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Date 3/25/2008
Time 9:07:33 AM

Login Name Saroja Douglas



CF-RAI-USAA-PD-GEN-2008-000076

Expanded Number **CF-RAI-USAA-PD-GEN-2008-000076**

External ID

Title

PSC. Ghana. Development Support Communication and the Role of the Communication Specialist: A perspective from a project in Ghana, by Gary Richard Gleason, PhD Thesis submitted to the University of Iowa

Date Created / From Date

7/1/1981

Date Registered

8/10/2007 at 2:21 PM

Date Closed / To Date

Primary Contact

Home Location **CF-RAF-USAA-DB01-2007-10673 (In Container)**

F12: Status Certain? **No**

Item Fd01: In, Out, Internal Rec or Rec Copy

Owner Location **Programme Division, UNICEF NYHQ (3003)**

Current Location/Assignee **Upasana Young since 3/25/2008 at 8:55 AM**

Date Published

F13: Record Copy? **No**

Record Type **A01 PD-GEN ITEM**

Contained Records

Container **CF/IRA/BX/DP/CM/1985/T009: Programme Support Communications**

Fd3: Doc Type - Format

Da1: Date First Published

Priority

Med

Document Details **Record has no document attached.**

Notes

pp 201 ²⁵⁰ ²⁶⁷

The thesis traces Ghana's political, economic and social development during the 1970s and 1980s, and the incipient role of project communications, including efforts made at setting up printing and communications facilities.

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breeding as a useful new behavior, in fact, could obtain the institutional support (hybrid stock, training, etc.) that would make this behavior change viable. The booklet and several other communication support project outputs had additional functions of this type.

A third function of the ISU's production of the rabbit booklet was to generate support for the project and the ISU within the Ministry. This function was planned by the communication support project before production of the booklet began. The booklet itself--regardless of its actual usefulness to farmers--demonstrated the revival of the ISU's production capabilities to the Ministry, FAO, and UNDP. The booklet was thus a persuasive factor for these agencies in terms of project extension.

These additional functions of the rabbit booklet may fall outside the functional model of Westley and MacLean. However, they did link the mass communication unit with the advocator of specific behavior change (the National Rabbit Project).

Missing from Westley's and MacLean's model is an advocacy function for the channel role (C) in which mass communication producers tell the officials (As) what is needed by the audience (Bs). One function of the booklet (a C message) was to pass information to the Ministry department (As) about a potential solution to a small farmer (Bs) problem.

Institutionalized Communication
Support Required Ministry's
Support

Also missing from the model's description of the mass communication process are the mass communication functions related to mass communication systems' dependencies for support not just from an audience, but also from information sources (A's). Obviously, the ISU was dependent on some of its information sources (the Ministry), and these sources had definite goals for changing the behaviors of the farmers (Bs). If these goals were totally ignored by the ISU (Cs), it would lose its required Ministry support.

Multiple goals and functions embedded in most of the project's mass communication products and activities suggests that Westley's and MacLean's model is an insufficient conceptual format for analyzing the communication support role. However, the model remains extremely useful as a guide for adding depth to analysis of an activity like production of an extension booklet. It also remains a consistent conceptual tool for evaluating institutional and individual functions in their relationship to prescribed elements of farmer-centered development.

Maize Booklet Raises Questions
About Project's Farmer Commitment

Westley's and MacLean's communication model is also useful for evaluation of a single project function in relation to developmental systems.

A second example demonstrates multiple project output functions by using Westley's and MacLean's model as a guide. The production of the composite maize booklet functioned in relation to the project's complex goals and constraints. The project initially assumed the usefulness of this innovation for small farmers and attempted to assist the ISU to function in a channel role to extend farmers' environmental knowledge of crops. It began by gathering information provided by the Fertilizer Use Project research.

The Fertilizer Use Project (Westley's and MacLean's set of Xs-->A) functioned to interpret one aspect of the farmer's environment (it had done research for seven years on increasing maize production). The Fertilizer Use Project was satisfied it had results that (if adopted by the farmers (B's)) would be good both for the farmers and for the country. However, this project was separated from the farmers and needed assistance from the ISU (C) to help persuade the farmers (via mass communication channels) to adopt the new maize (X-->A-->C--B)

Consistent with Westley's and MacLean's concept of mass media producers acting as agents of the audience, the communication support project looked at the information provided by the Fertilizer Use Project from the perspective of providing farmers with all the environmental data they would need to enlarge their crop production options.

From the farmer perspective, the volumes of research data gathered by the Fertilizer Use Project helped little for they failed to include information on ways of overcoming other constraints such as shortages of fertilizer, difficulties in obtaining farm loans, inability to buy chemicals and fertilizer, etc. In terms of Westley and MacLean, the environmental knowledge needed by B's (farmers) to solve their problem was not contained in the data A (fertilizer Use Project) gave to C (ISU).

Evaluation of these additional environmental problems and consideration of the institutional problems that surrounded them led the communication support project to conclude that it did not have the capability to provide the farmers with all the information needed to adopt the new maize on a widespread basis. Furthermore, the project, through the ISU, could not find a reasonable strategy for increasing essential institutional support.

The output that came from the ISU and the project compromised the role of the ISU as a non-purposive, farmer-oriented mass communicator. The ISU produced a booklet to inform farmers about materials and practices required to produce composite maize. But, the communication support project did not become involved in planning ISU outputs which would attempt to affect the Ministry system in ways that could support widespread adoption of composite maize.

As with the rabbit booklet production, analysis of the communication support project's behavior in relation to the request for mass media assistance by the Fertilizer Use Project demonstrated some functions inconsistent with a farmer-agent role. If it had been functioning strictly in a farmer-agent channel role (C), the project and ISU would have included in messages the ISU produced cautionary information outlining how potential problems such as poor credit, inadequate fertilizer supply, and other shortages affect farmers if composite maize was widely adopted.

The failure of the project to provide this information complexified the analysis of the project's functions. Failures of the project to respond to the farmer's needs made it less easy to view the ISU in the channel role conceptualized by Westley and MacLean.

Reasons ISU and Project Varied
from Westley-MacLean Channel Role

Rural Farmers Had No Power
to Affect ISU or Project

At this point, continued analytical use of Westley's and MacLean's model requires further discussion of the project's operational environment. The structural position and resource potentials of the project when it became involved with the Fertilizer Use Project had been impediments to the project's efforts to have the ISU function primarily in a farmer agent role.

Unlike the mass communication system described in the model, the audience (Bs) system made up of rural farmers seldom had the ability to choose among useful mass communication sources to solve their environmental problems. In Ghana, the small farmer had no opportunity to select from a variety of publications, radio shows, and extension service demonstrations to gain information about problems of food production. In fact, most small farmers were without access to any mass media type channel. Information sources relating to a problem such as methods of increasing maize production were so rare that any messages produced were considered valuable. In this atmosphere of information scarcity, the quality of a particular mass media product frequently was less important to its use than the fact that some relevant media was in fact available.

In a situation like that of the communication support project in Ghana, the mass communication message producers need not be concerned that information contained in their products be more useful than that of their competitors. For the rural population's attention, there are no competitors.

In addition to the lack of mass media channels and the lack of mass media production, feedback from farmers to the ISU was not an important factor for maintaining required support. The feedback links between the farmers and the ISU (from B to C) and from the small farmers to the Ministry

(from Bs to As) were informal and weak where they, in fact, did exist. The project's support was only tied to farmer approval of output in an indirect and minimal manner.

Project/ISU Survival Linked
Directly to Ministry, FAC, and
UNDP

Maintenance of the ISU and the project was related much more directly to evaluations of output by the Ministry, FAO, and UNDP. The ISU was a subsystem within the Ministry that relied on Ministry resources and authority. To maintain the ISU, the Ministry's goals had to be served.

The Ministry's goals for the ISU included regular output of mass media products to persuade small farmers to adopt practices and innovations consistent with national agricultural policy.¹

In response to Ministry goals, the ISU -- and indirectly the communication support project -- functioned as agents of the Ministry and not the farmers. From this perspective, the ISU functioned as a persuasion oriented, mass media arm of the Ministry. Its function was to expand and to refine Ministry information, to produce mass messages, and direct these messages toward the interface between the Ministry and the agricultural population.

ISU output required by the Ministry was at least partially persuasive. The ISU and the communication support

project realized that a purely farmer-centered function -- with no messages attempting to persuade farmers to adopt specific Ministry desired behaviors -- would be insufficient to generate continued Ministry support.

Because the feedback links in the farmer population capable of supporting maintenance of the ISU and the project were at best weak, the Ministry's goals could simply not be ignored. No communication support agency can continue to operate without a continual input of resources and support. In the project's case, this support came from the Ministry, FAO, and UNDP.

Accra Productions and Activities Posed Dilemma for Project

This analysis raises questions that apparently posed a dilemma for the communication support agency in that some goals were inconsistent with new ideas about development. When an agency is supported by an institution operationally oriented to diffusion of innovations and not to development, how can these conflicting mass communication roles be resolved? Were the ISU and the communication support project incapable of functioning in what Westley and MacLean called a channel role, that is, as mass media producers acting as agents of the small farmer population? Given this empirical situation, did the ISU, as a government agency, have the potential to direct communication support primarily

toward the clients of the Ministry rather than toward the Ministry itself? Analysis of project activities such as the maize and rabbit breeding cases fails to solve this apparent dilemma. Resolution of the dilemma and answers to the questions above require examination of the project's pilot activities in the Upper Region and its work with URADEP.

The communication support project's pre-URADEP activities evidenced a reluctance to commit fully the ISU's production capacity, its training and strategy design potentials, and its audience research activities to various diffusion oriented projects it encountered in Accra.

Early on, the project did perform some diffusion oriented functions to train the ISU staff in media production techniques and to improve support for the ISU and the project within the Ministry. The project's reluctance to commit itself fully reflected some concern that these efforts were not based on farmer-centered development goals. Despite encounters with well intentioned officers and projects with a genuine concern for small farmers, their solutions simply suggested diffusion of innovations developed by local the experts or by those imported from abroad. The diffusion assistance required by these experts and projects did not reflect knowledge of, or planning for, the complex changes within both the farming system and within the institutional systems needed to make widespread adoption feasible.

Lack of systematic channels capable of carrying farmer expressed needs, problems, and goals to the Ministry prevented most Ministry projects from operating or being defined as dynamic development efforts. To fulfill its goal of exploring communication support, the project needed to locate or create a Ministry project oriented toward client-centered development.

Until it found this type of Ministry project, the communication support project directed the majority of the ISU's activities toward improving the Ministry's support for projects that reflected an understanding of farmer needs. It also assisted a project in obtaining institutional support and additional resources (the National Rabbit Project). While the communication support project operated only in Accra during its early months, it continued to search for a viable, Ministry-backed frame in which it could shift its orientation toward exploring, client-centered communication support.

URADEP Potentially
Productive For Pilot
Activities

Once URADEP was identified, the project immediately accepted the Upper Region as a pilot area to expand the functions of the ISU.

Potentially, URADEP's design would allow the project to explore development oriented communication support at least within the pilot region. This potential rested in both the rhetoric stating program goals and strategies, and the flexibility afforded the communication support project to suggest changes in operationalizing URADEP's structures and strategies.

Early on, the project's pilot region activities had an advocacy orientation. The project continually sought solidification of URADEP as a development assistance agency rather than a large, complex, multiple innovation diffusion program. From the communication support project's perspective, URADEP had the potential to orient itself toward either goal.

URADEP's planning rhetoric contained substantial reference to farmer participation and locally researched solutions to problems. However, its preliminary operations in the Upper Region and the orientation of several of its senior expatriate staff were clearly toward diffusion strategies.

URADEP's basic structure and major strategy were based on a model being used with some success in northern Nigeria and Malawi for improved food production. Research on local conditions, resources, institutions, and socio-cultural variables of the Upper Region had been used to adapt the model and to form a URADEP plan.²

The plan presumed farmers would become organized through registration at a Farmer Service Center and perhaps through eventual ownership of some equity in the Farmer Services Company (FASCOM).³ Several URADEP plans called for farmer labor in order to improve the physical infrastructure of the Region via soil conservation efforts and dam construction.⁴

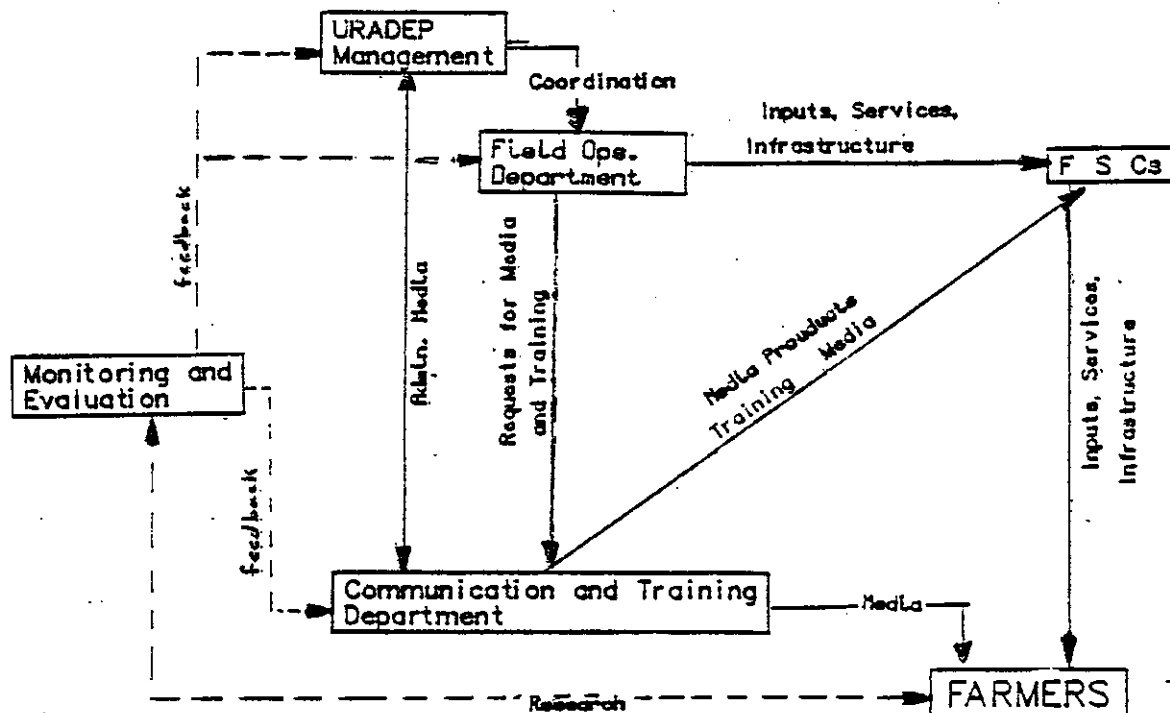
URADEP plans embraced organized, farmer management participation through the inclusion of two regional chief farmers on the Program's executive committee. This type of participation recalls Akter Khan's important adage about the traditional right of wolves to lead sheep.

Communication Support for URADEP Required Structural Change

The URADEP program contained no formal plans to train Program personnel in methods of encouraging farmer organization. Also, there was no reference to training in interpersonal and group communication skills as a direct or indirect function of the Communication and Training Department. According to the original URADEP plan, the Communication and Training Department had a public relations function, a technical training function, and the coordination of a pilot functional literacy scheme.

The flow of service inputs and outputs for the Communication and Training Department outlined by URADEP plans is shown in Figure 6.2.

Figure 6.2: Communication Support Requests and Products Flow (URADEP Plan)



Orders for media products would come into the Communication and Training Department from above. The department would then function as part of a complex system by which URADEP would continually conduct research on regional problems and would try to have farmers adopt new practices that would lead to solutions.

According to the communication support project's arguments, this design lacked any method of assuring that

farmers would become, in fact, the focus of URADEP's goals and operational priorities. A description of structures and functions which guarantee farmer representation was a lacuna in URADEP plans. Also, that a viable, two-way channel from the grass roots to the organization would be set up or that such a channel would affect URADEP priorities on its services, inputs, and infrastructural improvements was not guaranteed.

Many communication support project activities sought modification of URADEP's structure and monitoring of its functions in an effort aimed at URADEP performance as a development oriented agency rather than as an elaborate and complex diffusion oriented agency.

Data On Farmers Required

One of the project's first pilot region activities was a survey of farmer behaviors in relation to agricultural practices, innovation adoption, and extension contact. The survey explored information gathering about agricultural problems by field workers as a new type of extension training. One survey goal was to develop a model for the dormant Monitoring and Evaluation Department. The model eventually given to the Monitoring and Evaluation Department became a resource for a system design to monitor systematically changes in a random sample of the farmers' lifestyles,

agricultural problems, and local use of externally generated innovations. If the Monitoring and Evaluation Department had used this research model as a guide, it would have been capable of providing URADEP with data on farmer needs and agricultural problems uninfluenced by reports from elites. (Unfortunately, this survey was never fully utilized.)

Farmer-Centered FSC Critical
from Project Perspective

The project continually advocated establishment of farm service centers with a farmer-group orientation within URADEP and FASCOM. The idea focused on rapid conversion of centers dominated by URADEP extension agents and FASCOM sales personnel into centers dominated by farmers. As farmer-centered points of agricultural development, the FSCs would be headquarters for farmer organizations. They would serve as the primary interface between organized farmer expressions of needs and problems, and the service, material, and information outputs from URADEP and FASCOM addressed to those needs and problems.

Communication and Training
Department Required Redesign

To create the FSC system as advocated by the communication support project required structural changes in URADEP itself. The Communication and Training Department required expansion beyond original plans. It would have to function

as a media resource center for the FSC and URADEP system. In addition, it would have to handle additional training requirements.

The functions of communication support and training advocated by the communication support project are shown in Figure 6.3.

Figure 6.3: Model for URADEP and IFCAT Functions in Farmer-Centered Program

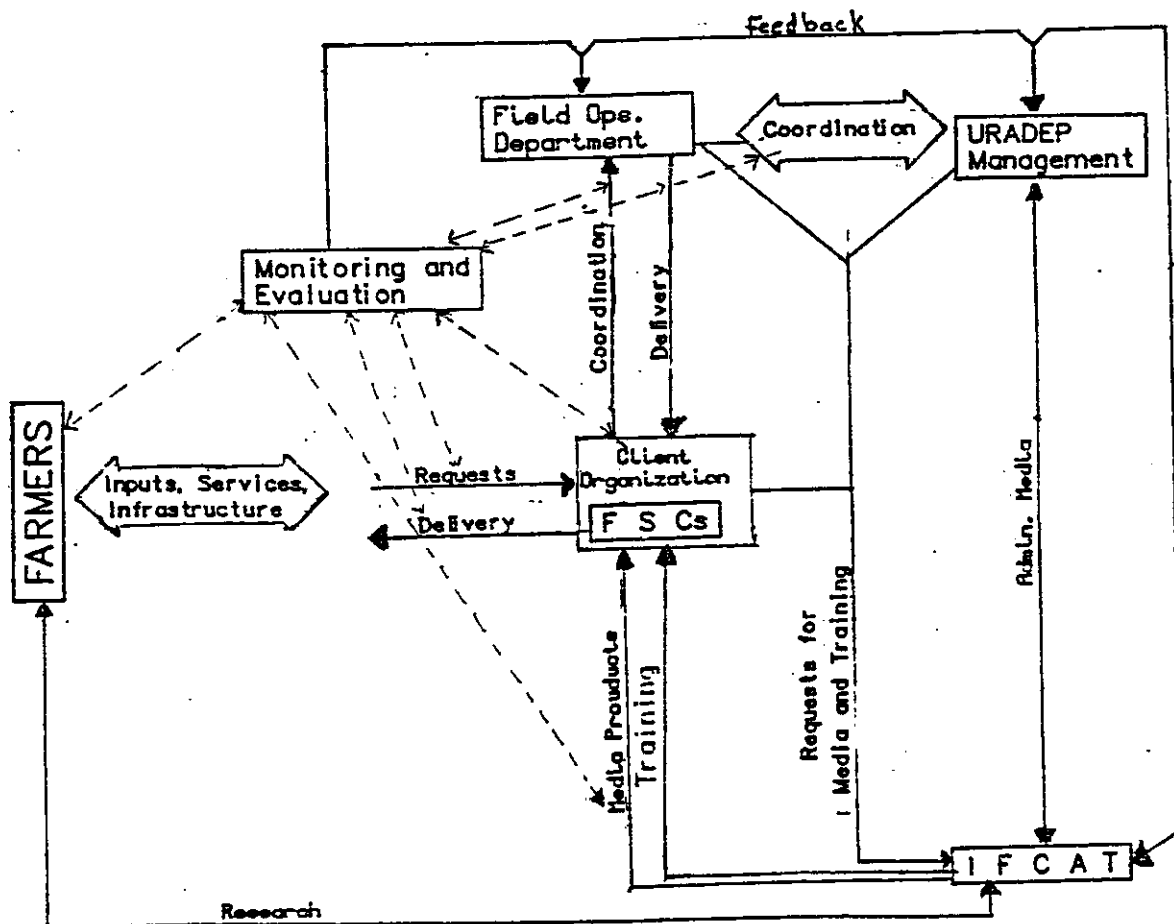


Figure 6.3 outlines the functions of URADEP as a farmer-centered development program. The development role of IFCAT as a communication support and training facility included research, technical training, extension and community organization training, broadcast training, production of printed and visual materials, and integration of training and media outputs.

Creating a system that could operate required structural changes in URADEP, including provision for a substantial training and media production facility. Specialized staff in a variety of areas, a larger training and production equipment budget, and a substantially improved Navrongo Farm Institute with quality administrative and maintenance staffs were required.

Changing URADEP Structure Dominated Pilot Region Activities

In order to institutionalize a communication support potential which could improve the program's developmental orientation, changes in URADEP's structure were necessary. Building IFCAT and obtaining the involvement of TREND provided an adequate communication support structure. Unfortunately, the difficulty of building IFCAT in the midst of Ghana's economic and bureaucratic problems was so great that personnel from both the communication support project and

TREND spent large amounts of time and energy on general activities -- obtaining supplies, supervising construction, and overseeing administration. Because of these problems, the project never devoted sufficient energy to assure that IFCAT was used to promote farmer-centered development. Because of time spent building the communication support structure for URADEP insufficient emphasis was placed on guaranteeing that IFCAT and URADEP used these structures in a farmer-centered frame.

IFCAT's Operations as
Development Support
Communication Agency

There were several indications prior to the project's termination that IFCAT was indeed approaching its assistance to URADEP from a developmental stance. The radio trainees were learning information gathering from a local cultural perspective and were developing a tradition-based programming theme. The Visual Communication Department had seriously begun to reduce administrative publication production. Its focus shifted to materials of interest to local farmers. Extension Communications had insisted that IFCAT be assigned two Farmer Service Center areas to work with farmer organization and training in response to requests from farmer groups.

IFCAT was also beginning to open feedback channels from farmers and FSC personnel through reports from its mobile training teams cross-trained in data gathering.

Project's Pilot Activities
Went Beyond IFCAT

Besides IFCAT, the project also used the pilot region to expand traditional orientations of communication support.

Through the ISU and IFCAT, the communication support project explored a broad spectrum of communication support activities concerning the National Rabbit Project. These activities included farmer research, farmer training, mass demonstration, slide shows, television programming, practice research, training aides, integration of media support, and interpersonal skills training. The project also had the opportunity to work on formal and informal feedback systems related to the Rabbit Project in the pilot region as well as nationally. These activities included resource generation for development from external agencies. Potential institutional support problems inherent in large, complex bureaucracies began to emerge, despite goals shared by all departments and projects.

Prior to and after the communication support project involvement, IFCAT was evolving an orientation to addressing small farmer needs and goals. In several respects, IFCAT assumed a channel role function with the farmers

corresponding to the behavioral roles in Westley's and MacLean's model of the mass communication process.

Although IFCAT became an institution which could provide communication support for development, URADEP never confirmed its orientation toward development vis-a-vis diffusion. Reasons for this ambiguity included conflicts within its staff, problems in its relationship with the Ministry of Agriculture and its other resource systems, lack of skilled management, and the basic difficulty of the Ghanaian economic and political environment.

Despite this ambiguity, the URADEP program manager had a strong understanding of and commitment to farmer-centered development goals and continually supported requests for resources to strengthen the Communication and Training Department if these requests were couched in development oriented terms. As long as IFCAT senior staff and the program manager shared farmer-centered development as the overall goal of URADEP, IFCAT priorities could be manipulated in constructive ways.

For example, the program manager and most other administrators continually requested administrative forms and general office items from the VCD that were required to set up and operate the URADEP system. Although the VCD didn't turn down these requests, several requests from the program manager were continually put aside while the VCD worked to

complete its building and to publish more operationally oriented materials. This type of "insubordination" was acceptable to the program manager. He continually approved requests for IFCAT materials and services not included in original URADEP plans.

The program manager never supported efforts by other URADEP staff sections for IFCAT to produce persuasive message packages directed at the farmers. However, IFCAT was required to maintain a good working relationship with the program manager, and therefore, it did produce some administrative forms and assisted in the solution of management communication problems.

ISB Proposal For National
Development Support Communication
Agency

The communication support project had learned through its experiences in the Upper Region that a communication support agency dedicated to media production, training, and organizational support could be established within a flexible bureaucracy provided that bureaucracy had client-centered goals and reasonable resources.

The fruitful experience of the communication support project in the Upper Region was used in developing a solution to the dilemma of providing farmer-centered communication support by a Ministry sub-system such as the ISU in

Accra. Structural changes in URADEP's Communication and Training Department to promote farmer-centered development functions gave the project clues to changes required in the ISU.

URADEP's organizational form as a parastatal body within the Ministry gave that Program the potential to bring in resources the Ministry system was not able to provide. A resource available to URADEP but not to most Ministry subsystems was a talent pool of Ghanaians who were unwilling to work under the civil service system. Because of IFCAT's attachment to URADEP, personnel with college level backgrounds and successful experience in mass media production and other communication related areas could be hired on contract at competitive salaries. The ability of URADEP to recruit individuals increased the incentive for other resource agencies to provide training and material resources to supplement URADEP's allocation to IFCAT.

Work with URADEP also identified a number of smaller projects and agencies that had client-centered goal systems, as well as the resources to purchase training services and raw materials for mass media products from a communication support agency.

On the basis of its work in the Upper Region, the project had become convinced that it was possible to change the structural position of the ISU within the Ministry for its

assumption of a national role similar to IFCAT in URADEP. If this new structure was accepted by the Ministry and the Ghanaian Government, the ISU would be able to function primarily as a mass communication agency for the small farmers.

The Information Support Board proposal submitted by the communication support project was a potentially viable solution to the problem of creating an agency within the Ministry's framework to encourage and support farmer-centered development. The ISB would obtain resources from a variety of sources other than the general budget of the Ministry. Development oriented projects desiring communication support services could provide materials for production and the funds needed to pay a highly skilled staff.

A status change from Ministry unit to parastatal board would allow the ISB to recruit talent outside civil service constraints and to generate income for operational expenses and materials. Resource problems restricting quantity and quality of mass media products and training could be solved. The proposal contained a statement of ISB goals consistent with a farmer-centered frame. An ISB would have greater latitude than the ISU had -- prior to the arrival of the communication support project -- to choose which projects it would serve. An ISB would also be free to work on products that were not farmer-centered (such as calendars, administrative forms, etc.) but that would generate income to pay for development oriented activities.

In short, the ISB proposal reflected the communication support project goal of exploring communication support as a pragmatic role in development assistance and of designing a system for Ghana that could operate as a development support communication agency.

Summary

Analysis of the communication support experience project uncovered a basic dilemma in terms of its goals to set up a system of communication support consistent with a mass communication channel role as described in Westley's and MacLean's conceptual model.

The resources and authority of the agency with which the communication support project had to experiment were not grounded in the audience of that agency's mass media products as was presumed by Westley's and MacLean's model. Rather, they were grounded in a system that -- despite its farmer centered rhetoric -- viewed its mass communication production unit as a means to persuade farmers to adopt behaviors the system deemed appropriate.

As a result, many of the products put out by the agency under project guidance had multiple functions. Some of these functions were consistent with those of the channel role (C) in Westley's and MacLean's model. However, functions inconsistent with the model were also required to

maintain support for the agency and the project by the Ministry system.

Eliminating the persuasion oriented functions of these products was impossible within the structural set up of the ISU in the Ministry.

In the Upper Region, the communication support project found a potentially farmer-centered development program just entering its operational phase. The project viewed this program as sufficiently flexible and tolerant to accept proposals for adapting its plans to include a mass communication production and training agency under the rubric of development support communication.

However, the difficulty in acquisition of resources and the difficulty in the establishment of this agency distracted the project and IFCAT itself from continually stressing farmer-centered development. Difficulties in setting up IFCAT, in continuing simultaneous operations in Accra, and in solving crises generated by Ghana's problematic economy and bureaucracy constrained the project from concentrated advocacy of development as a guiding principle for URADEP itself. For these reasons, URADEP developed primarily as a diffusion of innovations oriented program. A reduction of support from the development oriented agencies of IFCAT and TREND resulted. Consequently, IFCAT and TREND began concentrating on small areas of the Region. They used

URADEP as a resource agency and attempted to foster small scale, farmer-centered development efforts in the midst of URADEP's complex and ineffective diffusion campaigns.

The communication support project's two year experience in the Upper Region and the knowledge it gained in its Accra operations served as resources for a proposal to change the ISU into a national farmer-centered communication support agency within the Ministry of Agriculture. The proposed Information Support Board would have the potential to create a mass communication agency acting primarily for farmers, despite reliance for resources on agencies and institutions other than the farmers themselves.

Solidly grounded in a client-centered approach, the proposal embraced a model for communication support which held mass communication products as essential resources of the rural farmer, yet realistically embedded the economic and bureaucratic constraints that were unavoidable within the Ghanaian context.

In short, the project had worked out a proposal to institutionalize several elements of what can appropriately be named development support communication.

Notes

1. Other goals for the ISU were mass media products to maintain and improve support of the Ministry by other government agencies, and products to improve the operations of the Ministry's other internal subsystems.
2. "Appraisal Report of the Upper Region Agricultural Development Project -- Ghana," World Bank Document, No. 1061-GH, June, 3, 1976, pp. 2-8.
3. "Appraisal Report," pp. 28-32.
4. "Appraisal Report," p. 13.

CHAPTER VII

A COMMUNICATION SPECIALIST ROLE
FOR CLIENT-CENTERED DEVELOPMENTIntroduction

The last chapter analyzed the experience of the communication support project in Ghana, drawing together several elements that begin to define development support communication. The analysis accounted for the pragmatic constraints and functional complexity of efforts to build a client-centered communication support agency within the context of an existing Third World bureaucracy and social system.

General project observations can be used to map development support communication as a range of activities including planning and production of mass, group, and interpersonally oriented products for audiences both within the population and within institutions. Generation of unplanned resources to meet needs discovered during project operations is included. Advocacy for client-centered planning and project operations within institutions together with the structural changes necessary for these activities to take place is also detailed here.

Need for New Models

The nature of development support communication explored by this study suggests that current research needs to study the potential for its application or adaptation to the parameters of development support communication activities. Formal and informal organizational research, relational research like network analysis, and research on broad-based information gathering and distribution techniques are areas which may be particularly relevant.

New programming models are required that clearly distinguish between client-centered and institution-centered communication support systems, that is, development support communication and diffusion support communication. These models need to be sufficiently prescriptive to satisfy the overt ideological and theoretical components of current client-centered development ideas. Simply put, models must accommodate communication channels flowing upwards from development clients to development assistance institutions. Furthermore, horizontal channels must accommodate quick transference of local solutions of a client system to other areas with similar problems. These models need to account for client system operations and development assistance institutions, that is, the dynamics of the interface between them. These prescriptive models provide researchers with pragmatic guides with which to guide programming and to judge the appropriateness of their projects on the ground.

Descriptive models of communication support systems need to be based on field project experience and, if possible, organized experiments. Experiential grounding provides researchers and planners with empirical knowledge necessary for applied research.

In an effort to add more concrete specificity to the conceptual model of Westley and MacLean, this study provided a descriptive model of the communication and training plans of URADEP and a prescriptive model of the system the project, through IFCAT, hoped to achieve. Operationalization of this prescriptive model would have created a system of mass communication in which IFCAT would have assumed the channel role described by Westley and MacLean.

However, in discussing the attempt to set up a development support communication agency in the Upper Region, the context was extremely important to explaining what actually was achieved.

The project had no control over existing agencies and plans such as those of URADEP for its Communication and Training Department. Analysis of the communication support project focuses on explanation of the base conditions from which modifications were attempted.

These conditions will vary in studies of other field experience and should be noted before generalizations about a project's activities are made.

Development Support
Communication Agencies

Investigation of the Ghana project helped clarify client-centered communication support, and showed that development support communication efforts were a potent factor in development assistance. However, the description and analysis of the project pointed out that institutionalizing development support communication within an existing national or international development assistance bureaucracy is an extremely difficult task.

The demonstrated difficulty of this task should not discourage communication researchers and professionals from attempting to institutionalize development support communication agencies or from engaging in refined studies of the functions of development support communication. Indeed, avoiding these tasks would be contrary to the challenges of the 1975 conference on communication and change and counter to current policies of several UN organizations.

Because of the potential value of development support communication agencies, research on attempts to create such agencies must go beyond a description and analysis of the professional efforts involved. The research needs to draw its analysis into a discussion of methods for further refinement and definition of the development support communication field.

Communication Specialty Base in
Communication Support Projects

The emphasis on discussion of methods is reinforced by recent decisions by Third World governments and international agencies to install some client-centered communication support agencies within their social assistance systems.¹

This study will conclude with a proposal for a professional role to define development support communication further, encompassing the establishment of communication agencies and the furtherance of development assistance institutions oriented to client-centered development goals.

Professional groups today are not trained to function in the proposed role description. In general, this role will require knowledge from diverse areas of communication theory and research tempered by experience in the professional arena of development. It will require a commitment to development and a willingness to practice that commitment among the bureaucracies of assistance and within the villages and barrios of the rural and urban poor.

The communication support project's staff -- including the experience of this author -- is one major source from which the proposal for a communication specialist role has been elaborated. This staff was represented by personnel with significant education and training in diffusion of

innovations, extension communication, mass communication research, communication theory, extension communication, journalism, and media production skills -- print, photography, audio cassette and radio, and video. Their professional experience ranged from work in commercial marketing and development project planning and evaluation to professional journalism, print production, rural community organization, audio-visual design, educational design, and teaching.

While this project's staff proposed two development support communication agencies during the project's three year life, neither one was yet operating as a self-sustaining client-centered media production and communication support unit when the project finished in 1979. Despite this limited success, activities of this staff contributed to the proposal for a communication specialist role. However, the proposed role is not just an abstraction drawn from the project staff's accomplishments. Staff and project failures and limitations also contribute to the role formulation. Definition of the communication specialist role has also been synthesized from project experiences and investigation conducted for the express purpose of exploring development support communication.

Communication Specialist Role
Operates in the Professional Arena

The communication specialist in development must embrace a professional role in order to operate in the difficult bureaucratic environment of Third World social assistance and planned change. This stance does not preclude academic training or a close relationship between the communication specialist and the academic communication researcher. However, a communication specialist's role is to engage in applied research, including gathering data for researchers. The communication specialist would also test theory's pragmatic value in order to suggest solutions to communication problems in development assistance. The communication specialist role will continually utilize knowledge obtained from academic and professional study of communication to foster client-centered, participatory, equitable change.

Principles and Theory Underlying
Communication Specialist Role

The communication specialist role acts for and through institutions, projects, and personnel with goals oriented toward client-centered development. Drawing from a perspective with an acknowledged lack of an heuristic theoretical description in the development discipline, the role nevertheless must reject the definition implying an

evolutionary process amenable to predictions of future social system states similar to the industrialized societies of the West. From this perspective, the communication specialist role grounds itself in extreme skepticism of institutions and projects expressing goals and exhibiting "assistance" strategies oriented primarily toward diffusion of externally generated, technological innovations. Furthermore, this role seldom involves attempts to manipulate client attitudes or persuade clients to adopt new practices whose justifications come mainly from high bureaucratic policy-making levels.

Principles of client participation are the hallmark of the communication specialist role in development planning and assistance, and the key to the dynamics of development itself. These principles require that an agency, institution, project, or person assume that each client system contains people seeking solutions to problems in order to enhance control over their everyday lives.

The role presupposes that the environment around each client, whether an individual, group, or institution, is complex and unique, but related to all other systems. Finally, this role presupposes that a client system has its own unique culture and history which affects its perceptions of which environmental variables require control and what methods are acceptable.

Communication Specialist Role
Advocates Client-Centered Goals

The experience of the communication support project uncovered strong evidence that much work fostering social change contradicts client-centered development goals and principles. Many institutions, projects, and personnel the communication support project encountered were at odds with these principles. This was the case despite high acceptance of similar principles in recent development literature and in high level policy documents in most international agencies and Third World governments.

Whether dealing with institutions, agencies, projects, or staffs, the communication support project found client manipulation to be the norm. This norm presents a problem since the proposed role of the communication specialist is antithetical to development assistance activities with a top-down, manipulation oriented institution or project.

Therefore, analysis of the type of social change sought by any project or institution desiring communication support services is the first function of the communication specialist role. If an institution's goals² are oriented toward diffusion of innovations and persuasion, the communication specialist cannot establish development support communication strategies until the institution reorients itself toward development.

A discussion of the communication specialist's role with diffusion oriented institutions will follow the next sections which address the communication specialist's role in client-centered institutions.

Communication Specialist
Analyzes Structural Potentials

Institutions with stated client-centered development goals may not necessarily have strategies or plans consistent with these goals. Unless they are new institutions, they will most probably have a history steeped in the older, top-down development theory. They may well require guidance in modifying their structures and strategies to facilitate client-centered assistance. The bases for this type of assistance are institutional structures and an organized client system structure capable of allowing information, materials, and services to move freely throughout a system of clients, institutions, and a number of resource agencies.

Many institutions lack the structural components necessary for gathering information about farmer needs and problems and for delivering resources to supply these needs and to solve these problems. The proposed communication specialist role calls for improving an institution's awareness of its structural constraints and assisting it in the design of appropriate communication facilities to improve its structures.

Specifically, the communication specialist would assist an institution in examining its own structures, those structures which organize its clients, and those that connect an institution with its clients. This examination should ascertain whether there are sufficient components in and between these structures to allow client-centered development assistance to take place.

In examining structures, various organizational components such as administrative, training, and research agencies of an institution need analysis to determine if they have the capability to gather, receive, store, process, and recall information necessary to address client requests.

Clients' (farmers or others) relationships would also be examined. Recent emphasis on network analysis may help the communication specialist. In addition, work from the discipline of human geography has provided important spatial considerations to understanding the organization of rural and urban groups. Finally, the links (or lack of links) among farmers, the institutions, and resource agencies are relevant. The communication specialist's examination of the structural components of each aspect of the development system is a necessary but not sufficient condition for development support communication. However, while the structure of the system and its functions cannot be separated in reality, here, for sake of clarity, structural problems are discussed first.

Minimal Structural Requirements
for Development Assistance

Seven minimal structural components necessary for client-centered development were inferred from problems and accomplishments of the communication support project and the literature on development and communication. They are:

1. An organization of clients allowing needs, goals, and problems to be expressed individually, debated commonly, and represented equitably to a service institution.
2. An organizational component capable of channeling requests from the client organization to the institution.
3. Internal administrative components allowing clients's requests to be refined, and supplying resources to contribute to solutions.
4. Components capable of coordinating agencies with specialized resources necessary to meet client organization's specialized needs.
5. Components capable of moving material, and/or human, and/or information resources from the institution to clients.
6. Components within the institution or within the client system capable of distributing solution resources equitably to all clients.

7. Components capable of gathering or organizing feedback (or feedforward) data to inform an agency of the adequacy of its solution resources and to provide it with guidance for the future.

The minimal structural and linkage components necessary for client-centered development are relatively similar to the structural components of a diffusion oriented institution. Therefore, the communication specialist may find that sophisticated institutions operating diffusion campaigns have most of the structural components required for development assistance already in place.

For example, when the communication support project began in 1976, the Ministry of Agriculture had long been a diffusion oriented agency. However, there were numerous small farmer organizations ranging from relatively sophisticated cooperatives to the traditional loose systems based on village and tribe. Extension officers and officials at various bureaucratic levels linked the farmers to the Ministry. Another linkage component -- the Ministry's Department of Economic Planning and Statistics -- continually gathered information from the rural areas of the nation. The Ministry itself had a variety of internal and external linkages, including the control of many agricultural resources to the farm population at the distributive and allocation ends.

The communication specialist should assist institutions in determining what structural additions or changes are required to assure client-centered development assistance. For example, in diffusion oriented institutions geared to persuasion, mass media production is centrally located. Production and research in the rural areas center on more effective message construction and delivery systems. In development oriented institutions, media production must be capable of assisting clients' articulation of their needs and problems in an effectual manner vis-a-vis the development agency. In a development oriented system, media should have the capability of spreading local solutions to problems throughout the client system. To assure these capabilities, media production and training staffs, production equipment, and production facilities must be closely linked to rural areas with media products moving upward toward policy makers and outward through the client systems.

The structural requirements of development and diffusion oriented institutions also differ in their training components. Personnel training in a diffusion oriented institution emphasizes producing extension workers who are technical experts in the desired innovations. If the training eclectically embraces diverse topics from the field of communication, discussions of psychologically oriented diffusion research would be used to provide officers with means to effect behavior and attitude change in the client system.

Training in a development institution should teach personnel who work at the interface between clients and the institution or project how to gather information from clients and to assist them in the organization and articulation of needs. Training should also teach workers how to improve the institution's delivery system. They should be prepared to act as a liaison between the clients and the institution or project. Training, in general, would be more eclectic and integration would be stressed.

While the training facilities of either type of institution or project might be similar, staff qualifications would be significantly different. Without a training staff and media production staff oriented toward and trained in the differences between client-centered development and diffusion oriented strategies, the institution or project cannot be structurally suitable for client-centered development assistance.

Concentrating on structural constraints and working to augment planned or existing structures consistent with minimal development assistance requirements should be a substantial function of the communication specialist role.

Structural Problems May Dominate
Communication Specialist Role

Changing structures and linkages dominated the communication support project efforts in Ghana. Analyzing

structures, planning modifications, locating required resources, and supervising structural change required diplomacy, equipment, money, personnel, and considerable media production software. New facilities required planning, approval, construction, equipping, and staffing. A myriad of trivial but essential details and decisions were involved.

The problems experienced by of the communication support project suggests a substantial danger that structurally related problems may dominate the communication specialist role. Structural analysis and the addition of necessary structural features are essential functions of the communication specialist role, but, if these functions dominate the role, it loses much of its potency for facilitation of client-centered development. This was a major weakness in the activities of the communication support project staff in Ghana.

Communication Specialist Role
Monitors Client-Centered
Orientations

The communication specialist role cannot be dominated by institutional or client system structural problems if it is to be effective in the long run. When a client-centered development system is being established, it may require an inordinate amount of effort to set up correctly and staff.

But, the manner in which an institution's parts function is an area requiring constant monitoring and improvement.

The functions of each institutional part are clearly distinguishable between an institution operating developmentally and one that is oriented toward persuasion and control. The features of a diffusion oriented institution function to further policies set by researchers and bureaucrats aimed at changing client attitudes and behavior in specific ways. If the institution's policies are persuasion and control oriented, each feature and channel is evaluated according to its contribution to efficient client adoption of innovations.

Development oriented institutions have goals generated within the context of requests for assistance from clients. Each institutional feature contributes a coherent set of resources for clients to achieve their own goals.

Solving Credibility Problems a
Facet of Communication Specialist
Role

Development oriented institutions are likely to have special problems in gaining credibility from clients. The experience of most client systems with projects and assistance institutions has been within the framework of persuasion and control. Friction and mistrust are likely to exist at the interface between the new institution and its clients.

Client-centered assistance is, after all, a relatively new concept and the literature of the past decade has not been diffused to most field workers, project managers, and certainly not to rural farmers and the urban poor.

In these situations, the communication specialist role assists the institution or project in explaining its goals and strategies. In such cases extreme care must be exercised so that explanations do not include promises for solutions to problems outside an institution's or project's scope. In the early stages of a project, the limitations of the project's resources and assistance potential should be essential information that flows through multiple channels to clients.

Client Organization Advocated by
Communication Specialist Role

Also problematical for the newly set up development institution or project is the absence of an organization through which clients can express their needs or the presence of an unrepresentative or ineffective organization. In these cases, the communication specialist role would develop strategies encouraging clients to organize effectively and equitably.

Some may argue that organization of clients is itself an innovation brought in from outside the community. From this perspective, any attempt to diffuse this innovation

violates the client-centered approach. However, client organization is a prerequisite for client-centered development, and the proposed communication specialist role must accept the responsibility for engaging clients, if necessary, in the need to participate in client organization.

Each Component's Function Can
Be Examined and Improved

With the client viewed as an active generator of requests for information and resources, the functions of each feature of a development institution are clearly different from parallel components in a diffusion oriented structure. For example, in an agricultural development project, extension officers act to extend the environment of the farmer, not the persuasive reach of the project. These officers become rural terminals for channeling farmer problems, needs, and goals upward through the project.

Extension communication training assists officers in explaining the resources of the project to the farmer, and also in explaining the resources of the farmers and their problems to the project. Extension media carry details of farmer problems and needs clearly and vividly to all sections of the project and sometimes to other projects with specialized resources required to meet farmer needs. Media units also spread ideas across the client system and extend the farmers' abilities to learn quickly local solutions to local problems.

On site researchers or resource personnel also function differently in relation to development assistance institutions. Research questions can be traced directly to the client system through the development institution.

Specialist May Establish and
Monitor Communication Support
Agencies

The communication specialist role should also embrace specific policy functions for development support communication agencies within development assistance institutions and projects.

In addition to improving a development oriented institution or project's structure by establishing a working development support communication agency within it, the communication specialist role should include careful monitoring of agency output.

Again, the model of Westley and MacLean may be used for a functional description of how mass communication roles interrelate with other system features when audience goals are the dominant concern of media producers. This model guides inquiry into the intended and actual effects of media products and other communication related activities.

Westley's and MacLean's model could assist a communication specialist in examining media products and their producers. The model also raises several questions relevant to

the communication specialist role. For example, are there open channels from the clients to these media production sections? Is information for media productions gathered in the field or primarily from high level policy makers? Who are the audiences of publications and other products? What are the goals of the publications?

These questions and others drawn from the model of Westley and Maclean can be used to assess the function of media production facilities and personnel. However, answers to these questions alone are not sufficient data to judge whether a communication support agency is functioning primarily as an agent of the development client. Analysis of the communication support project in Ghana has provided strong support for the the viability of a client-centered communication support agency within an institutional structure. However, it was also clear that not all products and activities of communication support agencies have the clients of development assistance as their sole intended audience.

When products are oriented internally or toward other institutions, the model of Westley and MacLean becomes less analytically useful.

Despite the utility of the Westley-MacLean model for analyzing the complex functions of media products, training orientations and other activities of a communication support

agency, its descriptive potential is inadequate to describe the more general functions of communication support.

Expansion and clarification of development support communication academically and professionally entails a descriptive outline specifically oriented toward its unique parameters. These parameters differ from those of Westley and MacLean, but they maintain the basic integrity of their model.

While the Westley-MacLean model emphasizes messages flowing toward the audience and data collection from officials and authoritative sources, a development support communication model requires a greater balance in the direction of the message flow and data sources. As the project demonstrated, development support communication places the communication support agency in an intermediary position between the support institutions and the clients.

Processing and channeling client needs, problems, and proposals upward to the institutional authorities and experts is a significant function of the development support communication agency and the communication specialist. Feedback from the media agency's audience and institutional sources in development support communication situations needs to be augmented by "feedforward," in terms of client-expressed needs, problems, and proposed solutions. Additional functions of a communication support agency are the