MOVING FORWARD VIA COMMUNICATION

Integrated Approaches to Development Action through Communication Strategies

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Leveraging Agriculture for Improving Nutrition and Health

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LINKAGES

As the background papers for this conference illustrate, the linkages among agriculture, nutrition, and health are clear. For example,

- When farmers eat nutritious foods, they are healthier and more productive.

- When farmers produce higher quality and more nutritious crops or other food products, the health of consumers (including local populations) improves, with resulting improvements in the economic activity of those consumers.

- When women in local communities eat more nutritious food, their health status improves significantly, and maternal and newborn mortality and morbidity decrease.

- When children have better diets, they are in better shape for school and, consequently, learn more, are able to make better economic contributions in later life (perhaps as farmers), and can help perpetuate the cycle of health and productivity.

There are many more examples. And there are not only linkages among agriculture, nutrition, and health—there are linkages in many areas of international development: Education is related to health and human rights. Gender plays a role in poverty. Conflict is connected to economic development and issues related to natural-resource use.

Addressing these issues requires integrated development action. And this action requires communication, which enhances leverage, learning, relationships, and synergies.

ARTIFICIAL BOUNDARIES

When it comes to how international development action is organized, demarcated boundaries are the norm, with little attention paid to the interrelationships among development issues. The United Nations is a good example, though similar divisions exist within almost every government agency, development organization, foundation, or major nongovernmental organization (NGO):

1. FAO handles Agriculture
2. UNESCO handles Education
3. UNICEF handles Children
4. WHO handles Health
5. ILO handles Labor
6. WTO handles Trade
7. ITO handles Telecommunications
8. UNFPA handles Population
9. UN Women will handle Women

Each of these agencies is a separate "silo." As any UN staffer will tell you, developing a systemwide approach or strategy, or even developing an action plan that spans several of these boundaries, is extremely difficult. This state of development "disconnection" is counterproductive. Communication is required to connect these silos, and we offer several practical planning models toward that end in the following sections.

THE COMMUNICATION CHALLENGE

When looking at the question of leveraging agriculture for improved nutrition and health from a communication perspective, it is vitally important to clarify where the main challenges lie. The problem is not at the community level; the issue is how international development action is organized overall. Development efforts can benefit greatly from 1) prioritizing a set of communication processes that ensures that the voices, ideas, perspectives, and plain common sense of people in local communities are included and amplified, and 2) promoting effective communication among development stakeholders in order to enhance coordination and cooperation across different vested interests and issues.
Action based on these two processes will generate the greatest outcomes; through effective communication, the efforts and energies of development agencies and local populations will result in accelerated action that breaks down unhelpful divisions, including those among agriculture, nutrition, and health.

COMMUNICATION PLANNING STRATEGIES: **OVERVIEW**

The challenges and opportunities presented here are not new. They have exercised the minds of many people in international development and within local communities. In order to learn from their experience, thinking, and reflection, we present four communication planning strategies developed by members of the development community that highlight effective ways to undertake development action based on interrelationships rather than silos. Each strategy utilizes a different approach that can be implemented at local, district, country, regional, or global levels:

>   Strategy One: Catalyzing social change
>   Strategy Two: Working toward a desired outcome
>   Strategy Three: Developing systemwide maps
>   Strategy Four: Learning from the most significant change

These four communication strategies are designed to ensure integrated approaches to development—including among the agriculture, nutrition, and health sectors. Though one approach to the challenge of integration would be to draw lines among the three elements of the triangle (agriculture, nutrition, and health) and then delineate specific relationships among them, this is not the approach used in any of the

strategic planning strategies. Rather, they all seek to identify core elements for effective integration and then work from that starting point.

Though the focus of this conference is on leveraging agriculture for improving nutrition and health, it would also be beneficial to leverage health for nutrition and agriculture, or nutrition for health and agriculture. This paper considers all of these interrelationships.

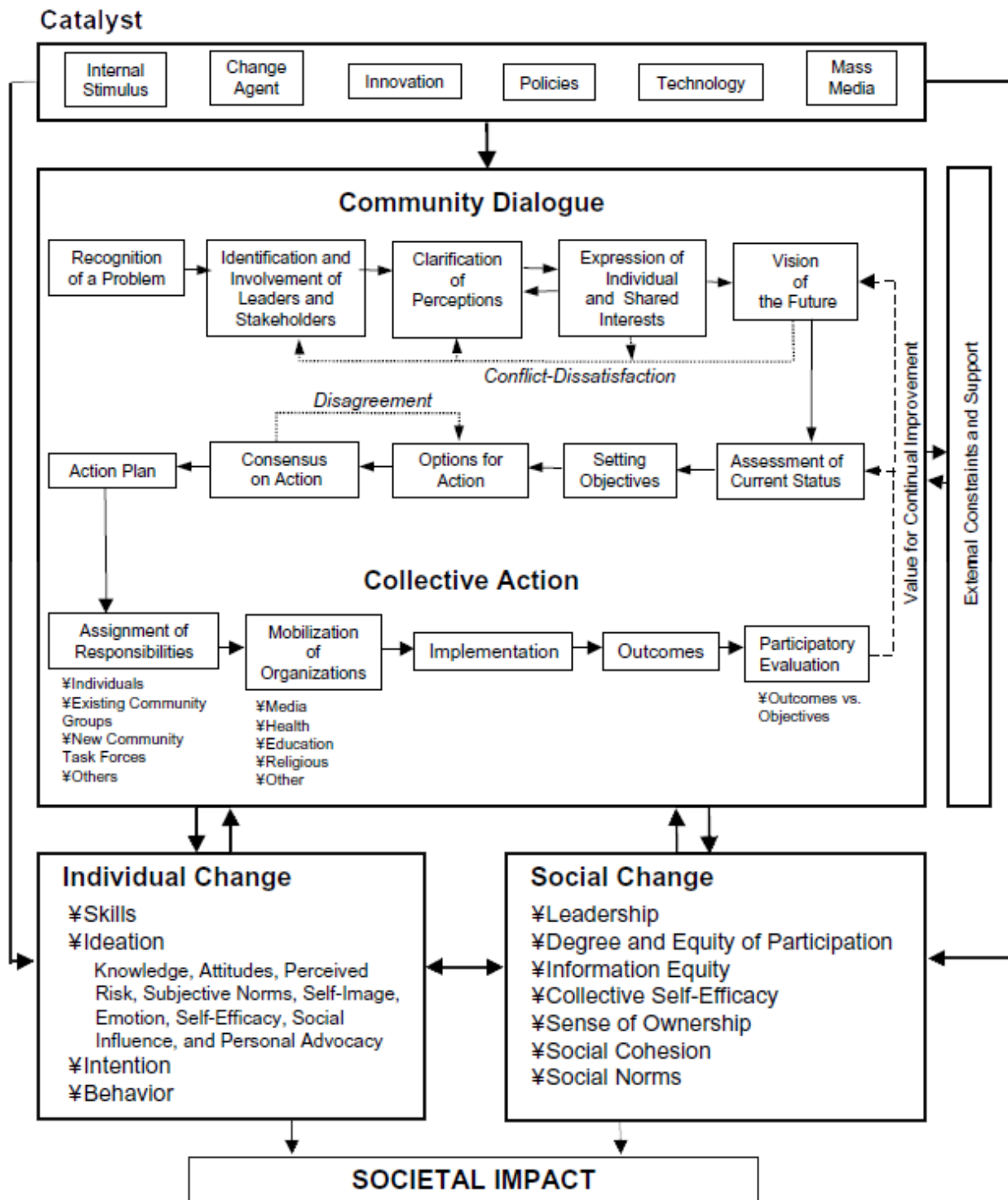PLANNING STRATEGY ONE: **CATALYZING SOCIAL CHANGE**

In their paper, *Communication for Social Change: An Integrated Model for Measuring the Process and Its Outcomes,* Figueroa et al. (2002) highlight the core elements of a communication strategy designed to provide an integrated approach to development issues (see Figure 1). They approach this integration strategy from the perspective of how such work can be evaluated—outlining indicators as well as key strategic elements.

In this social-change approach, the core element for an integrated process is a catalyst/stimulus that can be external or internal to the community. The catalyst will differ in every circumstance and context. Using an agriculture, nutrition, and health perspective as an example, perhaps teachers have expressed concern regarding the nutritional status of their students to local officials. This catalyst leads to *dialogue* within the community that, when effective, leads to collective action and the resolution of a common problem.

The catalyst is a trigger that needs to be recognized by and resonate with both the local and development communities. That resonance needs to both prompt and provide fertile ground for harnessing and amplifying local dialogue and debate—from friends chatting informally to family discussions at meal time, from local council deliberations to national media coverage, from local school board dialogues to farmers' union discussions and a myriad of other local and national processes of debate, consensus building, and decisionmaking. The power of this approach to integration comes from the resonance of the stimulus and the process of dialogue and debate that engages different groups, vested interests, and perspectives around a common dynamic.

Another important aspect of the social-change approach is evaluation, which is based on records kept by the community, the person or institution that drives the change (the "change agent"), and other interested parties regarding each stage of the community dialogue and action process: what steps were undertaken, who participated, whether there was any conflict or disagreement, the way in which it was resolved, and the outcome of each step.

Figure 1. Integrated model of communication for social change

Source: Figueroa, M. E., Lawrence Kincaid, D., Rani, M., and G. Lewis. 2002. *Communication for Social Change: An Integrated Model for Measuring the Process and Its Outcomes.* Communication for Social Change Working Paper 1. Baltimore, MD, US: Johns Hopkins University Press.
http://www.communicationforsocialchange.org/pdf/socialchange.pdf.

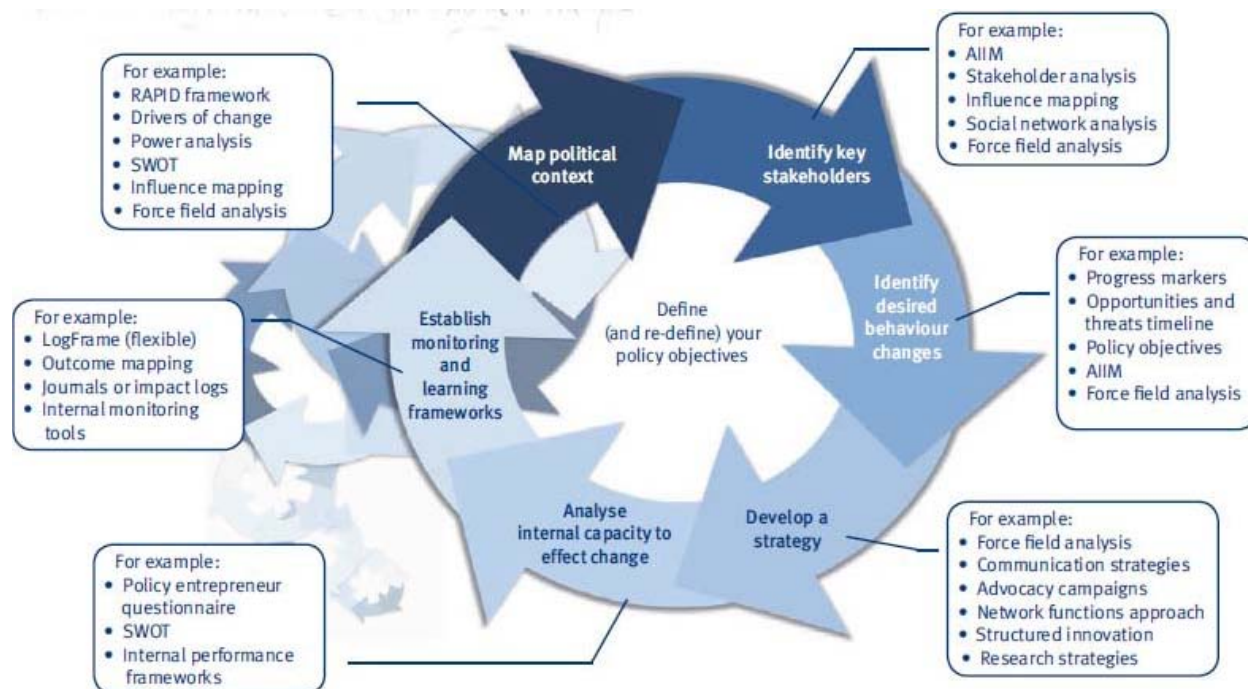PLANNING STRATEGY TWO**: WORKING TOWARD A DESIRED OUTCOME**

In the social-change approach mentioned above, the key element for integration is the catalyst that resonates across constituent groups. The approach mentioned in this section, the RAPID Outcome Mapping Approach (ROMA), has a different focus (Young and Mendizabal 2009). The core of the ROMA approach, which was developed by the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) in the United Kingdom, is not a catalyst, but rather the desired (and eventually negotiated and shared) outcome toward which all actors are working. It is the negotiation of that outcome "map" that provides the driving element for greater integration across development issues, including issues related to agriculture, health, and nutrition.

> "The originality of the methodology is its shift away from assessing the development impact of a programme (defined as changes in state - for example: poverty alleviation, or reduced conflict) and toward changes in the behaviours, relationships, actions or activities of the people, groups, and organisations with whom a development programme works directly. This shift alters the way a programme understands its goals and assesses its performance and results. Outcome Mapping establishes a vision of the human, social, and environmental betterment to which the programme hopes to contribute and then focuses monitoring and evaluation on factors and actors within that programme's direct sphere of influence" (ODI 2009).

There are eight RAPID Outcome Mapping steps, which are presented in Figure 2:

1. Define a clear, overarching policy objective.
2. Map the political/policy context.
3. Identify desired changes needed.
4. Identify the key stakeholders.
5. Develop a strategy.
6. Ensure the team has the competencies required.
7. Establish an action plan.
8. Develop a monitoring and learning system.

Figure 2. The RAPID Outcome Mapping Approach (ROMA)

For example:
- RAPID framework
- Drivers of change
- Power analysis
- SWOT
- Influence mapping
- Force field analysis

For example:
- AIIM
- Stakeholder analysis
- Influence mapping
- Social network analysis
- Force field analysis

For example:
- LogFrame (flexible)
- Outcome mapping
- Journals or impact logs
- Internal monitoring tools

For example:
- Progress markers
- Opportunities and threats timeline
- Policy objectives
- AIIM
- Force field analysis

For example:
- Policy entrepreneur questionnaire
- SWOT
- Internal performance frameworks

For example:
- Force field analysis
- Communication strategies
- Advocacy campaigns
- Network functions approach
- Structured innovation
- Research strategies

Map political context

Identify key stakeholders

Establish monitoring and learning frameworks

Define (and re-define) your policy objectives

Identify desired behaviour changes

Analyse internal capacity to effect change

Develop a strategy

Source: Young, J., and E. Mendizabal. 2009. *Helping Researchers Become Policy Entrepreneurs: How to Develop Engagement Strategies for Evidence-Based Policy-Making.* ODI (Overseas Development Institute) Briefing Paper 53. London: ODI. Accessed February 1, 2011. http://www.odi.org.uk/resources/download/1127.pdf.

PLANNING STRATEGY THREE: **DEVELOPING SYSTEMWIDE MAPS**

The core of the third identified integrated planning strategy, known as Systemwide Collaborative Action for Livelihoods (SCALE), is mapping (AED 2004). The development of a common map by constituent groups with very diverse, and often different, perspectives and experiences can be a compelling platform for effective integration. Using agriculture, health, and nutrition as an example, one can imagine a wide range of local and national knowledge contributing to the development of common maps. Crop yields would be combined with school attendance. Maternal mortality could be compared against rural/urban demographics. Rural transport links and times could be mapped along with health facility locations. Child health data could intersect with child food consumption, which could be presented on the same plane as the nutrient values of the predominant food produced, for example.
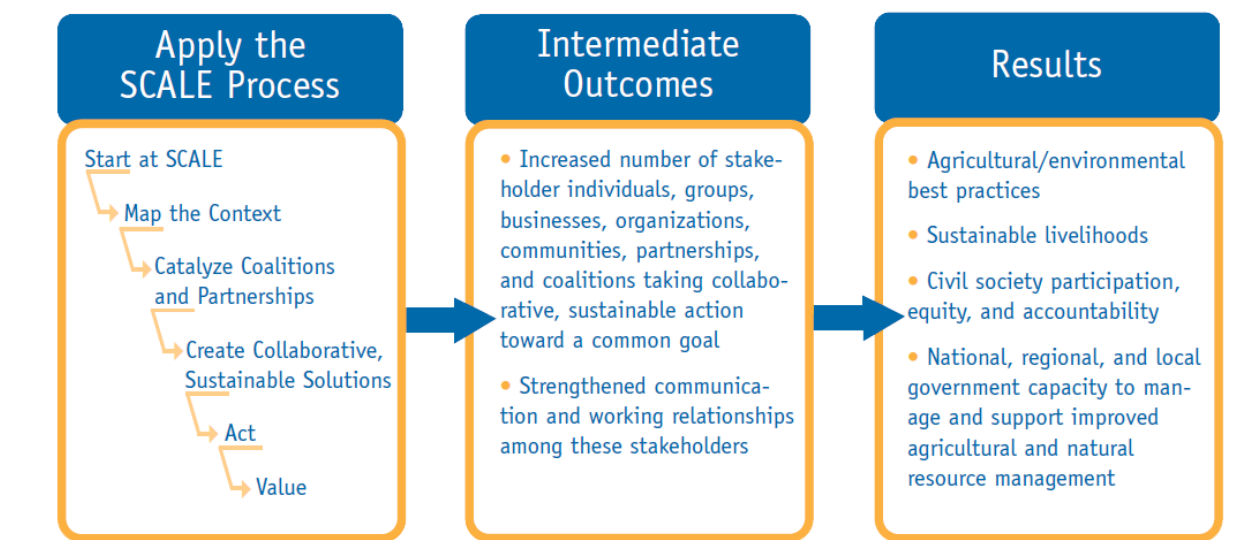
The ability for any interested party—from a ministry official to a local farmer— to see all of these factors at a glance , and then to work together to address development issues, makes SCALE a compelling approach for integration. The SCALE process is illustrated in Figures 3 and 4.

Figure 3. The SCALE process

Source: AED (Academy for Educational Development). 2004. *Going to Scale: System-wide Collaborative Action for Livelihoods and the Environment.* Washington, DC: AED. Accessed February 1, 2011. http://www.globalhealthcommunication.org/tool_docs/52/scalefinal.pdf.

Figure 4. The SCALE framework

Apply the SCALE Process

Start at SCALE

Map the Context

Catalyze Coalitions and Partnerships

Create Collaborative, Sustainable Solutions

Act

Value

Intermediate Outcomes

• Increased number of stakeholder individuals, groups, businesses, organizations, communities, partnerships, and coalitions taking collaborative, sustainable action toward a common goal

• Strengthened communication and working relationships among these stakeholders

Results

• Agricultural/environmental best practices

• Sustainable livelihoods

• Civil society participation, equity, and accountability

• National, regional, and local government capacity to manage and support improved agricultural and natural resource management

Source: AED (Academy for Educational Development). 2004. *Going to Scale: System-wide Collaborative Action for Livelihoods and the Environment.* Washington, DC: AED. Accessed February 1, 2011. http://www.globalhealthcommunication.org/tool_docs/52/scalefinal.pdf.

PLANNING STRATEGY FOUR: **LEARNING FROM THE MOST SIGNIFICANT CHANGE**

In addition to the three communication strategies designed to facilitate and support increased integration across and among development issues, there is one more – the Most Significant Change approach (Davies and Dart 2005). The key element of the Most Significant Change approach is for constituent groups across the spectrum of interest to identify, assess, and distill lessons from a significant change that has taken place. There are 10 steps to the Most Significant Change analysis process:

1. How to start and raise interest
2. Defining the domains of change
3. Defining the reporting period
4. Collecting stories related to the change that occurred
5. Selecting the most significant of the stories
6. Feeding back the results of the selection process
7. Verification of stories
8. Quantification
9. Secondary analysis and meta-monitoring
10. Revising the system

As an example, it could be that a country is looking to accelerate the links among the agriculture, health, and nutrition sectors. Perhaps there is a region of the country in which there has been significant change in maternal mortality, child school attendance, Vitamin A deficiency, average birth weight, or farmer productivity. The Most Significant Change approach would engage a cross-section of stakeholders/constituents in that region to analyze how the change took place.

In the Most Significant Change approach, people discuss significant changes within their area and submit the most significant of these to the level above, which then selects the most significant of all the SCs submitted by the lower levels and passes this on to the next level, and so on. Figure 5 illustrates this flow.

Figure 5. Flow of stories and feedback in Most Significant Change approach
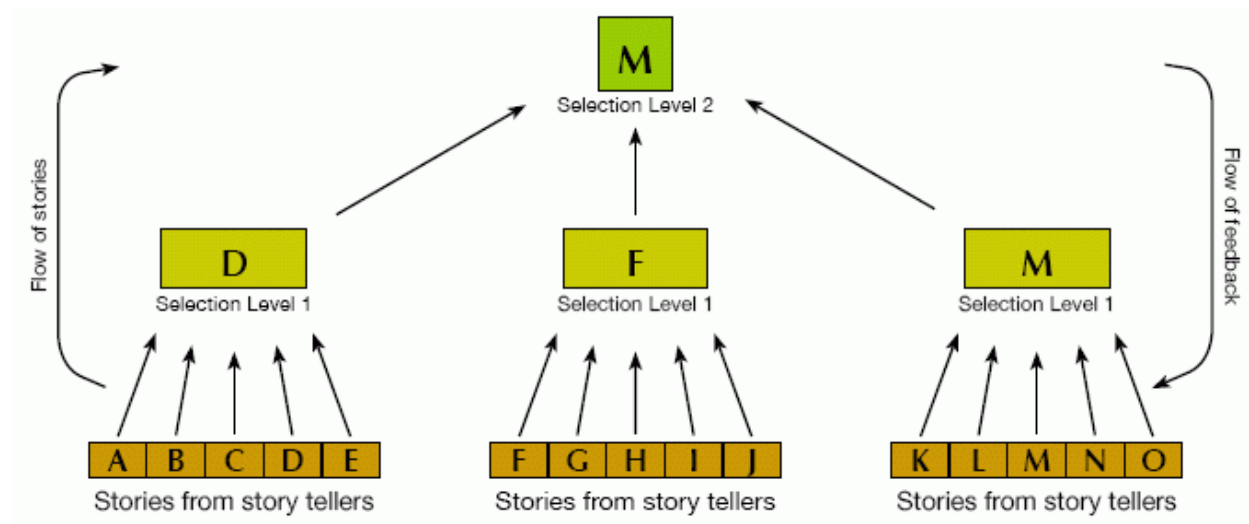
Source: Davies, R., and J. Dart. 2005. *The "Most Significant Change" (MSC) Technique: A Guide to Its Use.* London: MandE NEWS (Monitoring and Evaluation NEWS). Accessed February 1, 2011. <www.mande.co.uk/docs/MSCGuide.pdf>.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Though there has been progress in combating hunger, 29 countries still have an alarming or extremely alarming hunger situation, according to the Global Hunger Index (von Grebmer et al. 2010). If further rapid and substantive progress is to be made, then the focus of this conference – developing integrated approaches – will need to become reality soon.

The communication planning strategies outlined above are designed to accelerate the development of integrated approaches across sectors. But they are not superficial processes; they will require substantive and thorough planning and implementation. There will be significant challenges, but the world hunger situation and myriad other international development issues demand and require long-term thinking and action. Each of the models outlined above, when implemented, can produce solid action plans.

It is also important to note that the planning strategies outlined above cannot be implemented solely by development agency professionals, or government officials, or local communities working on their own. Each of the approaches outlined above requires interaction among the international community, government actors, and local populations.

These two forms of integration—across sectors and across a range of actors—are both required if progress is to be made in addressing the common issues facing agriculture, nutrition, and health.

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AED (Academy for Educational Development). 2004. *Going to Scale: System-wide Collaborative Action for Livelihoods and the Environment.* Washington, DC: AED. Accessed February 1, 2011. http://www.globalhealthcommunication.org/tool_docs/52/scalefinal.pdf.

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Young, J., and E. Mendizabal. 2009. *Helping Researchers Become Policy Entrepreneurs: How to Develop Engagement Strategies for Evidence-Based Policy-Making.* ODI (Overseas Development Institute) Briefing Paper 53. London: ODI. Accessed February 1, 2011. http://www.odi.org.uk/resources/download/1127.pdf.

APPENDIX: SOURCES FOR FURTHER INSIGHTS

The resources mentioned here are either directly related to the planning strategies discussed in this paper, or they reference them in some way, or they describe projects and thinking that use the strategies as frameworks.

(A) *Planning Tools*

Executive Summary: Communication for Social Change: An Integrated Model for Measuring the Process and Its Outcomes
http://www.comminit.com/en/node/1275

Most Significant Change (MSC) Technique
http://www.comminit.com/en/node/201192

RAPID Outcome Mapping Approach (ROMA)
http://www.comminit.com/en/node/308757/348

SCALE (System-wide Collaborative Action for Livelihoods and the Environment)
http://www.comminit.com/en/node/201273/307

Checklist for Programme Officers: Improving the Quality of SRHR Education Programmes for Young People
http://www.comminit.com/en/node/316361

Health Belief Model (Detailed)
http://www.comminit.com/en/node/27093/347

Communicating about Biodiversity
http://www.comminit.com/en/node/201300/306

Evidence and Rights Based Planning and Support Tool for SRHR/HIV Prevention Interventions for Young People
http://www.comminit.com/en/node/316286

Gender-Equitable Men (GEM) Scale
http://www.comminit.com/en/node/308749

Intro to Participatory Photo Mapping (PPM) and Using Participatory Photo Mapping (PPM) to Engage Communities
http://www.comminit.com/en/node/321072/307

(B) *Strategic thinking*

Lessons Learned in Scaling Up TB/HIV Collaborative Activities
http://www.comminit.com/en/node/323166

Incorporating Male Gender Norms into Family Planning and Reproductive Health Programs
http://www.comminit.com/en/node/305290

Social Norms Marketing Aimed at Gender Based Violence: A Literature Review and Critical Assessment
http://www.comminit.com/en/node/325499

Performing Arts for Behavior and Social Change
http://www.comminit.com/en/node/314661/347

Combating Malnutrition: Positive Deviance Grows Roots in Vietnam in the Land of a Thousand Rice Fields
http://www.comminit.com/en/node/307513

Making the Case for Integration: Tides Foundation's Africa Family Planning and HIV Integration Fund
http://www.comminit.com/en/node/325223/38

Community-Based Adaptation to Climate Change
http://www.comminit.com/en/node/323133

(C) *Program experience***s**

Soul City Television Series
http://www.comminit.com/en/node/122775/347

Kivulini Women's Rights Organisation
http://www.comminit.com/en/node/321508

Women Accessing Realigned Markets (WARM)
http://www.comminit.com/en/node/308882/304

HEARTLINES
http://www.comminit.com/en/node/130145/303

Agricultural Employers Association (AEA) HIV/AIDS Awareness Theatre
http://www.comminit.com/en/node/294234/347

Story Workshop Educational Trust
http://www.comminit.com/en/node/130895/38

Breeze FM
http://www.comminit.com/en/node/120410/376

Phukusi la Moyo (Bag of Life)
http://www.comminit.com/en/node/297128

(D) *Evaluations*

Compelling Evidence: Soul City and Its Impact
http://www.comminit.com/en/node/71648/304

Impact Data - Alam Simsim Outreach Program
http://www.comminit.com/en/node/149170/304

Setting Our Agenda on Early Learning, Violence and Physical Environment: Care for Child Development
http://www.comminit.com/en/node/324749

CORE Group, PD/Hearth Technical Advisory Group (TAG) Meeting Report
http://www.comminit.com/en/node/302828

Monitoring and Evaluation of Research Communications: Scoping Study
http://www.comminit.com/en/node/222472/348

An Assessment of the Effectiveness of Radio Theatre in Promoting Good Healthy Living among Rural Communities in Osun State
http://www.comminit.com/en/node/311050/304

Catalyzing Personal and Social Change around Gender, Sexuality, and HIV: Impact Evaluation of Puntos de Encuentro's Communication Strategy in Nicaragua
http://www.comminit.com/en/node/293115/347

(E) *Training Events*

Soaps and Society: Making Broadcast Drama for Development
http://www.comminit.com/en/node/327989

Leadership in Strategic Health Communication Workshop
http://www.comminit.com/en/node/327513

The 2011 Summer Institute on Integrated Marketing Communication for Behavioral Impact (IMC/COMBI) in Health and Social Development
http://www.comminit.com/en/node/327493

Capturing Lessons from the Field: The Writeshop Process
http://www.comminit.com/en/node/327461

Social and Behaviour Change Communication Approaches Certificate Course
http://www.comminit.com/en/node/312142/38

(F) *Materials*

Gender-Based Violence and HIV: Technical Brief
http://www.comminit.com/en/node/327785/347

The African Child Speaks "Finding our Rights in the Time of HIV" - The Story of Rudo and Themba - Comic Book
http://www.comminit.com/en/node/307668/2781

Networking for Policy Change: TB/HIV Advocacy Training Manual
http://www.comminit.com/en/node/328090/347

Happy, Healthy, and Hot: A Young Person's Guide to Their Rights: Sexuality and Living with HIV
http://www.comminit.com/en/node/327946/347

Children to the Fore! An Easy-to-Use Training Handbook that Promotes Child Rights and Cultural Issues in the Face of HIV in Southern Africa
http://www.comminit.com/en/node/307841/303

Strategic Communication for Development Projects: A Toolkit for Task Team Leaders
http://www.comminit.com/en/node/268810/2946

(G) _Blogs_

Scaling Steep Slopes - The Public Policies Helping to Transform Medellin
http://www.comminit.com/en/node/274811

Climate change communication – time for the stage?
http://www.comminit.com/en/node/327719/2675

Little Green People
http://www.comminit.com/en/node/303029/2675