advocacy efforts.
4. *Advocacy Communication*: Raise awareness of issues; win support of important constituencies; influence policies; lobbying.
5. *Networking for social and political action*: Build coalitions; strengthen partnerships. between stakeholders; develop advocacy networks; create and sustain glocalities; insert local places and affinity-based communities in global networks.
6. *Empowerment-related communication*: Create, expand, sustain agency/power of the community; participatory action/ communication approaches; co-equal knowledge sharing approaches.
7. *Resistance communication*: Organise resistance to structures & policies that foster inequity; direct action; street protests and demonstrations; squatting; civil disobedience; self-defense actions; marches; vigils; rallies; political artwork; politics of self-actualisation.
8. *Community mobilisation*: Expand, sustain public participation, debate, and discussion; grassroots organising; use of local/online social/mobile media; create/strengthen democratic participation of all stakeholders.

The examples of communicative actions mentioned above have the potential to become agents of change. The role of media and communication in these radical communicative actions is dialogical and dynamic. It becomes the starting point of a dialogue about social change rather than an afterthought. Its availability and accessibility make it possible to overcome barriers which were otherwise unbreachable.

The communicative actions of Phase P are the new avatar of the communication for development and social change. Change can now truly come from the fringes and is no more the sole propriety of governments and transnational organisations. However, as we closely examine these communicative actions, we realise that the creation of high-impact content and novel resistance ideas are critical for the success of these. The two assets that development and social change initiatives from the fringes have are creativity and a personal stake. Otherwise, they are always in short supply of financial resources, infrastructure, and more. Let us look at creativity in further detail.

Overview of Creativity

Creativity is a key that opens many doors including the door to generating ideas. Ideas that are inspired by creativity have tremendous problem-solving potential. Creativity enables an individual with the ability to

produce high quality and impactful content. In this section, we will elaborate how creativity and creative skills are instrumental in various aspects of the principal communicative actions.

As stated earlier, commonly, creativity is the ability to come up with novel and useful ideas (Barron, 1955; Runco & Jaeger, 2012). Ideas come with the potential to solve problems. For example, ever since humans wanted to set foot on the moon, several problems were hindering this from happening. How and where to escape earth's gravity, how and where to enter moon's gravity, how to not miss the moon and be lost in space, how to reenter the earth, etc. were the perplexing problems. And, simultaneously, there were several ideas generated as possible solutions to get there. Finally, one idea ended up being the best possible solution at that given time to limit fuel consumption by using the earth's gravitational force as a catapult to launch the satellite into the moons gravitational orbit. The ability to generate solutions with the potential of solving perplexing problems is creativity.

Creativity has been in use for eons. But for the longest time, the praxis of creativity was restricted to the field of arts such as painting, sculpture, and music. Creativity remained an integral part of these domains and continues to do so. With the passage of time the frontiers of creativity's utility and application expanded with areas such as literature. The literacy revolution encouraged science and technology, and this led to further expansion of the utility and application of creativity and creative ideas. Creative ideas became the building blocks of inventions and discoveries.

Despite the superficial agreement on the importance and significance of creativity in so many fields of study, creativity itself was still not picked up as an area of interest for systematic examination. It was, finally, the advertising and marketing tsunami that significantly increased the demand for creative ideas. This fueled interest in systematic examination and study of creativity. Psychology took on creativity as a foster following the logic that creativity has something to do with intelligence, personality traits, and therefore the brain. Moreover, psychology was also one of the early fields in social sciences to have gathered a critical mass of scholars and, therefore, legitimacy as a field. It is only in the last thirty years that creativity has emerged as a field of systematic study and has managed to sustain two to three mainstream journals consistently publishing works in creativity.

Why is Creativity Important?

Creativity has become an increasingly important skill in the 21st century. Creativity is not only pivotal in enabling development communication in achieving social justice through directed social change but also is vital for finding innovative solutions for the problems humanity has created through its successes of the previous centuries. Creativity is an answer to the rapidly changing ecosystem. Without being creative and using creative thinking to find solutions to the rapidly changing ecosystem, which is on technological steroids, we risk seriously jeopardising collective wellbeing. Creativity is more important than technology because technology is an enabler but without the seeds of creative ideas and solutions technology by itself is unable to solve problems. Creativity is important because it is a skill that can be universally found among individuals.

Creativity is commonplace. Unlike technical or advanced skills, creativity is easily attainable. Every individual and every culture that has survived has been genetically transmitted creative abilities. The fact that culture is still surviving is a testimony to its creative problem-solving traits. It is possible that some individuals may not feel creative. Unlike other inherent or intrinsic characteristics, creativity can be enhanced and fostered. Creativity does not decrease or empty. It's like a car with an eternal full tank of gas. Literacy, as much an enabler, has also been a disabler. Creativity can surpass the barriers of language and literacy. A person does not need to be literate to be creative. He or she can be creative and can produce creative accomplishments despite his or her lack of literacy. This is crucial because the communities and individuals that are usually the targets of development initiatives are mostly illiterate.

Creativity is intrinsically rewarding. The reward is internal to the human being. The moment an individual can find a new solution or a variation to a given problem he or she receives an internal dose of happiness-

inducing chemicals which do not just make him or her happy but also foster a health habit that backs-up the overall wellbeing. Lastly, as the traditional saying goes, "Give a man a fish and you'll feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish and you've fed him for a lifetime. Similarly, give a man a creative solution and you have solved his problem for a day. But teach a man to be creative and then you have enabled him to solve problems for his lifetime. This foundational aspect is also the critique for Positive Deviance.

A system that has become popular in the last two decades within the realm of development communication is Positive Deviance. Positive Deviance has been widely utilised to solve development and social change problems. The premise of Positive Deviance relies on identifying deviants that are doing something good or better despite the same challenges as the rest of the community. The individuals are the ones with a bright or a different idea of going about a certain thing and yielding desirable results. This idea is then popularised using the amplification abilities of mass media. Looking at it from a creativity lens, what PD does is that it identifies a creative idea that works despite the odds and then disseminates it. It affords the masses information about the existence of a creative idea that works. What it does not do is enable the masses to be able to think creatively. It does not attempt to empower the masses to be positive deviants. In other words, it does not intend or attempt to skew the normal curve to the positive side. By using positive deviance, you are providing a solution that works in the limited resources availability scenario. But you are still not enabling the individual to come up with his solution on his own. Creativity enhancement enables an individual to find innovative solutions for every problem he is and will be faced with in the future.

For all the reasons stated above and many more, creativity is crucial in general and specific to the development communication context. By ignoring systematic training and enhancement creativity in the past 80 years, the field of development communication has stunted its ability to achieve its goals.

Creativity Before Phase P

The call for action to advance social justice and directed change is no more only the prerogative of democratic superpowers and transnational organisations. With the new avatar of development communication, the call to action can come from anyone and from anywhere. Phase P of the POD model explains in detail the numerous mechanisms referred to as radical communicative actions and their place in forwarding the goal of social justice and directed change. This section elaborates the role of creativity in these radical communicative actions

Before going any further, it is important to remind the readers of the types of radical communicative actions. The radical communicative actions as listed in the Phase P are social mobilisation, media mobilisation, community mobilisation, advocacy communication, information politics, empowerment-related communication, networking for social and political action, and resistance communication. The underlying functions that make up these actions can be broadly categorised into three areas of action: content creation, content dissemination, and individual/people management.

Let us take resistance communication for example. Within resistance communication most of the direct resistive actions such as street protests and demonstrations, marches, vigils, rallies are straightforward. Creativity is required in planning different versions of these direct actions. Creativity has also been used to make format-based changes in these direct actions. The occupy movement is an example of a format change within the direct resistive actions. The occupy strategy was largely successful and it has now been deployed in more than eighty countries globally.

Whereas, indirect resistive action such as the use of political artwork and graffiti are direct outcomes of the creative abilities of artists. A lesser-discussed resistive strategy that has been around for a while now is the publishing of cartoons in magazines and newspapers. The ability of a cartoonist to criticise the predominant system or shining light upon an important issue and supporting the call to action is again closely connected to one's creative proclivities. A modern form of such cartoon-based resistive actions that came into limelight with the internet and especially social networking sites is memes. Memes are used as radical communicative actions and have at times larger viewership than traditional newspaper cartoons. The ability to create memes requires

creative thinking and some acumen in using editing software. In the case of newspapers, the creativity aspect was constant but instead of editing software people needed to possess drawing skills. Just like memes and other political artwork, graffiti is also creativity heavy. There are two components to graffiti. There is the message and the artistic depiction. Both rely on creativity.

In information politics, the goal is to generate politically usable information and enact policy changes. Creativity becomes important not only during the creation of politically usable information but also during the conceptualisation and drafting of new policies. Conceptualising new policies is inherently creative. Even finding innovative ways for strengthening existing policies is a creative thinking exercise. Through the radical communicative action of empowerment-related communication, one creates, expands and sustains the agency of an individual and a community. Creativity alerts individuals to their own entrenchments and subsequently also enables them to overcome their entrenchments. Actualising one's potential is unquestionably fulfilling. When one gets in touch with his or her inner creativity he or she becomes aware of the 'what it isn't' and this very journey from 'what is' to 'what could be' is a strong step in inching closer from life politics to emancipatory politics and journeying towards the politics of self-actualisation.

The goals for community mobilisation, media mobilisation, and social mobilisation influence public opinion, raise awareness, encourage debates and participation by using local, online social and mobile media. These radical communicative actions depend on content creation as well as content dissemination which requires creative thinking and creative problem-solving. An interesting phenomenon of radical communicative mobilizing actions against heavy control and censorship is currently happening in China. China controls and censors its media outlets especially the internet-enabled networking platforms. To counter the control and censorship, activists and resistive groups have resorted to creativity and redefined and reimagined aspects of language. This has led to a classic game of cat and mouse between the government controllers and activists. A primary way of controlling any anti-establishment initiative is by keeping checks on the use of certain words and phrases. To avoid the trap, activists have created codes and code languages to fly below the radar.

Creativity Enhancement

Creative achievement is like the accumulation of potential creative energy which upon release transforms into useful kinetic energy. Contrary to the misbelief, creative achievements are not sudden bursts, revolutionary or disruptive ideas. Creativity is a skill. It is an ability that has to be enhanced incrementally. "With creativity being distinctly integral and important to the field of development and progressive social change, it is vital to explore the ability to enhance or develop it" (Yagnik, 2018). Although there have been sporadic instances of the application of creative thinking and inputs in development communication, systematic and purposeful creativity enhancement has not been undertaken in the field. Brainstorming has been a popular method used to generate ideas. However, systematic training of how to use brainstorming is hard to be seen. Attempting to use a tool without proper training can be counterproductive. Before you start driving a car you are required to learn and know how to pump fuel in it. Currently, in development communication there are a lot of car drivers, but they do not necessarily have the required know-how to pump the fuel.

It is important to reiterate that creativity is a skill, an ability. This means that it can be taught, developed, and enhanced. As stated before, creativity is the ability to create ideas that are novel and useful. This much-needed ability is developed through getting in touch with one's inner creativity, allowing it to flow freely and finally by letting one's actions and decisions be inspired by creativity. There are several creativity enhancement systems that are generally popularised under the guise of idea generational systems. A very popular system is brainstorming. Brainstorming started initially as an idea generating system for individuals but in later years after research it was realised that brainstorming works the best when conducted in a small group setting. There are many other popular such systems such as "The six Hats Method, the Creative Pause, The Concept Fan, Movement, Setting Up Provocations, the Random Input, The Creative Pause, Turn the Situation Upside Down, Find or Apply Analogy, Borrow, Adapt and Steal Tactics, Simplify, Deviation Amplification, Let it Happen, Contrarianism, Redefine the Problem or Situation, and more."

Creative Aerobics (CA) (George & Yagnik, 2017) is another such system, which Yagnik (2018) argues can be beneficial to advance the work of communication for development and social change. As opposed to Positive Deviance, Creative Aerobics led creativity enhancement intends to empower every individual and hopefully gives them enough agency to become positive deviants. This is especially important in regards with capacity building, agency creation, and idea development. Given below is the strategic placement of creativity enhancement according to Yagnik (2018). An additional systematic and purposeful creativity enhancement intervention must be included in the overall process flow.
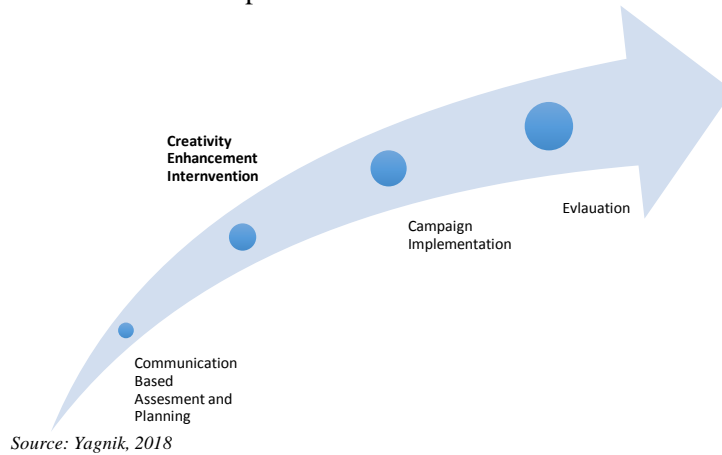

Creativity Enhancement Internvention

Evlauation

Campaign Implementation

Communication Based Assesment and Planning

Source: Yagnik, 2018

Figure 2: Creativity Enhancement Intervention Positioning

Even in the POD model, there has to be an addition of a creativity-based intervention labeled as C. The stages of assessment, planning, execution and evaluation are standard to all the radical communicative actions of Phase P. Moreover, as seen in an earlier section, creativity lends itself to content creation and dissemination, which is critical for the communication for development and social change field.

Conclusion

Creativity plays a vital role in the field of development communication for social justice in directed change. Communicative radical actions are like toothless tigers without creativity and creative individuals. Without high-impact powerful communicative radical actions of the Phase P, it is unlikely to achieve the goals of directed social change as put forth in the POD model. Systematic and purposeful enhancement of creativity should be given more importance in the field of development communication. Creativity is the fuel for the future of development communication. Without systematic and purposeful training in creativity and creative problem solving, the different actors involved in development communication for social justice in directed change are like cars without fuel. It is not that cars without fuels don't run. Cars without fuel run if they are on a slope or are being pushed by a few people. But the moment the slope becomes uphill and/or there is a dip in the number of people pushing it there is a crisis. Moreover, the work of directed social change and social justice is one of the toughest uphill treks. The car will be unable to transport individuals and societies to the destinations of equity and social justice. It is not sustainable. Therefore, it is time that development communication practitioners, scholars and organisations start systematically investing in creativity.

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