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Over the last forty years, the field of communication for development has moved away from the modernization, central-planning models to an emphasis on participatory responses to people’s grassroots organizations and programs to deal with persisting rural and urban poverty. The focus today is on issues of culture, environmental protection, fostering indigenous knowledge and indigenous forms of communication, research by beneficiary organizations, the adaptation of ICT to development needs and the empowerment of women and youth. In the African context, there is increasing emphasis on fostering the development of indigenous African conceptions of communication and development, community-based media, and the dialogue between the African, Islamic and Western civilizations rooted in Africa as the basis for a peaceful and united vision of the African future.

Keywords: development communication, participatory communication, environmental communication, ICT for development, Internet, mobile phone, empowerment of women and youth, community media, indigenous knowledge, communication for changing power structures, rural and urban poverty.

Introduction:
Part I of this article reviews recent research on communication for development internationally. The collection of essays originally done by Servaes and his colleagues (2008) for UNESCO is one of the best recent overviews, but the book by Wendy Quarry and Ricardo Ramirez (2009) is a candidate for the list of classics in this field.
Part II summarizes briefly key theoretical arguments and research by Africans on communication for development in Africa. Part III takes up the issue of new communication technologies, focusing on Internet and the mobile phone. Part IV reviews some recent research on communication methods in new approaches to environmental protection. This review provides the background for several articles in this issue of *African Communication Research* on communication for development and environmental journalism.

**Part I - Current debates in research on communication for development**


This edited book of Servaes provides one of the most comprehensive recent summaries of the state of thinking in this field. Servaes has managed to bring in contributions dealing with most of the major lines of current thinking in this area. An earlier version of the book was produced for UNESCO as a kind of “state of the art” of thinking about the field. The present collection of experts updates this and highlights the major issues.

In his Introduction, Servaes gives a useful definition of the field. “All...those...involved in the analysis and application of communication for development would probably agree that development communication...is the (study)...of the relationship between the practical application of communication processes and technologies in achieving positive and measurable development outcomes...” (2008, p. 15).

Servaes gives a brief review of the evolution of the field from its focus on communication processes in modernization models in the 1950s, to dependency models in the 1960s and 1970s to today’s multiplicity and participatory models. The modernization model places emphasis on infusions of money and technology from the developed world to the developing world and leaves the decisions for development in the hands of local elites and the masters of the global political-economy.

Over the last twenty years there is virtual universal consensus in the field of development communication that participatory forms of communication are far more effective for development than the moderniza-
tion model of central planning offices making all the decisions. An example is “experts” deciding on what farmers are to produce and then imposing these decisions on the bewildered farmers with little knowledge of the real conditions of agriculture in a given context.

One has only to consult the recent major texts and anthologies in the area of communication for development to see the consensus on the importance of the participatory approach: Wilkins (Ed.) (2000), *Redeveloping communication for social change*; Wang, Servaes and Goonasekera (Eds.) (2000), *The New communications landscape*; Melkote & Steeves, (2001), *Communication for development in the Third World: Theory and practice for empowerment*; Richards, Thomas, Nain (Eds.) (2001), *Communication and development: The Freirean connection*; Rodriguez (2001), *Fissures in the mediascape: An international study of citizens’ media*; Mody (Ed.) (2003), *International and development communication*; Oscar Hemer and Thomas Tufte (2005), *Media and glocal change: Rethinking communication for development*; Gumucio-Dagron and Tufte (Eds.) (2006), *Communication for social change*; The World Bank (2007), *World congress on communication for development: Lessons, challenges and the way forward*; Mefalopulos (2008), *Development communication sourcebook*; McPhail (2009), *Development Communication*. What the participatory model introduced is the view that development advisors from agricultural extension agents to planning bureaus must allow people’s groups to define their needs and initiatives. Development agencies then need to respond to these initiatives in a way that strengthens people’s motivations and initiatives. The objective is to place more of the services within people-controlled organizations to insure responsiveness to development initiatives. In the final analysis, the people must carry out the development of the nation.

At the practical level this means that farmers, for example, must enter into a dialogue with experts in agricultural technology to find solutions to the farmers’ problems. Technical experts will no doubt learn much from the farmers and the farmers from the technical experts. The current consensus emphasizes the following aspects:

1. **Attention to the local cultural values**, including the religious values, that are the motivations for engaging in any kind of technology improvement;
2. The European or American model of development is not the universal model for the whole world. Rather, there are a “multiplicity” of models according to the local socio-cultural-
political context. The horizontal interchange of ideas between people in various models is beneficial to all.

(3) People who have been living in the authoritarian, repressive context of the modernization, strong-state model need to experience a space of empowering freedom to discover their capacity to take initiatives.

(4) Development is not just introducing technology from the West but encouraging a process of socio-political change in power structures that opens a space of freedom for people’s initiatives, knowledge and technical capacities.

(5) That globalization is creating a network for promoting the ideas for an enormous number of localities, but that the local remains the most important context for people’s initiatives.

Servaes maintains a very optimistic attitude in quietly assuming that the world of socio-economic development welcomes a participatory, multiplicity, democratic model of development. But as one reads through the much more realistic essays in the book, it becomes evident that the participatory model is more of a dream than a reality. The reason is very evident. The modernization model based on the political-economic power of local elites continues to impose itself.

For every development problem, the answer which political leaders seek is not the empowerment of grassroots initiatives but one more massive monetary infusion from entities such as the World Bank, the IMF or other international investment agency. These funds obviously go into the hands of the modernizing elites, and little if anything trickles down to the people. Where the foundation of the nation is an imperialistic colonial government—and most developing countries are former colonies—the founders of the nation are the colonial bureaucracies set up by the colonizing empires. These bureaucracies operate with the same exploitative logic as the colonial occupation. The only fundamental solution to this problem is a socio-political movement which places power solidly in the hands of the people at the grassroots and makes the technical elite subservient to a democratic governance of the people.

Nowhere is this realistic analysis of the continuation of the modernization model more evident than in Pradip Thomas’ analysis of poverty. The most persistent evidence of the failure of the modernization model is the increase of concentration of economic and technological power in
an elite class and the declining access of lower-status groups to the resources of development.

**The persistence of poverty**


One of the strongest indicators that the current dominant models of development are not working is in the persistence and growth of poverty in the world. There are 1.3 billion people worldwide who live in absolute poverty. That is, they cannot meet their basic needs of survival. In most developing countries, approximately 30 to 60 per cent of the people live below the poverty line, and even in the USA and in Europe approximately 15 per cent live below the poverty line (Servaes, 2008, p. 18). The number of people living in poverty is steadily increasing in both absolute and relative terms.

Why is poverty persisting or even increasing? In the view of Pradip Thomas, much depends on the conception of poverty and the solution that is inherent in that conception.

A first conception of poverty is that it is essentially a lack of resources. The most visible aspects of poverty are the massive unemployment, the lack of access to land and technical assistance by peasant farmers, the lack of health centers, or inadequate education. The response of the major donor agencies and governments is to provide work programs, to provide some land, to make some schools available. But this response is to deal with the symptoms of the problem of poverty, not the causes. Why is there unemployment, low agricultural productivity or lack of health facilities? These are issues of structural allocation of resources that depend on socio-political power. The government may embark on a program of health centers, but then find that soon there is not enough money to maintain them. To deal with the causes would require giving the poor real political, economic and especially cultural power. In the modernization perspective, the knowledge, capacities and cultural identity of groups such as peasant farmers have no validity. Until you put on shoes and a necktie, you will not be believed. Only the technology and organization of the developed world has validity.

A second approach to poverty is to give the poor organizational capacity which supposedly will enable them to have access to technical
knowledge to improve their productivity, provide access to credit for small business people in the informal sector, access to better technical training for unskilled workers and especially access to information sources. But as Thomas points out, no real structure of access for those in the informal sector exists in most developing countries. Agricultural extension systems are not interested in small farmers. Credit for small business has exorbitantly high interest rates. The existing information systems of radio, newspapers, Internet and even cell phones are designed only for an urban elite. Again only if the poor have the power to completely reorganize the systems of access to bring these into their networks of communication and with their language is there likely to be real access. In most developing countries, the system of access is essentially top down with a central control center down through government and commercial bureaucracies. There is no bottom up definition of the flow of information that brings about real dialogue and mutual problem solving.

A third conception of poverty is the lack of human rights, the lack of entitlement. In the modernization model of development, only those who meet the conditions of the market and advanced technology are entitled to services. The problem is that entitlement without real power is meaningless. Entitlement implies a reallocation of resources from those who have been favored in the modernization program to the great majority of the people. In most developing countries, elites have access to the best of schools and teachers. Most teachers, health workers, or any other service professionals do not want to go out to work among the rural and urban poor because they would have to sacrifice something of their cultural status of modernity.

When Thomas begins to give examples of systems of access and of communication, they are not systems which are essentially controlled by urban-technical elites but by the poor themselves. The examples are those of community radio which is controlled by organizations of the poor. The systems of health services are controlled by the poor and give prominence to forms of communication which are those of the poor: folk drama, traditional dance and singing, the rhetoric of the people. Where improved technology is involved, it is not through middle-class professionals but is in the hands of paraprofessionals who live in the communities of the poor and are able to engage the poor in a discussion which blends technology into the indigenous knowledge and capacities of the poor themselves. The reference point is not the
technology of the West, but the knowledge and values of the people themselves.

**Modernization from the West vs indigenous participation from the grassroots**


This essay gives a concise but quite brilliant account of the sixty-year battle between the modernization and participatory perspectives in the field of communication for development. Huesca himself does not take sides, but he leaves out no major actor in the account. Much of the attempt to formulate a participatory model of development is part of the long struggle to overcome the imperialistic mindset that saw development as making the whole world part of the political, economic, cultural and communicational system of the colonizing European nations.

The first books on development communication in the immediate Post World War II period believed firmly that development was simply a matter of transferring the technology and massive infusions of capital from the West. In many ways this was a continuation of colonial strategy: selecting and training a local elite of the colonized countries in the forms of governance, economic management, education and the culture of the mother country so that this elite could extend this among the natives. The interior of the developing nations were characterized as having an inferior “traditional” way of life that had to be obliterated and replaced by “modernity.” The fallacies of this model soon became apparent, and moves toward a participatory model of development began to emerge.

(1) **The organization of the peasant farmer**

The classical model of this was the agricultural extension system. The periodic famines in economies based on agriculture seemed to be the clearest evidence of the inferiority of the traditional. The extension paradigm set up an agricultural university modeled especially on US farm-related universities to adapt Western farming techniques to local conditions and train “extension agents” to replace traditional agriculture with modern agricultural systems. There was not much attention
Robert A. White

to the fact that the peasant farmers in Africa, Asia and Latin America lacked all that had made American or European modern farming possible: ample land, credit, good marketing, ready supply of inputs such as fertilizers, literacy, good roads and media communication, above all, strong cooperative organization. Without this support, the peasant agriculture, the largest part of economies aside from oil and minerals, failed to generate the capital needed by developing countries, and peasant farmers became the perennial poor of the developing world. Although Huesca makes only glancing references to this, the first moves toward a “participatory model” argued that peasant farming had a logic of its own and that the best form of development was to respond to the initiatives of peasant farming on its own terms. There was a widespread move toward farmer-led credit and marketing cooperatives, and demand for agrarian reform that would give more land to the peasants. In virtually all developing countries, here were massive peasant movements opposing modernization conceptions of development and supporting these new people-controlled policies. Often these popular movements came into direct conflict with modernizing elites allied with former colonial powers, and implanted in developing countries a struggle of the mass of the poor against elites imposing control through strong state planning.

(2) Dependency theory

The modernization theory met a storm of opposition in the former colonies seeking political independence, economic self-reliance, cultural affirmation and a control of their own communication systems. The modernization model proposed economic and financial autonomy, but the earlier stages of economic growth were to be based on export of traditional agricultural and mineral commodities with a gradual process of import substitution that would grow continually toward more sophisticated manufacturing. It became apparent to leaders of developing nations that this model would keep them in the position of continual poor producers of cheap raw materials—what they had been as colonies. No matter how fast and efficient the rise of sophisticated manufacturing, the low educational and research levels of most developing nations would condemn them to a game of perpetual dependence on the advanced technology of the developed nations.

Nyerere’s Arusha Declaration in Tanzania was typical of the call to a whole nation to cut off ties of dependence on the developed nations and make self-sacrificing initiatives of indigenous creativity to chart
their own course politically, economically, and culturally. This became part of the theory of participatory communication in that every citizen was expected to voluntarily participate in this national self-determination process.

The modernizing elites paid little heed to calls for self-sacrificing dedication to the nation. The creation of the new ministries, parastatals and all the other apparatus of a modern nation brought a huge increase in the employment of the urban educated classes who identified more with the modern globalizing world than with the traditional culture of their peasant indigenous past. What the people identified with most and participated in increasingly was the popular culture of telenovelas, Nollywood home video films, music, drama, circuses and other forms of popular entertainment. Martin-Barbero’s classic *Communication, culture and hegemony* (1993) (*De los medios a las mediaciones*) showed clearly that the autonomous identity of developing nations and their resistance to cultural imperialism was to be found more in their popular culture than in their economic independence. Using media decoding theory, Martin-Barbero showed that the enjoyment of popular films such as those of Nollywood enables people to participate in the autonomous construction not only of their culture but their social organization and even their forms of economy. Indeed, the debate regarding dependence shifted increasingly from economic to cultural and communication independence.

(3) *Freire and the emphasis on dialogic communication*

Virtually all of the developing countries have a history of colonial occupation that introduced a highly authoritarian system of governance, economic control, education, and cultural subjugation. Often this was reinforced by racial discrimination. This system of control cultivated in lower-status people a sense of inherent inferiority and obedience to authority. Every significant communication relation in this social order is structured in terms of linear commands demanding a response of absolute obedience and uncritical compliance. Not surprisingly, any rise in status is symbolized by taking on the authoritarian, repressive attitude.

When the Catholic Church in Brazil began its program of grassroots civic education in the early 1960s, they invited the educational philosopher, Paulo Freire, to help design this preparation for voting. Freire immediately saw that to be an intelligent voter one had to be able to
make a critical, independent assessment of one’s material situation and social power.

His own personalist philosophical background led him to replace teachers with animators who encouraged members of a lower-status group, constantly told that their perceptions were inferior, to get in contact, in a non-directive way, with their own personal perceptions of a situation and validate these perceptions. The topics of discussion came not from the dominant classes but objects and issues of importance to lower-status people, and the group discussions about these issues attempted to lead all to grow in confidence in their own perceptions and judgments. The communication was dialogic: listening carefully to each other, affirming the validity of other persons and their perceptions, and inviting the others into cooperation. The educational method often started with a large photographic portrayal of a typical situation in their experience such as a farmer plowing some land that was normally interpreted from a higher status perception and gradually to bring to the surface of consciousness the way poor peasant farmers themselves might see the situation. Typically, the initial perceptions repeated the higher status power relations, but gradually the interpretations of the meaning of the situation became what the peasant farmer might really think but was afraid to say because of fear of the reprisals for saying something that would threaten the interests of large land owners. Freire’s simple method led naturally to group consensus, organization and action, and became the basis of small scale power changes more by conversion than by coercion. Clementia Rodriguez’s book, *Fissures in the Mediascape* (2001), provides one of the best explanations and descriptions of the transformative impact of the Freirean method. Freire’s books provided a socio-political, epistemological and philosophical rationale as well as a very practical explanation of how to carry out the methods. Freire’s thought swept through the post-colonial and post-modern world, and became the foundation of participatory communication.

(4) The “another development” approach

In 1975, a Norwegian communication specialist, Andreas Fuglesang, collaborated with the Dag Hammarskjold Foundation of Sweden to produce the report *What Now? Another Development* based on five principles of development:

1. that development be geared to the satisfaction of needs, beginning with the eradication of poverty;
2. that it be endogenous and self-
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reliant – that is, relying on the strengths of the societies that undertake it; (3) that it be in harmony with the environment; (4) the need for structural transformation (change in power structures); (5) ... immediate action is both necessary and possible (Quarry and Ramirez, 2009, 27-28).

Although this statement does not use the word “participation”, the stress that it be endogenous and self-reliant implies that it be a response to the initiatives of the people who are directly affected, not part of a modernization plan introduced from above. More important, the ideas of “another development” became an influential part of theories of communication for development.

(5) The pseudo-participatory approach to participatory communication

The writings and practices of Freire and the “another development” approach made devastatingly clear how contradictory and repressive is the modernization model with its coercive persuasion approach to introducing new technology. But the ministers of government and financial institutions such as the World Bank or the IMF found it difficult to build in Freirean or another development approaches because governments are faced with promises to the people, production goals of national development plans and sluggish bureaucracies that must be “commanded” to get action. Extension agents who had little respect for peasant farmers would have enormously varied aptitudes for facilitating a participatory process.

Some would stress “participation” as a response to market needs, but discount grassroots initiatives and consciousness-raising efforts as unnecessary and impossible. The protagonists of the diffusion, modernization models came to the rescue with methods that would seem participatory but which, in fact, could be commanded in a uniform national program. One of the most typical of these is the use of soap opera formats or forms of traditional communication that are designed by experts to get audiences to identify with pro-social values, but leave the interpretation open to audience construction of meaning.

(6) The importance of widespread popular social movements

Many authors argue that the most effective contexts for creating a sense of confidence in personal and cultural identity, developing organizational and political capacity and bringing about significant changes in power are the great social movements. The 1960s independence movements in Africa, the movements among ethnic and racial minori-
ties, the great peasant movements, and the South African anti-apartheid movements are given as examples.

The conditions for social movements are present when there are widespread social grievances that are not being responded to by the official structure. A movement is usually set in motion by a dramatic violation of human rights and justice that opens a space of freedom to meet in the face of opposition and listen to leaders proclaim a whole new world view of rights and aspirations for the lower-status members. Participation and listening to grievances among all present is important because movements can succeed only if there are large numbers, and there will be large numbers only if everybody feels welcome. Leaders can bring forth new symbols of identification that galvanize popular identification and gather the followers into self-sacrificing loyalty. It is only in this context that Freirean consciousness raising by particular local leaders can be really successful and bring about structural change and major changes in power structure (White, 1994).

Some, such as Clementia Rodgriguez, question whether the era of great social movements is still valid in societies so complex and varied as that of today. She argues that more important movements are local protests and uprisings dealing with issues of gender, violation of human rights and social crises. The background for this may be simmering social discontent, but only continuous quick protests actually obtain change (Rodriguez, 2001).

(7) The “multiplicity” model

Jan Servaes has emphasized the multiplicity of variations of social development, in part, to counter the view that all nations and cultures must follow the European or Western process of social development but also to counter the view that there is any one path toward development. The cultures, social conditions and histories around the globe are so diverse and unique that we must assume that each context will generate its own process. This perspective gives primacy to the multiplicity of cultures and opens a space for the many advanced cultures of Asia. This is important for international aid agencies and development institutions that tend to globalize their plans and strategies.

(8) Participation and significant changes in power structure

The tendency of theories of participatory communication to focus on the micro level of personal consciousness raising and empowerment has obscured somewhat the need to explain how real participatory
decision making can be achieved at a national or global level. Development communication seems to have little explanatory power as to what to do with the entrenched modernizing power elites who are controlling most decision making in most developing countries. The gap between the very rich and very poor is widening, and no one seems to know what to do about this. Such questions tend to slip off the screen of development communication and are more likely to be taken up in political science with theories of democratization, the development of civil society, and the guaranteeing of elections. There seems to be no relationship with the theories of participatory development and these socio-political changes. Huesca has few theoretical guidelines.

Macro-power questions also tend to be taken up in the economics of development, and here again the question of participation is often forgotten. This is more a question of policy and national planning, and Servaes book on communication and development is helpful (2001). Huesca, however, contributes little on this point.

(9) The role of media in participatory communication

The research on participatory communication has been very fruitful in this regard, with special emphasis on radio, especially community radio (the topic of a future issue of ACR) and video (S. White, 2000; S. White, 2003). Another area much researched is group media and folk media which relates very well to the Freirean emphasis.

So, why is development still not participatory?


All the current research provides evidence that a participatory approach to development would raise incomes for the rural and urban poor, provide much better educational and health services and, in general, make the vast pool of unemployed and underemployed people in developing countries more productive. What a participatory model means, in short, is introducing an alternative socio-political-economic system which gives to peasant farmers and those working in the informal economy access to education, technical knowledge, credit, good marketing conditions and other factors of production. The term widely used for this model is empowerment, that is, giving to the mass of the poor the social, economic, political and psychological power over these
areas of their lives so that they can get the resources to realize their hopes, initiatives and endeavors. But, as the essays of Servaes, Thomas, Huesca and a host of other analysts show, poverty and powerlessness persist. Why? The answer most honest observers would readily give is that an exploitative and unjust power structure continues to exist between the developed and underdeveloped world and within developing countries.

How to change this exploitative and unjust power structure? In their remarkable and charming book, Wendy Quarry and Ricardo Ramirez argue that replacing the relationship of exploitative power with a relationship of service and genuine esteem of the poor and disadvantaged brings—perhaps not personal wealth and pomp—but great personal satisfaction and happiness. Quarry and Ramirez have been moving in the world of development organizations in an enormous variety of consultancies and projects over thirty years and have seen virtually every aspect of the world of development. In their travels, they have met a great number of people who have seen clearly that an exploitative relationship brings only emptiness and sadness, but that a relationship of service brings enormous personal satisfaction and internal peace because it refuses to live the daily contradiction of human exploitation. What we need are less “development bureaucrats” and more who have have a loving dedication to the poor and marginal.

This is a relationship which understands that at the heart of development are the human initiatives to make a world not only productive but ecologically balanced, introducing a culture of justice and dialogue. Those who have some form of power over resources through their education, organizational skills and, in this case, communication skills are willing to take their cue from the initiatives of others and respond to the initiatives of others on their terms and with the perspectives of others. In terms of communication skills, this is a relationship of listening to the poor about what the poor want to do and, only after listening and understanding what the powerless person dreams of doing, responding by telling, sharing whatever technical know-how the poor may find helpful.

Quarry and Ramirez call these persons of service “champions”. All are people Quarry and Ramirez have known personally and have observed working at close hand. The list includes Don Snowden of the Canadian Fogo Island video project, Manuel Calvelo-Rios of Peru and, more recently, Alex and Wilna Quarmane, working in community radio in Ghana. They are persons who have never been co-opted into
the modernization model of development simply because their per-
sonal values and inclinations lead them to see the human goodness and
beauty in the poor that makes them want to “listen” rather than imme-
diately “tell”. They do not see anything intrinsically wrong with the
tools of modernity, but they are aware that modernization is a structure
that gives developed nations power over underdeveloped nations and,
since modernization creates and works through a power elite in
developing nations, it creates a power relation between national elites
and the powerless poor in developing nations. These champions also
see that all power relations are exploitative and can dehumanize both
the powerful and the powerless in that power relationship—as Paulo
Freire showed so clearly.

Quarry and Ramirez explain the champions’ “opting out” of the
modernization model by locating their ideals within the model of
“another development” outlined by Andreas Fugelsang for the Dag
Hammarskjold Foundation of Sweden back in 1975. Fugelsang’s What
Now? Another Development was based on five core principles and is
worth quoting again from Quarry and Ramirez (2009, p. 27):

(1) that development be geared to the satisfaction of needs, beginning
with the eradication of poverty; (2) that it be endogenous and self-reliant
-- that is, relying on the strengths of the societies that undertake it;
(3) that it be in harmony with the environment; (4) the need for struc-
tural (power) transformations; structure refers to the patterns of
ownership over domestic resources that reproduce unequal economic
relations at the international level; (5) ...immediate action is both necessary
and possible.

Here Quarry and Ramirez (2009, p. 28) quote an extremely impor-
tant passage from Fugelsang’s book:

Any attempt to change this situation depends on the vision, the will and
the organizing capacity of those concerned. It implies that they become
self-reliant, that they transform the structures which have brought about
the present situation, and that they establish the conditions in which
the majority poor will have the means to improve their lot. Such reform
affects both socioeconomic and political structures, as well as the linkages
between them (Dag Hammarskjold Foundation, 1975, p. 38).
In short, the persistence of poverty and underdevelopment is due, in
great part, to a power structure, often inherited from a previous colo-
nial regime and maintained by a ruling elite in developing countries.
Quarry and Ramirez think that this power structure can be changed
only by an awareness that the problem lies within this power structure
itself and through the willingness to "opt out" of this structure by
establishing a relationship with the poor which empowers them, not by
reproducing in them the existing power structure, but by helping all to
realize that a relation of mutual service and mutual esteem is for the
benefit of all.

In the view of these authors, "champions" are "people who make a
difference" but they can come into operation only through the fortu-
itous circumstances of "context"—a second central variable, and if they
understand what communication is really about.

If "champions" are the answer, then how do we "produce" more of
the kind? As the stories of Quarry and Ramirez unfold, it is clear that,
above all, champions arrive on the scene without any modernization
agenda. They can simply interact with the people and let themselves
see the charming and remarkable qualities of these poor and
marginalized people. They don't have to make the people produce
modern results and are therefore rarely disappointed. Their own
success in life does not depend on getting the people to produce mod-
ern results. Being upwardly mobile in social status is not a primary
value, and they often stay with the people for a long period of time,
getting to know them well. Getting to know the people enables them
to build a relationship of esteem that blossoms into ideas of how to
work together with them to find solutions…and it grows. Yet champi-
ons are also writers and researchers and spread their ideas among both
researchers and practitioners.

The authors stress the importance of the context: an urgent need of
the poor people one lives with, an often desperate request from the
people, an organization that gives them opportunities to work with
these people, a public policy that favors people-controlled communica-
tion, the welcoming attitude of the people that makes this their home.

The champions are communication specialists, but their deep esteem
for the people convinces them that their role is not telling but helping
the people to get their message out to others facing similar problems, to
those in governmental power, to specialists in development and to the
people themselves to reflect more deeply on the value of their own
insights.
This is a book that one can read over and over again, gaining ever deeper insights into their central theme: it is good development that makes good communication for development. And good development is that which emerges from the initiatives of the people...not that which comes from planning offices.

The focus of Quarry and Ramirez on “individuals who make a difference” opens up a different perspective in the study of development communication. Although most of the champions described in this book are working at a fairly micro level, one’s imagination quickly runs to other champions at a broader level. In Honduras, Fernando Montes, who for many years guided the Honduran Coffee Institute, dedicated year after year to bringing thousands of small farmers into lucrative coffee production. At the same time he obtained a market for Honduran coffee at the international level. Fernando Montes showed many of the characteristics of a champion—dedicating almost a lifetime to opening up a whole area of the Honduran economy. In many conversations, Montes revealed to me his central motivation: deep dedication to the Honduran peasant farmer. He too has been a “listener”.

The study of champions at all levels of the development process is something which could well be brought into this field of research.

Part II - African perspectives on communication for development

The group of authors who have produced this book are, for the most part natives of Africa, and many of the essays attempt to present an “Africentric” view of development in Africa. The first three chapters, which frame the argument of the book, are especially valuable in presenting an “African”, “inside” perspective.

The opening chapter, by Molefi Kete Asante, an African American who has spent a life career re-Africanizing himself, presents a basic cultural and philosophical framework for the book with his chapter, “Afrocentricity and communication in Africa”. He defines Afrocentricity as “an intellectual orientation toward viewing Africans as subjects of history with their own agency in the midst of all phenomena” (Molefi Kete Asante, 2004, p. 5). What he means is that all African development initiatives must embody an African way of seeing the world and African ways of acting in the world. The problem, he thinks, is that Africans
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have “lost all contact with their inner cultural selves... How you treat others is the most direct manifestation of one's political philosophy and an indication of one's cultural manner” (Molefi Kete Asante, 2004, p. 6).

Molefi Kete Asante summarizes his argument by presenting six characteristics of Afrocentricity, something worth quoting in full:

(1) Intense interest in psychological location as determined by symbols, motifs, rituals and signs.  
(2) Commitment to finding the subject-place of Africans in any social, political, economic, architectural, literary or religious phenomenon with implications for questions gender and class.  
(3) Defense of African cultural elements as historically valid in the context of art, music, education, science, and literature.  
(4) Celebration of “centeredness” and agency and a commitment to lexical refinement that eliminates pejoratives about Africans or other people (Asante, 1998).  
(5) A powerful imperative from historical sources to revise the collective text of African people.  
(6) Use of critical reconstructive analysis and other-centered forms of achieving understanding as ways to recenter, that is, to reposition African communication in the world.

One of the most elaborate and well worked out attempts to clarify the distinctive African forms of communication has been done by Moemeka (1997, 1998, 2000) and further developed by Faniran (2008). Much of this emphasizes a form of communication and development that emphasizes community solidarity over individualistic interests. This places a high value on the community concern for the well-being of the individual and the concern of the individual for the well-being of the whole community. What Faniran and his associates have done is to identify in ordinary African activities these forms of communalistic solidarity.

In the development field, Ansu-Kyeremeh has emphasized a centripetal (from below) model of development vs. a centrifugal (from above) model of development (White, 2008). He points out that development must above all respond to the initiatives of the people at the grassroots, in the interior of the nation. This means a rejection of the modernization model of development, that is, a rejection of the importation
not only of the technology of the West but the cultural style of life of the West as the goal of development. It would mean that the urban-technical sectors would put their talents at the disposal of the rural and urban poor, being willing to go out to serve the people in rural schools and hospitals. They would not see their role as the intermediaries of Western agents of modernization and the lower-status population, but as learning from and responding to the indigenous population of the country. It would mean that the political system would no longer be a parasite living off the people, but would be ready to give operative control over development to the urban and rural poor through their civil society organizations.

Searching for an African cultural synthesis

To look for a rejection of Western culture is, in the view of the authors in this book, unrealistic and unwise. Masrui and Okigbo, in their chapter, “The triple heritage: The split soul of a continent speak of the three civilizations which have shaped Africa: Africa’s own indigenous cultural history, Islamic culture and the impact of Western traditions, religions and lifestyles. In almost all African countries these three civilizations are present. One might also add (as does Okigbo in his own chapter) that in many parts of Africa there is a strong Asian-Indian tradition that has a contribution to make. The tendency at present is for each of these traditions to fight for cultural supremacy or to seek cultural isolation in its own world. What is called for is real intercultural dialogue in which each tradition would try to understand the other and see the strength of cultural resources of each tradition in solving common problems. This would mean that all of the traditions would look for a way to live together in communication about their values. The outcome would most likely not be a civilization dominated by any one of the three traditions (or four) but a new fourth (or fifth) civilization which might represent the best of all the traditions. All three or four civilizations have a deep respect for human life and human community. If mutual trust and dialogue could be established, then in each social, political and economic crossroads, people imbued with these traditions would “talk together” (the traditional African “palaver”) to find the best solution, out of the these traditions, to respond to the common value of respect for human life and human community.
In fact, in many African countries this harmony among traditions and this dialogue is going on. Tanzania might be one of the best examples of a country in Africa where the three traditions are quite strongly represented as “civilizations” (not simply as religions) in relatively equal power. Also present in Tanzania is the Asian-Indian tradition (as it is in all parts of East Africa and in much of southern Africa). No part of the country attempts to form an exclusive enclave or attempts to impose its tradition as exclusive, but has found a fourth form of law, political governance and economic life which includes the values of all the traditions. It is also a country where there are strong dialogical traditions in political life, in communication institutions and in everyday life. Up to this point there have been no major open physical conflicts within traditions, such as indigenous tribal conflict, or between traditions, such as between Islamic or Western Christian civilizations, which could stir up memories of resentment or defensive-ness.

Masrui and Okigbo are undoubtedly right when they argue that this cultural harmony and good intercultural communication is a necessary foundation for the social, economic and political development of Africa. Unless we agree on what kind of future civilization we want, we cannot effectively work together to create it.

Finding a common base of public morality

Charles Okigbo, in his chapter, “The African world: The publics of African communication” carries further the urgent need to find a common African public culture. He follows the argument of the classic 1975 article of Ekeh (1975) pointing out that there is no common public morality in Africa. Given the lack of dialogue and common agreement among the different civilizations present in Africa, these are not just separate cultures, but, more importantly, they are separate systems of private and public morality. Each has its own reasoned foundations for respect for human life and human community. Unfortunately, largely because of the way the state and the public sphere developed in the African colonial period, people entering the area of the governmental institutions and most of public life leave behind the moral reasoning that characterizes the civilization that they are socialized into.

The strongest area of formation in moral commitment, according to Ekeh, is the “primordial public realm”, the moral obligations based on ethnic and familial life. To this may be added an area of Islamic or
Christian/Western moral formation. One might also add that there is a further area of professional ethics based on the forms of education that Africans prize so highly, partly because the school culture has its roots in the schools of the missionaries, the schools of the indigenous communities and then in the universities established directly by European universities.

The reasons why the “civic public” realm is essentially amoral, according to Ekeh and repeated by Okigbo are complex. The major reason is that the state in Africa has its roots in the colonial government. Although the colonial government operated under a legal system, these governments were in no sense accountable to the native peoples as to “citizens”. Indeed, colonial occupiers tended to look down on the native people as very inferior. To give the impression that colonial officers were obliged to “serve” the native peoples would be to lose status. The colonial governors had virtually absolute power to do what they wanted, and numerous decrees were made against any form of protest, especially published protest. The major obligations imposed on colonial governments were to keep the native peoples under control, extract enough economic surplus to sustain the colonial government and permit the extraction of other resources that the imperial powers needed at the moment.

As Okigbo explains (2004, p. 35), as the colonial bureaucracy became the bureaucracy of the independent states, they brought much of this amoral culture with them. The absolute power of colonial governors became the neo-patrimonial clientelistic governance of African rulers. Although governments may have the appearance of public servants, guided by the moral obligations of professional civil service, in fact they are a network of personalistic client-patron relationships which links them into the ethnic, familial relations. Young graduates of the universities, schooled in the ethics of their professions, are dismayed when they move into government jobs and find that the ethics of professional service means nothing in government circles (Mallya, 2006, pp 167-186.). One of the reasons why so many young professionals and university teachers migrate overseas is that it is almost impossible to fulfill professional ethical commitments in the politicized bureaucracies and educational institutions of Africa.

Okigbo proposes that “African politics will be completely different if African voters can determine whom to return to office through free and fair elections...” (2004, p. 37). Unfortunately, the level of education and understanding of the obligations of government are very low in
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Africa and voters generally tend to follow their dependent client-patron relations in voting. Bratton, Mattes and Gymah-Boadi (2005, pp.208-211) found in their major afrobarometer study of governance in Africa that a critical, more demanding attitude toward governance is directly related to the use of mass media and to the levels of education.

All of the different perspectives advanced by these thoughtful African authors begin to converge on the conviction that development in Africa depends very much on agreement on cultural values and obligations among all actors. All have to see that they are interdependent in a national and continental system. One person cannot pursue his or her goals without taking into consideration others. All have moral obligations to others. Communicating for national integration is central in African development (Amienyi, 2005).

Part III- New communication technologies and development

ICT policy, planning and development in Africa


This is a particularly useful book in that it analyzes in detail the factors that have helped or hindered the development of ICT in one country. While Nigeria has had enormous problems in providing electricity, good roads, safe air transport and even petrol availability it has been relatively successful in ICT. Nigeria has the largest number of cell-phone users in Africa (above South Africa) and the sixteenth largest in the world (Cf. the discussion of cell phones below).

The author credits the ICT policy and especially the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) first of all for a policy that stimulated the investment of many billions of dollars to set up a national ICT infrastructure. Secondly, the NCC has maintained a balance in regulation activity that encouraged entrepreneurial activity in Nigeria and at the same time insisted on good service to rural areas, good connectivity and good customer service. The NCC has created a telecom users’ parliament and a consumer affairs bureau. The issuing of licenses for digital mobile, fixed wireless access and unified access service has made
Internet access widely available at reasonable costs. Thirdly, the cell-
phone came as an answer to the communication problems of Nigeria. 
There were less than 500,000 fixed-line phones in a population of 150 
million in a highly urbanized society. The need for phone coordination 
is very high in a context of traffic congestion, petrol shortages, power 
outage, constant strikes and other forms of disruption. With the tech-
nology mounted and maintained by international management teams, 
the service is relatively good. Finally, with the heavy use of the cell 
phone and competition between providers, the price has fallen.

The author notes that although Nigeria is a giant in consumption of 
ICT, it is doing little in the production of technologies and innovations 
in usage (Akpan-Obong, 2009, p. 179). It is suggested that Nigeria 
could become a leader in ICT entrepreneurial activity just as it has in 
the Nollywood film industry. What is not noted, however, is that ICT 
use and Nollywood have flourished precisely in the arena of the infor-
mal economy. Leadership in the production of technologies and innovations 
would require an enormous improvement in the formal economy: a strong banking system, good power and transportation 
systems and better educational and research institutions. This will not 
be accomplished until Nigeria has better governance and national 
unity.

Better governmental and intergovernmental planning

development: An assessment of progress and challenges ahead. New York: The 

Karima Bounemra Ben Soltane, Nino Orlando Fluck, Aida Opoku-Mensa, M.A. 
Mohamed Salih (Eds.) (2004). Africa networking: Development Information ICTs 

Both of these books from the early 2000s outline how governments 
should be planning to make ICTs a major factor in development. Both 
emphasize the role of the ministries of information and the importance 
of intergovernmental bodies such as the Economic Commission for 
Africa and NEPAD for creating concrete policy and governmental 
action plans.

Many of the scenarios of the ICT future of Africa that these books 
outline are meant to be the guidelines for the stakeholders to create this 
future. What is most interesting, however, is the process of gradually
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bringing the decision makers, the ministers of government - primarily politicians - to an understanding of what policy should be introduced. The massive and relatively smooth introduction of the cell phone in Africa depended very much on a consensus among government regulators, political leaders, entrepreneurs and a host of other stakeholders. Opaku argues that this consensus was the result of a series of meetings that brought together regularly, ministers of information and communication and regulatory agencies, international ICT experts, UN and UNESCO officials, global ICT entrepreneurs, representatives of major donor agencies, the African Advisory Group on ICT, the African Telecommunications Union, the Economic Commission of Africa and other major stakeholders. Representatives from South Africa often played a major role (Opaku, 2003, pp 288-291).

Also important was consensus established at the national level. An example of this is NITIPA, the Nigerian Information Technology Professionals Association.

Opaku notes that the major result of this consensus building on strategy, policy, regulation and coordination with national economic development up to now has been to open the door to global entrepreneurs. Now, Opaku argues (2003, pp.291-297), Africa must build a new level of policy commitment and common understanding for developing the local manufacturing capacity for ICT, strengthening the indigenous research and educational capacity, stimulate academic interest in ICT at all levels, and educate the public in the use of ICT. There must also be major efforts to develop the software industry in Africa.

The major obstacles to all of this are the antiquated political institutions and neo-patrimonial, clientelistic systems of governance. The authors in the book, Africa networking: Development information, ICTs and e-governance, argue that ICT could itself improve accountability and public service. Unfortunately, the structure of ICT access is much influenced by the existing social and political institutions. Much of the governance system has been inherited from the colonial control institutions which put so many restrictions on freedom of the press, freedom of public discussion, freedom of access to information and other forms of public debate. While the people who live in the capital cities that the colonialists established have the same access to information that Europeans would have, the vast majority of the population of Africa lives in an exclusion and poverty that inhibits access to and use of ICT.
Overcoming the digital divide with telecentres

Information and communication technologies for development in Africa:

In the late 1990s the telecenter experiment attempted to set up in lower-status rural and urban communities, centers with Internet points, telephones, printers and other forms of information access. The telecenters were located in various African countries. All were established by external donor agencies, mainly, the Canadian Aid for International Development.

The telecenters did provide increased access to information for the communities, and these two volumes have extensive detailed reports on how low-income communities can have better access to information. But they suffered the usual problems of public services in Africa: the lack of electricity, breakdown of equipment and slowness in repairing, and lack of funds to maintain them well. In the end, most closed.

The experiment confirmed that the public sector in Africa is not highly motivated to overcome the digital divide and that successful overcoming of barriers still depends more on transnational investment motivated by profit.

The World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS)


There is growing concern that the ICTs such as the Internet are causing an enormous concentration of power in the hands of the global and local information rich. The book of Servaes and Carpentier documents the efforts to get global regulatory agencies such as the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) to introduce regulations that would open access to ICTs to civil society, to small and medium enterprises (SMEs), to educational systems among the rural and urban poor, and to excluded groups such as women. Such regulations would stimulate a redistribution of the huge profits of mobile phone and other ICT investors toward goals of social and economic development. Challenging the ICT giants, however, is a “gigantic” task!
The contribution of ICT to social and economic development

It is widely assumed that new communication technologies are the key to rapid development in Africa. In the following section we take up recent research on two types of communication technology that many think will have a major impact on development processes in Africa: the Internet and the mobile phone.

The role of Internet in developing African enterprises: Does the use of ICT Improve the Productivity of SMEs in East Africa?


Small and medium enterprises (SMEs) are widely regarded as central in the economic development of Africa because they are closer to the capacities of investment, managerial skills, workforce training, and technology in Africa. SMEs are also central in the efforts to reduce unemployment and poverty because they tend to take on relatively unskilled labor and require a relatively low level of scarce capital. The study reported here examined how ICT—computers & Internet, telephones (both land line and mobile), and FAX—can improve the competitiveness of SMEs. Although the data was gathered in 2000, it is significant because it attempted to evaluate the relative importance of telecommunications in relation to other factors such as labor capacity and transportation. The study is also significant because it compares two countries—Kenya and Tanzania—side by side, but quite different in their entrepreneurial culture. Kenya has a much better educated work force and a more advantageous entrepreneurial context although, in the period studied, Tanzania showed higher rates of economic growth. The sample of the study was 300 SMEs, 150 in each country.

The SMEs in the two countries were relatively similar in their use of ICT: about one third of the 300 in the sample had no in-house ICT use—not even a telephone. All SMEs using some ICT reported that the mobile phone was the most useful. In Tanzania, at the time, 57 per cent of the SMEs were investing less than $200 in ICT, and 91 per cent did
not use any computer based ICT. The figures for Kenya are only slightly higher. Even though mobile phones were coming into use in SMEs rapidly in both countries, owners still relied mostly on interpersonal communication for getting supplies, recruiting a workforce and marketing. This is supported by other similar studies regarding the mobile phone (Molony, 2009). One of the major reasons for the slow introduction of computer based technologies was the low level of education of the workforce (especially in Tanzania) and the low level of skills in the use of computers.

One of the major conclusions of the study is that the investment in ICT is an integral part of a broader favorable investment climate: accessibility of reasonable credit, good managerial skills, good transportation and electric power facilities, a favorable legal system, and especially better educated workers. The relatively high cost of ICT devices in Africa is also a factor. Finally, unless educational levels are raised in countries such as Tanzania, we cannot expect an effective use of ICT in terms of economic growth.

Is there a link between economic growth and the increased use of ICT?

The editors of the book where the use of ICTs in Kenya and Tanzania is reported conclude that ICT is not closely linked to economic growth, at least in continents such as Africa. It seems that a country must reach a certain threshold of industrial and financial maturity, such as has occurred in India and Brazil before ICT investment begins to make a significant difference (Torero and von Braun, 2006, p. 338).

One of the problems is that ICT has not been adapted to the conditions of the lower end of the development spectrum, and the educational systems in these countries are not preparing the workforce for this.

The Internet and the new public sphere in Africa


Internet as the public sphere of the international African diaspora

Although the Internet may not be a major contributor to the increasing economic productivity in Africa—at least not yet—it is opening up new public spheres, especially among young Africans.
Newspapers and other forms of print media are relatively restricted for many Africans. But the Internet offers almost unlimited space for projecting one’s opinions and entering into debate especially regarding public policy, especially for the millions of young Africans who have gone overseas because of economic hardships or political repression. Few have left entirely voluntarily, and all still have their hearts in Africa. Wisdom J Tettey’s chapter in this book, “Transnationalism, the African diaspora, and the deterritorialized politics of the Internet” opens up a highly relevant set of questions.

The Internet offers an opportunity to follow political developments in the home country newspapers, but, more important, the chat rooms of the Internet offer the possibility to carry on debate about major policy moves and political issues. This has become sufficiently important that the opinion of the diaspora is being monitored by political intelligence and even by some political leaders. The Internet is also an opportunity of followers of political parties and movements to promote their ideas with compatriates in the diaspora. For example, the U.S. branch of Ghana’s New Patriotic Party has a website (http://nppusa.org) dedicated to disseminating the party’s accomplishments, showcasing its candidates and asking those overseas to contribute to the support of the electoral campaign (Tettey, 2009, p. 151). Some presidential candidates in the recent Ghanaian elections set up websites with a strong appeal to the diaspora to support the campaign. In the view of Tettey, this appeal shows the importance of the diaspora constituency for domestic politics and the importance of the Internet in contacting them.

The Internet is also the source of homeland music, films and many other forms of cultural expression. Some would argue that the Internet provides a space for projecting more progressive, freely expressed political ideas. Others suggest, however, that it tends to be wildly emotional, often incoherent and retrogressive. In all cases, it is providing an alternative public sphere that is much wider and much more diverse than the public of the domestic sphere in African countries.

**The Internet as a site for civil society debate**

In the chapter, “Repression, propaganda and digital resistance: New media and democracy in Zimbabwe”, Last Moyo (2009, pp 57-71) describes how the Internet can open a space for a movement to defend human rights and civil society organizations in the face of a repressive government. The Kubatana.net website is maintained by a civic organi-
zation within Zimbabwe (though largely supported by external donor funds) and provides information of public meetings of protest, representation of civil society organizations and accounts of violation of human rights and more personal accounts of police brutality. Kubatana.net encourages the public to write letters, send emails and engage in other forms of speaking out against such issues as electoral violations and violations of human rights. This in itself is an important form of civic education. Kubatana.net has hyperlinks with close to 360 civil society Web sites that are focused upon ongoing discussion of democratic participation, human rights, elections, civil society use of media, and the political rights of citizens. At one point Kubatana.net organized a mass protest by email and letter against the state’s attempt to impose cyber surveillance. The Kubatana.net is a link between the off-line and on-line public spheres and, in the words of its director, Brenda Burrell, is “considered one of the best practical examples of cyber-advocacy in Southern Africa (Moyo, 2009, p. 66). One caution that the author makes is the tendency of websites such as Kubatana.net to present an overly black and white picture of Zimbabwean society.

Complementing Kubatana.net is New Zimbabwe.net providing alternative and reliable news on politics, business, arts, culture and sports. It is also a platform where Zimbabweans in the diaspora and at home can exchange views in discussion forums.

In sharp contrast to Kubatana.net and New Zimbabwe.net is the official government website, News.net, which is maintaining a discourse of official ideology and vigorous debate with other alternative networks.

In the Zimbabwean context where government repression makes debate in the more traditional media difficult, the Internet becomes more important, especially because it involves the diaspora outside the country. The higher levels of education and somewhat higher levels of income in Zimbabwe make the Internet more significant for a public sphere.

*Do the new media open up new forms of political campaign communication*

Many of the electoral campaigns in Africa are attempting to use mobile phones and the Internet to reach voters, not least because they can then go directly to the public and avoid the critical editing of journalists. The chapter of George Nyabuga and Okoth Fred Mudhai,
“‘Misclick’ on democracy: New media use by key political parties in Kenya’s disputed December 2007 presidential election” (Nyabuga & Mudhai, 2009, pp.41-56) concludes that in the 2007 Kenya elections the use of new media was not significant. The Internet was not of any great importance because relatively few Kenyans have access to this (80 per cent of the population lives in rural areas), but also because the use of websites by political parties was unattractive and unimaginative. Most were simply party propaganda or rosy personality profiles, not accounts of how the party would deal with issues of importance to the people. Few were interactive, and there was no real debate of interests posted.

A far more interesting question is how the parties used the mobile phone, in the hands of most Kenyans, to reach voters. On this, surprisingly, the authors have little to say.

Internet as the best medium for getting government accountability: the case of Egypt

Due to the free Internet strategy in 2002, Egypt’s 67 million people form the largest Internet market in Africa with 8.8 million users, although this is almost entirely in urban areas. There are around 300 Internet and data service providers. The government provides free Internet access to governmental agencies, NGOs and other organizations. The government also has programs to promote Internet use and computer literacy. Khayrat Ayyad’s chapter (2009, pp.89-104), “Use of the Internet by NGOs to promote government accountability: The case of Egypt”, provides evidence on how the websites of NGOs open debate on the accountability of Egypt’s government in providing public services.

Egypt also has approximately 15,000 NGOs, predominantly small community-based organizations that concentrate on service delivery and social assistance. Many are involved with health care, education, job training, child care, elder care, welfare, legal assistance, human rights, water, irrigation, environmental protection and other services to the poor. In recent years, frustrations in providing services have turned many NGOs toward advocacy aimed at forcing inefficient governmental agencies to improve services. The traditional media, largely controlled by government, are not receptive to NGO advocacy, so the NGOs are turning to the Internet as an alternative.

Khayrat Ayyad reports from an analysis of a sample of 102 websites that virtually all had a relatively high level of criticism of government
on issues of transparency, violations of freedom of the press, lack of freedom of information and government corruption. The Web sites were also sharply critical of the practices such as incarcerating persons without formal accusation and police violation of human rights.

One of the problems facing the operators of these Web sites is the lack of interactive feedback mechanisms. Ayyad’s study focused on the websites and it is difficult to estimate the impact of this steady criticism of the government and other major institutions, but there are numerous examples of how public protest has brought significant changes.

**Conclusions: What is the new public sphere emerging with the Internet**

The Internet is providing a space for a new public sphere for younger, more affluent and better educated Africans, especially in contexts such as Zimbabwe where there is considerable government restriction of public debate and considerable repression. Much depends on the development of the Internet by national policy as has happened in Egypt. There is little evidence that the Internet is expanding the public sphere created by radio, television and newspapers or that it is opening up new areas of political communication in contexts such as electoral campaigns. The Internet is primarily an elite medium used by people who would also have access to newspapers and television. One might ask how people are using the Internet in relation to their use of newspapers, radio and television.

What was not taken up in this series of studies is the role of the mobile telephone as a new form of public sphere. A specific case would be the call-in programs that are now a major and important part of the programming of virtually all radio stations in Africa, whether these are commercial radios or some form of community or institutional radio station. The use of mobile phones is now becoming almost universal even among lower status and rural people, especially younger people. To what extent is this opening up a new public sphere which is reaching down into lower-status groups.

**The mobile phone and development in Africa**


It is estimated that there are approximately 400 million cell phones in use in Africa at present and that one in three Africans has easy access to a cell phone (Guardian, 22 October, 2009). The coverage of sub-Saharan Africa by a cell phone signal is estimated at approximately 50 per cent of the population, including 42 per cent in rural areas (Guardian, 22 October, 2009). The major expansion of cell phone service has been done in the last ten years. If one takes into consideration that the land line access to telephones is very low after some sixty to seventy years of efforts to extend it, the achievements in making cell phone communication available to even the poorest of Africans is truly remarkable.

Nigeria has the largest number of cell phones in use in Africa, 64,000,000 (ranking 16th in the world), while South Africa has 42,300,000 (24th in the world). China has the top number of cell phone users in the world, 765,970,000, followed by India, 584,000,000, the USA, 285,610,580 and Russia, 208,330,000, (Wikipedia, 2010).

At the outset of the mobile phone era, Africa was considered an almost impossible place to develop mobile phone service. Even the intrepid pioneers in cell phone introduction in Africa by far underestimated the likely response. Africa was considered a place of violence, corrupt governments, impossible transportation and a populace so poor that they would never spend on a mobile phone.

The so-called mobile phone miracle has been brought about almost exclusively by a remarkable group of private entrepreneurs who have been able to mobilize the enormous finance, bring together a remarkable group of technicians and financial managers, construct a system of payment and build brand names that make cell phones virtually the only household term in Africa. The book of Southwood, though published by Wiley, has all the marks of the vanity press, but it does tell the story of one of the most colorful of the cell phone entrepreneurs very well. Mo Ibrahim is particularly interesting because he is the only black African among the top founders of cell phone empires. He has also sought a reputation as the empire builder with the greatest sense of social responsibility, dedicating his life (while managing his fortune) to improving, with the Mo Ibrahim prize, the governance of Africa.
Southwood’s book is particularly interesting in its description of how an entrepreneur gets started. Mo Ibrahim, the founder of Celtell, began as an academic specialist in the engineering of mobile phones. The son of a clerk in Khartoum, he made his way to London and eventually was granted a PhD in mobile communication. By the age of 40 he was starting his own business setting up mobile communications in London. Particularly interesting is how companies such as Celtell invented the adaptation of cell phone systems to the African context with amazing rapidity.

What is the impact of a company such as Celtell in Africa? In 2007 Celtel had created 6,000 high tech jobs, virtually all of them Africans and indirect employment for 40,000 (Southwood, 2008, p. 201).

All over Africa the mobile phone has become a major economic activity. Virtually all studies of the mobile phone have noted the economic impact. People with small businesses are speeding up every stage of their entrepreneurial activity (de Bruijn, Nyamnjoh & Brinkman, 2009, pp. 74-75). The cell phone becomes very important in formal organizations, introducing the culture of teamwork and micro-coordination.

Today, 30-35 per cent of every cell phone call is tax paid to an African government, and the tax revenue of mobile phones is said to be one of the largest parts of the tax base of virtually all governments in Africa (Southwood, 2008, p. 43).

The cell phone’s impact on society

Before examining how the cell phone may have brought changes in Africa it may be helpful to see what research has found about the uses of the cell phone in contemporary society in general. In many ways, the uses in Africa are similar to those in the rest of the world. In Africa, however, the need for the typical uses of the cell phone are much accentuated, and this may explain the rapid and widespread use of the cell phone in Africa.

The impact of the mobile phone


As Ling points out in his comprehensive survey of research, by far the most important use of the cell phone is the interpersonal coordination of activities. Indeed, two-thirds of the use of land-line phones has generally been for coordination of activities. Traditionally this coordination has been done by the clocks. In the Western world, the first mechanical clocks were introduced about the year 1300 as the central coordination of towns, an extension of the use of clocks for coordination in monasteries. With clocks, the life of the community began to be coordinated in parallel fashion. It was not until the 1850s, however, that the portable pocket watch was introduced, making interpersonal parallel coordination possible.

Ling argues that the cell phone may be gradually eliminating the clock as the principle instrument of coordination, making direct interpersonal coordination possible. According to current studies, two-thirds of the land-line phone calls are for coordination of small group activities. The cell phone has only extended this use and made possible micro-management of activity coordination. A major factor in this coordination is the movement through public transportation systems and the uncertainty of coordination in public transportation (Ling, 2004, p. 68). Given the congestion and much greater uncertainty of public transportation in the African context, the use of the mobile phone for coordination is even more important. The mobile phone also is useful to pass information about the unforeseen emergencies and the indisposition of parties who will be meeting.

The research suggests that in African societies where support of coordination is relatively low and the lack of coordination much more tolerated, the cell phone becomes much more central. Life in Africa is the merger of the highly coordinated life of bureaucracy and the uncoordinated life of the vast majority of persons who live in the informal economy. One may have an appointment, but when a friend or relative appears asking for help or consultation, the bonds of need and affection are a priority. Also, in Africa, the prevalence of chronic debilitating diseases such as malaria makes the cell phone extremely useful. In general, the demands and the difficulties of coordinating activities in Africa are enormous. Whereas much of the basic coordination in developed countries is done by land lines, the absence of clocks and land lines makes the cell phone much more essential. An important research question is whether the introduction of the cell phone has increased the efficiency of planning and achieving set objectives by a prescribed time.
A second major use of the cell phone generally is for purposes of insuring security in small groups such as the family where parents or other guardians want to know about the security of others such as children and then to guide these dependents into decisions of greater security. The rising insecurity of life in all parts of the world is certainly a factor in the rapid introduction of the cell phone, and the high level of insecurity in African contexts not only from criminal activity but from the ordinary problems of traffic accidents and other forms of accidental damage make the cell phone even more important.

The use and symbolic significance of the cell phone in adolescent subcultures throughout the world is particularly noteworthy. In Norway in 1997 (and this would be typical of most countries), only 5 per cent of fourteen-year-olds had mobile phones, but by 1999 60 per cent had mobile phones and by 2001 85 per cent of fourteen year olds had mobile phones. For seventeen year olds mobile phone possession rose from 5 per cent of girls and 20 per cent of boys in 1997 to nearly 97 per cent of the girls and 90 per cent of the boys in 2001 (Ling, 2004, p.84)

Why the rapid rise and why did the mobile phone use among adolescent girls surpass those of young males? Studies in Korea, Japan, Italy and other parts of the world reveal a similar pattern.

Beyond the functional use of the cell phone among an age group that places great emphasis on group formation where reliability of coordination is so important to get into groups, there is the symbolic significance (Ling, 2004, p.103). Letting others know about one’s possession of a cell phone is an indication that one is accessible for group inclusion and valuable for a given group. Making calls enables adolescents to build solidarity by “gifting”. The number of names that one has in one’s phone and the number of calls received and delivered is an indication of group acceptance. The ownership of the “correct” type of phone for particular kinds of groups is also very important.

The mobile phone in one African context - Sudan


The research of the Leiden group in Sudan was a pilot study carried out over a five-month period in 2007. The overall objective of the study was to understand better how the mobile phone affects social
relations, especially rural-urban interaction. The focus of this study in Khartoum was with university students based on in-depth interviews with eighteen young men and one woman who work in the mobile phone sector. All spoke of their business promotion activities, their understanding of how customers use mobile phones and their own experiences as end-users. The university student study was complemented with numerous other interviews and forms of participant observation.

One of the most important observations coming from the study is that the mobile phone tends to be used to strengthen and coordinate family bonds (Brinkman, de Bruijn and Bilal, 2009, pp. 77-79). This is most notable where the family is separated by immigration from villages to the city or by relocation to different parts of the city. The war in Sudan has brought many dislocations, even to distant countries of Uganda and Chad. International emigration is common and the mobile phone is important for coordinating remittances from Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and other countries. The mobile phone has been important to maintain extended family bonds within Sudan. Particularly important were the contacts of children working in Khartoum with their parents, many of them now elderly in the villages. Given the importance of coordinating all decisions related to children with parents and others in the family, the mobile phone now becomes an important means of debating familial decisions. Gifts among family and friends are important in Khartoum, and mobile phones or mobile phone charge time are now important gifts that imply a certain obligation to parents, children and friends.

In Khartoum, as elsewhere in the world, the mobile phone has become a central part of youth culture. Almost all young people, even among lower-status youth, have mobile phones and this is making young people, especially young women, far more independent (Brinkman, de Bruijn & Bilal, 2009, pp. 80-81). The mobile phone offers the opportunity to contact friends, especially young male friends, outside the approval of parents. Now young women can make contacts without their parents and guardians knowing about this. What are the full implications of this freedom of the youth to make contacts for courtship, marriage and family remain to be seen.
The economic use of the cell phone: Farmers’ marketing strategies in Tanzania


This study of the use of the mobile phone by farmers and itinerant truck drivers to micro-manage the most advantageous marketing of perishable vegetables in larger urban markets such as Dar es Salaam is part of a larger study of the use of information and communication technologies (ICT) in micro and small industries. As Molony points out, the initial contacts of farmers with the itinerant traders is based on interpersonal relations building up mutual knowledge of who has the best produce or who is the most reliable driver. Once the relationship between farmers and traders is established, the mobile phone is used by farmers, especially larger farmers, to let a trader know that a crop is ready for marketing, how much could be available and in what condition and what are the current prices in different town or city markets. In this study Molony focused on the marketing of tomatoes and potatoes in the large Kariokoo market of Dar es Salaam.

Molony found that indeed the mobile phone is replacing other communication such as sending a messenger or sending a written note. The mobile phone offers many possibilities for farmers selling to itinerant traders with their trucks and for traders who are selling as middlemen to the large auctioneers in the big Dar es Salaam markets who sell to little vendors scattered throughout the city. Mobile phones allow for the possibility of first-hand exchange of information while it is still up to date. Farmers and traders can quickly negotiate for the best prices and conditions. Farmers and traders can both know the demand in the big markets. Farmers can have their produce ready for pick up with much more accuracy, and traders report spending less time and money on travel with the use of the mobile phone (Molony, 2009, p.99). Using mobile phones enables farmers to keep track of consignments in transit and on their arrival at market. The mobile phone is regarded as more reliable than a messenger or sending a message by a bus.

Molony found, however, that many smaller farmers remain marginalized by their remoteness from good roads which makes it
difficult for itinerant traders to pick up their perishable vegetables. A major problem at the time of the data gathering (2003), however, is the remoteness of many farmers from the mobile phone coverage. Molony reports many ingenious ways farmers have managed to get phone connections with traders, including constructing a series of kiosks on stilts (to get better reception) at places where reception is possible.

It is significant, however, that interpersonal trust remains the basis for the best communication between farmers, traders and the big market sellers in Dar es Salaam. Molony recounts how one of the big auctioneers in the Kariakoo market, Kamwene, takes the time to go out to meet his farmer suppliers in the southern highlands some hundreds of kilometers from Dar es Salaam. Even when he has no shortage of supply he goes out to drink local beer with the farmers and discuss farming, trading or anything else the farmers want to talk about. The farmers appreciate this interpersonal relation immensely. As one smallholder farmer of an already rather drunk group said...

Kamwene comes to the farming areas because he is a good madalali and he likes to drink homebrew with us. Other madalali come to farmers when they want something, like a politician when it is time to vote. Kamwene comes many times and stays with us for a long time (Molony, 2009, p. 106).

Thus the “economy of affection” continues to be a major factor in communication in African contexts. Kamwene, one of the largest sellers in Kariakoo, does not bother to obtain a mobile phone, but does extremely well because he has cultivated relationships with farmers. As one large tomato farmer in the southern highlands of Tanzania explained:

For us Africans often an explanation over the phone is not enough even when you’ve greeted one another. When you see each other again you start afresh, greeting each other again. Likewise in business even if you’ve talked on the phone a businessman feels like he’s not satisfied so he likes to meet face to face so you talk and this satisfies him. That’s a way to build faith in business. ...We get customers through information (but) it’s imperative to see each other (Molony, 2009, p. 107).

**Part IV: Communication strategies for environmental protection in Africa**

Many parts of the world have successfully overcome the tendency of advancing desertification and have made previously arid lands very productive. Africa, on the other hand, is losing millions of hectares of land to desert every year. Soil and water conservation is something that only the local farmers can do because they know the soil conditions, the sources and best use of water, the rainfall and the traditional methods of conservation. Introducing new plans against desertification also requires cooperation and planning at the local community level. Unfortunately, the trend toward state centralization has taken the responsibility away from the farmers and the communities and made the regional conservation agents little more than policemen trying in vain to enforce norms of conservation. Respect for the local knowledge of the people is often a threat to positions of power and a political issue (Fischer, 2000).

Advancing desertification also is a factor in increasing conflict in Africa. Fulani herdsmen in Nigeria (often of Muslim background), pushed south by desertification, are increasingly in violent conflict with farmers (often of Christian background).

Guy Bessette has gathered together a series of case studies, some eighteen from Africa, describing how collective responsibility for soil and water conservation was restored to local communities using participatory communication strategies. Particularly significant has been the effectiveness in bringing women to the leadership in this process because in most African communities it is the women who are often those most directly involved in farming and soil and water conservation.

Using these case studies as a data base, Guy Bessette from Canada and Nora Quebral from the Philippines have been able to draw up a model of five stages of the communication process in forming an effective permanent participatory organization for natural resource management: (1) catalysts in opening up community discussion; (2) training in new farming and conservation methods; (3) community-level planning of new approaches; (4) experimentation in the farming context; and (5) evaluation.

1) Catalysts in opening up community discussion

There is often very little sharing of information and cooperation among farmers in rural communities in Africa because the hierarchical, clientelistic systems build dependent communication relations with the “big men” of the community and the district. The key catalyst persons
in these case studies were “facilitators” trained in the art of breaking
down barriers of suspicion and building trustful cooperative relations.

For example, in a program to stop encroaching desert sands carried
out in two countries of the SAHEL, Burkina Faso and Chad, a first step
was to select facilitators of communication in five communities. In
some cases they approached the Sultan or other religious authorities to
encourage farmers to meet and discuss. Often this was a signal that
gave the women in the community the right to speak out. In other
cases, facilitators met with local opinion leaders to analyse the major
problems and find out disputes and other problems of intercommuni-
cation. The facilitators were often the ones to conduct meetings in
which every member of the community was encouraged to speak, and
people were encouraged to respond to each other’s ideas in a more
dialogical method. Facilitators trained local community leaders to lead
not by commands but by listening, getting others to listen and gradu-
ally draw the people to a consensus that involved real commitment.

Especially significant was the growing involvement of the women.
As one women in a village in Chad said, “Now we talk openly about
things, whereas before we tended to keep quiet. The women’s group
that this project has helped to set up can only make us even more open
(Sankaré and Sonaté, 2006, p.97). The women began to speak out
more freely only after the facilitator had spoken at length with the
husbands. At the end of the process, has liberated our women; we’ve
never seen them this way before” (Sankaré and Sonaté, 2006, p. 99).

The main role of the facilitator was to get the people to talk about
issues in desertification: that water was getting scarce; the unbridled
exploitation of the trees and other vegetation, the wanton killing of
wildlife and the gradual disappearance of the wildlife, and the lack of
cooperation in the village. Gradually in these discussions a consensus
about action emerged and people were ready to set up an organization.

One of the most instructive methods of stimulating discussion and
horizontal interaction among the villagers was to put up photographs
from the discussion sessions on bulletin boards. “These were posted in
the village square where everyone, and especially the women, could see
them and could point to themselves taking part in the debates about
their own real concerns” (Sankaré and Konaté, 2006, p. 99). The tape
recorder was always used for recording the discussions, and listening to
the cassettes afterwards sparked very positive reactions. The showing of
films, often produced by neighboring villages, followed by debate,
encouraged people to speak (Sankaré and Konaté, 2006, p. 99).

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After showing a video on how women in another region secured rights to land, a woman declared in the group, “We want to be like our sisters in the village of Matafo, who organized themselves and won access to land. Now they can use those harvests to meet family needs without turning to their husbands” (Sankaré and Sankaté, 2006, p. 99.)

(2) Training in new farming methods
The training in new farming methods emerged only after the people had defined the problems they were having in their crop and animal production and they openly began to request help. New farming methods were always discussed as improvements in what they were already doing and only after those involved were fully convinced that the new methods would fit in with their own farming systems.

One of the common methods of training used was to visit other villages which were trying new methods and have the people explain how their new methods seemed to be an advantage. Much of the training was carried out through video films produced by the people themselves describing the problems and possible plans as a basis of discussion. Many of the videos and cassettes presented experiences in the neighboring villages (Sankaré and Konaté, 2006, p.99). The videos produced by the people were circulated into other communities with similar sorts of projects.

(3) Community-level planning of new approaches
The initial catalyst discussions in most of the communities led to setting up organizations to plan and carry out the proposals that began to emerge in the discussions. The project then worked closely with the decentralized committees established in the villages (Sankaré and Sonaté, 2006, p. 99). The technical supervisors working at the regional level of the programs can then provide services for these village committees as their services were called for. This changed the role of technical advisors from a command role telling the villagers what to do into a supportive role in which the decisions and planning was made by the people of the villages.

In the project in Burkina Faso, set up to fight bushfires in the scrub forest areas, one forest officer commented, “In the past we acted like policemen over the peasants. We would call the farmers together and tell them things, and that was all. It was a completely unilateral approach. Today, it’s the villagers who explain what has to be done or not
done…” (Sankaré and Konaté, 2006, pp 103-104). Once the control of bush fires was the responsibility of the village committees, the surveillance was much more careful and attentive than it had been under the forestry officers (Sankaré and Konaté, 2006, p 104).

In the project promoted to manage the Kahuzi-Biega National Park in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, participatory management and communication mechanisms were established in the villages as a basis for participation. Each local committee had a “steering committee, a monitoring committee, a drafting committee and an anti-poaching committee” (Mumbu, 2006, p. 119). Once the people knew that they had the responsibility, they became much more active in the management, raising funds to cover their activities and finding solutions to problems that the official park managers felt incapable of dealing with.

(4) Experimentation in the farming context;

It is becoming common in many parts of Africa that the experimentation is no longer carried out far from farmers’ actual production conditions in agricultural universities, but is done in the villages where programs are being carried out with the farmers. Not untypical is the on-the-farm research project in improving banana production by the Uganda National Banana Research Programme (Odoi, 2006, pp. 130-135). The objective was to put banana experimentation under the direction of groups of farmers in villages who were linked together in an information exchange network at the district level. The farmers worked closely with experienced agricultural researchers so that together they would determine the best methods. A first step was to meet with local government officials, opinion leaders and agricultural extension agents at the site of the program in order to train them in this very different communication process. Then the farmers were encouraged to form groups who then elected representatives to a council of farmers and agricultural researchers called the Participatory Development Communication (PDC) project. The farmers’ groups, through their representatives, proposed the major problems to be studied and eventually three experimental groups were formed dealing with problems of soil fertility, soil erosion and soil moisture retention. One of the most significant results was that researchers discovered that many farmers had indigenous knowledge very important for the problems of soil and water, but this needed further validation.
One of the most valuable communication strategies was for farmers to visit other farmer projects. Another valuable communication strategy was for the farmer representatives in the PDC groups to bring their knowledge back to their grassroots groups in the villages. Many of the farmers representatives used videos, photographs, posters and brochures on soil fertility, soil erosion and soil moisture retention. Eventually, professionals—a graphic artist, an illustrator, and a cameraman—had to be brought in to help the communication process among the farmers. In some cases the main job of the professionals was to train the farmers to use these media, albeit in a more amateur way. But the farmers discovered on their own which photographs and videos would communicate best to their fellow farmers.

One of the major results was that the farmers involved formed the Ddwaniro Integrated Farmers Association to continue the program under their own farmer management.

(5) Collective evaluation of successes and mistakes as a basis of new stages of planning.

When projects of soil and water conservation are set up, these have to be continually maintained. There really is no end of the project as far as the people are concerned, and evaluation is a form of continuous assessment. Perhaps the closest thing to an evaluation is when the villagers produce a video that narrates the process and that can be distributed around to other villages.

From the perspective of the government and NGO agencies that set out with certain objectives in these programs, the stable functioning of the village level organizations is the end of a phase. The outside groups may consider this to be a moment to stop and evaluate. This should be done with the people themselves so that it is a participatory evaluation.

Conclusions: What is the impact of the new communication technologies on development?

From the selection of studies cited in this review, it is clear that ICT has made possible more grassroots participation. The technology in itself is more divisible and empowering, but a conscious participatory communication methodology multiplies this possibility:

(1) The move from mass broadcasting and print media to the mobile phone, the Internet, small camcorders, digital photography and cassette/CD recording has put the media in the hands of the people.
(2) The new media facilitate more horizontal, farmer to farmer communication, strengthen the value of indigenous knowledge and lessen dependency on the vertical, extension model of communication.

(3) The new media strengthens community communication. Community radio benefits from new technologies. But inexpensive video and CD technology enables communities to produce their own media and exchange with other communities.

(4) The use of mobile phones to call into radio stations is an area of participatory communication which is evident, but needs much more research.

(5) The alternative Web sites have provided a public forum to contest the domination of the press and broadcasting by repressive authorities.

On the whole, however, the introduction of ICT into Africa has accentuated the digital divide and increased the power of the information rich. The degree of access to ICT depends on the social structure and systems of power, and this is far from just or democratic in Africa.

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Designing an MA program in communication for development:
The experience of the University of Zambia

By Kenny M. Makungu

Abstract
Since 1995 the Department of Mass Communication of the University of Zambia has offered the MA in Communication for Development. The program was designed on the basis of consultation with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations and an international team of experts in development communication. The program accepts twenty candidates each year from governmental and non-governmental agencies for an 18-month program of six modules, a practicum and internship with a stress on development policy and communication practice. The program stresses use of inter-personal, group and mass communications (particularly radio), with heavy emphasis on community and participatory communication to solve problems of reaching isolated rural and lower-status urban populations.

Key words: MA program in communication for development, training in communication for development, University of Zambia, community media, agricultural extension

Introduction:
In the African context, socio-economic development is a central issue, especially in areas such as agriculture, health and education. How to communicate new technology to improve agricultural productivity, food security and rural livelihoods has been a priority for all African governments and for the international development agencies supporting governmental and non-governmental efforts. The technology to improve agricultural productivity and health is generally available.

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The problem is how to communicate this, especially to rural people who live in more remote areas.

In 1994 the FAO project “Communication for Development in Southern Africa” was a pioneer in supporting and enhancing development projects and programs through the use of participatory communication approaches. This regional project based in Harare was dedicated to adapting communication approaches, techniques and media to the needs of development and to use these communication tools more effectively.

The FAO project, placed under SADC, developed an innovative methodology known as PRCA - Participatory Rural Communication Appraisal, which combined participatory tools and techniques with a strong communication focus needed to design strategies enhancing projects’ results and sustainability. FAO and SADC published a handbook on PRCA and this methodology is still widely used today in various projects around the world. The program of training presented here was developed under the auspices and active participation of a project, Communication for Development in Southern Africa, sponsored by the Italian government and executed by the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of the United Nations.

As a first step, the project developed and successfully pilot-tested an action program for communication skills development that enabled trainees to learn while doing by putting them in direct touch with clients in the field. The action program included a research component, participatory rural communication appraisal skills, and strategic communication approaches that have been tailored to the needs of the region.

The FAO project was particularly interested in bringing the communication departments of universities in southern Africa into this program. In 1994 as a step toward this, the FAO brought together a consortium of universities including the University of Zambia (UNZA) This consortium in collaboration with the FAO and an international drafting team, coordinated by the World Food Programme (FAO) under the support of the Italian Government, set out to develop a Postgraduate Professional Programme in Communication for Development in Southern Africa. Four countries, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Namibia and Mozambique participated in the FAO Project (SADC, undated).
The Drafting Team

The scholar-practitioners charged with designing the programme included:

- Prof. Joseph Ascroft (Malawi), FAO lead consultant and head drafter. He was co-founder and former head of the development support communication masters program, University of Iowa. He undertook a fact-finding mission to the international Agriculture Centre in Netherlands for this project.
- The late Prof. Francis P. Kasoma, then Head, Department of Mass Communication, University Of Zambia. He undertook a fact-finding study tour to the Institute of Development Communication in the Philippines.
- Dr. Bekimpilo Sibanda, chairperson, Centre of Technology, University of Zimbabwe. He undertook a fact-finding study tour to Cornell University in the USA.
- Dr. Linda Nhlapo Maepa, Lecturer, Division of Extra-Mural Services, University of Swaziland and Coordinator for Southern African Catholic AIDS Project, Pretoria.
- Dr Samora S. Gabarone, Senior Lecturer and indigenous peoples specialist, Adult Education Department, University of Botswana.

Various academic and professional institutions world-wide were canvassed for information and advice on the development of the curriculum. Pre-eminent among them were:

- The Program for Development Support, Centre for International and Comparative Studies, University of Iowa.
- The Institute for Development Studies (DEVCOM), University of the Philippines Los Banos in the Philippines (Quebral, 2001).
- Department of Communication, Cornell University, New York, USA.
- International Course on Rural Extension, International Centre of Agriculture, Wageningen, the Netherlands

After development of the program, the idea was to identify a university in the region willing and able to implement the program. FAO was going to put the weight of its support behind that university and help seek donor assistance to help it with start up assistance. But this did not preclude any other university from adopting all or part of the proposed curriculum.
Kenny M. Makungu

In the event, the University of Zambia was not selected for the pilot project of the FAO. Nevertheless a number of agencies in Zambia became interested in having this program in the country, and with the leadership of the late Francis Kasoma, the Department of Mass Communication at the University of Zambia moved to set up its MA program in Communication for Development.

The Department of Mass Communication of the University of Zambia starts its program in 1995

After consultation with a number of development agencies in the country, the Department of Mass Communication took the recommendations of the study team described above, but modified this to fit the particular needs of Zambia and neighbouring countries. The department also consulted with a team of communication practitioners and researchers in the Southern African region who drew on their own experience and the experience they got from relevant international institutions.

To draw students to the program it was evident that it had to be an 18-month Master of Communication for Development (MCD) Program, instead of the diploma program recommended by FAO. The Department was convinced that the program curriculum had to be strengthened by adding two more courses: “Communication Policy and Planning in Developing Countries”; and “Seminar in Current Issues on Communication for Development”. These were already being taught in the Department’s Master of Mass Communication program.

The UNZA MA program in Communication for Development (MCD) was designed to be the first professional post graduate diploma in communication for development in Africa, but adopted by UNZA as a full master’s degree. The program was intended to produce communicators who, upon graduation, would have the professional competence to provide communication advice to governmental, non governmental and other development organisations in the region. They would also be able to train personnel in communication strategies and skills and to formulate, implement and evaluate human development projects and programs.

The program emphasized the practical skills of professionalism, but with a sound theoretical base. The courses were designed to be enhanced by practical courses and internships.
The Department announced the program and got a good response in the initial year. The applications have remained steady and, usually, about 20 candidates are accepted each year. Persons attracted to the program usually come from non-governmental organizations and government ministries of agriculture, the extension services, community development and the information and broadcasting services. There have been many coming from the development activities of the churches and, increasingly, many teachers are coming for the MA program. The program is open to candidates from all parts of Africa and there have always been applications from outside Zambia. We have to tell them, however, that like many public universities in Africa we have our fair share of strikes and other interruptions.

The tuition costs are about US$ 1,000 per semester. Most of the applicants are sponsored by the organizations they work for, but a few are self-sponsored.

To our knowledge this is the only MA program in communication for development in Southern Africa. We have attempted to contact other similar programs in Africa, but so far there has been no response. If there are such programs in other parts of Africa, we would be most grateful for a contact.

Rationale underlying the program

Scholars and practitioners have realized that development is not just about gross national product, per capita incomes and commodity production. It is also, if not more so, about human development and about helping people in subsistence poverty levels to gain more control over their basic needs. It is about empowering them to participate in deciding the nature of development intended for their benefit.

Conventional extension remains the most important source of new productivity-increasing and health-improving innovations. Conventional extension, though highly necessary, is by itself not sufficient to take on the human development challenges. The main reason, it is now increasingly being realized, is that in the developing world, communication can be a very complex and problematic undertaking that is often not adequately anticipated and covered in extension training. Needed is a profession that augments and complements extension by taking up the challenge of communication. It should be a profession dedicated to:

a) Designing and applying ways of reaching people wherever they may be using all the processes of interpersonal, group and mass communication more effectively.
b) Communicating concepts and products of science in idioms they can understand.

c) Involving them in development decision-making in ways in which they can participate on their terms.

d) Analysing people’s needs and problems more accurately and understanding their decision-making and reasons for their choices.

In short, what is needed are professionals with the requisite training in the theory and practice of communication and a supplementary grounding in communication-relevant aspects of the behavioural social sciences. The Masters in Communication for Development degree is designed to fulfil this need.

Central to the program is the use of radio for development, especially community radio. The program has drawn extensively from the experience of using radio in rural development in Francophone Africa (Manyonzo 2006).

Challenges in training development personnel
The major part of our target audiences are small-scale farmers living near the subsistence poverty line in rural hinterlands that are often beyond easy extension reach. The majority are often living with a multiplicity of long-standing cultures with languages and ways of living that can render extension difficult. It is not simply a question of proffering innovations, but of forging complex accommodations between deeply held traditional ideas and practices and the new ones that threaten to change or replace them.

While conventional extension still remains the most important way of introducing new productivity-increasing methods and health innovations to those who need them, extension is turning out to be but one blade of the development scissors. The other blade is introducing new ways of reaching people more effectively wherever they may be through a combination of interpersonal, group and mass communication:

- Rendering concepts and products of science in idioms people can comprehend;
- Enabling people to participate in analyzing their own development needs and problems and to choose solutions deemed appropriate in their perceptions;
Involving people in formal processes of deciding the nature of projects and programs intended for their benefit;
• Designing development messages, materials, multimedia strategies and campaigns to communicate new ideas and practices selected by those in need of them.

The Curriculum
Drawing upon relevant theories of the other social sciences and adding these to the body of the knowledge and skills of communication is what the curriculum is about. It provides a scientifically sound basis for identifying and analyzing problems concerned with the human dimension of development and a professionally valid foundation for designing practicable solutions. In short, it yields professionally trained communicators for development ready to hit the ground running.

The curriculum of the MA in Communication for Development (MCD) at the University of Zambia is made up of eight (8) modules (two more than originally planned for the diploma program), a practicum and internships.

This merging of communication theories with relevant theories of the other social sciences and adding the knowledge and skills of the communication arts and crafts epitomises the curriculum. The curriculum provides a scientifically sound basis for identifying and analyzing problems concerned with the human dimension of development. The eight courses, practicum and internship collectively provide a sound basis for integrating theory with practice and ability to communicate with the peoples of southern Africa.

While the MCD program at the University has been running for about 15 years now, due to financial constraints, the University has not taken an official audit of its former students to find out what they are doing and how the program has been of use in their work. But, informally, the feedback from a number of past students has been very positive. They are particularly pleased with the courses on research methodology, how to communicate innovations and how to bring about social change. In general, the practicum and the internships bring up a host of questions about problems, and we do a great deal of evaluation of the internships in group discussions.
**Modules in Summary**

The set of six modules abstracted below represent the core of the subject matter intended to give students a basic understanding of both the theoretical concepts and operational strategies underlying the study and practice of communication for development.

**Human Development: Principles of Participatory Communication**

**Objectives:** Introduces the essential truth that people, not just economies, must be at the centre of development. To this end, focuses on enlarging people’s choices by offering them ways of raising their living standards and quality of life. This stresses the need for trained communications to archive these goals.

Students learn how to:
- Identify and specify human development components of development projects;
- Work with people to determine their human development needs and formulate communication projects accordingly;
- Involve people in participatory decision making about their own development.

**Communication of Innovations**

**Objectives:** Introduces the notion that innovations for greater productivity, promoting better health practices and better living are the building blocks for enlarging people’s choices. The program describes types of innovation decisions and advocates the participatory approach. The program focuses on ways of accelerating the diffusion of innovations through the training of professional communicators.

Students learn about:
- Elements of the process of diffusing innovations;
- Authority, optional and collaborative innovation adoption decision;
- The characteristics of adopter categories and channels of communication;
- Pros and cons of alternative ways of accelerating the diffusion process.

**Communication and Change**

**Objectives:** Introduces the concept that change is an inevitable concomitant of enlarging people’s choices in the process of human
development—the result of innovations impinging on social norms, family values and individual attitudes and behaviors. Focuses on social, family values and individual reactions to the probability of change. Examines a variety of change-inducing communication strategies.

Students learn about:

- How to identify development relevant norms, values, attitudes and behaviors;
- Potential reactions to and consequences of inducing changes in social norms, family values or individual attitudes and behaviors;
- Potential of conflict between modern and traditional norms, values, and attitudes;
- Difference between immanent change and externally directed change.
- Pros and cons of various communication change inducing strategies.

Communication Theory and Process

Objectives: Introduces the fundamentals of communication as a social science that draws communication relevant theories and processes from the other social sciences and combines them with its own large body knowledge and process. Distinguishes between everyday communication as a basic life process and professional communication as a means of effective and efficient goal achievement. Introduces a communication model that includes the professional communicator yet adheres to the participatory principle.

Students learn about:

- A basic dyadic model of everyday communication and its fundamental elements.
- An adapted triadic model of professional communication and its fundamental elements: development benefactors, intended beneficiaries, professional communicators interposed between them and communication surrogates to serve in the participatory roles on behalf of their social systems.

The principals of symbolic representation in the message making and of media use in disseminating the messages.
Communication Research Methods

Objectives: Introduces methods of gathering and analyzing data that are eminently suited to the participatory principle of human development. Presents qualitative and quantitative methods of gathering information for need assessments, goal formulation and strategy design and testing. Advocates for the involvement of people as active research participants, not merely as research subjects.

Students learn about:
- Involving people in participatory research to the point where they feel ownership of it.
- Qualitative research tools: focus groups, open-ended key informant interviews.
- Quantitative methods: sample surveys and field experiments.
- Participatory action: communication appraises research combining qualitative and quantitative methods.

Communication Policy and Planning in Developing Countries

Objectives: To develop in the student knowledge, comprehension and skills needed in the area of communication policy and planning.

Students learn how to:
- Demonstrate a good understanding of communication policy
- Demonstrate a good understanding of communication planning both at the macro and micro levels
- Understand how media ownership affects communication policy and planning
- Demonstrate how to draw up and implement communication policy and planning at sectarian and national level;

In the “Communication and Policy Planning” course, we use Alan Hancock’s book (1992), Communication planning revisited, published by UNESCO, 1992. The issues treated in this book are:

1. Planning principles reassessed
2. Case studies of communication planning

This book gives case studies in order to help students understand some of the planning methodologies and why they were not successful in planning. By way of looking at these case studies, students are able to see some of the weaknesses, failures and reasons why some institutions and in particular the communications system is problematic here
in Zambia. We need to learn from these mistakes in order to improve our management styles.

**Seminar in Current Issues on Communication for Development**

**Objectives:** To develop in the student an appreciation and comprehensive understanding of current issues in communication for development.

Students learn how to:
- Describe the historical background of the field of communication for development and be able to relate them to current trends
- Apply principles of communication for development to problems in the field
- Apply current trends in communication for development to solving some of the development problems in society.

**Practicum**

**Objectives:** The program is dedicated to producing graduates capable of performing as professionals capable of analysing the causes of communication problems in various development contexts and devise solutions to the problems. The program includes opportunities for students to learn strategies and skills in the classroom simulations and in practical applications in the field that put them in direct touch with clients. The FAO project has developed, tested and packaged an action program for communication skills for development purposes replete with a participatory research strategy and a tool bag of strategic communication approaches that is well suited to this purpose.

Students learn how to:
- Research, plan and implement communication activities in a professional way.
- Train personnel of development projects in participatory research techniques.
- Manage programs to improve people’s participation in planning field projects.

**Internships**

**Objectives:** Students are placed in development projects and programs not only to give them hands-on experience of real life communication problems but also to offer them an opportunity to bond with
potential employers. Programs and projects in their region are canvassed for those willing to accommodate advanced students or recent graduates. Students may opt to serve their internships before or after graduation. In the expected absence of trained communicators in the projects, internship supervision may initially need to be provided by instructors.

Students learn to research communication project problems and constraints as they arise in real situations and design implement strategies to solve and overcome the.

The program stresses that the theory and practice of development communication continues to evolve today, emphasizing different approaches and perspectives unique to the varied development contexts that have made the field grow (Manyozo, 2006).

Development communication is characterized by conceptual flexibility and diversity of communication techniques used to address the problems. Some approaches in the “tool kit” of the field include: information dissemination and education, behavior change, social marketing, social mobilization, media advocacy, communication for social change, and participatory development communication.

In all the courses we teach, we try to Africanize or localize the communications concepts we deal with. This paper is too short to deal with each subject or course offered, but by way of a few examples, in Human Development and Participatory Communication, we teach:

1. Introduction to communication, development and empowerment in the third world, which is broken down as follows; (i) Third World, (ii) communication, (iii) empowerment, (iv) development, (v) communication for development.
2. Theories and models of development, broken down as follows; (i) modernization, (ii) dependency, (iii) multiplicity
3. Biases and critique of modernization and dependency theories.

The three points above are an attempt to explain development in general and then seen from our own situation how these models have played a part in our own development system as a country and thereafter see which model we should apply much more and for what reason(s).

In some countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, Zambia being one of them, the community media have mushroomed very much. Community media have an open door policy for anybody. There is access and participation, and they are the real agents in development. Students are
introduced to the community media to see how they can take advantage of community media and promote development in rural areas together with the community.

In the same course, we also teach, among other things, the concept of participation, from rhetoric to reality. The topic is broken down as follows; (i) definition of participation, (ii) Two major approaches to participatory communication, (iii) Three caveats, and (iv) Important related concepts. No.4 was developed from the critique of No.3 above. However it was also understood that there are moments when people are just spectators and are just informed about the decisions taken from above. There is need for people to be involved in the projects so that they are drivers of their own projects and able to avoid paternalism and armchair participation. Hence there is need to clarify what participation really entails especially here in Sub-Saharan Africa where kinship, rank, hierarchy and status have a big role to play.

The course, “Communication Skills and Strategies” is offered in order to help the students gain some basic ideas, knowledge and experience of how to use the media for development work. For this, the students are drilled in the basics of radio, television and print media handling. This is because some of the students work in organizations like World Vision, UNICEF, CARE, WWF and in some NGOs and other government or non-government institutions. In these organizations, at times they use community media as one of the best modes for being in contact with the grassroots and to carry out their projects. Here in Zambia, after the liberation of the airwaves in 1996, a number of community radio stations have been started and have become a support for developmental projects especially in remote areas. That is why it is necessary that the students are trained in the use of the tools which are cardinal in carrying out their work.

Training to meet the HIV/AIDS crisis

Few crises have presented such a threat to social development and economic progress as the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Almost 30 years after the first evidence of acquired immunodeficiency syndrome was reported, AIDS has become one of the most devastating diseases humankind has ever faced. HIV/AIDS is now the leading cause of death in sub-Saharan Africa (WHO, 2005; WHO, 2006).

Zambia has one of the world’s most devastating HIV and AIDS epidemics. According to a Ministry of Health report more than one in
every seven adults in Zambia is living with HIV and life expectancy at birth has fallen to just 37 years (Ministry of Health, 2007). This has compounded Zambia’s existing economic problems. In four decades of independence, Zambia has found peace but not prosperity and today it is one of the poorest and least developed nations on earth.

Poverty continues to be an endemic problem. According to the Living Conditions Monitoring Survey (PRSP, 2002), 78 percent of the population in Zambia is classified as living in poverty. Furthermore, poverty is more prevalent in rural areas than in urban sectors. Poverty has existed in Zambia, but it is clear that disease, including HIV/AIDS, has exacerbated it by contributing to decreased agricultural productivity and increased household food insecurity.

High levels of poverty directly or indirectly promote behaviour which creates vulnerability to HIV/AIDS. In turn, the consequences of HIV/AIDS can lead to poverty resulting in a complex and mutually reinforcing interrelationship between HIV/AIDS and poverty. As a result, preventable and treatable diseases have taken an enormous toll on the poorest people in Zambia who do not have access to professional care, health information, education, and secure employment. The MCD program tries to train a core group of people to assist in conducting social change campaigns, among other things, to address some of these problems.

**Duration of the program**

As earlier alluded to, this is an 18 months Masters degree because it is aimed at training personnel who are working in various development-related assignments within the Southern African Development Community (SADC) countries. The need for training such people in the region was identified by the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO). Unfortunately, it has not been possible for the FAO and other international agencies to provide scholarships for students from the region.

FAO provides advice and technical assistance to member nations in identifying communication needs in support of agricultural and rural development initiatives and in applying innovative, cost-effective communication strategies for specific audiences. The MCD program has benefited from FAO's experience in applying ComDev methods and tools in agriculture and rural development work. The guiding principles and underlying philosophy of FAO’s work in ComDev are:
• Communication is a mediation process that brings different social groups together to discuss their interests and needs and reach consensus for action;

• Communication technologies and media are tools in this process, not ends in themselves;

• Listening to farmers, taking into account their perceptions, needs, knowledge, experience, cultures and traditions, is a vital part of the process;

• Stakeholder dialogue facilitates partnerships and supports a holistic approach to rural development and innovation;

• An appropriate media-mix—traditional, local and modern media—is designed to fit the cultural, social and economic conditions of rural areas in each country.

Admission Requirements
The admission requirements for the MCD were also varied slightly from the initial FAO recommendation. Candidates for the MCD degree need not be journalists or have any background in journalism or media work. But they should be people who have been involved in development work.

Admission requirements for the MCD degree, therefore, are:

a). A good bachelor’s degree or equivalent in any field, or

b). any other qualified persons who can satisfy the Senate:

(i) As having equivalent standing to graduates in terms of paragraphs (a) above

(ii) As to their fitness to pursue postgraduate studies

c) Experience in development-oriented work.

Work Load
Candidates are required to take all the six courses whose details are given below, plus Communication Research Methodology and Techniques and Communication Policy and Planning in Developing Countries both of which are given in the Master of Mass Communication (MMC) program.
Candidates are also required to do a six-month practical attachment after completing two semesters of class work, which is taken as a report writing course.

Candidates do the following courses in each semester:

**First Semester**
- Communication Research Methodology and Techniques
- Communication Theory and Process
- Human Development and Participatory Communication
- Communication and Change

**Second Semester**
- Communication Policy and Planning in Developing Countries
- Communication Strategies and Skills
- Seminar in Current Issues on Communication for Development
- Communication of Innovations

**Potential Employers**

Many of the students are sponsored by actual or intending employers seeking to incorporate the new professional expertise into their operations. This includes government ministries and non-governmental organizations, multilateral and bilateral donors and technical assistance agencies, and on-going development programs and projects. Also included are institutions that provide pre- and in-service training for mid-level and field service extension and health workers.

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, as the World Bank points out, development communication is the integration of strategic communication in development projects, and Zambia would do well to equip as many people as possible with communication skills that enable effective dissemination of development messages.

This is important because strategic communication is a powerful tool that can improve the chances of success of development projects. It strives for behaviour change not just information dissemination, education, or awareness-raising. While the latter are necessary ingredients of communication, they are not sufficient for getting people to change long-established practices or behaviours.
All development requires some kind of behavior change on the part of stakeholders. Research shows that changing knowledge and attitudes does not necessarily translate into behavior change. In order to effect behavior change, it is necessary to understand why people do what they do and understand the barriers to change or adopting new practices. It is not enough to raise awareness of the “benefits”, it is critical to understand peoples' barriers or the “costs” they perceive such a change would entail.

Meaningful communication is about getting information out to particular audiences, listening to their feedback, and responding appropriately. Whether discussing a development project or broader economic reforms — from health, education or rural development to private sector development, financial reform or judicial reform — the idea is to build consensus through raising public understanding and generating well-informed dialogue among stakeholders.

Well-conceived, professionally implemented communication programs that are tied directly to reform efforts or development project objectives are important. These bring an understanding of local political, social and cultural realities to bear in the design of development programs and can make the difference between a project’s success and failure. This is the knowledge, it is hoped, the MCD program is imparting to its students.

This MCD program focuses on the effective use of communication as a tool to further the development agenda. Agunga (1997) observes that if improved problem-solving strategies in areas such as poverty, food insecurity, the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) pandemic, gender inequality, and the need to promote democracies world-wide is to become a reality, then the centrality of communication in development is not debatable.

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Kenny M. Makungu


How to improve standards of journalism education

By Guy Berger

Abstract
During 2009, the Media Council of Kenya commenced a process to secure statutory regulation of journalism education. These steps are located within broader controls of the value chain of journalism, including registration provisions for media institutions and individual journalists. While the intentions may not be to compromise freedom of expression and media freedom, the measures do open up risks to these norms, and they also violate international and African standards. Alternative strategies to deal with the standards of journalism education should be explored – for example, by letting the market rule, and developing forms of voluntary peer accreditation.

Key words: journalism education, accreditation, license, freedom of expression, media freedom, quality standards, Kenya.

Introduction:
The debate about how to train journalists for a responsible role in the public affairs of the nation and to guarantee a minimum journalistic competence continues to be a hot and contentious issue in most African countries. Who should control this training and how to avoid attempts to limit freedom of expression in the media by this control is at the heart of the debate. A recent episode in Kenya following the election violence illustrates this problem. In April 2009, it was reported that the Media Council of Kenya (MCK) had called on that country’s Ministry of Communication to regulate journalism education and training (Itumbi, 2008a, 2009).
Reportedly, the proposal made was that institutions engaged in such activities would be required to employ certified and accredited lecturers and have a minimum set of training facilities before being allowed to operate. Further, three exceptions (all of whom have personnel on the board of the MCK) were reported as the Nairobi University School of Journalism, Daystar University and the Kenya Institute of Mass Communication (Itumbi, 2009). (The first two schools have been recognized in a 2007 UNESCO survey of potential centres of excellence or of reference – see UNESCO, 2007). A fourth institution, the United States International University is also indirectly represented on the council through veteran journalist Joe Kadhi who heads the journalism program at that institution.¹

The Media Council of Kenya was born in the face of strong opposition from some quarters, replacing a prior voluntary body that had been set up in 2002. Its establishment as a statutory body, however, also met with some favor as the previous incarnation had not been able to enforce subscription payments by the media industry. However, as will be seen, a lot more baggage has come with the statutory arrangement.

Amongst its purposes, the MCK in terms of its legislative basis in the 2007 Media Act is supposed to advise the government or the relevant regulatory authority on matters pertaining to professional education and the training of journalists and other media practitioners, and also to make recommendations on the employment criteria for journalists. The significance of training was debated around the original bill in the definition of who constitutes a journalist. The original definition referred to “any person who habitually engages in the practice of journalism and is recognized as such by the Council”. Writing in 2007, Gathara asserted: “According to the Standard (newspaper – author’s insertion), the “media stakeholders” would like to replace this definition with one that includes the provision that a journalist is one who ‘holds a diploma or degree in mass communication from a recognized institution of higher learning and is recognized by the council as such’.” As Gathara went on to argue, such a clause would deny many lifelong journalists legal recognition on the basis that they do not possess the requisite academic qualifications. The proposal to link journalism to formal qualifications was also criticised by cartoonists, in a statement that reads: “Cartoonists Rights Network, International (CRNI) and the CRNI-affiliated KATUNI object to these elements of the legislation: a. Defining “journalist” as an individual who “holds a diploma or a degree in mass communication from a recognized institu-
tion of higher learning and is recognized as such by the Council,...” (CRN/IFEX, 2007)

As it finally turned out, Section 2 of the Media Act (2007) indeed defines a “journalist” to mean “any person who holds a diploma or a degree in mass communication from a recognized institution of higher learning and is recognized as such by the Council, or any other person who was practicing as a journalist immediately before the commence-ment of this Act, or who holds such other qualifications as are recognized by the Council, and earns a living from the practice of journalism, or any person who habitually engages in the practice of journalism and is recognized as such by the Council” (Kenya, 2007). This qualification exempts prior practitioners from educational preconditions for practising, but not those who wish to come into the market. The law’s import is very wide-ranging as it also defines “journalism” as “the collecting, writing, editing and presenting of news or news articles in newspapers and magazines, radio and television broadcasts, and in the Internet”.

Kenya’s journalism schools exist at registered universities, both public and private, but there are also private colleges that offer journalism training. Public universities have the autonomy to mount programs as they see fit, but private universities have to secure approval from the Commission for Higher Education, which then constitutes accreditation of that program. Private schools and colleges (several of which seem to be fly-by-night businesses) appear to have been unregulated up until 2009.

Part of the background to this call for regulating journalism education in Kenya was reportedly complaints by media players that most training institutions are offering sub-standard courses and flooding the industry with half-baked professionals. “The situation is so serious that people are graduating with diplomas in film production and they cannot even switch on a camera,” Esther Kamweru, the chairperson of the MCK, has been quoted as saying (Itumbi, 2009). She is also quoted to the effect that the Kenyan media were concerned about introducing non-trained journalists to the profession. “We have received a lot of complaints from the professional journalists who are raising concern about the issue and [this – author’s insertion] is something we are trying to look at as a council to better address it.” (Katago, 2009). Indeed, the Journalist Association of Kenya (JAK) has called on government to “to tighten journalism training” (Itumbi, 2008a).
The news report on the MCK’s specific proposal on the journalism education institutions added that, to ensure compliance with the new directive (if approved), the MCK was mobilizing human resource departments in media houses to reject graduates from non-accredited institutions. The article concluded by citing Eric Odour of the JAK as saying: “The move by the Media Council of Kenya is a boost to freedom of the media, which is anchored on professional training of journalists” (Itumbi, 2009).

These steps come in the context of other developments in Kenya that are relevant to journalism education and training. First, reference here is made to the aftermath of the widespread violence in that country following the election in 2007. That development challenged journalism teachers to help address a situation in which certain media (especially private radio stations) helped to fan the flames of the inter-ethnic clashes. (See International Media Support, 2008; Dean & Abdi, 2008). The violence following the last elections caused deep consternation among Kenyans. In March 2008 a still-shocked representative of the Nairobi University School of Journalism told a meeting of African journalism educators in March 2008 using words to the effect that “We live in a region of conflict, but we never thought it would happen in our own country”. He said this before going on to talk about the need to reform the school’s curriculum so as to address media and conflict issues. A second area that has challenged Kenya’s journalism schools and teachers is the role of their government during the crisis in imposing questionable restrictions on media freedom (a ban on live broadcasting).

MCK’s focus on “accreditation” issues in journalism education in Kenya is driven by questions about the quality of the outputs, but it is not separate from the issue of what to do about media freedom and role of media in conflict situations. The “accreditation” focus comes precisely in a context that raises questions about whether journalism should be restricted to well-trained professionals, and thereby presumably improve the media’s role in conflict. The context is also one in which educational institutions are challenged as to whether they should engage with the political issue of regulations to prevent ethical violations such as hate-speech during the 2007/2008 violence. These wider concerns have indeed been concerns of the MCK, with government and the council wrangling over who should control a study into the problem (and therefore, presumably, the kinds of recommendations that would arise). The role of journalism education enters these debates.
because of its relation to media performance and the political environment for media.

Although the “accreditation” approach through the MCK has been the key focus for addressing journalism education, there are alternatives. For example, an approach to dealing with unskilled and/or unethical practitioners or with issues such as hate speech, very different from that of legal regulation, is to promote voluntary responsibility in the education and training of media personnel. Such a proposal would direct debate and study towards the development of educational courses to address the matter and thence to empower journalists to do better. Instead, the thrust (through the MCK) has been on regulation rather than strengthening the competence and responsibility of the providers of education and training. This control-oriented dimension raises many concerns from the vantage point of a normative framework of freedom of expression and media freedom, as elaborated below.

Other questions can also be raised about the methods of “accreditation” of institutions for training journalists. While certain Kenyan radio stations were criticized for fanning the violence, no reports have been found that correlate this phenomenon with the education and training by problematic providers. And while some journalism schools – whether mainstream or fly-by-night – may have provided inadequate guidance to their charges on how to deal with the media’s role in conflict, there does not seem to be evidence that any training institutions had actually served as “propaganda” schools which prepared personnel to foment public violence. Thus, it appears that problems with journalism education may have been with the gaps in their programs and outreach activities – i.e. with omission, rather than commission. At the same time, the performance of the Kenyan media in the 2008 violence would likely be related to a host of other factors beyond what training did or did not do.

Against the background of these questions, it is salutary to assess the “accreditation” approach to journalism education in the light of broader media politics in Kenya.

2. Regulating to gain control

The MCK is a body constituted in controversy. It replaced a previous institution that had been based on voluntary self-regulation and which had been chaired by Absalom Mutere, a veteran Kenyan lecturer in journalism. The momentum for this change came from government
which introduced draft legislation for a statutory council, which would in turn represent a range of media stakeholders – but with government in control (for example by appointing the chairperson). Kenyan journalists expressed fear at the time that current or future governments could use the then proposed law to intimidate or deny them freedom to operate. For example *The Nation* newspaper on 18 May 2007 editorialized: “A clear contradiction is that one cannot talk about statutory regulation and self-regulation in the same breath. It is either one or the other, and statutory regulation in which the Government plays a key role would represent a major assault on existing constitutional guarantees for a free press.” The Kenya Media Owners Association called upon parliament to get rid of the Bill. After negotiations and some limited reform of the law, it was passed in 2007 and the MCK came into existence.

Media concerns were somewhat placated in that MCK’s membership is predominantly from various media sector bodies (eg. owners, editors, journalists, educators), who now elect the chair from amongst their ranks. The bodies mandated to nominate members of the council are the Kenya Union of Journalists, the Media Owners Association, the Law Society of Kenya, the Editor’s Guild, the Kenya Correspondents Association, the Public Relations Society of Kenya, schools of journalism, the Kenya Institute of Mass Communication and the Kenya News Agency. Freelancers may be considered to be represented at least in part by the Kenya Correspondents Association. It is estimated that freelance journalists form the majority—75 to 80 percent—of the profession in Kenya (MSI, 2007). There is no provision for media-support NGOs or citizen groups – presumably because they fall outside of the purview of seeking to confine journalism to formally qualified personnel.

The Media Act has provisions that speak of media freedom and independence, but it also provides for a compulsory licensing mechanism for journalists and an annual prescribed fee. The MCK is empowered to “uphold and maintain the ethics and discipline of journalists”. It has substantial legal powers to compel the publication of apologies in print or broadcast. Sanctions may be imposed on journalists found guilty of failure to comply with directives of the Council’s Complaints Commission, or for misleading or obstructing this Commission. There is provision for imprisonment for up to three months and/or a
fine ranging from 100,000 to 200,000 Kenyan shillings (circa $1500 to $3000).

Further, the functions and duties of MCK’s executive director include keeping “registers of journalists, media enterprises and other registers”. The law does not prevent it from denying registration or implementing deregistration. In fact, a letter sent by the Council to journalists via media owners in 2008 read: “[Y]ou have two months to comply or face the risk of deregistration.” (Itumbi, 2008b). The letter also expanded on the law, saying that journalists have to seek “accreditation” on an annual basis (Itumbi 2008b). In fact, the law does not go as far as this, specifying only that fees may be annual. Section 19 (1) says that “The Council may, by notice in the Gazette, impose a levy in respect of all media enterprises operating in Kenya, and an annual registration fee in respect of all journalists whose names appear in the registers kept by the Council”.

There are two aspects of controversy around this registration (the term is also sometimes substituted in Kenyan discourse with the more neutral sounding “accreditation”). Firstly, it has been queried as follows: “nurses, engineers and lawyers are accepted into practice once; why should we renew accreditation as if it is membership to a club or a professional body?” (see Itumbi 2008b). Secondly, there has been an uproar about the costs of registration after the MCK in 2008 set the fee at 2,000 Kenyan Shillings ($30) for each journalist (see comments by journalist unionists, in Itumbi, 2008b). However, former Kenya Union of Journalists (KUJ) official, Ezekiel Mutua, who became the Director of Information and Communication in government, was reported in 2008 as saying that journalists had to comply with the registration requirement (Nyakagwa, 2008). Ultimately, the dispute around the levy was settled at Ksh 2,000 ($30), and a number of the media houses have reportedly paid up for their journalists.

But absent in the whole controversy was the principle of statutory registration as such, even though it runs against norms of free expression and media freedom (see below). Statutory power, however, is also an issue in the funding of the council. The MCK imposes a levy on media houses to pay for its costs. In defence of this, the chair of the council, Wachira Waruru, reportedly stated (Itumbi, 2008b): “We are a product of negotiation between the media and the government and since we have a legal mandate we have to implement it”. In a Government Gazette issued in January 2009, the MCK pegged monthly levies
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for media houses (payable on a quarterly basis) from between 150,000 Ksh – 10,000 Ksh ($2,250 – $150), depending on the size of operation. (see Kenya, 2009). What this means is that industry stakeholders in Kenya are being required to fund the government’s desire for statutory regulation. The system authorizes them to use the law in policing themselves, at the behest of the state, and they carry part of the costs in so doing. From one point of view, this amounts to the MCK in effect doing the government’s work for it. It is not surprising, therefore, that in August 2008, a meeting was convened to discuss reviewing the Media Act to allow the Media Council to be funded by the government – even though this is a move that could further compromise the independence of the body. The step would also be contrary to the recommendations of the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe that the media industry should take responsibility for funding media councils as a way to secure the independence of such bodies (Zlatev, 2008, p. 61). However, in May 2009, the attorney general proposed amendments to the 2007 Media Act requiring the Treasury to provide funding to the Media Council, under what was reported as a “Statute Law Bill”, and this became law in July 2009 (AFMF/IFEX, 2009; Ratemo & Mutua, 2009).

As a sign of the power issues around funding, the MCK has already run into tensions with the Kenyan government. The body is reported to be legally prohibited from obtaining donor funds, but the government has questioned where the funding has come from in regard to a MCK plan to audit media performance during the election violence. Director of Information and Communication Mutua has charged that the MCK was meddling in the affairs of his ministry which had planned a similar audit. The Director, who sits on the council, then threatened to disband the body. Mutua was reported as saying (Nyakagwa, 2008). “If the MCK cannot work in tandem with its parent ministry (sic), then, as the director of information and public communication and its appointive authority, I will have compelling reason to deregister the Waruru team and appoint a team that will cultivate a much more professional, lawful and symbolic relationship with the ministry”.

This incident signals that a body with statutory power to register and deregister who could be a journalist is itself in danger of its incumbents themselves being “deregistered” from office. Mutua later released a statement toning down this stance, and there were statements from the KUJ disputing that he had the power to fulfil his threat.
how to improve standards of journalism education (Itumbi, 2008c). However, the fact that a top government official believed he had the legal power to disband the council and secure a more compliant one, shows the danger of a statutory entity being abused for control by those in political power. When the same government is funding the entity, the body is even more vulnerable to pressure.

3. The ambiguity of “professionalization”

The stated intention of setting up the MCK is to promote “professionalization” – an objective that can mean many things. At any rate, “professionalization” is prominently highlighted by a great many stakeholders seeking to optimise the democratic significance of media. Amongst these are:

- the ‘Africa Media Development Initiative’ – co-ordinated by the BBC World Service Trust (BBC World Service Trust, 2007);
- the Media Sustainability Index of the International Research and Exchange Center (MSI, 2006);
- the US-based Center for National Media Assistance (2008);
- UNESCO’s indicators for media development (2008).

Evidence of the lack of professional journalism around Africa has also been detailed by African scholars such as (the late) Francis Kasoma (1997), Francis Nyamnjoh (2006) and William Tettey (2006). They have noted bribery, fabrication, sensationalism, donor-driven agendas, political bias, etc., in African media. According to MSI (2008), in Kenya “many journalists ask for transport from organizers of events”. It continues: “Editors ask for money to kill stories or give more coverage to certain people, institutions, or businesses. Self-censorship is practiced at all levels. Negative stories on big advertisers are not run in order to protect revenue.” Professionalization (by various means – although not by regulation, state or otherwise) is put forward by many observers as the antidote to such ethical problems.

The problem around a lack of professionalization, however, can be also be interpreted in a very different way. A conference in Burkina Faso in 2008, convened by the European Union (EU) and the African Union (AU) heard President Blaise Compaoré complain about...
“disinformation, libellous or insufficiently documented reports, amateurism and corruption”. Against this backdrop, the conference controversially resolved to create a Pan-African Media Observatory (dominated by government appointees and state-owned media) to “ensure responsibility, quality, professionalism and ethical principles at continental level...” (see Berger, 2009). In this orientation, professionalization is presented as a way to promote government-friendly journalism. Significantly, government criticisms about a lack of professionalism are typically levelled against the private press in Africa, with little or nothing being said about the government-controlled media. However, across the continent, scores of state-owned broadcasters, newspapers and news agencies practice propagandistic mass communications far from professionalism in the sense of independent journalistic reportage.

However, even if the question of standards of professionalism was assessed across the entire media spectrum, there is still another issue that arises with the measure itself. This is the questioning of professionalism as being a form of gate-keeping and control that is anathema to democracy. It is thus an issue about the extent to which professionalism can serve as a barrier to free speech, and especially as a block to government critics seeking to practice journalism. This concern is about who is entitled to access mass communication platforms to exercise their right to free expression. Particularly the community radio movement, not least in Africa, is concerned about the privileging and elitism associated with such “professionalism”. Further, as blogging develops in African countries, so too do proponents of citizen journalism also clash with this kind of professionalization.

Professionalization in a particularly controversial form was proposed in Tanzania in 2007, where a system of envisaged registrations threatened to become licensing. This was in the draft Media Services Bill whereby all journalists would be required to hold a recognized professional or academic qualification approved by a government-appointed Media Standards Board. The draft Bill stated: “No person shall practise journalism in Tanzania unless he/she holds academic and professional qualifications recognized by the Board.” These were defined as a university degree, a postgraduate diploma in journalism or mass communications, or other qualification to be approved by the Board. It would be an offence to hire a non-qualified person to practise journalism, in terms of the Tanzanian Bill.
This proposal has an echo in the literal definitions in the Media Act, which appear to require the Kenyan media to now hire as new employees only those persons who have communications qualifications. This is even independent of MCK having amongst its legal functions, that of making “recommendations on the employment criteria for journalists”. Together, the two provisions could lead to a scenario like that in Botswana, where the sister-in-law of the President contacted that country’s statutory media council in 2009 asking it to deregister two journalists whose coverage she did not like (COFEX, 2009). Such an outcome could conceivably be achieved by an effective annulment of qualifications. After all, doctors and lawyers can be struck off the roll for mispractice – meaning that their qualifications count for nothing. There is also the possibility of disqualifying a person with qualifications from an institution that is retrospectively de-accredited. The point is that the opportunity for selective victimization on the pretext of qualifications is vast. Once the gate is opened to statutorily-enforceable means about who can practice journalism, the potential for control-creep by governments or others on the gatekeepers is huge.

Where the Tanzanian bill went even further on statutory “professionalization” was in proposing a Media Services Board which would “synchronise curricula and vet qualifications for trainers” (Section 71. –(1) (o). In this way, not only journalists would be licensed, but journalism teachers as well. The logic of this is to impose compulsory licensing along the entire chain of human resources involved in journalism: the trainers, the schools, the journalists and the media houses. In this circuit, a licensed media house may then only hire licensed journalists, who in turn need to have a license from a licensed training institution, in which the teachers must also be licensed. How norms of individual free speech, and media freedom and independence, are to be reconciled with such a sewn-up system is hard to discern.

In the light of norms around media freedom and free speech, the Kenya case is, at “worst”, an expansionist apparatus that could be abused for political suppression of critical public speech. At “best”, however, it risks becoming a cartel of industry incumbents that has come together to create a closed shop around who can get a licence to run a new and rival start-up company, as well as who can actually practice journalism – and with an expulsion mechanism to keep out competition. This latter situation, even if operated independently of government, would still nevertheless be contrary to important international principles and standards on journalism:
• The Inter-American Declaration of Principles on Freedom of Expression (2000) says that any compulsory membership or qualification to practice as a journalist amounts to an illegitimate restriction on every person’s right to freedom of expression through “any medium”. The same sentiment is expressed in the 2003 joint declaration by the relevant rapporteurs of the UN, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the Organization of American States in 2003. (See Berger, 2007, p. 8).
• The African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights (2002) has a “Declaration of Principles on Freedom of Expression in Africa” which says: “Everyone shall have an equal opportunity to exercise the right to freedom of expression.” It also provides that there should not be any undue legal restrictions on the exercise of an individual's rights as a media practitioner.
• Kenya’s own constitution states (Section 79 (1)): “Except with own consent, no person shall be hindered in the enjoyment of his freedom of expression, that is to say freedom to hold opinions without interference, freedom to receive ideas and information without interference and freedom from interference with his correspondence.”

Statutory licensing with exclusionary powers is not compatible with these norms, whether it applies to individual journalists, journalism schools or journalism teachers. The system inherently lends itself to chilling effect – which is, arguably, one reason why governments come to expect that formal qualifications for journalists will help guarantee a quiescent press. Self-censorship is already a major phenomenon practised by many African journalists (see Skjerdal, 2008). Even with resort to the euphemism of “accreditation”, an environment of statutorily enforced registration as in Kenya amounts to potential licensing, and this can only reinforce the self-censorship problem.

There is also another problem in locking journalism education into a licensing system controlled by a statutory media council. Even leaving the potential for government control aside, there are also those interests who would like journalism educators to “dance to the tune” of the direct actors in the media industry. In contrast, however, there are times and reasons why journalism education needs the academic
freedom to chart its own course. For example, this includes being free to criticize both government and the industry when there are ethical lapses. It also includes being free to break with industry inertia and foot-dragging, in terms of teaching and developing new paradigms, topics and technologies of journalism. If a journalism school and its personnel have to meet the statutory approval of industry (and if in turn the stamp of the educational institution is what authorizes a person to work as a journalist), then an authoritarian system is in place. Within policy parameters, editors are normatively entitled to editorial independence from owners, and likewise journalists from editors. Journalism educators need the same autonomy from the industry. In the case of MCK, however, there is a danger that the leading educational institutions are co-opted into a system which not only serves industry interests, but could also be exploited by government.

4. Exploring alternatives:

The 2007 UNESCO study of African journalism schools was driven by the question of how, in effect, to improve the institutional capacity of these bodies considered as central to generating journalistic professionalization. Part of this agenda was to develop standards of excellence, and systems for measuring this. Some debate has taken place as to whether these developments could be assisted by a pan-African system of accreditation of schools (UNESCO, 2007). What the Kenyan case shows are the dangers of an approach (national or continental) that entails statutory power, and which lends itself to predatory governments co-opting media owners, unions and journalism schools into a cartel that can act against freedom of expression, media freedom and academic freedom.

What could an alternative system look like? The starting point is what problem it would address, and whose problem that is. For governments, the problem is largely a free media that can generate negative publicity about the authorities. For media owners, the problem is graduates who cannot operate cameras, etc. For society, the problem would be unethical journalism such as that which allows hate speech. In Kenya's case, where much journalism is done by untrained freelancers, and where the "hate speech" cases after the elections were more associated with incapacity by DJs and talk show hosts than journalists (International Media Support, 2008; Dean & Abdi, 2008), it
Guy Berger

is rather hard to blame a lack of professionalism on the journalism schools.

To the extent that what happens in education and training has a bearing on journalism, the question still arises as to whether problematic issues should be addressed through statutory regulation and “clubby” protectionism. In the Kenyan case, what can be done in the face of genuine schools that are so resource-poor that they cannot deliver learning value, ones which do not have conflict journalism in their curriculum, or others which are simply fly-by-night rip-off businesses? The answer is: Instead of trying to control them, an alternative is to concentrate on competition – where the media industry reserves its right as to which schools and programs produce the graduates they will employ. In this sense, the market decides. Some years ago, South Africa had the experience of the “African Media University” (run by one Liesl Gottert who later became a communications advisor for the country’s president, Jacob Zuma). That institution generated negative coverage about its failure to live up to promises made to students, and the bad publicity contributed to its collapse.

In the Kenyan case, the university-based formal media training institutions have in recent years had to face the giant Nation Media Group setting up its own academy, which in effect was a vote of no confidence in the schools as being suitable service providers of journalism education. The Aga Khan further announced in April 2010 his intention to create a university-level Graduate School of Journalism. In other words, whether the three top schools are somewhat protected by the MCK or not, they still face the reality of competition to which they need to respond.

To really compete and provide effective educational services, the journalism schools in Kenya could profitably revisit the criteria for excellence which were collectively developed during the 2007 UNESCO study of African journalism schools. This, indeed, was the route considered in April 2010 by the schools represented in the MCK. Their thrust was to modify the UNESCO criteria into an instrument for a proposed inspection and accreditation, to be funded by government. This was to be administered later in 2010 of middle-level training colleges that issue diplomas, which institutions have been said to be amenable to the process. The difficulty, however, is that this is happening within a statutory licensing context.

Meanwhile, the UNESCO criteria focus on the means, not the outcomes, and they cover three bases – many of which are underdevel-
oped amongst Kenya’s schools. The first base is the internal capacity of a school – which covers infrastructure, curriculum, qualifications and experience of teachers, as well as opportunities for media production. The second is the external orientation and interconnection of a school. Here, ties with industry (not necessarily uncritical) are important, such as internships, and training across both sides in the relationship. In Kenya, providing services to freelancers and radio talk-show hosts would be relevant examples. In addition, links with community and taking a stance as regards media policy and freedom (including the freedom of community media journalists and bloggers) would be important. The third UNESCO base is the forward-orientation of journalism schools which relates to the sustainability of a school – its revenue sources, its planning ability, its networks, and its standing.

Improving all three areas could be an effective route to quality journalism education in Kenya. However, a strong case can be made that this should not happen under statutory regulation, but rather on a voluntary self-regulatory basis. With the statutory framework, the UNESCO criteria can become an officially-sanctioned exclusionary based process that impacts on one key moment in the value chain of journalism, and which mirrors creeping controls at other moments. Instead, the system could be driven by a voluntary peer-based mechanism. A successful (albeit very time- and resource-intensive) case is the USA’s experience of voluntary accreditation by the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (ACEJMC) or the Francophone system called Theophraste (See Berger, 2005).

If self- and peer-based voluntary “accreditation” become the dominant strategy, (which allows for schools, educators and journalists to practice even without accreditation) then education and training can contribute to “professionalization” and quality in a positive sense. But if protectionism prevails, with or without governmental exploitation of the system, then a violation of tenets of free speech, media freedom and academic freedom hove into view. In this event, the day may come Kenyan journalism educators come to regret their participation in the MCK and pursuit of a statutory method to improve journalism education.

Footnotes
1 Dr Levi Obonyo, the representative from Daystar has been described in the media (Suyianka, 2007) as representing Public and Private
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Universities; Prof Wambui Kiai from the University of Nairobi is on the council member in a similar capacity.

This is a reworked version of a paper originally delivered at the Second World Journalism Education Congress Africa-Regional Prepcom paper, Grahamstown 9 September 2009, which in turn built upon the presentation “Does journalism training make sense? And if yes, when, where and why? Some African experiences” for the symposium “Re-Inventing Journalism? Journalistic Training in the Social Media Age”, Deutsche Welle Global Media Forum “Conflict Prevention in the Multimedia Age”, 4 June, Bonn 2009.

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Guy Berger
The values and attitudes of Tanzanian journalists...
How competent are they regarding public affairs and environmental journalism?

By Bernadin Mfumbusa and Peter Mataba

Abstract
The present article presents the findings of a survey of Tanzanian journalists regarding age, professional training, occupational motivation, ethical principles, knowledge of public affairs and attitude toward reporting of issues of environmental conservation. The survey found that journalists in Tanzania have a relatively high degree of job satisfaction because of their involvement with public affairs in spite of their low pay and low status due to poor general and professional education. Their knowledge and awareness of issues of environmental protection is also relatively low.

Key words: Tanzanian journalists, journalistic ethics, journalists’ job satisfaction, conditions of work of journalists, journalist knowledge of public affairs, journalist knowledge of issues of environmental conservation

Introduction:
Often little is known about the practicing journalists of a country. Accusations are made about journalists’ incompetence, their lack of training, their unethical conduct or about their lack of professionalism, but these statements are only general impressions. There is little foundation for the training of journalists and little basis for a policy for the strengthening of journalistic performance. The evaluation of the state of an occupational profession in a particular national context is generally very difficult, but a simple survey is often a good starting point. The present survey was carried out in 2006 and 2007 to provide a profile of the “typical” journalist in Tanzania.
In addition to basic data such as age, educational background and years of journalistic practice, the study sought to gauge journalists’ perceptions and attitudes on environment, professional autonomy, journalistic values, and occupational motivation. The survey was national in scope focusing on four major cities where journalists are concentrated: Mwanza, Arusha, Dar es Salaam and Zanzibar.

The Tanzanian study was part of a broader East African survey in Burundi, Rwanda, Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania sponsored by the Swedish Development Agency (SIDA) as part of a SIDA project aiming to get a better understanding of journalists’ perceptions and attitudes on the environment, but also their values and working conditions. The study itself was part of a program initiated in 2002 by SIDA to improve environmental journalism. The initial part of the program involved the training of journalists and setting up regional documentation centers in various universities. Hundreds of journalists and others working in the communication field participated in various aspects of the program.

The methodology used in the study

A standard questionnaire prepared in Makerere University in Uganda was used in the survey, which was undertaken in Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda and Burundi as well as in Tanzania.

The respondents were asked to answer a total of 37 questions. An attempt was made to incorporate in the survey a representative sample of journalists in Tanzania. A first approach in identifying journalists and the organizations where they were working was to consult lists held by media institutions: the directory (2004/2005) of the Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA), the Tanzania Media Directory (2000), and the Political Handbook and NGO Calendar for 2005. The actual sampling was carried out in stages. The first stage was to create a list of all media organizations in the country by region. The media organizations included newspapers, television stations and radio stations. A total of 83 media organizations were identified in four cities: Mwanza (9), Arusha (6), Dar es Salaam (60) and Zanzibar (8). Freelance journalists were identified in all towns (except Dar es Salaam) with the help from regional press clubs.

Except for seven newspapers, one in Arusha and six in Dar es Salaam, the media institutions surveyed all use Kiswahili as their
operational language. While six media houses are government owned, individuals or institutions own the rest.

The data collection was carried out in December 2006 and January 2007. Self–administered questionnaires were distributed within each media institution with the help of field assistants. A total of 256 questionnaires were distributed in the media organizations of the four major cities of Tanzania. However, only 172 were recovered in time for use in this analysis, a response rate of 67.18 percent.

Findings

1. The profile of journalists in Tanzania
   Of those surveyed male journalists were 51.62 per cent and females were 32.48 per cent; 27 respondents, 15.69 per cent, failed to register their gender. This confirms the impression that the journalism profession in Tanzania is dominated by males.

Age and experience
   Journalists in Tanzania tend to be quite young. In this sample, only one respondent was under 20 years of age. The largest age group, 53 out of 172, 30.74 per cent of the respondents, were between 21 and 30 years. Another 46 respondents, 26.68 per cent were between 31-40 years. Only 4.6 per cent were between 51 and 60.
   Most Tanzanian journalists have relatively little experience in this field; 54.52 per cent of the respondents have worked in the field for less than 5 years. Only 24.94 per cent of the respondents have worked in the field for between 6 to 10 years. Another 12.76 per cent have experience of between 11 to 20 years. And only 5.8 per cent are veteran journalists with more than 20 years of experience.

Education
   The educational level is quite low, considering that this is a professional activity. Most have no specialized degree or training. Some 41.18 per cent of the respondents have secondary or college education but without a university degree. Only 51 out of 172, 29.58 per cent, have a first university degree. A miniscule 4 out of 172, 2.3 per cent, have postgraduate education (either MA or doctorate).
Significantly, 46 out 172, 26.68 per cent, of the respondents refused to reveal their education status.

**Income**

This survey confirms that journalists’ incomes are very low. In this sample 30.1 per cent of the respondents said they earned less than US$ 100 dollars a month. A small fraction of respondents 0.58 per cent said they earned more than US $ 700 a month and only one journalist earns more than US$ 1000 a month. However, 38.8 per cent of the respondents refused to divulge their financial status.

**Job Satisfaction**

A six-item scale was used to measure job satisfaction.

**Table 1: Job satisfactions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job satisfaction index</th>
<th>Very satisfied</th>
<th>48</th>
<th>27.84</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Somewhat satisfied</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>25.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fairly satisfied</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>35.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very dissatisfied</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Don’t Know</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Refused</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6.38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As table 1 indicates, 88.95 per cent of the respondents are fairly, somewhat or very satisfied. Only 6 respondents, 3.48 per cent, said were very dissatisfied with their job conditions. This is a surprising finding, considering the poor pay, limited autonomy and lack of upward social mobility due to their low educational levels. How the contrast of poor working conditions and relatively high levels of job satisfaction are to be reconciled is something which merits further investigation.

**Occupational motivations**

One of the key questions in the study is the motivation for being a journalist and the ideals that are underlying the difficult work of re-
porting in the Tanzanian context. In Tanzania, sources are often reluctant to disclose sensitive information and pay is low. A high degree of motivation is necessary to remain a journalist.

Table 2: Occupational Motivations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Very important</th>
<th>Somewhat Important or Not very important</th>
<th>Don’t Know</th>
<th>Refused</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The pay</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>62.06</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>24.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fringe benefits</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>33.64</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>35.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Editorial policies</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>52.78</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>28.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chance to influence public affairs</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>51.62</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>38.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training opportunity</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>40.60</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>8.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chance to contribute to national development</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>70.18</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>20.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job security</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>63.80</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>25.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autonomy</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>28.42</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>45.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chance to get ahead in the organization</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>28.42</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>22.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chance to help people</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>56.84</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>31.32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 above indicates that the chance to contribute to the national development is the strongest stated motivation. The opportunity to help people rates fairly high in the motivations. Also important in the motivations is the chance to influence public affairs and participate in agenda-setting editorial policies. This expression of rather idealistic motivations correlates with what other similar studies of journalists’ motivations have revealed (Ogongo-Ongong’a and White, 2008, pp 165-166). Journalism provides the opportunity to participate in the major issues of public life and to influence public opinion.

It is surprising, however, that the the pay and job security are also mentioned as high in the motivation, especially considering the journalists’ awareness of low pay.

Perceptions of Journalistic Freedom

Three central indicators of journalistic freedom were used to gauge perceptions of freedom in journalistic work: (1) freedom in
selecting the stories they work on, (2) freedom in deciding aspects of
the story to be emphasized, and (3) ability to get the subject or idea
that one thinks important covered. Among Tanzanian journalists the
perception of freedom to select the stories they wish to report is rela-
tively high; 46.40 per cent feel that they have a great deal or almost
complete freedom. And another 42.34 per cent have varying degrees of
freedom. Only 9.86 say they have almost no freedom at all.

Table 3: Perception of Journalistic Freedom

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of journalistic freedom</th>
<th>Degree</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Freedom in selecting the stories they work on</td>
<td>Almost complete</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>20.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>freedom</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A great deal</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>25.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Some</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>42.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>None at all</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>9.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Don’t Know</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Refused</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freedom in deciding the aspect of the stories to be emphasized</td>
<td>Almost complete freedom</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>16.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A great deal</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>23.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Some</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>44.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>None at all</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>12.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Don’t Know</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Refused</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to get the subject/idea you think important covered</td>
<td>Almost complete freedom</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>41.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A great deal</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>22.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Some</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>24.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>None at all</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>8.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Don’t Know</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Refused</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3.48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In deciding what aspects of the story are to be emphasized, again, a
relatively high percentage of journalists, 41.18 per cent, feel that they
have almost complete freedom. If one adds to that those who think
that they have a great deal of freedom, these statistics suggest that
63.22 per cent feel that they have a high degree of freedom. Only
24.36 say that only occasionally can they get permission to cover what
they think is important. This relatively high level of autonomy of
journalists in East African contexts is again supported by the study of the young journalists working in *The Standard* and *The Nation* in Kenya (Ogongo-Ongong’a and White, 2008).

**The journalism ethics of Tanzanian journalists**

The ethics, attitude toward public affairs reporting and institutional values of journalists were central aspects of the study. As Table 3, presenting attitudes of approval or disapproval of unethical practices indicates, only about 40 or 45 per cent of the Tanzanian journalists take a clear stand on ethical issues such as misrepresenting one’s journalistic identity or making use of personal documents without permission.

**Table 4: Commitment to journalistic ethics**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Justified occasionally</th>
<th>Don’t approve</th>
<th>Not sure or Don’t know</th>
<th>Refused</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paying people for confidential information</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using confidential documents without authorization</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Claim to be somebody else</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agreeing to protect confidentiality and not doing so</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making use of personal documents without permission</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using hidden microphones and cameras</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using re-creations or dramatization of news by actors</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disclosing the names of rape victims</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being paid by source to publish or kill a story</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A surprising percentage, about 25 to 35 per cent, depending on the issue, think these practices—widely disapproved of among journalists
and texts of journalistic ethics—are justified in some circumstances. A
relatively large number were not sure, didn’t know or refused to com-
mit themselves.

The only ethical violation that got considerable rejection was the
practice of taking bribes to publish some story or kill a story. But even
here only about 60 per cent were certain, many were wavering and
some even thought that it could be justified in some circumstances.

The news values of Tanzanian journalists

The set of questions regarding public affairs was designed to test the
degree of awareness of important issues, but then also to test to see
what they think are the important issues that should be brought before
the public.

Table 5, presenting what journalists consider important news, shows
that journalists think that poverty and development as well as corrup-
tion issues are of the greatest importance. Also of high importance is
protection of the environment. The respondents easily put celebrity
news and gossip as well as entertainment in the lowest category.

Given the relatively low level of education and training, one can ask
whether many of the journalists can deal adequately with issues of
development, causes of corruption or unemployment.

Table 5: News Values of Tanzanian Journalists

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Extremely important</th>
<th>Quite or Somewhat important</th>
<th>Not really important</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
<th>Refused</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The executive arm of the government</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>38.86</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>43.50</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legislative processes</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>44.08</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>37.70</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courts and judiciary</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>38.86</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>76.28</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local government</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>42.92</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>35.96</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corruption/transparency</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>64.38</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>16.24</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poverty and development</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>68.44</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>15.66</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment/unemployment</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>51.62</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>23.36</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental management/protection</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>59.16</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>22.04</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sports</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>38.86</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>44.08</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infrastructure</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>44.66</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>34.80</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entertainment</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>35.38</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>45.82</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Celebrity news and gossips</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>28.42</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>36.54</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Importance of media coverage of environmental conservation

As was indicated at the beginning, this study was carried out as part of a larger project of improving the coverage of environmental issues in the media. The program emphasized a series of workshops and seminars to improve the knowledge of journalists regarding the need for improved environmental policies in the East African region. Thus a central part of the study was to determine to what extent journalists are now more aware of the need for environmental protection in the region.

As Table 6 indicates, an overwhelming majority, 83.52 per cent, think that it is important to cover the issues of environment. Indeed, one could hardly imagine a journalist not thinking it is important. However, they also perceive that that the performance by Tanzanian media is, at best, only good or fair. Most would rate their own media institution as only fair or weak in reporting environmental issues. Also, it is apparent that relatively few personnel in their media houses are dedicated to this.

Although journalists tend to rate environmental issues as important in comparison with other issues, it may be much more difficult for them to imagine how they can make it an important part of the news.

These results suggest that if an increase of coverage of environmental issues is important, it may be necessary to target editors, especially managing editors, or, in radio and television, program directors. Although journalists may have considerable autonomy in choosing news topics, it is normally the editors who make the decisions on particular stories to cover or who decide a general coverage policy.

It may also be useful to work more directly with agencies of the government or major non-governmental agencies that are dealing with environmental policy and environmental issues. Environmental issues and policies may be too complicated for most journalists to deal with, especially given the low level of education of journalists in Tanzania and the lack of journalistic specialization that most media houses encourage in Tanzania.

If an evaluation of a program such as training for improved coverage of environmental issues is pursued further, it would be very important to carry out a broad content analysis of the newspaper articles and radio or television programs that have dealt with these topics. A content analysis would reveal whether the main issues have been covered, whether the material is accurate and whether there is proper evaluation of the governmental or non-governmental agencies involved.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Scores</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Important for the media to cover environment</td>
<td>Degree                  No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very important          144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Quite important         13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Somewhat important      6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not really important    2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Don’t Know              2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Refused                 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance by Tanzanian media in covering the environment</td>
<td>Outstanding             31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very Good               8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Good                    51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fair                    57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Poor                    18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Don’t Know              2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Refused                 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance by own news organization in covering environment</td>
<td>Outstanding             21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very Good               13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Good                    50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fair                    33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Poor                    38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Don’t Know              2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Refused                 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reporters/Writers specializing in covering environment</td>
<td>1-5                     46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6-10                    7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11-15                   3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>None                    41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Don’t Know              58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Refused                 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Spoilt                  2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Awareness of national and international environmental policy documents and protocols

Since perceptive understanding and presentation of environmental protection issues in the news presupposes an understanding of policies and protocols, a nine-item question regarding local Tanzanian and international protocols and agreements was used to measure respondents’ perception of environmental policies. The nine items are: (1) Stockholm Declaration of 1972, (2) Bruntland Commission of 1987, (3) Kyoto Protocol of 1989, (4) Millennium Development Goals (MDG), (5) Earth Summit of 1992, and (6) Rio 10 of 2002. Others were: National Environmental Management Council (NEMC), The Environmental Management Act, and the National Environmental Policy.

Table 7: Awareness of Environmental Policy Documents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Scores</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>International Issues</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stockholm Declaration</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>18.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bruntland Commission of 1987</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>13.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kyoto Protocol of 1989</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>44.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Millennium Development Goals</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>57.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earth Summit</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>38.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rio 10</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>38.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Local/National Issues</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Environment Management Council (NEMC)</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>48.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Environment Management Act of 2004</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>34.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The National Environment Policy of 1997</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>36.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None of the above</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refused</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7 presents the data regarding the knowledge of environmental policy documents. For Tanzanian journalists the local documents, the Millennium Development Goals, and local environmental protection bodies, such as the National Environmental Management Council.
(NEMC) are far more known and seen to be of greater importance. Regarding the international documents, the Kyoto Protocol of 1989 is seen as the most important followed by the Earth Summit, and Rio 10. The Stockholm Declaration of 1972 and the Bruntland Commission of 1987 are perhaps too remote to be of significance to Tanzanian journalists today.

Goals of media owners and senior media managers

The journalists were asked to indicate what they would see as the most important goals of the institutions where they are working. Table 8 indicates that journalists do identify with the goals of the media institutions where they work. The goal which they see as most important is producing high quality journalism, followed by the goal of building the largest audience possible.

Table 8: Perception of importance of media institutional goals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Extremely important</th>
<th>Quite important</th>
<th>Somewhat or Not really important</th>
<th>Don't know</th>
<th>Refused</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Earning high above average profit</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>30.74</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>19.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintaining high employee morale</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>48.14</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>9.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keeping the size audience as large as possible</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>56.26</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Producing high quality journalism</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>73.66</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>8.12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Perception of the importance of the institutional values

Respondents were also asked to indicate their assessment of what constitutes institutional values and motives such as being profit driven or whether cross-ownership of media houses is good.

Table 9 shows that journalists identify with the market model of journalism and agree that audience research is needed to bring about
Table 9: Journalist agreement with media institutional goals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Strongly agree or</th>
<th>Somewhat agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Somewhat disagree or Don’t know</th>
<th>Refused</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Profit matters more than good journalism</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>15.7</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>20.3</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journalism quality has been rising over time</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>30.2</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>33.2</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newsroom resources have been shrinking over the past few years</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>23.0</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>23.8</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A lot of audience research is needed to learn the kind of information needed</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>36.0</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>20.4</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More invested in market/promotions not in editorial/journalism</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>46.4</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>22.1</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross-media ownership is good</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>29.7</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>24.4</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The values and attitudes of Tanzanian journalists

the adaptation of the newspaper to contemporary contexts. It is important to continually improve the quality of journalism. Also important is high employee morale, and journalists identify strongly with the importance of improving the profitability of the media.

Conclusions

The study has shown that the level of education of practicing journalists’ in Tanzania is rather low. Most respondents have only secondary or post-secondary level education. This naturally has implications for their capacity to undertake in-depth analysis of issues.
Also, currently, most people involved in the journalism enterprise in the country are relatively young. Most fell in the 21 – 40 years category and have a limited experience working in journalism field.

A matter of concern is the contradiction between what journalists think is important to report to the public and their knowledge about these issues. In this and other similar studies, journalists appear to be very idealistic in their desire to inform people of their rights and promote democracy and national development. A high percentage of the journalists stated that it is important to put issues of environmental management and protection before the public, but they lack an understanding of the major problems of environmental protection. Most did not know about or understand the policies, protocols and agreements on environment, even when it was a matter of the millennium goals in Tanzania itself. This implies that the respondents cannot engage in serious analysis of issues surrounding the contemporary debate on environment.

Journalists’ values evince a curious mix of motivations. On the one hand journalists are motivated by money (pay and fringe benefits) and on the other, they are interested in promoting national development and helping people. Journalists think that corruption, poverty and development are the most important issues that should be reported. In fact, many do not understand well what is good governance or development policies. Part of the problem is the general low level of education among Tanzanian journalists. Many journalist training programs are content with the mechanics of reporting and have nothing on development issues and or democratic procedures. Half of them have only a secondary school education. Surprisingly, media owners and managing editors seem to tolerate and encourage news reporting from badly educated and poorly trained journalists.

One of the most striking results of the survey is the affirmation by journalists of a high degree of freedom in selecting the stories they work on and freedom to decide aspects of the story to be emphasized. Nearly 50 per cent say that they have complete or a great deal of freedom in selecting the topic of stories and less than 10 per cent say they have no freedom at all. More than 80 per cent say that they can emphasize what they think is important. This is due in great part to the reliance of newspapers and other media on free-lance correspondents.
also see a contradiction in the fact that a very high percentage (nearly 70 per cent) consider it very important to bring corruption before the public for public condemnation, but at the same time many would approve of very questionable ethical practices such as violating confidentiality. Many of the journalists in the survey are not clear about key ethical principles of the profession. Although it is to the credit of journalists in Tanzania that 60 per cent do not approve of accepting payment from sources to publish or kill a story, still it is a matter of concern that 10 per cent approve of it and another 30 per cent are not sure or refused to answer the question. The survey reveals that on the whole journalists in Tanzania are not well trained regarding the ethics of the profession.

Another possible contradiction that calls for further explanation is the fact more than 60 per cent think that the quality of journalism has been increasing over time, but at the same nearly 50 per cent think that newsroom resources have been shrinking over the past few years.

One can conclude that although the present survey does have many limitations, it has been useful in providing evidence regarding issues about which there is only superficial impressions. A survey of this type is most useful as a basis for further research.

Footnotes
1 Some of the media houses listed in the directories had folded at the time of the study; others were one-man media organizations which were left out of the study.
2 The press clubs are Mwanza Press Club (MPC), Arusha Press Club (APC) and Zanzibar Press Club (ZPC). In Dar es Salaam it was not easy to identify freelance journalists as most refused to categorize themselves as freelancers despite the fact that they lacked permanent employment in any media house.
3 The government owned media were: Daily News, Radio Tanzania Dar es Salaam, Television ya Taifa, Sauti ya Zanzibar, Television Zanzibar and Habari Leo.

References
Traditional media in Nigeria: The semiotics of the Tiv Kwagh-Hir theatre

By Gowon Ama Doki

Abstract
Communication is the grist of human existence and communal living. Without communication most of what makes life and living meaningful would be lost. This paper examines communication from the point of view of traditional Africans living in their rural space. The performance method devised to inform, educate, instruct, entertain and also appropriate nature around him is very critically explored. The conclusion arrived at in this work is that traditional forms of communication, mostly creative theatre forms, are quite effective in the administration, mobilization and education of a people. As such, these forms must be encouraged, and efforts made at improving its quality and efficiency. While exogenous forms such as the radio and television are good they should not be seen as substitutes for culture or traditional forms.

Key words: Traditional media, theatre, Nigeria, semiotics, Tiv culture, Kwagh-Hir theatre, African theatre forms

Introduction:
In communication, an individual's expressed thought, feelings, ideas, yearnings, aspirations, struggles and challenges, reveal that person's way of seeing the world. Other persons may have a different perspective and see the world about them very differently. Cumulatively, when these individual views aggregate into a quantum or sum total of experiences within a defined space and population, it is said to be a people's world view. What therefore, a people see as their vision

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of the world around them, the meanings of events in this world, is regarded as their own culture. An almost endless variety of world views and cultures exist around the globe, each revealing similarities and peculiarities. As one tries to understand them, it is apparent that each culture is an interrelated system of meanings, communicating the meaning rooted in the world view of the culture.

This paper, therefore, is an attempt to look at the concept of communication as a system, how it is being practiced in traditional circles using the basic tenets of semiotics as a critical tool of analysis. It is a performance-based approach where the cultural institutions of the Tiv people are reflected or expressed through their theatre art forms - The Tiv Kwagh-hir. This study is also founded on the basic principle of the new development communication paradigm which emphasizes the “re-emergence of culture as a facilitator of development and the integration of traditional and modern systems” (Melkote and Steeves, 2004, p.252). This shift in focus according to Ugande (2008, p. 8) “puts the spotlight on indigenous channels of communication and the folk media that were once relegated to the background in the modernization paradigm”.

Folk media comprise all the traditional communication channels of a given culture. They are essentially orally transmitted, but perform exactly the same function as the technical forms of mediation such as radio and television. As traditional communication channels folk media are wide-ranging. They embrace story telling, drama, theatre, puppetry, songs and dance, festivals, poetry, proverbs, concerts, dirges, mimes, gong beating, symbols and signs, the institution of the masquerade and divination (Ugande, 2008, p. 8). In an attempt to accommodate the scope of folk media, Ugboajah (1985) in Nwosu (1990, p. 27) defines folk media as:

The products of the interplay between a traditional community’s customs and conflicts, harmony and strife, cultural convergences and divergences, culture-specific tangibles and intangibles, interpersonal relations, symbols and code and oral traditions which include mythology, oral literature (poetry, story telling, proverbs) masquerades, witchcraft, rites, rituals, music, dance, drama, costumes and similar obstructions and artifacts which encompass a people’s factual symbolic and cosmological existence from birth to death and even beyond death.
This elaborate and all-embracing definition by Ugboajah gives credence to the choice of Kwagh-hir as a popular art form in assessing the communication systems in traditional African societies. As a folk media Kwagh-Hir theatre serves the essential role of commenting on and redressing vices within the society. This is done to either curb deviant behavior or encourage and appraise deeds of honor and integrity by individual members of the community. This communicative function of Kwagh-hir is perhaps the nucleus of this discussion. Kwagh-hir thus falls under the classification—indigenous communication systems which to Ansu-Kyeremeh (2005, pp.16-17) includes: Any form of endogenous communication system, which by virtue of its origin from and integration into a specific culture, serves as a channel for message in a way and manner that require the utilization of the values, symbols, institutions and ethos of the host culture through its unique qualities and attributes.

The above definition suggests that indigenous communication systems are embedded in the life and times of a particular culture which makes it easier for such a community to understand and discern more easily communication possibilities or points of emphasis in such a communication process.

Central to this discussion is communication. Communication itself has been variously defined by a number of experts. Nevertheless, within the context of this work, it is safer to look at Brilhart (1986, p. 3), where he defines communication as “a process whereby symbols generated by people are received and responded to by people”. This implies that, communication is a communal or mutual exercise which places both the encoder and decoder of messages on the same platform of exchange of ideas where what is sent is received, interpreted and sent back through a feedback mechanism. Mutuality is thus the hub of human communication systems. Communication primarily functions to create and validate sign systems, which define social reality and regulate social action. Generally speaking, communication is divided into verbal and non-verbal forms. Verbal communication is that which uses language or oral words to convey a message. The chief code here is the language which is made possible by selecting and arranging words that create readily acceptable meanings in the minds of listeners. Non-verbal, on the other hand, implies communication via accessories. These include gestures, kinesics, mime, pantomime, costume, space, signs and symbols. It is from this non-verbal mode of communication...
that this present study is inspired to use the semiotic tool of analysis to
examine communication systems in traditional Tiv society such as the
Kwagh-hir puppet theatre.

**African Communication Systems**

An African communication system refers to all the indigenous or
traditional forms of passing or sharing information among members of
a defined settlement or group. These are forms that originate from
within a people, and have been tested over time as having a reasonable
level of success and consistency in communicating the world view,
ethos and emotions of the people. They are affordable, easy to be
identified with and have the advantage of an enduring aesthetic appeal.
They are usually orally transmitted and are couched in the original
culture of the people. Regarding the purpose for which indigenous
communication systems evolved, Ugbojah (1985c:167) believes that:

> Their most important purpose is to provide teaching and initiation, with
> the object of imparting traditional aesthetic, historical, technical, social,
> ethical and religious values. They provide a legal code of sorts which rest
> on stories and proverbs generated through the spoken word. They also
> play other roles in the village society such as mobilizing people’s aware
> ness of their own history, magnifying past events and evoking deeds of
> illustrious ancestors. Thus they tend to unite a people and give them
> cohesion by way of ideas and emotions.

This lucid conceptualization by Ugbojah no doubt advertizes the
multi-functional role of indigenous communication media thereby
making it a preferred method of communication by community
development workers. However, because these indigenous communi-
cation systems are so intricately webbed with the whole social structure
of a community, certain cultural inhibitions may prove to be a fraction
of distraction. In recognition of this fact, Parmer (1975, p.70) warned
that, as far as story telling is concerned, “Tales must be cleansed of age-
old errors of religious mysticism, superstition, unseemly incidents and
episodes of false constructions”. This is perhaps a way to make room
for certain shifts that are necessary for modern life and living. The
forgoing has been expressive of popular forms in Africa which are
capable of communicating not just values and customs, but change in
behavior and possible adoption of best practices that could engender
growth and development. Herein lies the Kwagh-Hir phenomenon that best suits this description above.

On the History of Kwagh-hir

On the question of origin and authorship it is advisable to uphold the view that, like any other traditional performance, Kwagh-hir is a deliberate creation of the mass populace of a community who come together to share experiences which, in their rich method of narration and presentation, lift it to the kind of performance tradition that we are witnessing today in development of the Kwagh-hir theatre. Hagher has attempted to establish Adikpo Songu as the originator based on misleading information he had gotten from other Kwagh-hir leaders which were perhaps craftily instigated by Songu himself, perhaps out of exaggerated self-esteem and pride. However, in his recent publication, Hagher apologetically but succinctly submits that:

*It is now with hind – sight that I realize that what I was looking for at that time was immaterial to popular art forms, especially popular theatre, where there is less emphasis on authorship... The popular theatres or theatres for the masses are not works of literature produced by the elite for their types about what they believe is the world view or should be, of the masses. Rather, it is the popular creation of the mass artists themselves in collective creativity, each contributing a part to the whole in a systematic and structured form in which the culture of the people is given expression (Hagher, 2003: 46).*

It is, however, important to mention the role of leading performers who by dint of expertise were honored and recognized as such. Among these is Adikpo Songu who, for some time since the evolution of Kwagh-hir performance from oral story telling tradition to actual dramatization, was able to retain leadership at contests. Others include Anande Chieshe, Kor Dodo, Anyam Ngura, Kende Kaase, etc. Although Hagher has identified six component art forms of Kwagh-hir from storytelling oral tradition to the dramatization or performance stage today. Kirby (1979, p. 4) opines that...

*The art of storytelling, practiced by individuals in a community, in groups, appears to be a significant indigenous performance mode throughout Africa. A most common form is that which includes*
songs, and in which the audience responds in chorus to the narrator. The content of storytelling approximates dramatic forms because it is developed as narrative. The performance is theatricalized by the use of music and songs and by the participation of the audience as an involved chorus. This presentation by the story telling requires the rendering of dialogue and presentation, by means of gesture, expression, and voice of the characters involved in the dialogue.

The traditional genre of what we see today of Kwagh-hir had its roots in the storytelling practice of the Tiv people. Several expressions in Tiv are used interchangeably, yet they reflect the central idea. Expressions such as “Kwagh-u-Alom” “Kwagh-u-Adzov,” and “Kwagh-hir” all entail the same thing. Kwagh-u-Alom literally means a “thing of the hare,” Kwagh-u-Adzov means “thing of the fairies” and Kwagh-hir means “magical or mystical thing.” Elders, in the past, gathered children in the evening to entertain and also teach them moral lessons through frightening stories of how naughty children met rough deaths as a result of disobedience. Though fictitious, these stories had the effect of educating these children to live and embrace the accepted societal norms and values. Such stories generally also served as evening relaxations after a tedious day of farm work. These story-telling sessions were and are organized at the level of village compound.

The practice of storytelling requires an exclusive and a purely creative impulse which only a few persons within the community could boast of. Such creatively exciting persons were usually the ones who could attract an audience. The audience on their part participated by joining in the chorus of the songs that occasionally accompany the narrations. Oral storytelling in Tiv land is valued very highly in the sense that “These tales give satiric comments on the relationship of men and the adzov or spirits and of matter over non matter” (Hagher 1998, p. 121).

In a gradual metamorphosis, Kwagh-u-Alom evolved from story telling within a family compound to telling within wider groupings, involving two or more compounds and even villages. To this end leading creative story tellers grew to the status of Kwagh-hir group leaders and often times led their groups to competitions against other groups. In spite of the diversity of the Kwagh-hir and Kwagh-u-Alom themes, one common feature about them is that they attack societal ills, lampoon unscrupulous personalities and, in more recent times, capture contemporary happenings around Tiv land.
Kwagh-hir in oral storytelling continued in existence until it underwent a period of transformation where emphasis shifted to the dramatization and performance of current societal and environmental happenings. At this period, masquerades and puppets started appearing during Kwagh-hir performances. Kegh ku (1990, p. 8) declared that:

Contemporary Kwagh-hir puppet theatre owes its birth to Adikpo Songu from Mbatyav clan in Gboko Local Government Area of Benue State. He first held an audience spell bound with his puppets and masquerades as recently as 1960.

The stage at which Kwagh-hir is today is very crucial and essential to the superstructure of existence of the Tiv people. Commending the Commonwealth Institute, London for bringing a Kwagh-hir group to the British stage for the first time, Harper observed that:

Kwagh-hir is one of the best performances I have seen in their theatre, an outstanding display of the masterly skills of the musical, kinetic, verbal and visual arts of the Tiv. (1984, p. 3)

To further strengthen the case for this performance, West Africa magazine, in the same issue of 7th May 1984, has a photograph of the An-or Igyura Kwagh-hir group on the front cover.

In terms of growth and development, Kwagh-hir performances witnessed a major spread around the 1960s. However, it was not until 1969 that Kwagh-hir had its first major exposure beyond the boundaries of Tiv land when it was performed in Jos under the auspices of the defunct Benue-Plateau State and subsequently featured at the “Nigeria National Festival of Arts” at Ibadan in 1971. Other major engagements of the Kwagh-hir were:

1973: Festival of 200 Traditional Dances of Benue Plateau State in Jos, (Live Presentation.)

1977: Second World Black Festival of Arts and Culture (FESTAC) in Lagos, (Live Presentation.)

What is technically referred to as “Nollywood” (the film industry) is another context or medium of the theatre practice in Nigeria. The widespread influence of the medium is simply overwhelming. Parents who hitherto could not allow their children read Theatre Arts as a course are now pushing for this program because of the array of stars
and the influence of this form of drama in most Nigerian homes. Film teaches, film mobilizes, film documents, film projects, film preserves, film processes and film does many more things in the corporate life and living of a people. This type of theatre is electronically based, which is why it appeals mostly to urban audiences. Kwagh-hir has also been recorded on video tapes and once in a while the nation’s television - Nigeria Television Authority (NTA) - plays it for the viewing pleasure of Nigerians.

On Audiences

As a general rule, Kwagh-hir audiences are heterogeneous. What this means is that literate or not, indigenous or non-indigenous, one is able to identify with Kwagh-hir displays. However, typically speaking, the Tiv rural populace, who were responsible for the emergence of this brand of theatre, constitutes the bulk of its audience. From the embryonic stage of storytelling, Kwagh-hir served as relaxation for the people. After a hectic day’s work on the farm, they retire home and in the evenings gather around a fire point with great story tellers thrilling the audience.

With its gradual metamorphosis into animations and puppet displays, its audience is no longer restricted. Kwagh-hir has now become a festival performed yearly by the Benue State Arts Council. It is also performed at special celebration days such as Children’s Day, Democracy Day, and Independence Day. At all these occasions many people of diverse origin gather to watch and appreciate its artistry. With animated displays on HIV and AIDS, football, and mechanized farming, Kwagh-hir could be said have a universal language appealing broadly to a wider spectrum of audiences.

Contemporary Kwagh-hir theatre performance, especially as it is performed in urban settings, is basically an arena theatre. From the small family story-telling setting around the fire, Kwagh-hir has metamorphosed into performance for wider groupings requiring wider spaces for its dramatization. In urban contexts, Kwagh-hir is enjoyed by the people mainly as a festival. Zonal competitions are held at the various local communities and winners from these zones are then invited to converge at the premises of the State Council for Arts and Culture in Makurdi, the capital of Benue State, where the grand finale of the contest takes place. This is usually a yearly occasion which attracts large crowds due to its spectacular displays. Apart from these yearly festivals, other major events in the State sometimes enlist the
services of this performance to help entertain, inform and educate guests at such occasions. The electronic media are another context through which this performance is beamed to urban audiences. Though not frequently, local television stations dedicate some time to airing episodes of these performances to the people. Some of these episodes are instructional, some informative and some promotional. In short, Kwagh-hir is performed for urban audiences as festivals, celebrations or as electronic media.

The cultural context of Tiv Kwagh-Hir Theatre

The Kwagh-Hir theatre is closely linked with the culture of the Tiv people. The Tiv as an ethnic group occupy the Savannah region, popularly referred to as the Middle Belt of Nigeria. According to the 1991 Census figures, the Tiv people occupy a total land mass of about 22,004 square kilometers. More than two thirds of the population that occupies Benue State today is made up of the Tiv people. Their worldview revolves round their belief in the supernatural God. He is believed to be the creator of the entire universe. Nevertheless, this belief is expressed through a series of ritual dogmas. The world of Ijov (singular) and Adzov (plural) is believed to exist side by side with the human world with a control mechanism to regulate human excesses. Adzov are spirit beings with the ability to affect positively the spiritually compliant man/as well as affect negatively the spiritually nonchalant man. As such, two types or classes of Adzov are identified among the Tiv. These are the benevolent and the malevolent. In his categorization, Hagher (2003, p. 26) describes the two groups as “the white, harmless, friendly and helpful Adzov and the red, capricious, malignant and vindictive Adzov who are most feared”. The purpose of Adzov is to act as watchdogs over the excesses of a group of human beings known as Mbatsav. This is a group of persons who by sharing their wickedness posses certain powers, usually to inflict pain and cause destruction. The Tsav phenomenon, according to Hagher (2003, p.27) is “The single most important factor that is at once religio-magical and psycho-religious as well as a philosophical and ideological representation of the Tiv people’s conception of their world is mbatsav which means possessors of tsav, or people controlled by Tsav”.

It is thus the interplay of forces between Adzov and Tsav within and around the human space that is usually re-enacted in the Kwagh-hir theatre for purposes of communicating warning, prognosis, diagnosis and pedagogy. We shall therefore attempt to examine the various levels
of communication in Kwagh-Hir theatre under the heading of semiotic levels of communication in Kwagh-Hir theatre.

**Semiotic Levels of Communication in Kwagh-Hir**

In discussing the semiotic levels of communication in Kwagh-Hir theatre, Eco’s conception of semiotics in theatre performance provides a useful guide. Eco (1990, p.115) proposes that:

*Semiotics can be conceived of either as a unified theatrical approach to the great variety of systems of signification and communication or it can be conceived as a description of those natural differences, their specific structural properties, their idiosyncrasies from verbal language sound to fashion. It shows a wide range of languages ruled by different conventions and laws.*

In order to formulate a semiotics of Kwagh-hir theatre, it will be more convenient to begin with a positively naive attitude, assuming that we do not know what the sign does in the theatre and what we see of Kwagh-hir performance as a product of creativity and an expression in the performance of ideas. This assumption will help in the sense that signs and symbols in Kwagh-hir are not a deliberate or conscious creation outside the scheme of creativity and performance, but an unconscious fusion of Tiv aesthetics in their indigenous art forms. Since Kwagh-hir theatre is one among the various arts, one in which the whole of human experience is co-involved with human beings, artifacts, music, literary expression (and therefore literature, painting, music, architecture and so on) playing at the same moment, it is pertinent to identify the specific object and starting level of a semiotics of Kwagh-hir theatre. There are a number of sign systems at work simultaneously during a Kwagh-hir performance. These include words, voice, facial mimicry, gesture, body movement, make-up, head dress, costume, accessories, design, lighting, music, etc. Each of these systems has a logic in itself but linking with other sign systems. However, since the object of Kwagh-hir semiosis is its performance, this paper shall explore the Kwagh-hir theatre from its object and themes of dramatization.

**Themes of Dramatization: A Semiotic Survey**

Kwagh-hir performance, whether of the “Nyam” “Eev” or “Ijov” mode, basically explains a story in motion or action. The type of stories
to be told the audiences are creative designs of individual leaders whose conceptions are transformed into actionable displays of carved figures representing animal puppets, spirits, masquerades and human beings respectively. Professional wood carvers are contracted to carve images of the kind of animals, puppets, spirits, masquerades, etc. that are desired by group leaders as stories are fashioned around such beings. After a careful and convincing rehearsal with these carved images, members of the village community housing the group are invited for a show.

In discussing Kwagh-hir as an art form of cultural relevance and semiotic enterprise, three major sub-themes drawn from the central theme of “cultural dramatization” can be identified and discussed to facilitate understanding of the playing aesthetics in this performance. Beyond the appreciation and valuation of the action in Kwagh-hir theatre, a cultural nexus exists between the performance and its themes of dramatization. This is why, according to Bonka Gavar in an oral interview, “An old man of spiritual, social, and cultural notoriety is named the custodian of each Kwagh-hir group.” Such a person is presumed not ordinary and can sense danger from a distance, and also protect the group from malicious attacks or gimmicks from rival groups during competitions.

With regards to the topic in question, it will be more convenient to examine Kwagh-hir under the three main themes of “reality”.

1. Cosmological and ontological reality.
2. Occupational reality.
3. Contemporary and social reality.

**Cosmological and ontological reality**

Kwagh-hir plays within this group seek to depict the values and cultural traits of the people. Here, moral lessons, chthonic (underworld) realms and indigenous configurations of the people are very concretely exposed and dramatized. For instance, spectacular puppets and masquerade displays under this group include “Ormankor” which depicts in its realm of fantasy the re-enactment of the traditional form of retributive justice. Suspects of a particular violation (criminal or moral) are made to pass through a process of sasswood ordeal. This was a means of killing men in the past and was instigated by a man who was deeply distressed over the death of one who was dear to him. Over-
come with grief, this fellow goes to consult the oracle, which usually
convicts a particular group. This group is then summoned by the elders
at an appointed date and venue. Those whose names were mentioned
as suspects, tie round their waist a piece of white cloth signifying
purity before conviction “The sasswood man takes some piece of bark
lifts it up for the elders to confirm its genuineness after which he
pounds it into a mortar six times. At the seventh he starts pounding
fast, sneezing hard the while” (East, 2003, p. 350). This he does in order
that every one may see how strong it is. The petitioner is made to take
the first oath of denial and innocence after which the suspects in turn
take the oath and drink the potion. One after the other, with individual
prayers, each undergoes the test. Every one who drinks this steps over
the sasswood fire, and his companions then lead him away. They either
fall victim to the sasswood or are vindicated. The innocent ones vomit
the poison while the guilty succumb. The dead are laid out on a
wooden platform, and left lying uncovered throughout the day. Every
passerby heaps abuses upon them.

This, of course, is what used to obtain in the traditional circle of
justice and truth in Tiv land. The reenactment, therefore, is a dramatic
presentation of the traditional vicissitudes of the people.

The Tyoor man “Mbatarev” outing is also another cultural display
under this theme of dramatization. In performance, the district head
appears with a retinue of clan heads, and, in elegant and fashionable
steps, walks round the performance area and exits on the opposite side,
depicting or signifying royal approval of the performance.

Example 1: “Tyoor man Mbatarev nav” (The clan head and his
Kindred Heads)

This short spectacle is loaded with traditional meaning and is sym-
biaic of the status and respect the community has for its leaders. For a
community audience this appearance signifies respect and homage for
the traditional rulers, and it is also a mark or sign of community ap-
proval/acceptance of the group as symbolized by its custodians. This
probably explains why each group strives to put up this particular
appearance, though with different carved representations.

Costume is also another theatrical feature used by Kwagh-hir groups
to express ontological and cosmological relations and the reality of the
Tiv people. The musical stand of the Kwagh-hir is adorned, with
young, energetic, good looking and nimble-legged ladies all dressed in
the Tiv traditional black and white cloth – in Tiv language, “anger” – and a white top. In addition, some even have headgear with green and white colors, depicting the Nigerian traditional colors.

**Example 2:** A group of young ladies in musical action during Kwagh-hir performance in traditional black and white wrapper (Anger) with a white top

‘Anger’ is a traditional cloth of the Tiv people, which depicts the dual realms of existence and cultural interaction - (Atetan man Tugh) day and night.

These young ladies are carefully selected with amiable traits of beauty and sonorous voices. This is so because, at first sight, the group of ladies is an embodiment of the totality of the people’s world of beauty and therefore a first attraction and objects of publicity. In narrative form, the songs play a very pivotal role in interpreting or telling a story of an appearance, and because the meaning, interpretation and theme of appearance is conveyed to the audience through these songs, the voices behind such songs must be pleasant and distinct enough to carry the desired message across to the audience. This research, however, seeks to highlight the role of songs in the Kwagh-hir scheme. Most times the audience is so engrossed in the spectacular display that the songs become a mere accompaniment to the performance. Care must be taken while watching a Kwagh-hir performance to read and interpret songs. In most cases the story line unfolds through songs, and if these are not present or not understood misinterpretation sets in. For instance, a skit appearance of the puppet carrying a baby at her back with a heavy pregnancy may not exactly reveal the state and status of such a puppet. The scenario could very easily pass for a pregnant woman helping her sister out with the baby while the said sister fetches some water from the stream. Perhaps, the actual storyline is that of an irresponsible nursing mother who is also pregnant. These actions are told through songs in the following words:

**Tiv:**

Nguveren aoo! Nguveren nongu kwagh:
Nguveren ngu a wan ave, Nguveren
Shi wa iyav ayange ne veoo!

**Response:**

Nguveren ao’o’, Nguveren nongu kwagh,
Nguveren ngu a wan ave, Nguveren shi
Gowon Ama Doki

Wa yaw oo
Unongu kwagh ve, shin tyo ka we!

English: Nguveren oh! Nguveren has tried! Nguveren is nursing a baby and Nguveren is also pregnant at the same time.

Response: Nguveren oh! Nguveren is nursing a baby and Nguveren is also pregnant at the same time. You’ve really tried, you are actually an excellent commercial sex worker.

This skit is basically designed to lampoon and ridicule sexually undisciplined people and to emphasize the need for family planning strategies. However, without the song, a large proportion of the intended meaning and essence of the performance is lost in admiration to the fanciful nature and character of the puppet or skit display. Essentially, therefore, plays under this theme of dramatization help to convey to the audience lessons on the cultural world view of the people as well as their respective cherished ideals.

Occupational Reality
This is another sphere of dramatization that seeks to showcase the occupational affiliation of the Tiv people. Predominantly, the Tiv people are farmers and hunters respectively. Thus, a large part of their cultural/social manifestations revolve round these spheres of interaction. As a medium of occupational expressions, skits and or plays in Kwaghhir dramatization under this theme of occupational reality seek to provide insights into the farming/hunting world of the Tiv man, thereby coming alive intelligibly with indelible marks of the people’s handwork and professional values.

The masquerade “Jov-Yangen-Ura” is one of such skits designed to facilitate commentary on the farming prowess of the Tiv man. As farmers, rainfall is the most important and cherished natural resource of the Tiv people. As the name implies, “Jov-Yangen-Ura” simply means the masquerade seeking for rain. The masquerade appears with furrowing and bulging eyes briskly looking left and right, sideways, backwards, upward and down. This masquerade usually appears at the early stage or initial stanzas of the performance, probably to ascertain
whether or not the performance is going to be disrupted by rains. At coverage of designated sight areas, the texture, rhythm and pace of the dance steps of this masquerade defines the sequence. A slow and moody retreat suggests a possible disruption by rains while, on the other hand, a wild, expressive and aggressive jerking around suggests or signifies approval for a hitch-free performance. For farmers, this climatic investigation enables the people to plan the next day’s activity even though it cuts short the level and extent to which they would have been thrilled and entertained.

Orkoon-Gari is another skit artistically created to represent the traditional mechanism of transforming cassava into gari. The cassava trunk, uprooted and the roots stripped of its covers, is brushed unto a rough pan of tin perforated by a nail to produce flour which is subsequently processed into fine gari flour. The significant import of this display is thus a show of skill and dexterity in local technology and dynamism of the Tiv man beyond mere crude farming or tilling the land. This is in line with Amankulor’s argument (1985, p. 83) that: The discipline of theatre (drama) is very vital for a fuller understanding of human life and activity in African societies, particularly in the traditional setting.

This show of professional competence and technological advancement through theatre lends credence to the nuptial relationship between man, the environment and theatre.

Example 3: Orkoon Gari puppet in action. (A puppet refining cassava into Gari flour)

The food basket symbol constructed at the Benue State capital (Makurdi) is also replicated in one of the series of skit appearances. A well-fed woman appears, carrying a basket loaded with assorted foodstuffs (yams, cassava, mango, oranges, banana, etc). She elegantly dances round brandishing the various parts of her well-endowed body to the admiration of the audience. The rounded picture and posture of this puppet attest very eloquently to the sufficient quantity and quality of food at her disposal. On the other hand, the basket load of foodstuff is a demonstration of the variety and abundance of food found within the Tiv region.

Example 4: A woman (well-fed) carries the symbol of Benue State Food Basket of the Nation with a proud husband by her side.
Several animal masquerade performances during Kwagh-hir dramatization offer a valuable inside view of the hunting expeditions of the Tiv man. The hunters’ experience in the forest with wild animals is reenacted through these animal masquerades. Some times this is accompanied with the expression of triumph of such hunters over the ferocious attack of animals. As Hagher (2003, p. 25) pointed out in the case of the Ajikoko performance.

The “Ajikoko” is a fearful animal which re-enacts with a costumed shuwa – narrator, the story of the powerful hunter who having traveled beyond the limits of human territory, comes across the “Aadzov” animals, the “Ajikoko”, a huge deer which cannot make turns but can dash forward ferociously. The combat between “Ajikoko” and the hunter is a total impasse as neither the “Aadzov-controlled Ajikoko” nor the “tsav-controlled” hunter can harm each other. This combat highlights the power of the “Aadzov” over \mbastav\ who controlled everything except the “Aadzov” who are free to do just about anything they like.

Like the Ajikoko, several other re-enactments in this category serve to express the art and craft of hunting, skill and dexterity in prowling for animals in the bush. All these are expressed through animal masquerade or puppet dramatization, song as well as careful costuming and other techniques. The main import of this episode is to project in collective terms through performance, the individual experiences of the people as regards hunting as a profession. Against the backdrop of the function hunters perform in a village, clan or the entire Tivland, the significance of hunting-related skits or dramatizations can be inferred. For instance, Makar (1994, p. 14) points out that:

Hunting generally was training in valor, a sparing ground for an informal militia quite often in the course of hunting, the people met atoatiev with whom they engaged in warfare...hunters were the border guards and spies for the whole of the Tiv land and the ityo or ugar. Hunters discovered new lands suitable for settlement and farming.

To this end group hunting, \ibem\, was often undertaken. In the view of Makar (1994, p.14) “\ibem\ promoted group feeling and identity but it had its dangers. It was prone to accidental homicide as weapons often missed animals and hit human beings. Added to
this were dangerous animals like lions, buffalos, elephants, or leopards which could be roused all at once while running after others. The result would be that they attacked the hunters indiscriminately”. How such hunters maneuver their ways through such animals constitute fascinating scenarios that are re-enacted during a Kwagh-hir performance.

Example 5. A wild animal “Yar Nyamkyume” on the prowl during a Kwagh-hir performance.

Aside from farming and hunting, weaving, an art as old as the Tiv, is also a serious professional handiwork found with the Tiv people. This also is given expression in performance through the puppet display of “Ortan mough”. Here a professional weaver (puppet) comes out on a moving platform (dagbera) to display his skill in weaving to the admiration and cheer of the audience. This also is a spectacular display of the talent, skill and creativity of the Tiv people. Apart from farming, weaving was also a major item of export in Tiv land.

The Tiv weave for export into neighbouring non-Tiv territories and for domestic use. That the Tiv exported their cloths into as far as Udam, Bafun, and Jukum territories testifies to the quality of the workmanship in weaving. The cloths were for two purposes. Tying round the waist and for covering the whole body. Quite often the weaver also spun his own thread as well. (Makar, 1994, p.16)

Example 6. Ortanmough: (A Spinner spinning fiber into wool)

From farming through hunting to weaving (puppets masquerade, and animal) performances are designed to convey to the audience the dominant reality of occupational values and affiliations, making definite statements on the ability, worth and pride of the Tiv nation.

Contemporary / Social Reality Plays

Most penetrating and making the rounds today are skits or puppet performances seeking to capture the follies of contemporary Nigeria with the view to unravelling the many mysteries surrounding many social behaviors. Emphasis here is on issues of the moment with the overriding motif of evaluating and criticizing or to some extent ridiculing certain actions deemed worthless. In the category of plays referred to as contemporary and social reality plays are those that offer valuable commentary on the social purviews of the society from which the Kwagh-hir derives its themes of dramatization. Dominant socio-
political, economic, religious and cultural phenomena constitute the major contexts out of which puppets, masquerade and animals are designed and created. Also included are plays that present aspects of modern technology that are not easily explained by Tiv technology or world-view. According to Hagher (2003: 221) who referred to such plays as domestication plays:

These technological innovations like motor cars, aeroplanes, motorcycles as well as other very natural phenomena like some wild animals, rare birds or places are problems to Tiv thought. Accordingly the presentation of these items in puppet form seems to do what vegetative rituals did to the primitive man of the hunting-gathering society. By presenting the object of curiosity the Kwagh-hir hopes to make it comprehensive and therefore perhaps more readily domesticated.

The much dreaded and deadly disease, HIV/AIDS, which has claimed many lives, rendered many orphans at tender ages and destroyed many dreams of our younger ones, has found wider publicity and expression in the Kwagh-hir theatre under contemporary and social reality plays. Little wonder, then, that each troupe, during the 2004 Kwagh-hir festival hosted by the Benue State Arts Council, paraded a puppet appearance of an AIDS patient. The signifying intention of this display is to exhibit the destructive effects of this disease and thus help in the campaign against indiscriminate/casual sex as well as encourage decent behavior aimed at avoiding the contraction of this disease. The pathetic appearance of this puppet strenuously staggering around the arena of performance thus symbolizes the extent to which the virus has eaten deep into the fabric of the victim’s once healthy body. Death stares most rudely in the face of such a patient, thereby shocking the audience to awareness that the puppet’s fate could be the lot of any member of the audience; speaking therefore in semiotic terms, the figure itself is a sign system representing the actual human victim.

**Example 7 An AIDS patient (Danzaria).**

The extent of the social complexity and national problems of the Nigerian nation bears a heavy burden on the individual who stands out at the helm of affairs steering the ship of leadership. The implication, therefore, is that the gravity of decay and social disorder is beyond the scope of a single individual either by the acronym of a head of state or president. A leader who attempts to appropriate these problems within
his limits of personal skill and manipulation will definitely collapse half way into his arsenal of manoeuvres.

**Example 8: Ijov Too tar (puppet carrying Nigeria on his head).**

This piece of creativity seeks to recreate in an abstract semiotic fashion the burdens and problems of Nigerian leaders. Nigerian leaders are mostly businessmen who rather than look at themselves as captains of industries, evolve structures and strategies that will help them perpetuate their stay in leadership and, by extension, maintain their dominance over the economic, political and social institutions. In broad terms, Fanon’s description of the national bourgeoisie in underdeveloped countries applies to the Nigerian ruling class: Fanon (1998, p.120) observes that:

> The National bourgeoisie of underdeveloped countries is not engaged in production, nor in invention, nor building nor labor; it is completely canalized into activities of the intermediary type ... the psychology of the national bourgeoisie is that of the businessman, not that of a captain of industry...seen through its eyes, its mission has nothing to do with transforming the nation; it consists, practically of being the transmission line between the nation and a capitalism which...puts on the masque of neocolonialism.

To protect these domains of wealth is highly disturbing. The majority of the people are dissatisfied, disenchanted, and disoriented in the face of such selfish and profit-driven governments, and, just as the saying goes, “the child that prevents the mother from sleeping will himself not sleep” such leaders sleep and wake with rioting intrigues on how best to suppress, subdue and subjugate the masses into permanent enclaves of ignorance – this is not an easy task at all.

A close scrutiny of the puppet will see the weight of the country (Nigeria) coming down heavily on the head of the leader, thereby shrinking the neck, forcing the knees to bend preparatory for an eventual collapse.

The concept of beauty and sexual perversity and promiscuity is given expression through the puppets - *Ashawo* and *Shaba* respectively. The *Ashawo* is constructed with well endowed buttocks, full and coiled hair, protruding boobs and snow white teeth, elegantly dancing.
around. All these are attributes of beauty in Tiv land that has found expression through the art of Kwagh-hir dramatization. The negative use, to which these natural qualities are put, is what the Shaba puppet comes out to display. The Shaba comes out beautifully dressed in her gaiety of natural endowment, she is chased around by a young man; spectacularly ugly in appearance. Nevertheless, through songs, it is revealed that the man is asking Shaba out and she is not bothered with the young man’s appearance but rather requests for soap and cream as conditions for her reply. This is thus a form of ridicule on young ladies who have turned their bodies into items of trade where money can be gotten in exchange for sex. This is one of the issues making the rounds of Tiv society today.

Example 9: Shaba puppets in performance.
Computer age children, who are supposed to be controlled via some form of remote control system thereby making it difficult for parents to monitor and train their children, who sometimes end up in tragic situations, are the concern of the “Buusa nyam” episode. A stubborn boy who neglected his father’s orders to remain indoors and went out with his friends to the forest was captured by this wild animal “Buusa”. This is re-enacted to scare children from way-ward behaviors as this could be their fate if they violate orders from their parents.

Example 10: “Buusa Nyam” in an attempt to capture the little boy during a performance
The realization that football is a great mobilizing agent with the growing fame of the Gboko team, the B.C.C Lions football club of Gboko, which took the African Soccer Trophy for keeps in the 90’s, has found great relevance and expression in Kwagh-hir dramatization. This also assumes even a far greater political significance to the Tiv people as James Ngise’s (Tiv songstar) song quoted in Hagher (2003, p. 20) attempts to compare governance to a football game, and the various executive arms compete on who will deliver the best goods (goals) to the masses. He holds the president Olusegun Obasanjo for the Tiv massacre, accusing him of bias in handling the Tiv/Jukum conflict. In the football metaphor, President Obasanjo is cast as a biased referee.
Mechanized farming, advanced technology, fuel crises, and water supply are all contemporary issues that have found wider expression in this genre of theatre performance with the display of puppets fumigating their farms, puppets driving cars, and fueling such cars at filling
stations and puppets fetching water from the bore holes respectively. Accompanied with songs, these actions either serve to encourage government to do more or urge it to do more for needy areas.

The point to emphasize here is that all kwagh-hir objects of dramatization are iconic in character, “denoting” the reality in the context of what the puppet stands to represent; thus accounting for the semiotics of this performance under these spheres of dramatization; cosmological and ontological reality, occupational reality and contemporary/social reality. A number of issues are given cultural interpretation which has helped in communicating to the outside world cherished ideals and values of the Tiv people. It has also given meaning and explanation to certain abstract happenings that bear or border on the private/corporate life or being of the Tiv people.

Conclusion

Communication in traditional African society is quite central to the administration, mobilization and education of a people. Because they so very easily identify with their own cultural institutions, most development workers like non-governmental organizations (NGOs) employ the services of such cultural institutions in passing across very sensitive messages. This, as already mentioned, has the advantage of an enduring aesthetic appeal, where the people’s sense of appreciation is arrested thus becoming much easier for mobilization.

In conclusion, therefore, this paper seeks to recommend that because of the many advantages of these forms of communication, they should be promoted and encouraged. Rather than seek to replace them with exogenous forms like the radio, television, and posters, efforts could be made at improving the quality and efficiency of these forms. This is because, elements of signification in cultural performances are numerous and continuous. The costume actors put on, the movements on stage, the extra speech sounds, and the postures all constitute systems of signification in communication. To this end, provision should be made for the office of a semiotic coordinator. He or she should be well informed of the nature, character and texture of signs and their respective functions in the society. This will enable him or her to carefully select, systematically arrange and diligently package a performance to blend harmony and give appropriate interpretation for effective communication- hence the case for indigenous communication systems.
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Books.
An assessment of information media on breast cancer in Kenya: Is print media the best way to reach women?

By Ann Nyambura Muthoni-Thuo and Ann Neville Miller

Abstract

This study employed eight focus groups with low- and middle-income rural and urban Kenyan women to assess print informational materials on breast cancer produced by the Kenya Breast Health Programme (KBHP). Responses were then compared to expectations of the material as elucidated by personnel at KBHP. Findings revealed four major areas in which KBHP expectations regarding the materials differed from responses of their target audience: (a) the accessibility of the language used in the materials; (b) the value of the visuals on the materials, especially the posters; (c) the usefulness of contact information regarding KBHP; and (d) the segment of Kenyan women for whom the materials are appropriate.

Key words: breast cancer information, breast cancer awareness, Africa, Kenya, breast cancer early detection

Introduction:

When breast cancer is detected in its early stages the result is better prognosis, more successful treatment and prolonged survival (American Cancer Society, 2009; Andersson & Ryden, 2001; World Health Organization [WHO], 2009). In much of sub-Saharan Africa, however, many women do not seek medical attention until their cancer is very advanced. This late presentation for treatment leads to higher cancer mortality rates and a heavier cancer burden on these nations (Okobia, 2003; Smith, Caleffi, Albert, Chen, Duffy, Franceschi et al., 2006; Stewart & Kliehues, 2003; Williams, Olopade, & Falkson, 2006;
What is true of sub-Saharan nations in general is also true of Kenya in particular. What little information is available about breast cancer in Kenya indicates that many Kenyan women seek care only if and when they experience pain or notice a discharge from their breasts (Nairobi Cancer Registry, 2006). This situation is undoubtedly due in part to the fact that population-wide routine breast cancer screening is currently unavailable; the number of mammography units in the national health care system is grossly inadequate (Nairobi Cancer Registry, 2006). However, clinical breast examination (CBE) by trained health personnel, and possibly breast self examination (BSE), in which women examine their own breasts monthly for changes, can be useful for early detection of cancer if women seek medical advice about any abnormalities they find (American Cancer Society, 2009; Mitchell, Matthews, & Myne, 2005; Pearlman, Clark, Rakowski, & Ehrich, 1999; WHO, 2009). Unfortunately, although various researchers have explored women’s attitudes toward breast cancer in other African nations (Odusanya, 2001; Okobia, 2003; Oluwatosin, 2006; Oluwatosin & Oladepo, 2006) virtually no published research is available on this topic in Kenya. The little evidence that does exist suggests that most women are unaware of the signs and symptoms of the disease or of early detection measures (Kenya Breast Health Programme, 2003; Nairobi Cancer Registry, 2006).

Scholars in other contexts (Viswanath, 2005) have emphasized the importance of information along the cancer continuum, from prevention information that enables women to become aware of links between their behaviors and risk factors for cancer; to information about screening services; and finally to information during diagnosis, treatment, and post-treatment phases. Women who are knowledgeable about breast cancer and its risk factors have been found to be more likely to comply with early detection behaviors than those who are not (Bhakta, Donnelly & Mayberry, 1995; Champion & Menon, 1997; Pearlman, et al., 1999).

The need for accurate cancer information is clear, but breast cancer has received little emphasis in the overall health communication environment in Kenya. Women’s health issues like family planning, HIV/AIDS, malaria prevention, nutrition and child health have garnered much attention in the media, but non-communicable or lifestyle diseases such as cancer, diabetes, and heart diseases have been notably absent from discussion. Only one local organization, the Kenya Breast
Health Program (KBHP), is actively involved in promoting public awareness of breast cancer. KBHP activities attain a high profile during the month of October when the organization holds the “pink ribbon campaign.” Ongoing mass media educational efforts during the rest of the year are mostly limited to print communication materials about breast cancer, that is, brochures and posters in English that are distributed primarily in urban centers around the country.

Unfortunately, the KBHP print materials were not pretested and little is known about whether they are conveying to the target audience the messages that the creators of them intend. Bernhardt and Cameron (2003) have urged that health communicators should strive to understand their target audience’s health literacy characteristics, needs, and barriers before they develop interventions. Furthermore, comprehension can be greatly increased when materials are developed and pretested for use with members of their intended audiences (Atkin & Freimuth, 1989; Healthlink, 2003). Of particular concern is whether the messages in the materials are culturally relevant and whether the target audience has a sufficient level of health literacy to access, understand and apply the information contained in them (Vahabi, 2007; Zarcadoolas, Pleasant, & Greer, 2006). With an estimated 2.8 million Kenyan women non-literate (Republic of Kenya & UNESCO, 2004), and an unknown but undoubtedly larger number only marginally health literate, or not literate in English, the materials may be inappropriate for large segments of the population.

The purpose of this study, therefore, was to explore perceptions of the materials by low- and middle-income rural and urban Kenyan women and to compare their responses to expectations of the materials as articulated by personnel at KBHP.

Methods

We used two data collection techniques. First, we conducted in-depth interviews with the executive director and communication officer at KBHP to gain insight into the perspective of the organization on the strengths and weaknesses of the materials as well as the process by which materials were developed. Second, we held focus group discussions with rural and urban women to elicit their response to print breast cancer materials (Williams, Abbott & Taylor, 1997). By accessing opinions of both groups we are able to make statements about how close a match existed between target audience perceptions and creator/disseminator expectations of the materials.
This study was part of a larger research effort investigating rural and urban Kenyan women’s knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors with respect to breast cancer and early detection practices. Only the evaluation of print materials appears in this report. Ethical clearance for the study was provided by the Postgraduate Department of Daystar University and the Kenya Ministry of Education, Science & Technology.

In-Depth Interviews
The in-depth interviews of KBHP officials lasted for one hour each and were held on two different occasions within the premises of KBHP. The interviews were audio recorded with permission. Questions in the interview with the KBHP director focused on issues related to the strategic direction of the organization, engagement with government and other partners, challenges besetting its activities, and future plans. Questions for the communication officer centered on how the organization developed its communication materials, the extent of involvement of the target audience in materials creation, previous feedback on and evaluation of the materials, and particulars of the dissemination process. Both interviews were conducted in English.

Focus Groups
Focus groups have been used in the evaluation of print health information materials (e.g. Fortin, Hirota, Bond, O’Connor, & Col, 2001; Witte, Cameron, Lapinski, & Nzyuko, 1998) and in evaluation and design of breast cancer screening and support interventions (Kahn, Fox, Krause-Kelly, Berdine, & Cadzow, 2006; Phillips, 2009; Sheppard, Figueiredo, Canar, Goodman, Caicedo, et al., 2008; Williams, Abbott, & Taylor, 1997). They are considered to be especially appropriate to developing culturally informed understanding of issues from the point of view of the target group (Casey & Kreuger, 2000; Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). In African settings where research is frequently constrained by limited budgets, focus groups can be an especially useful means of exploring attitudes toward communication. Even sensitive sexual issues associated with HIV have been effectively explored via focus group discussion by a number of African researchers (e.g. Lugalla, Emmelin, Mutembei, Sima, Sweisigabo, et al., 2004; Nabaitu, Bachengana, & Seelye, 1994: Nyanzi, Pool, & Kinsman, 2000).

We chose to hold focus groups with both rural and urban women because the enormous barriers faced by rural residents in obtaining adequate health information (Musoke, 2007; Mutua-Kombo, 2001;
Ngimwa, Ocholla, & Ojiambo, 1997) make it likely that baseline knowledge of cancer and therefore participant interpretation of KBHP materials by the two groups will differ. Rural participants were drawn from two locations that were selected because they are populated by two of the largest Kenyan ethnic groups (Kikuyu and Kamba), and because in the first author’s capacity as an information officer repackaging health information for rural residents, she already had a degree of entre into both communities.

Urban participants were drawn from two residential areas in Nairobi: a middle-income residential area, and an informal, low-income settlement (slum). We sampled both low- and middle-income urban dwellers because while rural areas are frequently associated with hardship and ill health, health care in urban areas is equally plagued by socio-economic restrictions, and by some counts the health of women in the slums is worse than that of their rural counterparts (Africa Population and Health Research Center, 2002). Finally, for each of the resulting four sub-populations, interviews with two focus group differentiated on the basis of age were conducted, with members of younger groups ranging in age from 20 to 35 years, and of older groups ranging from 36 to 60. We segregated groups by age because these groups were likely to differ in terms of media exposure, and studies in other contexts have demonstrated that women differ in perception of risk for breast cancer by age (Bjorvatn, et al., 2007; Karliner, et al., 2007). Each group had six to seven participants. Discussants were identified with the assistance of community leaders.

Discussions were held in churches, clinics, and women’s group offices. The first author assumed the role of moderator in six of the focus groups, that is, those held in the English, Swahili, and Kikuyu languages. For the two groups that were conducted in the Kamba language, a local women’s trainer facilitated the discussions. A research assistant with training in electronic media assisted with audio and video recording all groups. Each discussion lasted about one hour. At the beginning of the discussion the moderator reminded participants of the purpose of the research, assured them of confidentiality, and obtained permission to audio and video record the discussions. Informed consent was obtained orally. All participants agreed to be both audio- and video-recorded. Moderators handed out all KBHP print breast cancer materials at the same time—a total of four posters, one brochure, and two booklets—and allowed about 10 minutes for participants to study them. Participants used the time to look through the materials and
discuss any interesting features and content among themselves. Mod-
erators then led participants through a set of questions about each
piece inquiring into the visual appeal of the piece, participant under-
standing of the language, and aspects of the content that were most
and least helpful. Finally, participants were asked to make suggestions
on improving content and use of the print materials.

Data Preparation and Analysis

Audio-tapes of interviews and focus group discussions were tran-
scribed in full and those that were conducted in other languages were
translated into English. At least two people worked independently on
each tape and consulted afterward to ensure accuracy. In the case of the
focus group interviews, gaps in audio-recordings were filled in by
referring to the video footage. Huberman and Miles’ (1994) five-step
process of reading, coding, displaying, reducing, and interpreting was
used to process the data. QSR Nvivo 2 qualitative data analysis software
was used to assist in data management.

Results

In-depth Interviews with KBHP Officials

Founded in 1999 under the auspices of Young Women Christian
Association (YWCA) and later registered as an NGO in 2003, KBHP
remains the only organization in the country whose primary focus is on
breast cancer awareness. Broadly, interviewees explained that activities
of the organization take place mainly in the capital city of Nairobi and
include breast cancer awareness talks in schools, churches, slums,
women groups, and workplaces, as well as occasional appearances in
the Kenyan media. Presentations typically feature general information
on breast cancer and breast self-examination as well as testimonials by
breast cancer survivors. A group of survivors called the “reach to
recovery group” has been recruited and trained to do outreach to
breast cancer patients and to counsel their families. Since 2003, in
partnership with hospitals that have mammography units in major
Kenyan cities, KBHP has also conducted screenings for breast cancer
during breast cancer awareness month in October.

The bulk of materials dissemination is conducted during the Octo-
ber screening activities, when materials are given out in clinics, schools,
and other places. According to both interviewees, the BSE brochure,
posters, and breast health guide (see descriptions below) are aimed at
either informing the general public about breast cancer and BSE. The
KBHP booklets are geared toward helping breast cancer survivors cope with life after diagnosis and include information on treatment, diet, relationships, and exercises. When possible, interviews said, materials on BSE are distributed in conjunction with face-to-face sensitization sessions. According to the director, rather than subscribing to the prevailing notion that civil society groups should only work with the poor, KHBP chose to create awareness to people of all socio-economic statuses. Materials are therefore not tailored to specific audience segments. Dissemination of the materials is challenging, especially in the rural areas, because doctors and nurses, who are the key volunteer personnel, are busy and often do not manage to distribute materials provided to them.

Print information materials were developed in two ways: first, some were adapted from materials collected from international breast cancer conferences in Europe and the United States. Second, certain pieces were developed in-house through consultation with the board of management of the organization, which is mainly composed of oncologists. When asked if target audience members were involved in the development of materials, the communication officer replied that because audience members did not know much about breast cancer, KBHP had relied entirely on the input of the experts on their board. Materials were printed in bulk, and the organization appeared to have a large stock of many pieces. “The posters were done in 2005,” the communications officer stated, “and there are thousands of them and they will last us a very long time.”

She stated that overall strengths of the materials included the fact that visuals were photographs of Kenyan breast cancer survivors and volunteers rather than stock images, the information was presented in a simple way that was understandable to most people, the posters were highly visual, and contact information on KBHP was included so that it would be easy for readers to make further enquiries if they wanted to.

When queried, the communication officer stated that the organization had not seen the need for evaluation of the print materials. Questioned regarding informal feedback the organization might have received on the materials, she stated that although no feedback had been received on the content of the materials per se, positive feedback had come in regarding the layout of a BSE brochure and a breast health guide booklet. Women seem to like the easy-to-understand graphics explaining self-examination procedures, and the illustrations of mammography helped remove the myth that the screening involves “a
machine that crushes people’s breast.” Some suggestions had also come in that more visuals to be included on some of the other, more text-heavy, materials. KBHP receives regular requests to have print materials translated from English to Swahili and other Kenyan languages, but they have not yet managed to do so.

Finally, interviewees were questioned as to major challenges that KBHP faces in its awareness activities. The director mentioned three major concerns: (a) most people equate the breast cancer with death; it is difficult for them to comprehend the message that cancer detected early is curable. Because of the enormous fear this engenders, no one wants to discuss breast cancer, not even survivors of the disease. (b) Although KBHP does receive limited funding from a local private sector corporation and two international foundations, the government has evidenced only minimal commitment to addressing breast cancer. In comparison with other diseases like Malaria and HIV/AIDS, budgetary support for breast cancer efforts has been meager at best. In the 2006/2007 national budget, she reported, only two million shillings (about US $30,000) was allocated to cervical cancer and none to breast cancer. (c) The lack of statistics on the extent of the cancer disease burden in the country makes it hard for the organization to adequately lobby for funding. She pointed out that the single cancer registry located in Nairobi only gathers data on the immediate environs of the capital city and is not sufficient for the whole country.

Focus Groups
Focus group discussants were asked to respond to each piece of print material individually and then to discuss overall strengths and weaknesses. Data are presented below in that order.

Poster 1
This poster was titled “Anyone Can Get Breast Cancer: Get a Clinical Breast Exam Today.” It depicted the faces of six people: one elderly woman, three young women, and two men. The main message on the poster recommended the age at which one should carry out BSE, clinical breast exams, and mammography.

Women described the use of images featuring multiple generations of women and men on this poster as relevant and appealing. Many of the participants reported that the message in the poster confirmed to them that breast cancer could affect anyone. Other women said that the poster gave useful information about what age one was required to
go for breast cancer checks. “On this one, I first asked myself, ‘Do men and young people too get breast cancer?’” one respondent said. “This makes you more curious to know more. I didn’t have this kind of information before. For men we know they are more affected by cancer of the throat.”

**Poster 2**

This poster depicted a young lady lying down with a thoughtful look on her face. The message declared, “She could be a wife... a friend... a mother... a sister or a daughter... but first she is a WOMAN! And she needs you as much as you need her.” The smaller print message on the poster indicated that breast cancer is curable if detected early.

Response to this poster was mixed. Some older rural women said that the use of a beautiful woman delivered a message of hope. A few older middle-income urban women expressed appreciation for the “she may be your sister your daughter” phrase, which they said communicated that fact that all women were vulnerable to breast cancer. One older rural woman noted that the photograph of a beautiful woman reassured the audience that breast cancer was curable and people could survive and be as beautiful as they were before. Some young urban low-income women, however, found this picture confusing. A few of them pointed out that the photo would be misleading for those who didn’t understand English. In fact, people wouldn’t even know the poster was about breast cancer. “The lady on this other poster, you would think she is just sleeping. If you didn’t know how to read you wouldn’t get the message,” was a typical comment. One young urban middle-income woman said the model looked sorrowful, and that made one conclude that she was depressed as a result of breast cancer.

**Poster 3**

Poster three depicted the face of an attractive young woman smiling back at the camera. It read “Breast cancer: Early detection can save your life.” Young rural women questioned the choice of a beautiful young woman for the visual and said that it was difficult to interpret the message. Several older urban low-income women pointed out that the woman on this poster looked perfectly healthy; they were not convinced that she was ill. Some older rural women complained that “If these posters are put up, [people] will be confused. Others like the young boys might tear it off and have them as pin-ups on their walls.”
Low-income urban women suggested that pictures of breasts should be used instead, and some specified that cancerous breasts should be pictured to show observers what the disease looks like.

**Poster 4**

This poster was titled “Breast cancer: Be on the look-out” and featured a large image of a human eye. A sub-heading read, “The physical signs and symptoms of breast cancer,” and underneath five symptoms were listed. This poster also elicited mixed reactions. Young urban low-income women felt the image of an eye was misleading because it was not clearly connected to breast cancer. One woman said that unless one was able to read the message underneath, one would be think the poster was about eye care. Some older urban middle-income women suggested that displaying breasts in a culturally appropriate manner would enhance the poster, but one young woman said that life-sized eye was impressive and raised curiosity. For some women the list of symptoms was helpful. For example, one older urban middle-income woman expressed surprise because she had not known that a change in shape and size of the nipple was a sign of breast cancer.

**Brochure**

This was a 3-panel, black and white brochure entitled “Breast self-exam (BSE): A personal plan of action”. The cover presented faces of four young women. The inside of the brochure described the purpose and procedure of performing BSE in textual and pictorial format. It also contained brief information on signs and symptoms of breast cancer and guidelines on other early detection strategies. This brochure was praised by women in all groups because of the graphics in the instructions. Young rural women said that having a picture accompany each step made it easy to follow the instructions. Women also affirmed the importance of the topic. “These ones are better,” a young urban low-income woman declared, “because they show the procedure of self-testing.”

**Booklet 1**

This was a 12-page booklet with a photograph of flowers on the cover entitled “Breast cancer and you: coping with a diagnosis.” The booklet gave guidelines on how to cope with physical, emotional and social issues surrounding a diagnosis of breast cancer. Within some groups, especially the older urban middle-income women, it was felt
that this booklet was loaded with too much information and would require a considerable amount of time to get through. Some older rural women who were literate stated that the booklet was too technical because it used hard English terms such as *retraction of the nipple* and *lymphoedema*. Furthermore, they asserted that the type font with which the booklet was written in the booklet was illegible.

**Booklet 2**

A second 12-page booklet also featured a photograph of flowers on the cover and was entitled “Your guide to breast health care.” The booklet contained information about breast cancer risk factors, BSE procedure, signs and symptoms of breast cancer, and guidelines for other early detection strategies including a pictorial of the mammography procedure. The booklet also incorporated testimonials from local breast cancer survivors. Most women reported that there was not much difference in terms of content from what they had previously seen in the posters except for additional information on mammography. Some older rural women said that the flowers on the cover of this booklet and the previous ones were not as appealing as the human faces on the posters. However, they stated that those who were able to read what was in this booklet would be able to teach others, especially where posters were not available.

**Response to the Use of Print Media**

In general, women were comfortable with the idea of receiving information through posters and brochures, but stated that print materials needed to be supplemented with other media. Urban middle-income women suggested the use of vernacular FM radio station programming or cell phone text messaging. Rural women expressed concern that mass media might be of limited use, however, and insisted that face-to-face contact was what was needed. As one rural woman asserted, “The question is how many rural people own radios or are literate to read newspapers? So we need to find ways of reaching those that do not have the ability to access information from the media.” Other rural women mentioned the value of small women’s micro-savings groups, or “merry-go-rounds,” which were an important place for women to share knowledge with one another. One rural woman explained, “During these merry-go-rounds we visit one another’s house
and see what others are doing to keep their homes well—women teach one another through these experiences.”

Some older rural women recommended that breast cancer posters be displayed and informational talks be provided in churches because that is where most rural women gathered. Young urban middle-income women suggested KBHP should hold more breast awareness campaigns in the year, and not limit them only to October, and during these events materials should be distributed widely.

Suggested Improvements to Print Materials

Although participants stated that the materials provided them with some new information and raised awareness, some said that causes and risk factors of breast cancer were not sufficiently addressed. Women from urban low-income and rural areas also stated that the materials did not address their need to know where to seek help. Although contact information for KBHP in Nairobi was provided, the organization was geographically out of their reach and none except a few middle-income urban women had ever heard of it. Participants reiterated that some of the materials were loaded with too much information and used hard English terms. Older rural women expressed a need to see more familiar faces, for example of local village women, on breast cancer posters to enhance their credibility.

The consensus among all groups was that the materials should have been written either in Swahili or vernacular languages rather than English. Rural groups and urban lower-income groups asserted that most women in their areas understood Swahili better than English, and materials written in Swahili would be easier to use in educating others. Older rural women said they would prefer materials written in their vernacular language. Middle-income urban women were comfortable with materials in English, but thought that rural women would have difficulty reading materials in that language. Older urban middle-income women said that one of the booklets was too wordy for women, especially in the rural areas, who could not read.

Discussion

Our findings reveal four major areas in which KBHP expectations regarding their print information materials on breast cancer differ from responses of their target audience: (a) the accessibility of the language used on the materials; (b) the value of the visuals on the materials,
especially the posters; (c) the usefulness of contact information regarding KBHP; and (d) the segment of Kenyan women for whom the materials are appropriate. We address these issues in turn below and close with general recommendations for African health communication researchers on this and related topics.

KBHP officials stated that they had received requests to translate the materials into Swahili but had not managed to do so. The responses of our participants indicate that language is perhaps a more serious issue than KBHP has assumed it to be. The majority of the women in our focus groups, particularly rural women and low-income urban women, found at least some of the materials confusing, and said they would prefer having them in Swahili rather than English. Some older rural women said they would prefer the materials to be written in their vernacular language. Furthermore, although the communications office cited the simplicity of the materials as one of their strengths, even middle-income urban women—the most highly educated among our participants—complained that some of the pieces were loaded with too much information and used difficult terms.

The language difficulties participants had with the pieces were compounded by problems with some of the visuals. Although KBHP officials were aware that text-heavy brochures were not getting positive feedback from their audience, they assumed that posters, which were primarily visual, were more effective. Our respondents gave a strong positive affirmation to only one poster, the poster with photographs of six different people. Visuals on the other posters did not communicate anything about cancer to most participants. Although some older urban women said that the use of young models was appealing and could give people hope that cancer was treatable, rural women, both young and old, thought posters with faces of beautiful women overpowered the message about breast cancer. They wondered if these lovely photographs might end out being repurposed as decorations in people's homes. Response to the giant eye poster was even more negative; many participants said it would be interpreted as having something to do with eye infections.

When asked what visuals they would like to see on the print pieces, women mentioned familiar looking faces, or culturally sensitive visuals of breasts. KBHP officials appear to be aware of this type of desire and have used only photographs of cancer survivors and volunteers on their materials. None of our participants, however, picked up on this tactic. The visuals that elicited positive responses from our discussants
were the graphics that illustrated the steps of BSE, which was also one of the pieces that KBHP had also received the most positive feedback on. It is noteworthy that in this case the visuals were clearly tied to the subject of the piece.

Although participants noticed the contact information for KBHP on the posters, most said the information was not helpful to them. They did indeed want guidance on where to get more information about breast cancer, but they needed a more local, accessible place to turn to. Once again KBHP seems to have identified a legitimate target audience need, but their attempt at meeting that need was not as effective as could be wished.

Finally, KBHP has not to date differentiated its messages to any particular audience segment. This is understandable given the extreme financial constraints under which the organization operates, and our findings highlight the desperate need for additional funding for breast cancer awareness in Kenya. Nevertheless it is important to recognize that contrary to the stated intentions of KBHP personnel that their current print materials should be relevant to a large range of women in Kenyan society, only middle-income urban women had the literacy level and fluency in English to fully benefit from the materials. Given that the materials are in English and primarily disseminated in urban areas, KBHP may well be on the right track for reaching that particular audience segment. Furthermore, among our participants urban middle-income women were much more aware of print media efforts in general than were women in other groups. Whereas rural women asserted that face-to-face communication strategies such as meetings in churches or women’s merry-go-round groups were likely to be more effective ways to disseminate information about breast cancer and breast cancer detection—and such strategies have been used effectively in other places (Suarez, Nichols, Pulley, Brady, & McAlister, 1993)—middle-income urban women suggested supplementing existing print materials with messages on vernacular FM stations. With a stock of print materials that they believe will last for years, the best move for KBHP may be to focus use of those posters and brochures to reach middle-income women in the cities.

The flip side of the good news regarding KBHP’s perhaps unintentional segmenting of middle-class urban women is that findings from other research (Muthoni-Thuo, 2008) indicate that this is group who have the most accurate knowledge of breast cancer among Kenyan
women already, and are therefore in least need of breast cancer informational materials. In other words, for rural and urban low-income Kenyan women, the situation with respect to access to breast cancer information as actually worse than it appears, because what little breast cancer information is available within the Kenyan environment is not accessible to them. As is the case with virtually every health issue, rural Kenyan women face enormous barriers to obtaining adequate health information (Musoke, 2007; Mutua-Kombo, 2001; Ngimwa, Ocholla, & Ojiambo, 1997). As a result their breast health, like their general health (CBS, 2004), is likely to be poorer than that of their urban middle-class counterparts and their cancer mortality rate higher (American Cancer Society, 2009; Andersson & Ryden, 2001). KBHP cannot realistically take up the challenge to create and implement a strategy based on the differing informational needs of these women absent additional funding from the government or local or international organizations.

Several limitations of this study should be mentioned. First, study participants were purposively sampled; thus results may not be generalizable. Nationwide quantitative research is needed to extend findings to the larger Kenyan population. Furthermore, this study only examined print materials used throughout the year by KBHP. A full picture of current breast cancer awareness communication in the country must examine the activities of breast cancer awareness month in October. Future research should prioritize such an examination. Finally, we did not interview breast cancer survivors in this study. Their response to the booklet targeting persons already diagnosed with cancer might well have been different.

In conclusion, results of our study also imply a challenge for African researchers in the field of health communication. Despite the evident importance of women’s health seeking potential, studies on access to health information by African and by extension Kenyan women (both rural and urban), are sparse and those available are inclined towards non-health information. On the other hand health information—understanding of diseases, causes of diseases, means by which illnesses are contracted, and methods of treating illness at home—has been found in other African contexts to be the most prevalent information need expressed by nearly one-third of respondents (Musoke, 2007). Communication researchers need to prioritize research in health information needs of African women.
Our findings also highlight the concern of various health communication scholars (e.g., Atkin & Freimuth, 1989; Healthlink, 2003) that when health communication proceeds in the absence of a strong research foundation its effectiveness may be limited. Although it entails additional initial costs, formative research is useful in identifying target audience knowledge, attitudes, priorities, preferences, and abilities. In the case of the KBHP materials, lack of pretesting resulted in a mismatch between the expectations of the organization and the perceptions of many target audience members. Our observation is that many small community-based and faith-based health-related organizations find themselves in a position similar to that of KBHP—they have neither the human nor financial resources to conduct thorough formative or summative research with the result that problems with their communicative strategies may continue unrecognized for years. Such organizations often welcome the offers of communication students at the masters or doctoral levels, or of faculty in communication programs, to assist in assessing their communicative efforts. Involvement of African scholars of various educational levels in that type of applied health communication research can make a measurable difference in the lives of African women and men in rural and urban low-income areas.

Footnotes

1 The Kenya Cancer Association (KENCASA), of which KBHP is a member, was started as a forum for medical doctors interested in cancer issues. It does not have an awareness agenda.

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Ph.D. in Mass Communication

Objectives of this 18 - 36 months, 36 credit-hour “taught doctorate” (evening classes) include:

- Developing a strong command of mass communication theory and familiarity with theoretical traditions in Africa.
- Capacity building for research and consultancy, media industry and other universities and institutions of higher learning.
- Developing capacity for original theoretical and policy-oriented research and scholarly publication.

Available facilities

1. Five areas of specialisation, namely:
   - Communication for socio-economic development;
   - Journalism and communication ethics;
   - International communication;
   - Media management, planning and public policy; and,
   - Public relations, advertising and marketing.
2. Specialized library facilities of more 10,000 volumes in the area of communications, access to research journals, and documentation in a modern library.
3. Cooperative arrangements for periods of study and research in universities in Europe and the United States on arrangement.
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The next intake is October 2010.

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