



Services for Rural Development

Sector Project "Knowledge Systems in Rural Areas"



Reader: Media in Rural Development

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1. Introduction

Digital Information and Media are excellent tools to increase knowledge as an important production factor. The generic term used for the Digital Information Sector is ICT (Information and Communication Technologies). ICTs contribute to the display, processing, storing and spread of information through electronic means (BRUNEAU and LACROIX, 2001). Often rural people in developing countries are excluded from the media-based political debate and lack a source of technical information. With the advent of the Internet era, the "digital divide" between industrialised and developing countries has become a major issue of global inequality. Yet, we should not only consider the fashionable Internet, but also the traditional media concerning access to information. The purposes of communication and transfer of knowledge can be approached through different channels.

2. Media Tools

2.1. *Print Media* BY IBRAHIM KHADAR AND OUMY NDIAYE

Print Media work well with participatory approaches. They include newspapers, posters, photo albums, wrappers, folders, stickers, calendars etc. The general use of print media in development is to provide information, to sensitize, reach and stabilise groups of rural people. Compared to other media, print has the advantage of being relatively cheap, as well as better to memorize because of the fact that written words or pictures stick better in mind. This medium is comparatively low-priced and available for a wide range of people. **The role of Print Media in agricultural and rural development has been evaluated by Ibrahim Khadar and Oumy Ndiaye from the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA),** which was established in 1983 under the Lomé Convention between the ACP (African, Caribbean and Pacific) Group of States and the European Union Member States. Since 2000, CTA has operated within the framework of the ACP-EC Cotonou Agreement.

Commissioned by:



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Introduction

The tasks of the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (ACP-EU) are to develop and promote services that improve access to information for agricultural and rural development, and to strengthen the capacity of ACP countries to produce, acquire, exchange and utilize information in this area.

CTA's operations are divided into three programmes:

- (1) Information Products and Services
- (2) Communication Channels and Services, and
- (3) Information Communication Management Systems and Skills.

The presentation has two parts

Overview general principles: The place of print media in development

Focus on CTA: Use and role of print media

The rise of the use of print media is linked to the virtual generalization of participatory methods in setting up development projects. So-called community projects began in the 1980s. In the 1990s, a diversification took place in order to refine theoretical concepts and practical tools. In fact, it was difficult to gather the experiences in the field, even if there is a lot of material produced around. A generalization of participatory methods (at least in words) can be observed at present. The use of print media is revisited on a regular basis as a foundation of how to develop participatory methods in the field.

Basic principles

Different print media have to be chosen on the basis of the use to which they are put. The use of media should be participatory.

What are the possible uses of print media in development?

- To inform
- To initiate dialogue and inspire confidence
- To seek for consensus
- Special pleading
- Bring about social mobilization
- To render account
- Others

To put it in a nutshell, the general use of print media is to provide information, to sensitize, and to mould the groupings participating in setting up the programmes. A prior condition is the in-depth identification of all participant groupings, and not just populations

The success of rural development programmes depends to a large extent on the joint contribution made by actors at different levels, these being the recipients of the information transmitted via the print media.

Recipients of information

The spread and exchange of information between the following categories of participants aims at appropriating the programme in some way and at acquiring autonomy as regards initiatives contributing to the success of the programme / project:

- The various categories of the community involved
- The team responsible for setting up the programme
- The other development actors (other projects, technical services intervening in a related technical domain, local organisations, NGOs)
- Elected representatives at local level
- The local and / or national private sector

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- The authorities in the region where the programme is set up
- Elected representatives at regional level
- Staff of the authorising National Technical Service
- Those responsible for the programme / project at the authorising Technical Ministry
- Those responsible for the programme / project at the Ministry of Finance
- Those responsible for the programme / project at the Ministry of Planning
- The political decision-makers
- Elected representatives at national level
- Others

The diversity of recipients implies making choices regarding:

- The necessary level of the information
- The type of information required
- The periodicity
- The correct format

The use of the print media should be included in an overall, intensive communication programme adapted to the different participating groupings on whom the success of the programme / project depends.

Choice of print media

Different stages in participatory approaches require specific print supports drawing on prior experience. Institutional communication is directed towards decision-makers, planners, external partners and partners at national level. The choice of relevant print media comprises press (general and specialised), illustrated brochures, policy briefs, printed versions of web-pages and reporting on activities (overall reports, summaries or extracts with commentary).

Mass communication is directed towards the public at large, actors on the rural development stage and economic sectors tied to rural development. The choice of print media relevant for this area comprises press (including local language newspapers), posters, wrappers, folders, stickers, calendars, diaries and others. Close communication is required at different stages with tools for interaction between communication specialists and partners in the field.

- Stage: Information / knowledge of the environment
(Map of the site, murals, posters, photo albums)
- Stage: Identification of solutions
(Illustrated cards like GRAAP Method)
- Stage: Training
(Extension file, jumbo notepad, technical data sheets, models)
- Stage: Follow-up / evaluation
(Photo album with comments, comparative map of site)

In the choice of print media, there are some essential elements that have to be taken into consideration:

- The choice of languages and language style depends on the recipients of the information
- The importance of local languages and of the links between communication strategies and programmes for functional literacy
- Analysis of the specific needs of the various categories of recipients (taking gender into account)

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Specific characteristics of print media include the following advantages:

- “Verba volant, scripta manent”
(Spoken words take flight, written words remain)
- Wide range
- Room for creativity and adaptation to contexts with limited resources
- Non-ephemeral character: possibility to revise, re-read and save
- Chance to communicate between partners, whether literate or not (drawings, photos, graphic creations)

Specific characteristics of print media include the following limitations:

- Costs involved when a certain level of quality / attractiveness is required and as regards distribution
- Compares badly with audio-visual support in certain situations
- Specific characteristics of print media

Print media can be integrated with different media. The content of print media can be used for radio broadcasts (the idea behind „Spore“ / audio). There are some exceptional opportunities provided by ICTs (for posting printed material on the web, sending printed material by e-mail, scanning and distributing documents).

CTA’s experience with print publishing

Direct users and ultimate beneficiaries:

- Farmers’ organisations, NGOs, women’s groups, trade unions, consumer groups and training institutes
- Exporters, chambers of commerce, processors and distributors
- Researchers, extension services and rural broadcasters
- Ministries and policy-makers
- Local service providers
- ACP regional organisations and networks

Media options:

- Oral medium: talking & listening, location-based seminars and training courses (mainly regional and international)
- Print (many publications)
- CD-ROM (pioneering role in piloting its use in Africa)
- Radio (in rural areas, relating to market information, etc.)
- Internet (e-mail, PDF, websites / portals)
- Multi-media approach

Information content:

- Policy issues
- Marketing
- Agricultural productivity
- ICM / ICTs
- Cross-cutting topics like gender and youth

Information sources:

- CTA seminars and studies
- Other development agencies

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- Publishers (mainly, but not exclusively, EU-based)
- EU authors
- ACP authors
- ACP publishers

Products:

- Journals („Spore“ and ICT Update and co-published: ARD)
- Conference proceedings
- Working documents
- Series
- Pamphlets
- Books
- Institutional publications

Publication distribution service:

- Access (free of charge; 74000 publications distributed to about 20000 recipients in 2002; limited access through subscription and credit system)
- New emphasis: local distribution, gender consideration and rural areas

Performance and impact issues

Talking about the use of media automatically means talking about the evaluation of impact. The(re are) [...] different levels and issues to consider in performance and impact evaluation.

Levels of intervention (evaluation scope and focus):

- Society & Development (long-term outcomes):
improved standard of living, improved policies
- Individuals / Organisations (medium-term / short-term outcomes): improved awareness, opportunities / threats identified,
improved skills, better informed decision-making
- Products and Services: relevance, demand, user satisfaction, effectiveness, accessibility, timeliness, accuracy
- Processes and Management: Needs, planning, efficiency, implementation, financial sustainability

Practical examples:

- CTA publishing programme
(1998 review: stratified random sampling / 445 responses)
 - Better informed of new practices / technologies: 63%
 - More aware of available opportunities: 51%
 - Improved skills: 63%
 - Information quite relevant: 98%
 - Information applied in their job: 88%
 - Information shared (discussion, lending, training): 90%
- DORA project (book donation scheme):
2000 / 2001 review, Nigeria (Interviews, focus groups and surveys)
 - Students expressed acute shortage of books / appreciated CTA coming to their rescue

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- All those surveyed / interviewed (students and lecturers) found the information in DORA books relevant
- Books should be kept in faculty and departmental libraries to make them more accessible
- The practice of sending books to individuals should be discontinued because people refuse to lend them to others
- Performance and impact issues (role of print media): practical examples
- „Spore“
(reader survey 2001 / 2002; no. of responses: 1314; questionnaire sent to all readers)
 - Uses of „Spore“ (based on open-ended question): raise awareness (55%), identify opportunities (15%), improve skills (25%), improve decision-making (3%)
 - Readership: 40 000 copies distributed per issue, 27 readers per copy on average

2.2. Rural Radio

Even if the radio is an "old-fashioned" medium in the current information age, in rural areas it is still the most widespread, accessible and affordable mass medium. In recent years, many small FM stations with distinct local content and audience appeared in rural areas. Rural Radio can empower communities to participate in dialogue and decision-making that influence their social, economic and cultural environment. Rural Radio gives the opportunity to be both part of the audience and member of the team of producers. **Riccardo Del Castello (The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, FAO) portrays how the Rural Radio Approach of the FAO could lead to an empowerment of communities.**

Rural Radio can facilitate linkages between farmers, extensionists and researchers. **Helen Hambly (International Service for National Agricultural Research ISNAR) shows that Radio stations could be linked with Agricultural Research** in the following aspects:

- exchanging knowledge and research
- receiving information about research products
- giving feedback on the reaction of communities to the research activities/ results
- collecting information from communities about their needs for agricultural technologies
- announcing progress on collaborative research.

2.2.1. Empowering Rural Communities Through Rural Radio *BY RICCARDO DEL CASTELLO*

Introduction

In communication for development it is not uncommon to talk about Rural Radio as an interactive tool. However, to the layperson this may sound awkward since radio is by definition a mass medium with a top-down characteristic. Yet, Rural Radio still arouses interest and curiosity: there must be more to it than just a radio in the countryside.

This presentation gives a broad overview of this tool, what it is, how it functions and why it is so special for certain development countries. The experiences mentioned are not meant to be exhaustive, they are drawn from the work that FAO has been carrying out as part of its communication for development programmes and projects related to agriculture and rural development.

Mass media are of crucial importance in rural areas of developing countries. Equally important is their role in communicating the information needed for individual's every-day lives: from market prices and credit facilities to weather reports, music, entertainment and culture.

Media and communications have been effectively employed since the early days of development assistance, but their application influenced by the various post-war development theories and, to a large extent, a top-down approach has dominated the scene.

Radio, television, cinema, print media and theatre are instruments through which the masses could be exposed to new ways of thinking and taught new attitudes in order to stimulate economic development.

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However, over the years the so-called masses have begun to appropriate these tools and to stimulate a truly bottom-up development. The growth of Rural Radio stations reflects both: the improvements in information technologies and the shifting development paradigm towards a more participatory style of information and knowledge transfer.

Rural Development in the Information Age

Radio in the current Information Age is characterized by technological progress, new tools and channels, info highways, information revolution and information economy.

Radio for development fell out of fashion when the Internet came on the scene. The world's knowledge a mouse-click away - an attractive application for many development organizations. Radio is taken for granted in the West. We forget that for most people in rural areas radio is still the most pervasive, the most accessible, the most affordable, and the most flexible mass medium. Often, the only mass medium.

Rural Radio and communication technology are closely linked. The new digital communication environment is characterized by:

- Dramatic expansion in information technology and services
- World-wide increase in the reach of mass media and electronic communication
- New forms of social interaction, new relationships and new types of transactions
- New economic opportunities and challenges

How have developing countries adapted to the new global information environment? Some issues:

- Building the information technology infrastructure
- Opportunities vs. threats
- Social impact of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) on the lives of people
- North-South discussion: Is the technology narrowing or widening the knowledge gap between rich and poor communities?
- What about rural communities where basic access to telecommunication facilities is lacking?

The recurring issue is infrastructure. But that is not always the case problem. The current debate revolves around the question of opportunities and threats.

Theoretically new ICTs could act as a catalyst for developing countries regarding access to knowledge and information for agricultural production and rural development. ICTs can be effective means of providing farmers with information on markets, technology, credit facilities, government services and policies, weather, livestock, health and natural resource protection. Also, they can facilitate dialogue among communities and encourage participation in decisions that concern their lives and coordinate local national and regional development efforts.

With the new communication technology discussions the notion of information poverty came up in which classes of information “haves” and “have nots” are created based on poor peoples' access to the technologies. In the Information Age where economies are placing greater importance and value on information, the effect on those people in the “have nots” group is potentially devastating. This is especially true for rural people who live in remote and hard-to-reach-areas. Giving technology access to the poor will not put an end to poverty. People with access do not automatically move to the information rich group. They must be able to use the technology and the information available to them in order to seek meaningful answers to their questions. The discussions about the Digital Divide are not just a question of infrastructure but rather a question of capacity and content. Therefore, the solutions are not only in the technology but primarily in capacity building and content creation. Infrastructure debates should focus on equipment and applications suitable for rural areas.

There is a clear need to facilitate access to sources of relevant content. Knowledge is essential for rural development. It empowers people to find solutions to their immediate needs. The knowledge does not

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necessarily have to come from outside the community, it is often right there or in a neighbouring village. It just needs to be communicated.

Why is information so important to development and food security?

- More than 80 developing countries suffer from chronic food deficits and 800 million people live in hunger.
- By 2025 the world’s population may exceed 8 billion and food needs in developing countries may double.
- Of these, more than two billion men and women will live in the rural areas of developing countries.
- The challenge for these countries is to assist farmers in achieving food security – It is a basic right of people to have access to the food they need.

Eliminating poverty and achieve food security calls for:

- New technologies, skills, practices and ways to collaborate
- Innovative strategies and investments in human resource development
- Opportunities to communicate with peers, local authorities and institutions
- Access to relevant knowledge and information, including technical, scientific, economic, social and cultural information
- Putting people, their knowledge and information at the centre of agricultural and rural development efforts

Information must...

- **be available in appropriate languages,**
- **be available in appropriate formats,**
- **be up-to-date,**
- **provide locally relevant contents and**
- **be communicated through appropriate channels.**

The characteristics of a good channel include proximity, trust and knowledge.

One notable example is Rural Radio.

Definition of Rural Radio

It is a radio for the rural areas broadcasting agricultural topics to a specific audience. Community Radio differs from the other two predominant communication models: public and commercial. Rural Radio and Community Radio are used interchangeably or together to describe a station broadcasting to a predominantly rural audience and of local focus.

Community Radio is characterized by access, public participation in production and decision-making, audience support and financing. The management of the station is in the hands of those who use it and listen to it. Structure facilitates participation in a way the other two models do not (volunteer work, targeted topics, opportunity for training, audience feedback). It has a local focus.

In the West, community radio is only a small actor in a vast landscape of various media. It serves the objectives and the needs of the community. In developing countries it is:

- A powerful tool for informing on topics those are crucial to rural livelihoods
- An agent of social change
- A tool for conflict management and conflict resolution
- A channel for expressing ideas and opinions
- An engine of democratization
- In a nutshell: Rural Radio is a development tool!

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Some basic data about Rural and Community Radio

Coverage area: 25 - 60 km

Transmitting power: 25 to 250 Watts

Equipment: Sturdy, high tolerance, dual, ¼” tape, cassettes, minidisks and reporting equipment

Configuration: Control room, Studio, Transmitter room, Editing room, Storage room, Power generator shelter or solar generator

Cost: approx. US \$ 80,000

Station management: Steering committee - made up of community representatives

Staff: Director, secretary, 2 - 3 technicians, producers-animators

On-air time: 10 - 12 hours / day

Programming: Agricultural topics, local and national news, culture, entertainment and personal announcements

Functions of Rural and Community Radio

- To Provide an instrument for responding to the communication needs of a given social group
- To overcome the shortcomings of state and commercial broadcasters
- To provide the right to access, participation and self management
- To produce timely and relevant information
- To reproduce cultural identity
- To voice social and economic demands
- To create alliances and new social relations

Rural Radio empowers communities to participate in dialogue and decision-making that influence their social, economic and cultural environment. It is a widespread, pervasive, accessible, affordable and popular means of communication that can motivate, raise awareness and mobilize local communities. The new radio landscape - privatized, deregulated, decentralized and community based - facilitates community empowerment. Rural Radio is:

- A platform for democratic and pluralistic expression of the opinions, needs and aspirations of rural communities
- A channel for interactive communication, dialogue and debate on a wide range of issues (agricultural, educational, health, social and cultural)
- A means for rapid diffusion of development information in a diversity of languages that reaches remote areas

Historical Background of Rural Radio

The Rural Radio concept started in West Africa towards the end of the 1960s. It was supported from international organizations and NGOs. At the beginning, the programmes were broadcasted from the state radio. Programming treated agricultural topics, cultivation techniques, farm management and machinery. Often, producers were located in the capital cities. As they produced programmes for rural audiences they were unacquainted with the reality of these areas.

In the 1980s, there was a shift towards rural development and farmer’s life as a whole. Through the advent of FM radio, low cost transmitters and receivers as well as mobile reporting equipment (cassette) Rural Radio was widespread.

With the upcoming participatory approaches in the 1990s the focus changed to reporting from the villages, community involvement and public broadcasts. Radio became a tool for stimulating development action. Audience needs and expectations became a public domain. The radio station adopted its own legal framework.

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FAO's Approach to Rural Radio

FAO has a long-standing commitment to the development of Rural Radio.

1966 -1988	Creation of radio clubs and support to the establishment of Rural Radios in Africa (Congo, Mauritania, Guinea and Chad)
1993	Re-launching Rural Radio activities in Mali
1994-1995	Formulation of a Rural Radio methodology in Niger and Guinea Bissau
1996	International meetings on Rural Radio

in 27 countries of Africa

Development of participatory interactive methodology

1997-2001	Setting-up 4 local Community Radios in Southern Mali
1997-2002	Assessment of ICTs potential to strengthen Rural Radio
2000	Development of a methodology for monitoring, evaluation and content analysis

FAO's Rural Radio Strategy

FAO has guiding principles for the work with Rural Radio:
Integration - Interdisciplinarity - Interactivity - Sustainability

Rural Radio should not only be concerned with agricultural issues but include all topics that are relevant to the rural world.

Integration: Rural Radio stations must integrate a large number of concerns and themes related to rural development. It is therefore important to encourage inter-sectoral collaboration on programme planning and providing advice. Government departments concerned with development, NGOs, donors, as well as the associations or groups that represent the rural world must all be involved.

Interdisciplinarity: Rural Radio production teams must represent and engage a range of topics and approaches.

Interactivity: Rural Radio programming must be based on the concerns of the rural world and be presented in the form of an ongoing dialogue with the community. Priority should therefore be given to field production techniques involving local participation and close interaction with community members.

Sustainability: Appropriate and effective legal, institutional and administrative frameworks are required for the proper management of the Rural Radio stations. These will ensure a better use of human and financial resources, efficiency and thus a more sustainable operation.

The Participatory Methodology of Rural Radio

In the 1980s, Rural Radio and PRA (Participatory Rural Appraisal) developed simultaneously, drawing from the same disciplines and borrowing various techniques from each other. The participatory approach is used in:

- Diagnostic activities
- Evaluation activities

On location radio production stimulates familiarization with surroundings and with community members, social interaction, participatory observation, preliminary discussions with village leaders and identification of themes and subjects, recording of interviews, testimonials, statements, proverbs and music, as well as editing and broadcasting.

The participatory research-oriented production process promotes discussion and reflection. The process continues during the broadcasts and after the team of producers returns to the village to collect reactions.

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When successful it can provoke lasting changes in a community that is empowered by the knowledge that its concerns are valid. The programme promotes communication between villages and innovation as the members of one community learn from others that have developed solutions for common problems.

Some Lessons Learnt

- 1. A Rural Radio initiative must be based on a communication for development approach!**
Start with the audience needs!
Develop the project with the final end users!
Promote the active participation of local populations and encourage partnerships!
Involve local population in the actual setting up of the radio station!
- 2. There is a need to establish a management committee!**
- 3. Legal framework is required!**
- 4. Training is needed in:**
 - Management**
 - Technical operation and maintenance**
 - Programme production and interviewing techniques**
 - Marketing communication services**Implementation period: four to six years
The radio must serve the information and communication needs of the whole community!
A survey of the electromagnetic field is always required.

Constraints

- **Relatively high initial investment costs**
- **Difficulty in building community ownership**
- **Maintenance**

In Conclusion

Rural Radio gives the average listener the opportunity to be at the same time member of the audience and of the team of producers. His or her contribution is a significant part of a specific message that the radio, in its authoritative capacity as mass medium, wants convey to the other members of the community. In doing so, the whole process becomes a dialogue between communication equals.

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The Rural Radio methodology is built around the close contact with the people through field visits. The recording studio becomes the village centre or the schoolyard and the radio staff themselves become members of the community in which they work.

Voices

“Our Rural Radio has to keep on continue? Otherwise we will loose our identity... Our radio speaks to us and about us.”

Niamato, Rural Radio Listener, Kati, Mali

“... Rural Radio has created a sort of feeling of local belonging and strengthened our ties with the local authorities and institutions...”

Micro Finance Officer, Kati, Mali

Finishing his presentation Ricardo Del Castello showed a promotion video about Rural Radio in Western Africa and Central America. The video provided some successful examples of how Rural Radio can tackle agricultural and social problems as well as stimulating the exchange between different groups of the community, like farmers’ organizations. Rural Radio has a clear potential for facilitating the sharing of information and local experiences. It can be used for stimulating learning by doing.

The video is included in the Workshop’s set of CDs. If you are interested please send an Email to Paul-mathias.braun@gtz.de.

2.2.2. Linking Agricultural Research and Rural Radio in Africa *BY HELEN HAMBL Y*

Introduction

This presentation focuses on the experiences of a Rural Radio project as a form of new / old information and communication technology (ICT) and as an organization that can facilitate farmer-extension-research linkages. With radio you can stimulate social learning. Social learning occurs between people, not technologies. Radio offers the advantage that it reaches resource poor people in local languages across long distances and is in line with the oral tradition of many rural people (i.e. building on powerful media like storytelling and singing).

Globalization of Agriculture: Impact on Research & Extension

Globalization demands new types of relationships (linkages) between researchers and farmers and various intermediaries (NGOs, extension staff, etc.). ICTs, but also new biotechnologies, are changing agricultural research and extension systems. There is a lot of pressure for restructuring and adapting organizations to these changing conditions. The gap between information “haves”, “have nots” and “will nots” widens. That is the agricultural digital divide. This should be of some concern for those who work in extension and research projects.

Why Agricultural Knowledge?

Agricultural knowledge enables rural people to learn about new ways to improve agriculture, and for researchers to learn from rural people. It is a two-way street. Knowledge is critical to generating and sustaining income and employment opportunities. The access to information is the key for marginalized rural people. Women have access to only 10% of agricultural extension programs (World Bank, 1998).

Definition & History

Rural Radio broadcasts to a rural audience. Most often on a relatively local scale (25 – 50 km radius) transmitting at 10 - 100 Watts. Some large transmitters (5000 Watts) can technically reach millions of listeners. It is difficult to generalize Rural Radio, usually it is country specific. In the 21st century, Rural Radio has seen many innovations like radio in suitcase and solar energy. But the renaissance of Rural Radio is not only due to technical innovations but also to new organizational roles. Today, we have new roles for Rural Radio like:

- Credit services

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- Distance / open learning
- Cultural centres – especially for youth
- Community databases

Rural Radio – A 21st Century Typology

- Government centralized and decentralized radio stations
- Commercial radio stations
- Community radio stations
- National networks and associations of Rural Radio broadcasters

Challenges

1. National policy does not necessarily give sufficient priority and resources to the establishment of community based radio programming and networks.
2. Rural Radio often involves untrained volunteers who have learned by doing, rather than by studying broadcasting techniques such as operating radio equipment, surveying audiences, and compiling radio programmes – they are not trained in agriculture, health, etc.
3. Information is not always readily available to broadcasters or in a simple style or language easily transmitted to farmers – the “bottom line” of agricultural extension is the quality of its message.

Five Reasons to Link Research and Radio Stations

Often, the linkages between farmers, research, extension and Rural Radio are weak. The figure on the right shows a desirable model for the future. Reasons are:

4. Exchanging knowledge and research findings through Rural Radio to multiple stakeholders: farmers, extension workers, community groups and NGOs, primary, secondary and technical schools and rural businesses.
5. Receiving information on where research products were used and where inputs / services can be obtained.
6. Giving feedback to researchers on the reaction of communities to research activities or results.
7. Collecting information and feedback from communities about their needs for new or improved agricultural technologies and experiences in using existing technologies.
8. Announcing progress on collaborative research / extension / farmer activities including providing information about venues for meetings or visits from outside specialists.

Needed: A Systematic Approach to Linkages

- Identification of needs for linking
- Through training develop appropriate knowledge, attitudes and skills for stakeholder collaboration
- Put in practice new or improved knowledge, attitudes and skills
- Ensure the sustainability of capacity building by following up
- Build networks to support capacity building

And we need to cause systemic changes. Proximity does not mean partnership!

The relationship between agricultural research and Rural Radio is weak or non-existent within the NARS.

Despite public research and radio having the same target audience a disconnect between the two stations of research and radio persists.

A systematic approach to linkages must address partnership attitudes!

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The Project (2000 - present)

Four countries: Cameroon, Uganda and Ghana (English), and Mali and Cameroon (French). Each country has a different history with the media and creates different contexts for radio and agricultural extension.

Why start in Africa? Food security is worsening. Radio is still a very important media. In Africa for every 1000 people there were by the late 1990s:

- 12 newspapers
- 52 televisions
- 14 telephone (main)lines
- 5 mobile telephones
- 7.5 personal computers
- 198 radios

The information world is changing but telecentres and access to Internet are still far from the current reality of many rural communities in Africa.

Project Objective

The project aims to develop capacity for agricultural research and Rural Radio linkages. The methodology evolves from knowledge-based action research (multiple data sources, experiential learning method for individual and organizational change: experience, process, generalize, apply...repeat)

Knowledge Based Action Research

9. Situation analysis
10. Needs assessment for research, extension and radio partnership (module 1) – available on the website
11. Training needs and organizational constraints assessed (report & video)
12. Learning material development & workshop (module 2)
13. Resource kit (hard copies & CD-Rom)
14. Team action plans developed and backstopped with support from ISNAR and existing and new partners (e.g. Commonwealth of Learning, OPEC)
15. Team survey of ICT access and use
16. Team visits (electronic and face-to-face)

CIDA-supported learning materials & resource kits are available under:

<http://www.isnar.cgiar.org/activities/radio.htm>

Team Action Plans - Examples

Ghana: Ministry of Food and Agriculture, Radio Peace and District Assembly Extension - Food for life: Sustaining high-yielding sweet potato production among resource poor farmers in Awutu-Effutu-Senya and Gomoa Districts.

Uganda: Ministry of Agriculture, Budu Broadcasting Service, Buganda Youth Alert and Ministry of Health - Roll back malaria: Neem trees for malaria and its vector control for resource poor farmers in Mukungwe.

Cameroon: Institute for Research for Agricultural Development (IRAD / research and extension branches), Cameroon Radio and Television and SOWEDA Producers Association - Second season maize: An unexploited income generating opportunity for rural women in Fako and Meme Division.

Project Findings – Theory and Practice

What can we learn about institutions that rarely or never work together? In theoretical terms, linkages are not formed (functionalist view) but learned through social interaction. This is not the same as attending a training course on linkages or establishing a policy. Active engagement of partners is required: Methodology =

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"Learning to Link".

NARS institutions may have "incomplete" ICT policy from a development communication perspective: a limited perception of radio.

Examining and improving existing farm radio programmes will help to develop new partnerships and facilitate agricultural innovation.

Limitations of the Project

Role of farmer organizations in linking research and Rural Radio requires attention.

There was limited opportunity for comparative field research (contrast experience in other countries and regions, e.g. Asia).

Future Research Issues

- Analysis of national research / radio station partnerships – including benefit / cost analysis
- Partnerships – but also how conflicts among research / extension organizations are resolved
- Advocate role of media in agricultural innovation process
- Strengthen policy and programmes for communication (not just IT) in national agricultural research systems

2.3. Internet BY DIETRICH MÜLLER-FALCKE

The Internet is potentially one of the most important media in rural development. However, it is still largely irrelevant to the lives of rural poor. This is currently discussed under the term "digital divide" (cp. Reader "Knowledge and Information Management") with the future task to make the Internet more relevant for the development of rural communities. Reviewing the preconditions for an implementation of Internet for rural development, **Dietrich Müller-Falcke (DETECON) sums up that it is necessary to concentrate simultaneously on connectivity, content and context.**

DETECON International is an integrated technology management consultancy with a strong focus on telecommunications and forms part of the Deutsche Telekom Group. The company evolved from a merger between DETECON Consulting and Diebold and has a turnover of 160 Million Euros (2002). 700 Consultants are working for the company.

Over the last 36 months, Detecon International, which has offices in Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Spain, South Africa, Brazil, Thailand and the US, conducted projects in 120 countries.

Introduction

In the outline of the seminar it is stated that the Internet is one of "the most important media used in rural development". However, although the advent of the Internet, and especially the WWW, offers unprecedented opportunities for information exchange and knowledge transfer, the Internet is largely irrelevant to the lives of rural people. This presentation is about the preconditions to make Internet more relevant for rural development.

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Characteristics of the Internet (compared to other media):

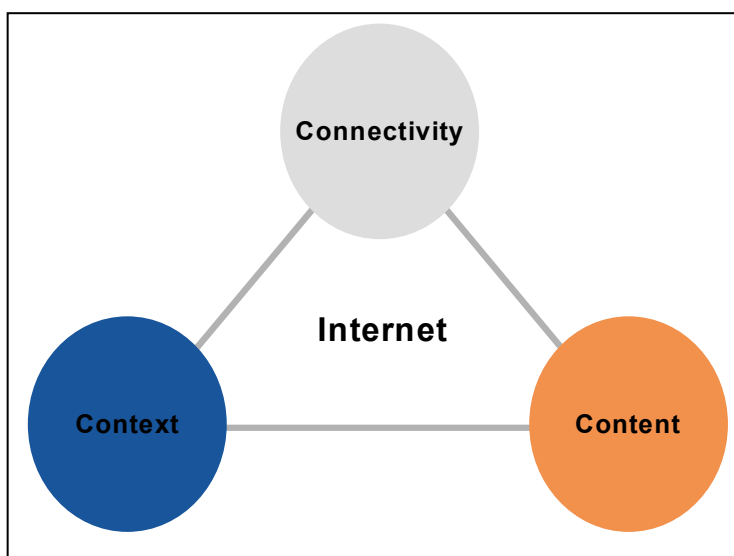
- Interactivity (synchronous exchange like in the WWW as well as asynchronous exchange like in emails)
- Choice of information
- Borderless access

Problems / Challenges:

- Specific access terminals needed
- Rapid technological development
- Skills and knowledge

The Triple-C Approach to Internet Usage

(See figure on the right)



Connectivity

If we talk about connectivity we have to talk about telecommunication. Their networks still form the basis for Internet usage.

There is a “Digital Divide”, not only on the international level but within countries. Regarding the number of telephone lines per 100 inhabitants the gap between rural and urban areas in developing countries is a lot wider than the gap between industrialised and developing countries. If it comes to Internet indicators the picture becomes worse.

Telecommunication and related technologies offer opportunities to mitigate the information problem in developing countries. They offer space and time bridging mechanisms. If gathering, storing, processing and distribution of information is expensive, this will lead to limited interaction and information flow between agents and finally to low efficiency and productivity.

The relevance of the time and space bridging characteristic is illustrated by data from a survey of Ghanaian households. The importance of telecommunication was ranked as follows: 1. saves money, 2. quick feedback, 3. saves time, 4. reduces risk of travel, 5. helps business, 6. increases frequency of info flow, 7. save / confidential, and 8. others.

Internet Infrastructure

The Internet has specific infrastructure requirements. There is a choice of available access technologies for rural areas.

- Infrastructure requirements
 - International connectivity (still expensive in developing countries)
 - National Internet exchanges (not enough connection points)
 - Quality of service
- Access technology options
 - PSTN – Public Switched Telephone Network (narrowband)
 - DSL (fixed line broadband)
 - Mobile (GSM, CDMA, DECT, WiFi)
 - Fixed Wireless
 - VSAT

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- Leased Line

Content

There are inherent problems to provide content for rural areas:

Information requirements:

- Fit to specific environment
- Language
- Relevance of topics

Content creation:

- Content creation as a public good
- Network effects in content creation
- Skills (create and organize content)
- Competition to other information sources?

Context

How to make the Internet relevant to rural areas? A meaningful use of the Internet requires specific, non-trivial institutional set-ups. Culture and traditions of information gathering have to be taken into account for the spread of the Internet.

Internet use evolves in the environment of

- content,
- ICT infrastructure (connectivity),
- regulation
(sector policy: connectivity, prices, content, Universal Service),
- culture (perception of information, specific traditions and institutions of information gathering, processing, storage and distribution),
- human resources and skills
(needed for use, content creation, operation and maintenance), and
- alternative information channels.

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Conclusions

Challenges to realise the full potential of the Internet for rural development:

The challenges to achieve the objective „Universal Access“ are foremost of political nature. Appropriate technology choice and efficient implementation may play an important role.

- Political challenges
 - Privatisation / Liberalisation
 - Regulation
 - Enforcement of policies
- Economic Challenges
 - Technology choice
 - Implementation
 - Operation

There is already a wide range of initiatives and projects on Internet use in rural areas. Currently most of these rather small projects have reached a problematic stage.

- Concentration on pilot projects
- Focus on access rather than on content
- Piecemeal approaches (context?)
- Dependency on donor support

To realise the potential the Internet is offering to rural development it is necessary to concentrate at the same time on connectivity, content and context.

3. Developing Media

Each medium has its own specific technical features that make it more or less suitable for specific objectives, target groups, situations, cultures, messages, levels of intervention and also budget. Different media strategies will be required for different objectives. The selection of a medium depends mainly on the message and the target group (gender, age and social status). Essential to success of media in rural development are a precise analysis of the situation, the objective and the actors, pre-testing and impact monitoring.

The proper selection of media is fundamental and should be done carefully. **Karin Bohmann (Freelance Media Expert) gives a concise overview of the steps that have to be considered in a successful media work.**

For the selection of media, financial, methodological, logistical and other criteria etc. are crucial. **Volker Hoffmann (University of Hohenheim) illustrates a checklist for media selection exemplary for the flannel board, which is relatively low-priced and widely used in rural development.**

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3.1. Impacting through Media - A Guide to Using Media BY KARIN BOHMANN

Introduction

Last year, I prepared a study for the GTZ Sector Project "Legal and Social Policy Advisory Services for Women" on the media use of NGO partners of the project as well as of other GTZ projects related to the themes of environment, rural development and health, and the multisectoral themes HIV prevention, gender and youth. In this context, I consulted more than 60 staff members.

In this presentation, I will focus on

- fundamental aspects of media work (avoiding pitfalls),
- concrete steps towards efficient media work and
- summarising some good practices.

Basic Aspects of Media Work

The most important rule is that there are no blueprints for an optimal media use. Each medium has its own specific technical features that make it more or less suitable for specific objectives, target groups, situations, cultures, messages and levels of intervention. These must be analysed in each case.

The advantages and disadvantages of a given media approach should be examined in the project planning phase, so that the first steps may be taken as soon as the project is launched. If the media component is introduced later – perhaps as a lifebelt for unsuccessful activities – time and valuable ground will already have been lost.

Media work has a good probability for success if fresh insights, experiences or changes of the situation can be flexibly integrated. It is therefore important that media activities will be developed process-oriented, as a part of planning and implementation.

The participation of target-group representatives in the various phases of media work has proved highly conducive to success. Ideally, stakeholders should participate in planning, design and implementation. For this, the target groups – their needs, customs, behaviour, values, culture and language – must be thoroughly understood.

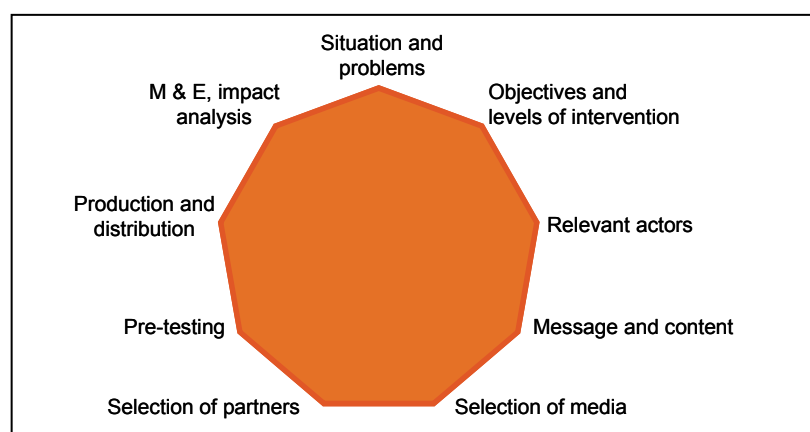
Awareness-raising measures as part of education or training are most likely to succeed when media work is combined with interpersonal communication. Some options are launching a debate with viewers after a video presentation or holding a phone-in debate on the radio following a special information programme.

A final fundamental aspect is continuity, especially regarding projects facilitating a shift in values or a change in behaviour, such as projects to conserve natural resources. In these contexts, media activities - and especially campaign work - should be planned for the medium to long term. Continuity does not mean permanence. A balance must be found between presence and continuity.

Though there may be no "blueprints", experience does show that process-oriented, participatory, culturally appropriate and continuous media work complemented by interpersonal communication is most likely to generate successful results.

Steps Towards Efficient Media Work

Before taking any concrete steps in media work, an organisation should establish whether it already enjoys a high profile and sufficient credibility among the target groups. If not, the organisation should first do some relations work on its own behalf. It is important to realistically assess existing human, economic and infrastructural resources, so that the organization can later respond to



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enquiries generated by the media. This refers particularly to mass media campaigns.

In each project, the media component plays a specific role and its scope is defined accordingly. This will determine the intensity and extent of the steps described now.

1. Situation and problem analysis

To get to know the problems and needs of the target group, a participative analysis of the concrete situation is highly important. This approach avoids that "outsiders" perceive things as problems that the stakeholders do not think are problematic. A period of reflection helps participants to identify problems they had previously overlooked. In any case, participants must hierarchise and prioritise problems, so that they can identify relevant problem-solving approaches, even at a later date.

The situation and problem analysis may differ significantly from an analysis conducted as a matter of course in cooperation projects. The media component is usually one of many activities. The radius of impact and level of intervention may not coincide with that of the project as a whole. Only when the impact radii of media work and the project as a whole match, a sole focus on the media-specific aspect will be sufficient.

Which media are available in the project region? The sexual health promotion project in Buenos Aires observed that at the discotheques where young people like to meet at weekends, video clips are shown on large screens during the dancing. This gave rise to the idea of using this medium for HIV prevention.

An exchange of information and experience with other projects in the local setting or projects addressing the same theme within the region can prevent mistakes and lead to the replication of positive approaches.

Sectoral networks and networks between projects addressing the same theme provide a good forum for such exchange.

2. Objectives and levels of intervention

The objective of media work should be formulated in concrete and positive terms. Different objectives, like information transfer through advisory services on the one hand and advocacy measures on the other, should be treated separately. Different strategies will be required for different objectives, and different media employed.

Once the objectives are defined levels of intervention can be identified. If objectives include structural change, such as advancing rural reforms, parallel activities at the micro, meso and macro levels may prove efficient:

At the micro level: Information, education and communication through flyers, radio spots and programmes on advisory and counselling services, community-based and participatory awareness raising.

At the meso level: Updating service for major stakeholders, with printed or electronic information for public officers.

At the macro level: Advocacy work, active agenda-setting and creation of a public audience through national mass media campaigns, press work and journalist training, regional networks using new ICTs.

3. Analysis of the relevant actors

Analysing actors includes the target groups, intermediaries, stakeholders and other credible persons with an interest in tackling the problem, and those who can provide political and possibly financial support. The target groups can be reached through these agents. Mediators include, for instance, opinion-makers, youth and women's groups, journalists, and institutions.

If other organizations are operating in the project region, synergy should be generated. Target groups must not be confused by conflicting information or advice.

The social, economic, gender-specific, cultural and spiritual factors determining the actors' behaviour should be identified, so that existing constraints and special opportunities may be identified.

Dominant prejudices, taboos or misconceptions within target groups must be identified before they can be addressed. The educational status of each target group should be taken into account. The content should be formulated and presented accordingly.

Socio-economic factors such as available income also play a key role in service utilization. Transport costs may keep poor people from using advisory services far away from where they live.

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How target groups communicate and learn is a question that should also be addressed. Media use must be surveyed, i.e. which media are used most frequently: where, when, how, for what purpose and by whom.

4. Messages and contents

Messages should be phrased in positive, simple, clear and easy-to-understand terms, in the language of the target group. They should be attractive, capturing the target group's interest. Less is more when it comes to information: Less is more easily retained.

Mass media campaigns should ensure that each spot contains just one, clear message. Content and its audiovisual realization should be congruent. It may be advisable to produce different spots for various sub-groups.

Information alone does not change people's opinions or behaviour. If messages offer some concrete, practical benefit, they are far more likely to make people change their opinions or behaviour. One professional way of reaching the target audience is to make the message entertaining and enjoyable, as in the eroticised video presentation of the condom designed to target young people at risk of HIV infection in Argentina. Such messages can motivate people to adopt new "fashions" and patterns of behaviour.

5. Criteria for selecting media

Selecting the right medium or media to reach a target group is the key to successful media work. Different media have different advantages that are defined through the specific context like the desired level of intervention, the objective and the target groups. The selection of a medium also depends on gender, age and social status of the target group.

Familiarity with the advantages of a certain medium and with the media use behaviour of the target group alone will not be enough to guarantee the selection of the right media. Some criteria that can help to choose media are:

- Credibility,
- Cost-benefit ratios of alternative options,
- Reproducibility and replicability,
- Updateability,
- Technical and infrastructural appropriateness,
- User-friendliness and
- Synergy spin-offs.

6. Selecting partners for media production

Who should produce the media products: Media experts or trained project staff in cooperation with target groups? The degree of professionalism required will depend on the target group, the level of intervention and the medium itself.

Cost-intensive TV productions, films, mass media campaigns or web pages should always be produced in cooperation with media experts who are involved right from the design phase. Project staff or fieldworkers can design small-scale media such as flyers.

It proved advantageous to involve co-financing partners and sponsors with a good standing in the community in sharing the costs of expensive media productions. These institutional partners may come from the public or private sector, or they may be other bi- or multilateral development cooperation organizations. Where electronic mass media are used, it may be possible to negotiate free time on-the-air with the media proprietors.

7. Pre-testing

Often, project staff does no pre-testing in order to cut costs. This can be counter-productive. Before large quantities of materials are produced, pre-testing together with target-group representatives is worthwhile to determine whether the messages and media products are understood and accepted.

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Also, attractiveness, relevance, potential to motivate people and generate action and credibility should be tested. If a solution proves to be less than optimal, it will have to be redesigned and tested again.

Pre-testing should be gender-sensitive to establish whether the media and the messages have the desired impact on men and women. Do they enjoy the same acceptance among both? Or do gender-specific perceptions or forms of media use actually undermine the communication goal? Age also plays a role: young people and older people perceive messages differently. Social status, group allegiance and regional differences must be taken into account.

Pre-testing might for instance take the form of discussions with focus groups of eight to ten persons, plus in-depth one-on-one interviews. Women should be interviewed by female, and men by male interviewers, so that everyone can speak openly in a setting free of fear or shame. This applies especially to sensitive or intimate themes such as sexuality but also to tradition-related topics such as gender determined land rights.

Materials should be tested in at least one focus group for every target group. In Tanzania, for instance, reproductive health information booklets for young people were offered to peer group multipliers for comment. Where nationwide mass media campaigns are planned, it is recommended that external experts or a polling institute is commissioned to conduct a survey of statistically representative data.

8. Production and distribution

A production site close to the distribution area can save delivery time and transport costs. It can also foster quality control during production.

In the case of print and small-scale media, videos and CD-ROMs, the media produced are usually distributed by the project itself or by cooperation partners, with print runs based on the size of the target group. In contrast, the dissemination of messages in the mass media is in the hands of the media proprietors. Random sampling can establish whether the messages are disseminated as planned, and at the correct time.

9. Impact analysis

Monitoring and evaluation during project implementation are prescribed practice in GTZ. However, hardly any of the projects contacted within the scope of my study analysed whether or not the intended impacts of media activities were actually achieved. To do media work without impact monitoring can mean that valuable experience is not evaluated, mistakes are reproduced, or good practices are not replicated. The general implication is that funds are not being utilized efficiently.

Apart from complex and sophisticated instruments, there are also simple and relatively quick methods for measuring impacts. Quantitative methods can be used, for instance, to measure whether there is a greater demand for a certain advisory service after a mass media campaign than there was before.

Further options to check if behavioural change did really happen include qualitative methods such as surveys, in-depth one-to-one interviews, discussions with focus groups, feedback mechanisms (like readers' letters and phone calls) or PRA studies. NGOs or universities may help to conduct impact analyses.

When media are a key instrument for achieving objectives throughout the whole project cycle, it is important to plan the next steps based on media evaluation and impact monitoring. On the one hand, one should guarantee the sustainable use of successful media products. On the other hand, one should identify the demand for new media products. An exchange of experience with other projects is also important, so that media products can be adapted and reproduced elsewhere.

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Some good practices

Media work is neither a mere "supplement" to other project activities nor a one-off activity, but an integral, process-oriented, on-going component of the project cycle. The participation of target groups and other actors is to be ensured during all phases of media work.

In successful media work, different strategies are designed for different objectives and target groups, and different media are used. A medium's appropriateness is determined by the gender- and culture-specific characteristics of the target group. The media used are regularly reviewed to ensure that their relevance and appropriateness for achieving objectives are up to date.

Essential to success are:

- precise analysis of the situation, the problem, the objective and the actors,
- pre-testing and
- impact monitoring.

Combining interpersonal communication with media work is especially important in changing attitudes and behaviour. Such change is most likely when it promises concrete, practical benefits.

Co-financing, sponsoring and targeted marketing strategies for expensive media products reduce project costs. Sound co-financing partners with a positive reputation in the target group can increase the power of media products and extend a project's impact radius.

The exchange of information and experience among organizations and projects fosters joint learning processes, helps to prevent mistakes, to replicate positive experiences and it facilitates strategy development.

Professional and creative media work, especially at the meso and macro levels, enhances a project's or an organization's image and defines its position. As such it should be seen indirectly as an instrument for soliciting new clients and projects. These opportunities and this potential should be harnessed.

Media Overview (by Karin Bohmann)

I. Print Media

- To read: Information booklets, brochures, books
- To look at: Posters, calendars
- For group work: Flip charts, flash cards

The non-verbal media can also be designed with and for illiterate target group members. They can be used to transmit information quickly and efficiently, reaching many people. Brochures and books are used at the meso and macro levels in

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information and advocacy work, the other media mainly at the micro level.

II. (Audio-) Visual Media

- Videos
- Films
- Slide series

These media are usually used in group work to arouse interest in a topic, to transfer certain information, and as a didactic instrument at the micro level.

III. Grass-roots and Small-scale Media

- Theatre, puppet shows, role-plays
- Songs, drumming, dances, poems, storytelling, street processions
- Fabrics, T-shirts, peaked caps, burlap bags with printed slogans
- Large flip-boards, flannel boards, flyers, leaflets
- Stickers, badges, postcards

These are particularly suitable for arousing interest, promoting awareness, and encouraging people to think about or discuss a certain theme. They are useful for work at the micro level; the non-verbal media are particularly apt for work with illiterate target groups.

IV. Mass Media

- Daily newspapers and magazines:
News, reports, columns, interviews, advertisements, appeals, announcements
- Radio and TV: News, reports, radio plays or films, soap operas, radio / TV spots, interviews, talk shows, appeals, announcements

These are suitable for information and education work, especially in campaigns. Simple messages and a range of background information can be efficiently disseminated and new themes placed on the agenda at the local, regional and national levels.

V. New Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs)

- Internet and computers:
Knowledge databases, e-mails, websites, PowerPoint presentations, CD-ROMs
- Digital cameras
- Mobile phones, faxes

These are used to transfer information quickly for remote training courses, to support seminars, to promote economic activity, to support advocacy work and for networks at all levels of intervention. The first positive experiences with mobile phones have been gathered at regional level in the marketing of small commodities. Digital photos, for instance, taken on tours of farms, can be a didactic instrument for profitable environmental management.

VI. Media Mix

Depending on the media use behaviour and the size of the target groups, different media can be used for specific segments of the group. Using several media concomitantly can harness synergy.

Based on: Ann M. Starrs, Rahna R. Rizzuto: Getting the Message Out: Designing an Information Campaign on Women's Health. New York: Family Care International. 1995. Supplemented by Karin Bohmann.

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Things to avoid in media work (by Karin Bohmann)

Often, projects try to conduct **house advertising** during campaigns. This can be a welcomed side effect, but should not be the purpose of the media work.

The **production of one medium for different target groups who are settled at different intervention levels** cannot be recommended.

An **adoption of material** from other projects **without checking the applicability** for the target group should be avoided.

The support of the media work by **stars and celebrities** can be a risk, if they lose credibility or get involved in affairs or scandals.

The **creation of anxiety and sensationalism** often is an excuse for failure to identify more creative alternatives.

Before a **mass media campaign** is launched, the human, economic and infrastructural resources should be calculated, in order to avoid **an avalanche of enquiries for which projects or organisations are unprepared**.

Particularly for NGOs it is very **difficult to negotiate broadcasting time**. These contacts should be secured before production begins.

It is risky to **conduct mass media campaigns during elections**. Changes in government and policies could create the need of changing the course of the campaign.

Unintentional and ambiguous messages have to be prevented. For instance, the illustration of women's land rights with an image of pesticides being used in a field conflicts with the general principle of sustainable natural resource management.

Documentary films or radio programmes with **long lectures and statements** by instructors do bore the recipients and contradict the principle of participative communication techniques.

Showing the victims of violence, diseases or accidents on film or photo is highly controversial. There are usually alternatives to the same goal and ways to avoid placing victims in the role media.

An issue presented solely in terms of **problems and conflicts, without alternatives** or examples of successful conflict resolution or problem solving, is hardly likely to motivate the target group to embark upon a new course of action.

Serial publications with varying layouts on covers and new layouts inside lose recognition value and consequently cause less impact among readers.

3.2. Media and Rural Development BY VOLKER HOFFMANN

The focus of Volker Hoffmann's presentation was to provide an example of a checklist of criteria for media selection. He used the technique of the **flannel board** to give a lively example. His checklist complements the guidelines provided by Karin Bohmann (see chapter 3.1.).

How do flannel boards work? You have a set of pictures with agricultural or any other content. On the backside of these pictures you paste glue and saw dust (or other rough materials). The pictures stick on tissues (flannel or cotton). The tissue can be fixed on any wall or door. Therefore, the technical requirement of this medium is very low: no specific transport needs (walk, bicycle, motorbike or car), no electricity, no phone lines and no other equipment. The whole set comes with instructions how to use it and costs about 8 Euro.

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You can change and rearrange the pictures. These pictures (the ones used in the presentation) came from GRAAP¹ in Burkina Faso and from PAP² in Rwanda. Also, pictures can be modified easily. Let's move to the aspect of media selection. A mix of media is desirable. But you have to decide clearly which media to use and why. Method and medium cannot be viewed separately, they are integrated. Even if you have a good combination, but use it in the wrong way you might have negative effects. The flannel board, for instance, is a very participative and flexible medium by its nature. Two types of criteria will be used for media selection:

- **Financial, logistic and organizational criteria**
- **Methodological, pedagogical and cultural criteria**

We talked a lot about Information and Communication Technology (ICT). Regarding the financial, logistic and organizational criteria ICT caused many changes: information has become very fast and accessible at reasonably low costs. Especially on the level of projects and administrations ICT had an obvious impact. However, if we move to the methodological, pedagogical and cultural criteria, there is no such change. Communication is always communication. If you don't have relevant information it is not the question if you use Internet or pamphlets. If you don't speak the “language of the people” it doesn't matter if you use email or radio announcements.

The two types of criteria and their application to the medium of flannel boards are shown on the following pages.

Financial, Logistic and Organizational Criteria	
Costs for production use and maintenance	Very low
Foreign exchange needs	Low (paper, glue, paint)
Maximum number of participants per presentation per event	Up to 30 desirable Up to 100 possible
Need for electricity	No, but with lighting evening work is possible
Is blackout necessary? (= darken the showroom)	No
Transport equipment requirements	None By foot or bicycle is possible
Are wear, tear and frequent repairs to be expected?	No Only protection against rain
Can the media be simply and locally reproduced?	Yes, manually, silk screen, photo, copying, hand colouring
Can the entire field staff use the media?	Yes

¹ GRAAP = Groupe de Recherche Appliquée pour l'Autopromotion Paysanne

² PAP = Projet Agropastoral de Nyabisindu

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Can the media be produced swiftly and independently of specific events?	Yes
Can the media material still be altered after production?	Yes
Dependency upon foreign technology or services?	No
Is the presence of staff trained in the subject matter and the method necessary?	Yes
Can the material also be used by other local services?	Yes

Methodological, Pedagogical and Cultural Criteria

Can statements or course contents be developed systematically?	Yes
Can sequences of action and developments over time be presented?	Yes
Are picture elements mobile or are sequence and positioning fixed?	Mobile
Can distracting details in the display be avoided?	Yes
Does the use of media have an educational and training effect on field staff?	Yes
Are links built to oral culture and storytelling traditions?	Yes
Are the persons and localities depicted locally adapted?	Yes
Is the language locally adapted? (Local languages, figures of speech, proverbs, comparisons)	Possible, eventually left to field staff
Can a series hero be established and retained?	Yes
Is the presentation comprehensible? (Concepts, symbols, semantics)	Yes, questions can be raised, symbols introduced
Can the field staff and the target groups participate in designing the medium?	Yes
Is the presentation a monologue? Can one ask it rather than say it? Are discussions stimulated?	Yes

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Further aspects and points of discussion

- Selection of media is crucial and should be done carefully! If you want to compare different alternatives you need criteria like the ones presented.
- The medium (flannel board) depends on a very specific situation (work on village level). A decision on the mix of media will always depend on your unique environment and objectives.
- Drawings have a lot of advantages: You can draw things that do not exist (like angels), things that existed in the past (like Roman warriors) and things that are not there at the moment (like pests or insects). There are no distracting elements like in photos and videos.
- The attraction of flannel board pictures lies a lot in colours. Colouring can be simply done, even by school children or old people. The selection of colours is not a problem – they should be similar to the ones in nature but need not to be accurate.
- The attraction of the medium relies on what one sees on the drawings (often better than photos). That depends a lot on the artist. Often, skilful designers can be found locally, on the markets and in the villages. They are involved during the entire process of elaboration. The major problem is not finding these people, but to instruct them how to do the drawings.
- Comments from the audience on the checklist: The checklist has to be appreciated even if it is somehow biased in favour of the method (flannel board).
- Different perceptions regarding the appreciation of cost (medium / reproduction and assistance to the session) and cost effectiveness are possible (e.g. radio is less effective but reaches more people at lower costs).
- The cost-impact-ratio should be seen in relationship to the change of behaviour.
- It should always be clearly defined what “reached people” are (those who saw, those who participated, those who understood or those who changed?).
- The most important methodological aspect is that discussion and interaction are supported. This requires training and development of corresponding skills of staff. We should not confuse skills and attitudes. The change of behaviour of staff is the most challenging aspect of the training.
- Communication and interaction is always based on “questions first” - not answers.

Do not forget “old fashioned” media that constitute methodological and effective achievements confirmed in practice.