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9. ABSTRACT
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Approaches, guidelines, strategies and policy recommendations for planners in communications development are outlined in this volume, one of three in the series. It points out that planning integrated communication components is necessary for rural development projects to be effective, and that the single greatest problem in the past has been the lack of active participation by local people. At the same time, it proposes that the most effective approach is local, flexible, action-oriented, and participatory, based on an understanding of local people and their behavior. The creation of strategies and approaches to implementation of communication projects must consider the compromise between the need for quick results and the time needed for preparation; the flexible planning of communications; the participation of local people; the use of feedback; and a consideration of the potential of innovative uses of communication media. Recommendations include: training rural people as both national and regional specialists; and developing regional information and communication centers and national health centers.

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Communication with the Rural Poor

AN ACTION APPROACH

Volume II

H. E. Sagasti Perrett

1975

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This report is the product of a study with the primary purpose of analyzing the effectiveness of communication technology and methodology in promoting and supporting rural development in less developed countries.

It is one in a series of studies and activities supported by the Office of Education and Human Resources, Bureau for Technical Assistance, which respond to current objectives of AID to focus its development programs on the most needy people and countries.

In the course of the study, 123 people of international agencies and university communities were interviewed, the theoretical and research contributions of several social sciences reviewed, hundreds of reports of development projects studied, and a number of projects in less developed countries personally visited.

COMMUNICATION WITH THE RURAL POOR
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

COMMUNICATION WITH THE RURAL POOR
A KNOWLEDGE BASE

VOLUME I

COMMUNICATION WITH THE RURAL POOR
AN ACTION APPROACH

VOLUME II

COMMUNICATION WITH THE RURAL POOR

The final report of the study is presented in three separate but closely related volumes.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This volume is prepared for those who want a quick overview. It is divided into the following sections:

- I The Study
- II Summary of the Findings
- III Basic Conclusions
- IV Strategies and Approaches
- V Policy Recommendations

VOLUME I: A KNOWLEDGE BASE

Volume I establishes a knowledge base for effective use of communication methodology and technology for development action. The emphasis is on the contribution of the social sciences. The knowledge base is tested against some of the key concerns of planners.

The volume is divided into seven sections, each section corresponding to one specific planning problem.

VOLUME II: AN ACTION APPROACH

Volume II is future action oriented. It develops approaches, guidelines, strategies and makes policy recommendations for planners and policy-makers in development communications.

It is divided into the following sections:

- Introduction
- I Planning Effective Development
- II An Analytic Approach to Practices
- III Recommendations and Basic Conclusions

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Introduction

The purpose and methodology of the study have been discussed in the counterpart volume to this one, Communication with the Rural Poor: A Knowledge Base, and will not be repeated here.

The present volume is a compliment to Volume I, in that it grew out of a review of social science theory and research on one hand and rural development experience on the other. But it goes beyond a review of the state of our knowledge, to propose action.

The orienting questions of Volume II are:

- How can development communications help rural development programs benefit the poor?
- What do we know about the way that change occurs in people's practices that can serve as a basis for development planning.
- What kinds of actions on the part of external assistance agencies would enable them to make a worthwhile contribution to the field?
 - What might be the most promising and appropriate kinds of approaches, strategies, and projects to support in developing countries?
 - What might be the most promising and appropriate kinds of research activities to support in developed countries like the United States?

The report is divided into the present introductory section and three substantive sections. All sections are closely interrelated, and directed to the question of how one can plan development communications activities as an integral part of rural development efforts, to support and accelerate beneficial change among the poorer

populations of developing countries.

Section I looks at communications planning in the rural development context. The emphasis is on explicit consideration of the rural poor. This necessitates a change in the way communication or education activities are planned to help them better serve the needs of the underprivileged sectors.

The dominant past tendencies in uses of communications methodologies and technologies in rural development are dealt with briefly. It is argued that such uses have not been fully effective in either reaching or affecting the rural poor of less developed countries.

The major part of the section deals with ways to improve the effectiveness of development communications. Special attention is given to the role of communications media in supporting the various functions of development communications.

Section II suggests an analytic approach for understanding, predicting, and facilitating change in human practices which could be used by rural development planners and appropriate in its language to professionals from many disciplines. It stresses the importance of recognition of the various degrees of ease or difficulty in changing different practices, or the same practices under different conditions.

Section III draws conclusions, outlines procedures and strategies, and recommends actions for external assistance agencies, both at home and abroad, which would best channel their resources to benefit the majority of the poor of less developed countries.

SECTION I

Planning Effective Development Communications

Without adequate and effective communication, economic and social development will inevitably be retarded, and may be counter productive. With adequate and effective communication, the pathways to change can be easier and shorter.

Wilbur Schramm

There is still a certain amount of controversy about the value of supportive education, information or motivation activities in socio-economic development. There are those that argue that returns on investment in such activities is uncertain, that it is a very indirect path to development, and that a good idea (or a good technology) will sell itself. At the other extreme, there are those that insist that planned education, information and motivation activities, sometimes administratively classified under the label of "development communications" or simply "communications," "educational technology" or "non-formal education," are important, and in most cases, necessary. To quote Wilbur Schramm, one of the leading thinkers in the latter orientation:

Without adequate and effective communication, economic and social development will inevitably be retarded, and may be counter productive. With adequate and effective communication, the pathways to change can be easier and shorter.¹

The present publication and the present section hold to this view.

The underlying arguments for the planning of communications activities where there is interest in integrating the poor of the world into social and economic development are:

- Development communications planning can set in motion information, education and motivation processes to facilitate the achievement of rural development objectives.
- Where rural development seeks to improve the situation of the poorer sectors of the population planned development communications are particularly important to insure that such populations have equal access to benefits from which they might otherwise be cut off because of factors such as ignorance, lack of motivation, lack of participative capability, and so on.

¹ Wilbur Schramm, Mass Media and National Development, Paris: Stanford University and UNESCO, 1964.

- In the past planned efforts of development communications have often fallen short of effectiveness with the poorer rural people, and especially poorer rural women. It is therefore necessary to re-examine our position and search for ways to make development communications more effective in the future.

Perhaps it is necessary to operationally define what is meant by development communications before discussing it. In the present publication, it denotes the integrally planned use of a wide range of communication resources and methods to support development program planning and implementation. The resources it mobilizes are not only technical communication tools like radio, television, film, audio-visuals, videotape, and so on, but also organizations such as cooperatives, clubs, community development agencies, and public and private institutions, as well as the people who educate and influence each other at any level of the development program.

The methodology of development communications is allied to such fields as sociology, psychology, and anthropology, which have lead the way in the study of man and his behavior in the social and cultural context. All these fields have contributed to our understanding of how the ability to receive and transmit meaning or "communicate" is fundamental to what man thinks, does and is, that is, to his very existence. Thus development communications emphasizes the human element in development, and generally brings a more social orientation to development planning and practice.

In such development planning and practice, development communications becomes a support element or accelerator which helps development program planning and implementation proceed smoothly and achieve its objectives. Above all it performs a very important function for development that the best technology cannot do alone -- it involves people in the process.

4

Perhaps an obvious question should be faced before proceeding further: what is the relationship between development communications and education? Development communications is allied to education, but it is broader and more flexible. Many of its activities can be referred to as "non-formal education." But in the sense it is used in the present volume it includes formal and informal education systems and any other information systems as well. Thus it is a broader concept. Again, whereas non-formal education usually deals with information flows from those who are assumed to have the knowledge to those who are assumed not to have it, the development communications approach suggested here does not make superior knowledge as a prerequisite for the right and the need to communicate.

Above all, development communications is more directly development action focused, than non-formal education often is. Whereas the objective of education is knowledge, the primary objective of development communications is action.

What then is good development communications planning and how can we get it? That is, in terms of the orientation of the present study, how can we ensure that the communication component of development programs and projects will help promote and maintain desired changes in specific practices of the rural poor, whether the subject involved be agriculture, health, nutrition, population or any other?

In this section the focus is on how communications planning to support development (usually not referred to under the label of "development communications") has been approached in the past, the effectiveness

or ineffectiveness of such approaches, and on how it might be possible to promote better use of development communications in the future. The argument is for a more participative and action-oriented approach which does not limit its function to transmission of information, but involves such activities as identification of needs, promotion of integration, of cooperation, and so on.

1. The Status and Effectiveness of Development Communications

The emphasis in the section is prescriptive. It is nevertheless important to take a brief look at the underlying reasons, key characteristics and barriers to effectiveness of past uses of development communications.

1.1 Main characteristics of the past approaches to development communications.

There is of course no single past approach to the use of communications technology and methodology in the interest of development. However, it is possible to attempt to generalize about what have been the main considerations involved in its conceptualization, and the existing key characteristics of the practice of communications in development. The resultant oversimplification of a very complex situation should nevertheless increase our understanding of what we have been, and are doing, in this area.

In its formative stages, the purposive use of communications methodology and technology to promote development, and in particular, rural development, seems to have responded to the following considerations:

- A realization of the enormous and widespread nature of development problems which call for quick and massive solutions.
- A focus on the wide reach and potential for penetrability of the larger technical communication tools (especially radio and to a lesser extent television).
- A view of rural development closely allied to adoption of technical innovations.
- A belief in the explanatory and manipulative power and role of technologically mediated communications.
- A belief in the receptivity and manipulability of traditional rural peoples.

Several critics see the result of the above considerations to be an approach to development communications which has been characterized by:

- A practice of development communications as predominantly information transmission either by personal or technical means, from those outside specialists who are assumed to possess it to those rural peoples who are assumed to not possess it.
- An emphasis on developing technical communications resources to include both equipment and physical facilities (e.g. for radio, TV, audio-visual production).
- The training of communications specialists to use such resources.
- An approach to rural people as an essentially passive "target" of development programs and development communications, with an unlimited capacity for both information and change.
- A focus on the role of communications as broadly educational and only indirectly related to action, with frequent emphasis on introduction of knowledge and attitudes and values of the "modernizing" Western type which are assumed to lay the groundwork for social and economic change.
- A definition of the role of the development communication specialist as essentially a technician, expert in the use of certain mechanical communication instruments to transmit messages to "target audiences."

In recent years there have been certain promising modifications or offshoots of this above sketched approach in development communications.

Among the most important emphases of these are the following:²

- A greater emphasis on making communication planning a more integral part of programs and projects in different sectors and closely and directly supportive of specific objectives in the sectors.
- An emphasis on closer coordination between the communication planning and certain infrastructural factors (e.g. in agriculture among those considered as most important have been: credit, prices, markets, transport, inputs like improved seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, and storage facilities.)
- An emphasis on using communications to promote the building of transformation of institutions and organizations at the local level to increase the local people's power and ability to take a more active and self-reliant role in the development process.

1.2 The effectiveness of past approaches

As a basis for proposing a more effective approach and strategy to the planning of communications activities in rural development.

It is important to appraise past approaches in their effectiveness.

In terms of reference of the present study, communications are effective if they help promote the positive change of specific agricultural, health, nutrition, population or other needed practices among the rural poor.

How effective has the traditional approach to development

² The reader interested in more detailed and comprehensive information on such past approaches is referred to the below publication: Philip H. Coombs, Attacking Rural Poverty: How Non-Formal Education Works, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974

communications been in reaching and affecting poorer sectors of the population? It is now fairly commonly acknowledged that its effectiveness has been limited. Often these people have neither been reached nor benefited by rural development programs, including those with communication components. One reason of course is that rural development planning has worked under certain false assumptions.

Many programs have not been directed toward this poorer sector under the assumption that benefits would "trickle down" to them -- an assumption now increasingly questioned. The small increases in national agricultural production that have taken place in the last few decades in less developed countries can, on the whole, be attributed to a small number of commercial farmers. While health education, and other services have been expanded, they cannot keep pace with the growing need. It is often the most geographically isolated and the most traditional peoples, who are also usually the poorest, who are not benefited, either because of underservice in their area, or because of their underutilization of existing services.

The new emphasis among assistance organizations and some developing countries on more equitable sharing of benefits and directly "reaching the rural poor," while commendable on both humanistic and economic grounds, needs a more explicit consideration of the special population to be reached and benefited, and certain resultant re-orientation in rural development planning, including planning of the communication component.

Another major limitation in development communication effec-

tiveness has been the fact that it has not been adequately integrated with development programs of sectors such as agriculture, health, industry and so on. The reasons are many. The human orientation that development communications calls for has often been undervalued by economic planners and specialists in subject areas, who are not used to thinking in such terms. Thus development communication planning has often simply not been included, or included too late to do much good.

Still another reason for ineffectiveness has been the limitations existing among communication specialists themselves who have sometimes maintained an ivory-tower aloofness and not accepted a service role. At other times the emphasis has been too much on equipment and gadgets as solutions, and on limited views of what development communications is and what it can do.

In sum, many communications programs in developing countries have:

- Often failed to reach the rural poor, and especially the poor rural women.
- Often failed to be understood by them or be relevant to them when they have reached them.
- Overtaxed their informational capacities.
- Have more frequently achieved changes in knowledge and attitudes than in practices.
- Often failed to achieve appropriate maintenance of the changes in practices that they have achieved.
- Have even achieved incorrect and counterproductive changes in practices.

Thus the time has come for a second look at development communications, what it is, and what it can do to help accelerate rural

development efforts among the world's underprivileged. How can development communications help integrate the poor of both sexes into the development process, as both actors and beneficiaries?

2. Main Considerations in Increasing the Effectiveness of Development Communications

How do we make development communications more effective?

In the present case we are speaking of effectiveness with a particular population -- the rural poor of less developed countries. It is argued here that development strategies, and the communication component of such strategies have usually in the past not been specifically designed for such people. If development communications is to be more effective, explicit consideration must be given certain relevant characteristics and needs of the people. Only then will strategies be effective.

There are of course innumerable differences between the rural poor of different less developed countries which must not be forgotten: differences in degrees of poverty, socio-cultural and situational-ecological types of differences. However, there are also certain commonalities in terms of their traditionally dependent and powerless situation within the social structure, and resultant ways of adjusting to their situation, which provide a basis for action. In other words, there are certain specific sociological, psychological and ecological aspects of living in a state of extreme poverty which provide a basis for planning how to reach and benefit such populations.

It is suggested that the most significant characteristics of the rural poor, as defined in terms of their ability and willingness to

participate in development, can be considered to be related to the fact that traditionally they have been:

- inarticulate
- dependent
- socially and economically isolated from power

These characteristics are generally exaggerated among the women even more than the men.

It is possible to define certain generally applicable criteria for effective use of communications in development projects which respond to these characteristics. The ones discussed in the following pages are:

- The stimulation of continuous dialogue between relevant groups.
- A multi-purpose planning of communications to support action.
- Alternative uses of communication media to enhance and support.

2.1 The Maintenance of Continuous Dialogue Between Relevant Groups

Continuous back-and-forth flow of information is essential to effective implementation of development programs. Development communications can support this, through considering not only top-down flow of technical information, but also other useful roles it can perform. Transmission of technical information still exists, but emphasis is on more equal information exchange between planners and local people on the assumption that even the poorest uneducated rural villager has the need and ability to provide useful information.

The different major flows of information in a development project that should be considered in planning are:

- o Between the rural people and the development project staff.
- o Between different members of rural families, groups, organizations, institutions in a community.
- o Between different communities or regions.
- o Between the rural people and regional or national level decision-makers.
- o Between different development activities.
- o Between the different staff members of one development : project or program.

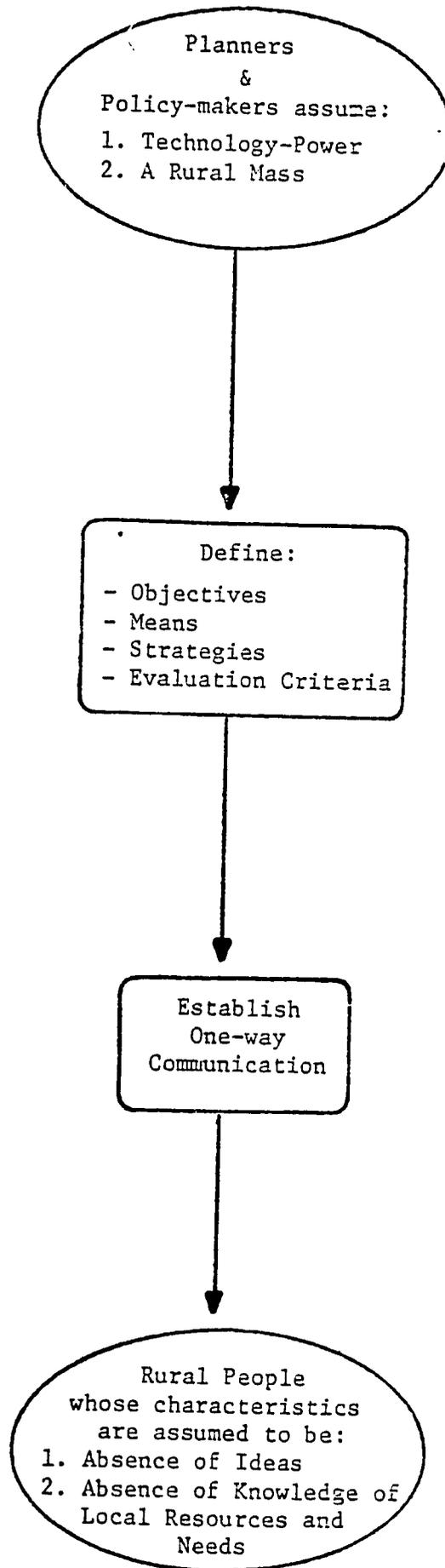
Dialogue means two-way communication. What is needed is two-way communication at all levels, but especially between those who have the urgent needs and those who have the interest and means to alleviate many of those needs. That is, between the rural poor and the planners and implementers of rural development.

The focus is on dialogue at all stages of the project, that is, at the planning, implementation and evaluation stages.

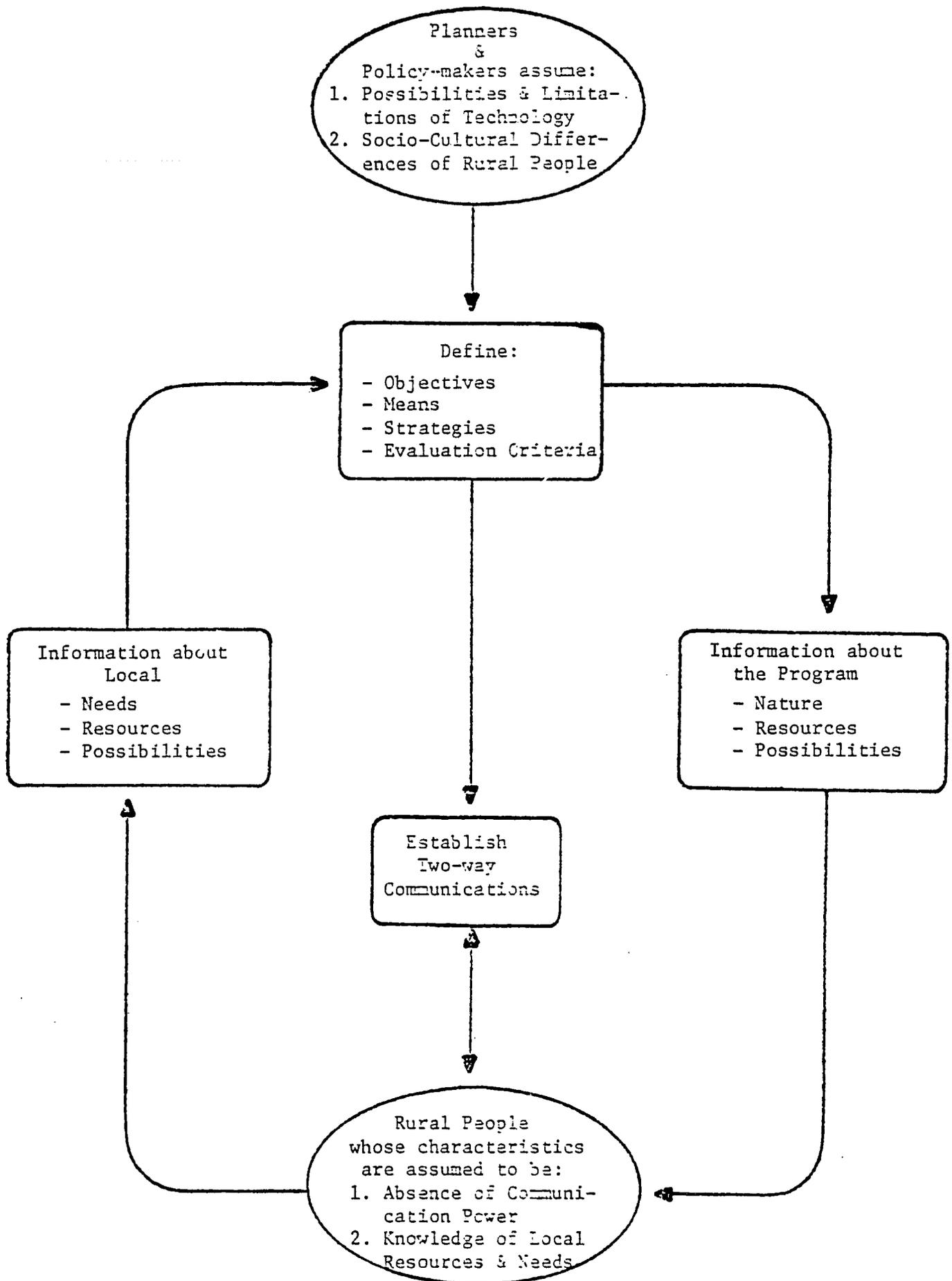
Such dialogue should ensure:

- o two-way motivation
- o two-way exchange of information
- o two-way learning

TRADITIONAL APPROACH TO DEVELOPMENT COMMUNICATIONS



DIALOGUE APPROACH TO DEVELOPMENT COMMUNICATIONS



Motivation: Both the rural poor and the development staff may need to be motivated to perform certain actions at different stages of the project. The rural poor may need to be motivated to cooperate, to participate, to engage in certain activities, especially when there is a lack of compatibility between program objectives and what people want. The development staff may need to be motivated to do something about the rural people's perceived needs, to consider the solutions proposed by the rural people, to make certain services available, and so on.

Information: There also needs to be two-way exchange of certain kinds of information. For example, it is vital to the success of a project that project staff be informed about beliefs, ideas, values and practices of the rural people and the relevant interlinkages of these with other beliefs, ideas, values and practices. They also need to know about certain technologies or products existing at the local level. The rural people are often most able to provide this kind of information. The development staff also needs to disseminate certain facts, perhaps about availability of services and products from outside, methods of access to these, technical information about methods of use, and so on.

Learning: Finally, there needs to be two-way learning in the entire development process for it to be effective -- not just learning on the part of the rural people. The villager may learn certain facts and skills in order to improve his

opportunities and abilities. The specialists from outside may learn about local resources, how the local people live, think, operate, cope with resource and service limitations, and the socially, culturally and ecologically determined reasons for their current practices.

Rural People/
Development Staff:

Dialogue, or two-way conceptualization of development communications then implies two important communication processes on the part of both the rural people and the development staff: "listening" and "talking."

Inadequate listening to what the rural people have attempted to communicate to development planners and staff has probably been the single most important cause of the failure of past development communications. We have tried to substitute research for listening but our scientific instruments have not been adequate to fill the gap. They have rarely been able to provide the complex causes of problem related practices. To listen to what the people have to say implies acknowledging the rationality and humanity of the so-called "target-population," It would humanize development and makes it democratic in the true sense of the word.

Actual "listening" also implies that we can not present completely ready-made project objectives. To ensure effectiveness some flexibility should be left, to the extent possible under existing administrative and political con-

ditions, for consideration of local information and concepts and ideas.

The best solution and the one most likely to succeed is not the one coming from the top or the one arrived at only at the local level, but the solution defined through a process of dialogue. The best form of avoiding failures is through maintenance of dialogue throughout the project. Being realistic, we know that this may often be impossible in the full sense. However, development projects should try to approximate this as far as possible if they want to be effective.

Intra-Community:

Emphasis is also on dialogue between members of families groups, organizations and institutions at the local level.

Here we are talking about dialogue between those who share certain kinds of needs, values, cultural heritage, behavior patterns and so on. The communication flow is horizontal. Its purpose is to establish a basis for, and to undertake decision-making about needs, solutions, actions, and evaluate effectiveness of actions taken.

The importance of the family and the group and of group discussion and decision-making has been touched on so frequently from different angles in Volume I that discussion will not be expanded here.

Inter-Community:

Dialogue between different communities or regions

serves the basic purpose for: 1) pooling or exchange of resources for action, and 2) provision of models of action which would help multiply beneficial changes. In the former case, communication promotes cooperation, in the latter it promotes spread effects.

Rural People/
Planners:

Dialogue between rural people and regional or national

level decision-makers serves the purpose of making needs known.

It is sometimes necessary to establish such a direct flow of communications in order to by-pass censorship at intermediate levels which might occur to protect personal interests. But the flow is not one-way. It is also often vital for motivation of local people, and for their confidence in those seen as responsible for introducing change into their lives, that decision-makers communicate directly to them the reasons for actions which involve them.

Different Develop-
ment Activities:

Dialogue between different development activities helps

to promote integration in rural development and avoid contradictions, (such as an agricultural project telling people to invest in high yield varieties, while a nutrition program tells them that the highest priority should be given to diversification into areas such as green vegetables, and fruits). It also helps prevent an information overload and repetition, and may provide useful areas for collaboration and cutting costs.

Project Staff

Members:

Lack of dialogue between members of development staffs has often been found to cause ineffectiveness at the local level. This has been especially well documented in the literature with respect to local level health teams. Some projects have overcome such difficulties by setting up regular meetings between different members of the project staff to promote interchange of information and views in order to present a unified front and promote effective coordination of efforts.

Thus both "horizontal" and "vertical" two-way flows of information are necessary, to provide increased feasibility of changes, local participation in change, multiplication of changes, and a generally higher quality and rate of maintenance of change.

But it must be recognized that reliance on dialogue might also mean being willing to settle for a more local definition of action and a slower rate of development. In other words, it requires a compromise between the desired speed of planners and the slow change rate of traditional rural peoples, that is, a medium-rate approach to change.

2.2 A Multi-purpose Planning of Communications to Support Action

As noted above, to date our conceptualization of communications in development has been a fairly restricted one, not in terms of the "size" of its role, but in terms of the varied dimensions of its role.

To enhance its effectiveness with the rural poor it is necessary to expand our understanding of the potential of communications, and move toward a model of its use which would not be simply a replication

of its predominantly purposive and consumption-oriented operation in some developed countries. It should be a model specifically designed and suitable to the reality of the rural areas of less developed countries, and to rural development projects.

The role of communications proposed here is that of supporting various specific project activities and actions by various groups of people, to make the entire process smooth and effective. Communications becomes a facilitator for needed action at all levels.

The main functions of development communications can be summarized and briefly discussed under the headings of:

1. Training Functions
2. Publicizing Functions
3. Motivation Functions
4. Diffusion of Technical Information Functions
5. Documentation Functions
6. Integration Functions

• Training Functions

The use of the term "training" here is reference not only to the training of field staff, but of village leaders, members of certain groups or organizations in the village, or most of the community. Areas include communication (possibly including production and use of media), participation (in the development action), organization (for action in development), and training in subject areas such as agriculture, population, health, housing and others.

Different kinds of skills become needed with different kinds of activities. With a change in conditions, re-training or upgrading of skills often becomes necessary. This can be very expensive and logistically difficult when large numbers of people are involved. Innovative alternatives to in-service training and/or support, based on use of communications media can often be useful here. Thus in developing countries, it is not only important to think of training, but re-training.

There will be no general discussion of training here, except to note the importance of recognizing the potential of rural peoples and focusing more resources on training lower level village workers, (see Section III). Again, it is important to at least note a couple of points which have been indicated by review of development experiences. It is important that training of village people: a) take place close to their home environment, if not in it; b) utilize the kinds of ideas, materials, techniques, and so on likely to be available in their home environment.

The below lists some critical planning questions in training of local workers which is probably the area of most universal concern.³

- What kinds of skills are required and by whom?
- How and where are such skills going to be acquired by them?
- What materials and physical facilities are going to be needed for such training, and where will these come from?
- What will all this cost?

³ Acknowledgement is made here of the help of UNDP Development Support Communication Service personnel and publications, especially those of Paul Boyd, John Woods, and Erskine Childers.

- When trained and ready to participate in the program, who will co-ordinate and supervise and evaluate their work?
- How will feedback on performance be ensured to potentially modify performance?
- What kinds of incentives can be used for appropriate job-effective behavior?
- How strictly defined should the information be which is given to these local level workers, and how much flexibility can they have within their directives?
- How will any material aids required either in the training program or later for use by the local level workers be prepared, designed and produced, and by whom, and how much will this cost?
- How can interpersonal communication by the local level workers be co-ordinated with any supportive mass media messages?

- Publicizing Functions

"Publicizing" or making available certain news or facts about services, products, activities, achievements, and of the entire development project, is basic to the success of many project activities. The kinds of publicizing activities which might be handled by development communications are:

- Preparation of the local people for the arrival of a project.
- Informing people of availability of certain services, and products.
- Announcing existence of other major communication activities such as training programs, mass media communications, meetings, and so on.
- Publicizing success of certain activities undertaken by individuals, groups, communities, to motivate others to action and socially reward such actions.
- Publicizing needs of groups of communities so that those who have the means to do something about such needs, can be aware of them.

It is important to realize that communication, planned or not, takes place from the very first moment any member of a development project or of a project in the planning stages, enters a village. If this is not consciously considered as a communication activity and planned in advance, it may mean a project fails before it begins.

Before the actual field activity begins it is therefore vital to prepare the people who will be either directly or indirectly affected by the project's activities and whose approval or disapproval might be essential for success or failure. This may be done through informal meetings or formal meetings with village leaders, through some kind of general organized village meeting, and so on. It may or may not include various kinds of communication aids or mass media uses (such as radio broadcasts).

The importance of appropriate definition and implementation of this initial contact with the local areas can not be overemphasized. The old saying of "first impressions count" applies only too often. The name of the project, what it promises and does not promise, who is contacted first in the village, are all very significant issues. If such questions are not dealt with in initial contacts often negative rumours begin. The power of such rumours and their potentially threatening impact has often been perceived too late in development projects.

The first point has been dwelt on because it is so often neglected in practice. The others are more self-evident and/or are dealt with in more detail in other sections of the reports.

- Motivation Functions

Unfortunately development projects rarely respond to everyone's interests. Thus certain motivational activities may have to be undertaken by the project at various stages in order to convince relevant groups or individuals to become involved in certain actions. Such motivational activities are:

- Motivating government decision makers or other power groups whose co-operation is necessary to the success of the project, to supply certain administrative, legislative, financial, institutional or moral support -- or at a minimum, maintain neutrality.
- Motivating other groups involved in development activities in the same area to co-operate in an integrated coherent approach to development so that no confusing or mutually contradictory communications result.
- Motivating field staff to undertake project activities in the most effective manner (e.g., respecting certain values, belief, existing practices of the people, making use of certain media aids, avoiding status conflicts, and so on).
- Motivating local level leaders or decision makers in the relevant areas to co-operate in development actions.
- Motivating the local people who will be affected to collaborate in decision making, in certain actions and/or make certain specific changes in habits or practices.

- Diffusion of Technical Information Functions

This point is obvious and will not be dwelt on. It is in the area of diffusion of technical information that most rural development programs, and especially agricultural development programs, have usually focused the bulk of their communication activities. A great deal has been written on the subject.

It is impossible to list all questions relevant to the diffusion

of technical information. The below focuses on some that have been indicated to be the most important to note in the diffusion of technical information to the rural poor. The list makes no pretense to being comprehensive:

- What kinds of information is needed by the people in order to make decisions, and to translate decisions into actions?
- What kinds of information are necessary for the people to be able to evaluate the success or failure of their efforts?
- Which of these kinds of information are not presently available to the people who need it?
- What is the informational capacity of the people for new kinds of technical information?
- How can such information best be formulated in terms of their particular socio-cultural reality, including language and existing ideas, values and behavior patterns, and in terms of their educational level.
- Which of the needed kinds of technical changes and associated information is likely to be incompatible with other information in the environment, and what can be done about it?
- What are the already existing beliefs, values, and practices at the local level which will help understand and apply the technical information?
- What are the concepts likely to be central in messages and what are the relevant terms currently in use in the area which are likely to be understood by the rural people?
- Should the information acknowledge and perhaps try to counteract any contradictory or threatening messages in the environment which are not able to be administratively controlled?
- How much knowledge of underlying scientific processes in certain areas of technical knowledge is necessary for the rural people and at what stages, and in what forms, should this knowledge be supplied?
- How can we ensure continuing interest in technical information on the part of those who need the information?
- Which different kinds of information is best carried by which particular channel?
- Which order of sender-channel-message-receiver inputs is indicated by the order of the project goals and strategy?

- What should be the timing of informational inputs to co-ordinate with other project inputs?
- How can we allow for necessary feedback about both the performance of the implementing system and the impact of the information at the rural people level?
- How can we ensure the necessary project flexibility to allow for any needed modifications in technical information in response to feedback?

Because of the great variation in rural areas these questions cannot be answered for all projects or clusters or projects in a general way. No single "cookbook" will fit all situations. Ideally, they should be answered as close to the local level as possible.

● Documentation Functions

There are certain activities which can be performed by the communications component of a project which can compliment or occasionally substitute for survey research. Such activities are directed towards providing information about intended beneficiaries to the planners, both at the early planning stages, during implementation, and occasionally at conclusion of project activities.

Some possible activities that can be performed with the help of media such as video tape, film and so on, are:

- The establishment of needs of the people in the project area, the priority order of such needs, and the significance of these for project objectives.
- The identification of different kinds of available resources in the project area.
- The identification of significant values, beliefs, behavior patterns that exist in the project area and the interlinkages of these.
- The identification of local leaders and other key decision makers in terms of the project objectives.

- The study of local perceptive styles and idiom relevant to development communications.
- The provision of feedback mechanisms on the effectiveness of different program activities, or components.

Uses of development communications for documentation purposes in developing countries is relatively new but there have been instances where they have performed an important role in effective planning and implementation of rural development projects.

Such uses of communications may be especially useful at early planning stages.

Ideally national plans are based on the shared needs of the people, and as they move from national to regional and local levels, the specific actions on which projects are to be based will become more and more narrowly defined in agreement with actual local conditions. However, most of the data available to decision-makers is based on socio-economic surveys, and while these provide several kinds of information, they rarely tell why people need certain things or why they do certain things. They do not provide decision-makers with a real and vivid perception of the populations they are planning for as human beings.

A more direct input from local levels to regional or national decision makers in the form of films, slides cassette recordings, and so on, would help appreciation of the human element and the real needs of this human element. It would also avoid the frequent censorship that goes on at intermediate levels.

- Integration Functions

The integration function that development communications can perform is one of the most important for many reasons, but it can only be dealt with briefly here. Integrated rural development requires cooperative effort on the part of several different kinds of institutions, individuals and activities to be effective. It also calls for involvement of the kinds of people who have usually had little part in performing development tasks or reaping the benefits of development. Finally, among that special group, the rural poor, it calls for the integration of an even less involved group -- rural women, and their more explicit consideration in development efforts.

How can development communications support these kinds of efforts that everyone is talking of today -- but finding difficult to put into practice? Some examples are listed:

- It can encourage general understanding and mutual support of various development agencies, services, and activities at all levels.
- It can promote a sharing of resources between different development areas and institutions.
- It can help to provide coordinated direction of diverse activities towards a common goal.
- It can support a more comprehensive and equitable approach at the local level through supporting low-cost re-training and operational support of field staff.
- It can create an informational environment which will help to change public attitudes and subsequently, public actions towards certain groups.
- It can provide previously uninvolved groups with the ability and incentive to take a more active role in development.

To a great extent, the integration functions of development communications have been the least exploited in the past. As there is more and more talk of integration and difficulty in carrying it out, it will probably become one of the most significant in the future.

2.3 Supportive Uses of Technical Communications Media

The present discussion of technical communication media use in development will be a necessarily abbreviated and directed one. It will: 1) touch on the predominant traditional use of communication media; 2) discuss the role of communication media as a project support element; 3) suggest some innovative uses of communication media which would contribute to rural development communications in various ways.

- The traditional approach to the use of technical communication media for development purposes

If we view it in the most general terms, it is clear that the use of technical communication media for development purposes has been influenced by some of the biases earlier discussed (see p.6 -p.7) which have been present in development communications as a whole. Predominant has been the perceived massive nature of problems and the focus on massive and quick solutions. Communication media have become channels for the information-as-transmission model of development communications, for which they have been seen as particularly appropriate because of the large audience they can reach so quickly with centrally transmitted messages.

The technical media or channels have captured considerable attention in development communications. It is the nature of

the technical channel or channels to be used that has often come to be decided first by planners. Often all other considerations are influenced by this. The audience characteristics have retained only secondary importance. In spite of the fashionable use of research to lay the groundwork for projects, we have only moved from a view of the rural audience as a faceless mass, to a view of it as a mass with certain basic demographic characteristics, and an all-important condition of poverty. We have still considered it amenable to a technified mass approach. Often important social, cultural and psychological differences have been forgotten.

At the risk of oversimplification, but to make a point, we can say that technical communication media use in development has been associated with development communications which has been predominantly uni-directionally directed to the rural people, technically oriented, massive and channel focused.

Some common biases have been:

- The big program bias which holds that especially telecommunications programs should be national in scope.
- The gadget bias which equates success with the nature of the technical instrument used, often focusing on new, sophisticated, or big and visible technology.
- The elitist bias which views communication media as information transmission instruments rather than communication instruments with two-way flow of information, feelings, ideas.
- The expert bias which associates success with big names and outside expertise in general, rather than an understanding of the situation and good planning of the total process.

- The cultural bias which tends to impose the values of the specialists rather than adapt to those of the audience.
- The quantity bias which feels that "more is better" and forgets that people may have limited information capacities.
- The knowledge bias which tends to equate knowledge, attitudes and practices, wrongly assuming that this is always the logical sequence with one necessarily following from the other.
- The scientific bias which places the emphasis on the scientific reasons for change rather than seeking to arouse people's emotions.
- The quality bias which equates acceptability with quality of form and content and does not allow amateurs including rural villagers, to play a part.

Part of this emphasis has been influenced by key communications decisions having been made by specialists in communication hardware instead of by social scientists who are oriented toward human elements as well as technical aspects of communications processes.

The faith in use of the "big media" in big programs has been somewhat modified in recent years by:

- A focus on increasing local sensitivity in mass media use
- The linking of interpersonal and mass communications for enhancing effectiveness of both.
- The focus on combinations of different media channels, and 'smaller' media with 'bigger' media.
- The use and promotion of low cost media (simple-audio visual media, which can be produced with a minimum of skills) and intermediate technologies (the adaptation of more sophisticated models to traditional environments).
- A focus on the use, revitalization, and adaptation to development goals, of traditional and folk media (puppets, folk forms, mobile theatre, games, etc.)

However, while such promising emphases are going on, we are only beginning to get away from our channel focus and transmission

mentality in the use of such new channels or combinations of channels. Planners are still searching for a "media cookbook" which would supply the recipe of communication media use in any particular development situation, on the assumption that the key decision is the media selection decision, rather than the planning of a total process.

Such a cookbook does not exist, and on the basis of our present knowledge, cannot exist. There is no one answer which will satisfy all development realities. There are too many possible combinations of media, message, senders, receivers and contexts.

In the end we have to realize that while certain kinds of media will be more suitable to certain kinds of audiences (based on criteria such as familiarity, perception styles, etc.) and some media are more suitable to certain kinds of information (e.g., if the way a cow walks is important to knowing it has a certain disease, a medium using visual-motion such as film will be more suitable than slides) almost any medium can be used in any situation, if it is used effectively.

- Communication media use to support rural development communications

Technically mediated communication can be used to support and enhance rural development communications at various levels, including those which are directed towards the rural poor. In other words, they can become the channels for various kinds of communication activities.

Many of the activities and questions earlier discussed,

apply also to the use of either modern or traditional media. It is probably appropriate to list a few extra questions which apply specifically to the choice of and use of communication media in rural development projects:

- If certain modern or traditional media are to play any role in the communications, are the systems in place, and do the right villagers (i.e. the poorer ones) have access to them?
- If the above does not apply, how can such systems and/or access be provided and how much will it cost and who should underwrite the cost?
- What are the rural people's perceptive styles, and especially visual perceptive styles, which might influence their understanding of any media messages?
- What particular medium is best for what kind of messages, audiences, senders, and reception situations?
- Should the access of the people to the communication media and especially any mass media be organized in the form of some kind of forum or listening or viewing group, and if so, how should this be done and by whom and where? How should such organization be evaluated for effectiveness?
- Who will design and produce the communication messages for these media and who will evaluate their effectiveness?
- How and with whom can one pre-test the effectiveness of media that might be used?

Development experiences to date, and especially projects which have been directed towards reaching the rural poor, have indicated the promise of the more local media and of the traditional and folk media. These kinds of media are also more amenable to two-way communications than media like television, radio, the press, and so on. However, with careful planning the mass media can also play a more sensitive two-way role.

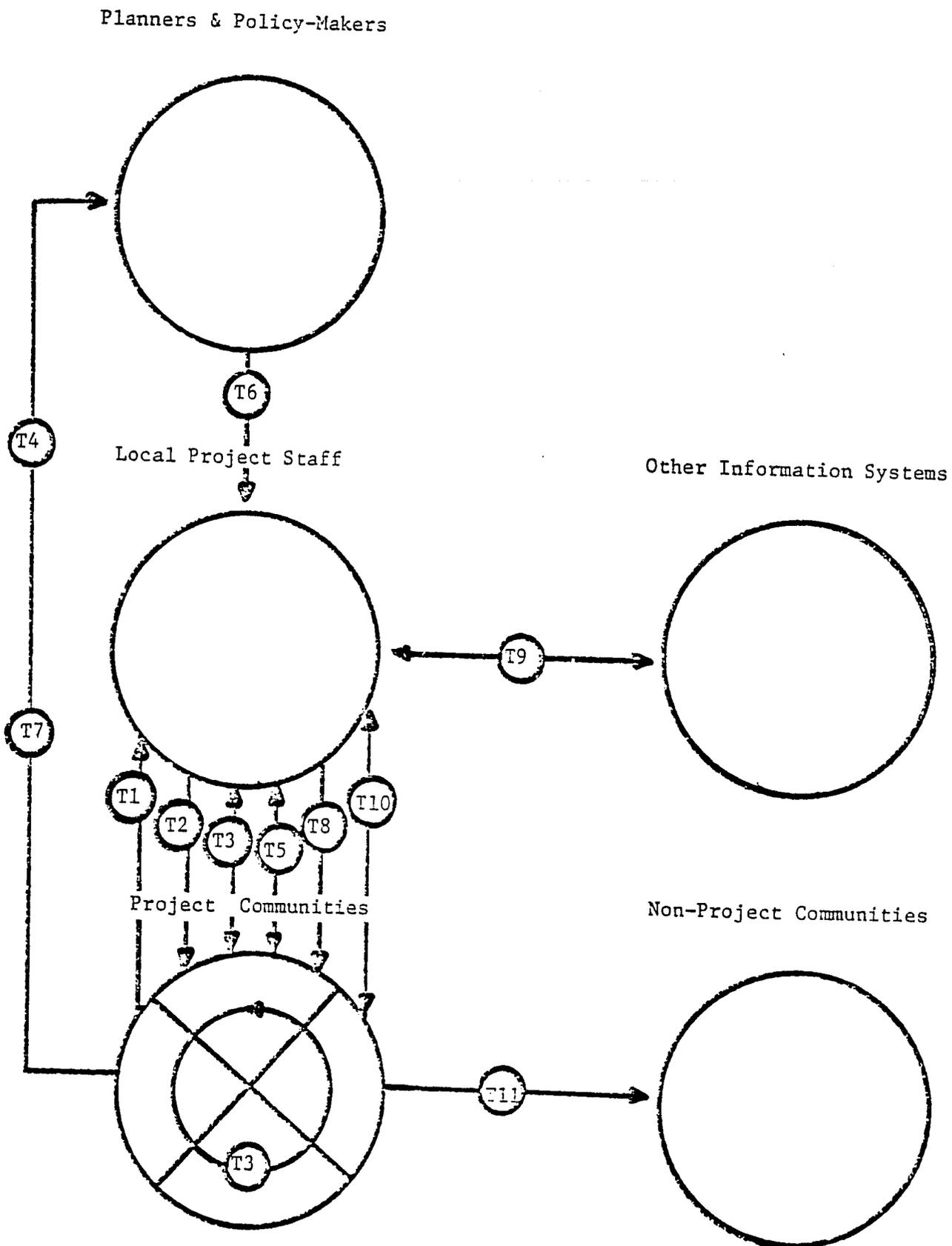
- Innovative uses of technical communication media

As mentioned in the above, in most development communication planning and implementation the focus in communication media use has been on "top-down" flow of information, frequently meaning technical information. But there are also other innovative and alternative uses of communication media to those which have traditionally occupied development decision-makers. These alternative uses of communication media can potentially support a wide range of development communications activities as developed above (see pp.21-30) at several different levels and among different groups involved in rural development.

Some little exploited uses of modern communication media are suggested for consideration by planners:

- (1) Use of communication media to analyze the local situation at the pre-planning stage.
- (2) Use of communication media to create initial interest in a program or project or issue and promote discussion of it.
- (3) Use of communication media to assist in definition of common needs and solutions among local people and between local people and project staff.
- (4) Use of communication media to publicize the needs of rural people to those who can do something about them.
- (5) Use of communication media to promote general up-and-down flow of information during a project's operation.
- (6) Use of communication media to motivate staff and increase or supplement their knowledge.
- (7) Use of communication media to provide rural people with increased communication power.

INNOVATIVE USES OF COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY*



* T1-T10 = Communication Technology Uses Proposed (pp. 36-45)
→ = Predominant Direction of Information Flow

- (8) Use of communication media to train and organize rural people for self-help action.
- (9) Use of communication media to promote interlinkages between different education systems.
- (10) Use of communication media to identify existing communication problems in the development program, and where possible, assist in the solution of such problems.
- (11) Use of communication media to promote communication between different communities.

These proposed uses are very briefly discussed in the following pages. It is not possible on the basis of present knowledge to illustrate all instances. In many cases, it is very likely that appropriate and successful illustrations do not exist or have not been adequately publicized.⁴

(1). Use of communication media to analyze the local situation at the pre-planning stage

Anthropological uses of communication media (especially of video tape or film) can help considerably in documenting and presenting people's accustomed practices. Busy decision-makers in some less developed countries have little experience with the rural populations but will not be interested in research studies or appreciate their usefulness, nor would they be willing to visit rural areas. However, they might be interested in viewing a documentary film or video tape which show the

⁴ A forthcoming book by Juan Diaz Bordenave, to be published by UNESCO, will do a more thorough job of analyzing case studies in the area than has been done within the time possibilities of the present project to identify or discuss. This publication is strongly recommended to those interested in further information. The assistance of Dr. Bordenave in this area is also gratefully acknowledged.

existing condition of the people and their accustomed practices and tries to identify the socio-cultural determinants of such practices.

A more limited amount of information which is actually taken into account in decision making is, in the final analysis, of more use than sophisticated information which is put aside and plays no role in decision making. Communication technology has the advantage of making information interesting to those who would not be interested in it otherwise.

The use of taped recordings of conversations around loosely defined themes can also assist in such understanding of the local situation, the ways local people view themselves, their health, their agricultural practices, and so on. Analysis of tape recordings by linguists, social psychologists or other similar specialists, can contribute greatly to understanding of the local situation.⁵

(2) Use of communication media to create initial interest in a program or project or issue and promote discussion of it

Communication media can help to arouse interest. This is especially important at the initial stages of a project, for presenting a project or introducing a program of action. For example, a locally screened film showing what a neighbouring community has done in the same area, preferably showing the "before" and "after" conditions can do more to create interest among other communities than weeks of persuasion. It can be a "drawing card" for people to gather together,

⁵ Such research has been undertaken by the Ministry of Health, Brazil, for example.

make people aware of their own reality, and create a central focus for discussion. Such a use of film and videotape has been illustrated, for example, in Canada's Fogo Island experience.⁶

- (3). Use of communication media to assist in definition of needs and solutions by the local people and between local people and project staff.

The people at the rural level often know their problems and needs better than anyone else. However, because of the historically dependent position of such people within the social and political structure, they frequently do not have the ability to identify such needs to others or to recognize and choose between several alternative solutions.

Whereas it is difficult for rural people to answer accurately to a direct question, it is sometimes easier for them to express their needs and solutions in a more indirect form. MEB in Brazil, in its earlier phase used sociodramas in which the villagers took different roles and a discussion followed. Out of the dialogue, numerous aspects of the life of the people, their values, beliefs, and their worries and concerns became evident, both to the staff of MEB and to the villagers.⁷ Games have been used for a similar purpose, and their use could well be enlarged and expanded in areas other than those focused on thus far in most developing countries.

⁶ Michel Guide, Film, Videotape and Community Development in Newfoundland, Stanford, California: Institute for Communication Research, 1971.

⁷ Marina Bandeira, "Movimento de Educacao de Base, una experience Brasileira de educacao e mobilizacao popular". Paper presented in the Seminar on Education of Rural Adults, Bogota, IICA-CIRA, 1972.

- (4) Use of communication media to publicize the needs of rural peoples to those who can do something about them.

Perhaps the best-known example of the need publicizing role of media is Senegal's two-way use of radio, which brought village needs and views directly to the attention of decision makers,⁸ and assisted in collective problem solving.

There is no denying that any country which provides such a public voice for the poor is taking a political risk. However, such uses of communication technology, including more "private" forms such as some mentioned above, are nevertheless important to consider.

- (5) Use of communication media to promote general up-and-down flow of information during a project's operation.

Some of the above points are relevant to this. There are also additional uses of communication media which help to bridge the information gaps so often existing between different levels of a project, and to promote dialogue, and through dialogue, mutual understanding. It is especially important where it involves local people.

An interesting use of video-tape which helped establish dialogue and mutual understanding between village people and government officials took place in the state of Rajasthan, India. Another such use took place in Tanzania.⁹

⁸ Henry R. Cassirer "Two-Way Radio in Rural Senegal," UNESCO Features, No. 500, February (1971), 1970, pp. 11-12.

⁹ Information Center on Instructional Technology, "Video Taping: A Medium for Social Change," Instructional Technology Report, Washington, D.C., March, 1974.

- (6) Use of communication media to motivate development staff and increase or supplement their knowledge.

Again this particular use of communication media for in-service training and motivation and operational support of field workers is fairly well known and acknowledged. It is especially useful in situations of relatively poorly trained and/or isolated field workers. However, in spite of acknowledgement of its value, it is not as often used as it might be. A good example is the use of two-way radio in Alaska to support isolated health personnel.¹⁰

- (7) Use of communication media to provide rural peoples with increased communication power.

The need for such increased power of inarticulate rural populations has already been mentioned. It is important to recognize that access to public channels of communication is power.

The above mentioned Senegal radio program helped meet this need of rural peoples. It is interesting to note that 70% of the radio program was recorded outside the studio and involved the ideas of the rural people themselves in their native language.

Some projects are even going a step further by actually putting the process of production of communication media into the hands of rural people, although this is usually limited to the less public media.

¹⁰ Osvaldo Kreimer, Health Care and Satellite Radio Communication in Village Alaska: A Compendium of the Final Report of the ATS-1 Biomedical Satellite Experiment Evaluation, Institute for Communication Research, Stanford University, California. July 1974

- (8) Use of communication media to train and organize rural people for self-help action.

What is suggested here is heavy reliance on communication media in the presence of limited services (e.g. health services, agricultural services, etc.) to help people engage in certain kinds of community self-help actions. Preventive health is a particularly promising area for such action, because some commonly needed health preserving actions can be made very simple.

- (9) Use of communication media to promote interlinkages between different education systems.

Two systems considered of particular importance are the formal educational systems and the "non-formal" education system. These two systems can potentially support one another and share resources both human and physical. It is also important for inter-generational maintenance of change to keep in mind the younger generation and the need to ensure that new information also reaches and affects their thinking and actions. Media can help to provide a linkage point (e.g. teachers serving as monitors for radio-listening groups of adults in school buildings).

- (10) Use of communication media to identify existing communication problems in the development program, and where possible, to assist in the solution of such problems.

Many of the problems encountered by rural development projects are problems of understanding, particularly between project staff and the rural poor. This occurs frequently with modern health services in rural areas, but also with agricultural projects and preventive health projects.

It is frequently difficult for either the project staff to know what is going wrong or for the rural people to directly tell anyone what is wrong. Innovative uses of communication technology focusing on less directive two-way communications can help to sometimes identify such difficulties, and even to solve the problems.

For example, a film could be made of the operation of the health team in the village and shown to representative villagers to stimulate discussion. Again, a socio-drama could be performed, with the villagers taking the roles of the patient and the health personnel in the modern health care system.

Both exaggeration of the problems of the interaction in the socio-drama and subsequent discussion can help identify problems. These are only two possible examples of the kinds of uses to which communication media can be put to help solve development difficulties. This approach is especially important in cases where information needed is not the fact or degree of program success or failure, but the reason for failure.

(11). Use of communication media to promote communication between different communities.

The advantages of such communications for motivation and spread of effects have already been mentioned in earlier parts of the report. Communication technology can promote such a process.

Perhaps the most interesting project which has been encountered in this area is one, which, according to present knowledge, has not as yet been implemented. Influenced by the Canadian Fogo Island use of film and videotape, the "Caribbean Project" was prepared. This proposed to

use video-cassette tapes for "restoring or developing national dialogue". The pilot demonstration was to include the encouragement of inter-community dialogue through communication technology.

Inter-community use of communications media can also serve to help spread effects of development from one area to another.

3. Key Questions to Ask in Planning of Effective Development Communications

Finally a check list of key questions is proposed for planners to ask with respect to development communications in any given situation. The list is not in order of importance, and does not pretend to be comprehensive but rather, preliminary and suggestive. It focuses on the effectiveness side rather than the cost side of the issue. It is related to a model of two-way, multi-purpose use of communications to support project activities, (above discussed) and to a dialogue model of rural development (see pp.87-97).

It is obvious that some of the twenty-eight questions are generally more important than others and that some questions will be more relevant in some kinds of development communication situations than in others.

General Planning

- Is the development communications component adequately planned and budgeted for at the initial stages of the program?
- Is the development communications component oriented towards promotion and constant support of the program's objectives?
- Have the trade-offs among various communications alternative approaches been carefully studied for cost and effectiveness?
- Is the development communications component well integrated with other program components?
- Is the development communications component well integrated with all other needed inputs to allow access to such inputs when necessary?

- o Are the trained people needed to implement the communications plan available? If not, is their training planned for?
- o Is any equipment required available or budgeted for, and is its maintenance planned for?
- o Are the institutions, agencies, groups, responsible for administration and operation of the development communications component viable, especially in terms of being able to work with those responsible for other components of the total program?
- o Does the local availability of any required material, institutional or human resources before bringing in outside resources?

Media Selection

- o Do the media channels selected reach the intended audience and attract their attention?
- o Are the media channels selected feasible in terms of infrastructural requirements, such as power lines, transmitting capacity, etc?
- o Is the language of the media channels selected comprehensible to the intended audience?
- o Are the media channels selected credible to the intended audience?
- o Are the media capabilities appropriate to the types of messages to be transmitted?
- o Is the communications media mix used the lowest cost one, that will do the job?

Local Organization

- o Does the development communications component take advantage of any potentially available institutional support at local and regional levels such as the formal school-system, the religious institutions, the local political system, etc?
- o Is the development communications component linked into a local organization for learning and action where relevant?
- o Does the development communications component give special attention to important local decision-makers, key agents, and the family as a decision-making unit where relevant?
- o Is the development communications component oriented toward encouraging group discussion, decision and action to support any media activities?

Information Flow and Exchange

- o Does the development communications plan allow for two-way flow of information between the rural people and the development staff?
- o Does the development communications plan allow for horizontal flow of information between groups and/or communities to promote motivation, cooperation and multiplication of successful actions?

Human Factors

- o Is the development communications component based on informational and motivational needs of the different groups involved in the development activity, including of course, needs of the intended beneficiaries?
- o Do the local people participate in the planning and implementation of the project, and possibly in its evaluation?
- o Does the development communications component take into account local and regional ecological, socio-cultural and economic differences among the rural people?
- o Does the development communications component help to minimize the perceived cost of change for the rural people?
- o Have immediate rewards for action been built into the plan, when not automatically available?

Message Content

- o Has enough time and money been provided for design, pre-testing production, transmission/distribution, and any necessary monitoring of messages?
- o Does the development communications component plan for internal compatibility and support of all planned messages with each other?
- o Will the messages transmitted be compatible with any other development messages currently reaching the rural people or other groups concerned?
- o Is the total amount of development information locally available at a given moment within the absorption capacity of the rural people?
- o Do the communications in their top-down phases propose agreed-upon, and feasible solutions to rural people?

- o Does the development communications component plan for accurate timing of all messages as the need for them arises?
- o Is there use made of social incentives for encouraging change or is emphasis solely placed on the scientific or economic reasons for adopting something new?
- o Do the messages incorporate the ideas, language, voice, images concepts and habit-words, and the general reality of the people to whom they are directed, associating new ideas and practices with existing familiar ones?
- o Have all ideas been simplified, and made concrete and personal when requiring understanding by the rural people?
- o Does the communications plan provide an overall "mystique" or emotional focus which will appeal to established interests of the people?

Feedback and Evaluation

- o Does the development communications component plan for feedback throughout the operation of the program or project?
- o Has evaluation been planned and budgeted for, and made an integral part of the total design?
- o Is the development communications component sufficiently flexible to allow modification in response to feedback?
- o Has any needed pilot testing of the total component been budgeted for in terms of time and money?

4. Summary

The present section has dealt with the question of communication methodology and technology and the planning of its use in rural development. Effectiveness has been defined as supporting modification or change of certain inappropriate habits or practices of the poorer sectors of the rural population whether the focus be on agriculture, health, nutrition, population or other dimensions of integrated rural development.

The past and current uses of communications in development were dealt with briefly to lay the basis for a more prescriptive focus. Underlying considerations, predominant characteristics, and some promising new tendencies in communications planning were looked at. It was argued that development directed communications had not been fully effective in reaching and benefiting the poorer sectors of rural populations because of a distorted focus and limited conceptualization of use.

The bulk of the section dealt with the question of how to improve the effectiveness of development communications. The main criteria defined for effectiveness were an emphasis on dialogue; a multi-purpose, locally oriented and action supportive use of communications, and alternative uses of communication media to enhance dialogue and support action. A check list of key questions was also proposed for planners.

The present study has tried to make order out of a considerable amount of disperse and unorganized material in the area. It has attempted to synthesize what we know on the basis of field experiences and social science research, and apply the more well-founded conclusions to development practice among a particular population. Above all it has argued for

more explicit consideration of the special characteristics and needs of the poorest rural men and women in developing countries, and involvement of them in development not only as beneficiaries, but as actors.

Section II

An Analytic Approach to

Practices

It is no exaggeration to state that the people actually involved in the final success or failure of a development project have to date received far less sensitive attention by project planners than the money, construction, soil and water, seeds and equipment to be used.

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UNDP/UNICEF Development Support
Communication Service

The focus in the present section is on the human element in development. It is the individual farmer and his family who form the final link in the chain of many rural development activities. It is he or she who will adopt or reject new concepts, new ways of viewing himself and his environment, or new practices or techniques.

Most rural development programs or projects require a certain kind of change or changes in accustomed practices of rural peoples in order to achieve their objectives. The communication components of such programs are typically either directly or indirectly oriented toward influencing these practices. The final test of the usefulness of development communications then is whether they have or have not assisted in such change.

For example, in agriculture the development communications component often has the objective of promoting acceptance of innovations leading to improved production methods or social organization, conducive to higher incomes and better quality of life. In health, the communications component may be said to serve to encourage acceptance and utilization of preventive or curative practices associated with improved health status. In nutrition, the goals of development communications are usually the selection, preparation, and utilization of more health promoting foods.

A focus on family planning, housing, migration or whatever, follows the same pattern. Whatever kind of focus is involved, change cannot take place if human beings do not change. Thus the understanding of such change, while not solely related to development communications planning, is essential to its effectiveness. This is why it is important to give special attention to the topic in the present context.

While we are usually dealing with a change in a certain kind of habit or practice, one kind of change is not equivalent to another in terms of ease or difficulty involved in changing. Ease or difficulty varies from one group of people to another. Again, the differences might be as great within areas as between topic areas. Or in other words, it is an oversimplification to say that agricultural change is "easier" than change in health, or that curative health is easier than preventive health.

For a practical approach to the subject, the ease or difficulty of a change is variable in any situation and can be said to depend on:

- the risk involved
- the benefit involved
- the nature of the new practice

Past development efforts have paid inadequate attention to such issues. If we have thought of risk, it has usually been of actual risk, and not of relative or perceived risk.* The same applies to consideration of benefits. Both have been too much influenced by a model of man and his behavior based on the reality of developed nations and not that of underdeveloped nations and of inarticulate and dependent populations. As

* "Actual risk" as used here means the objective nature and magnitude of the risk. For example, five dollars and censorship by one's neighbors might be the actual risk involved in adopting the purchase and use of pesticides.

"Relative risk" is used to mean the nature and size of the risk for different people. For example, five dollars for a man whose annual income is \$100 is much more than for a man whose annual income is \$1,000.

"Perceived risk" filters both the above through the screen of psychological factors involved in perception, to define risk for the particular individual or individuals concerned.

The same use of terms is applied in the case of benefits.

for the new practice itself, there has usually been little or no attention to its feasibility in a particular context in social and cultural terms.

One reason for lack of focus on such issues is related to the absence of adequate methodological guidelines to deal with them.

There will obviously be differences in different development situations. However, in order to be effective in the use of communications technology and methodology to change practices, we need to have some appreciation of the key dimensions or key questions to ask about practices in any given instance.

In this section there is an approach toward an analytic methodology. This should be viewed as suggestive rather than definitive. The main objective is to help planners and decision-makers to view and assess any particular situation, whether problems involved fall under areas of agriculture, population, health, nutrition or community development, and whether the geographic locale is Asia, Africa or Latin America.

The discussion is based on a critical analysis and synthesis of field experiences, and to some extent, social science theory. It should be noted that in speaking of habits or practices or behavior the emphasis is on:

- observable and measurable habits or practice, rather than changes in knowledge or attitudes, although knowledge and attitudes will obviously be relevant at certain stages of the discussion.
- discrete habits or practices related to specific time-situation factors or program objectives in integrated rural development, rather than general 'modernization' type of behavior, or behavior associated with the creation of a suitable 'climate for change.'
- targeted changes in habits or behavior on the part of the rural poor in less developed countries.

It is suggested that any development situation which involves a change in habits or behavior be approached with the following key questions in mind to assess the feasibility of change:

1. What are the risks perceived* in adopting the new practice?
 - Is there risk of life or health involved?
 - Is there financial risk involved?
 - Is there risk of social censorship (by relatives, neighbors, etc.) involved?
 - Is there risk of loss of autonomy involved?
 - Is there risk of foregoing pleasure (e.g. entertainment, taste, company) involved?
 - Is there risk of losing time involved?

2. What are the benefits perceived in adopting the new practice?
 - Is there any health benefit or life benefit involved?
 - Is there any financial benefit involved?
 - Is there any social benefit (e.g. prestige) involved?
 - Is there any autonomy benefit involved?
 - Is there any benefit of saving time involved?

3. What is the relationship between risks and benefits?
 - What is the comparative certainty between benefits and risks?
 - What is the time gap between taking of risk and the appearance of benefits?
 - What is the total size of the benefits as compared with the total size of risks?

*That is, as seen by the rural people themselves.

4. What is the degree of "innovative difficulty" of the new practice?

- To what extent is the new practice dependent on any services or materials (e.g. agricultural credit, fertilizer, medical post, etc.) which are uncertain in their availability?
- To what extent does the adoption of the new practice mean giving up an old and valued practice?
- To what extent is the new practice already familiar (e.g. through ancestors, neighbors, etc.)
- To what extent is the new practice divisible (i.e. can be adopted gradually "in pieces")?
- To what extent is the new practice visible (i.e. to other people, and therefore subject to either criticism or praise)?
- To what extent is the new practice reversible (i.e. does not commit one to a long-term course of action)?
- To what extent does the new practice require repetition (e.g. is not a one-shot change)

In the following pages in this chapter there is discussion and illustration of these human dimensions of change.

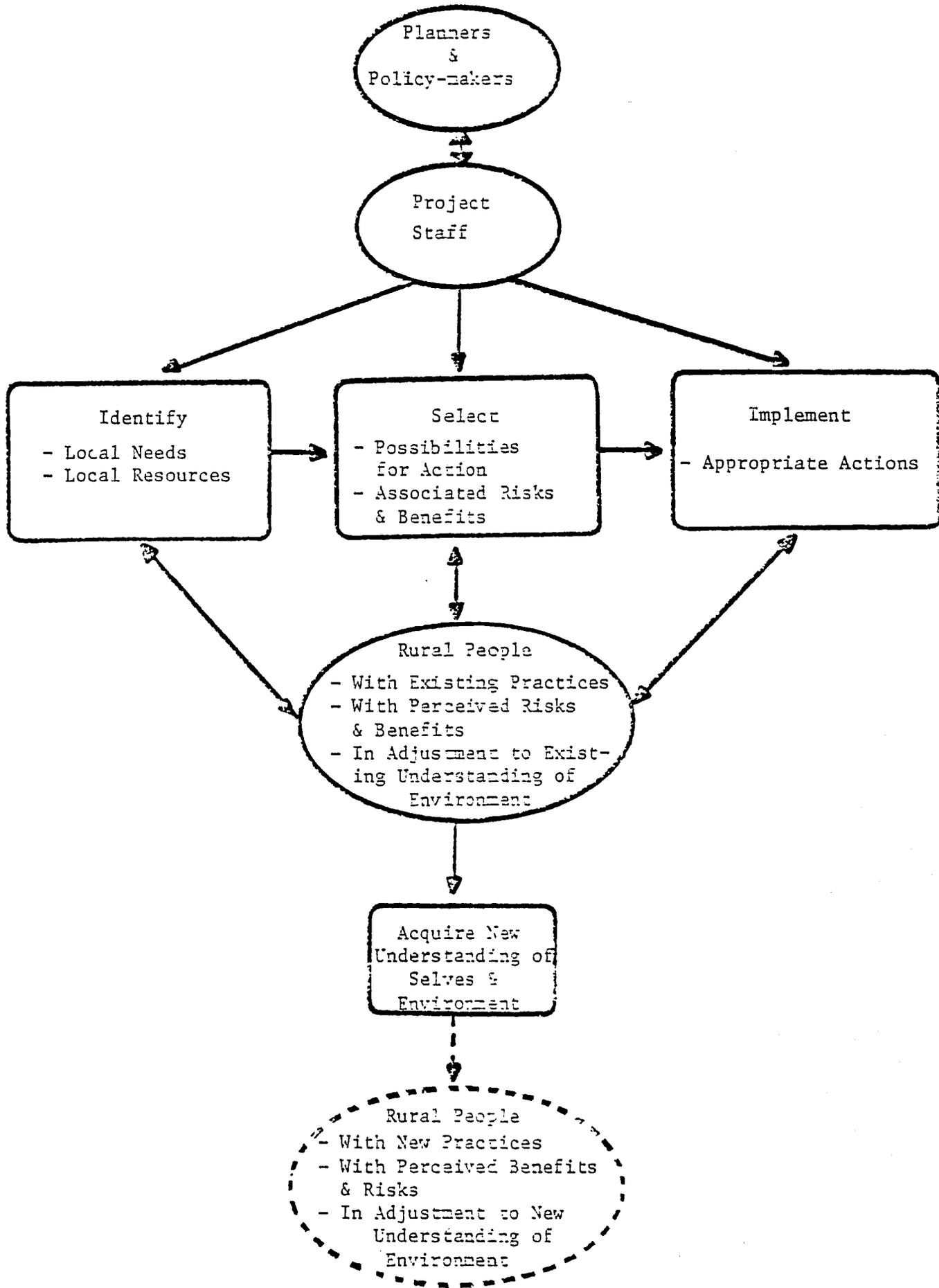
1. What are the risks perceived in adopting the new practice?

The attractiveness of a new practice to the rural village will depend on the ratio of perceived risks to perceived benefits.

This question of risk has received inadequate consideration in development programs and projects. Often only economic risk has been considered, and social risk has been ignored. Furthermore the entire conceptualization of risk is often that of the project planner rather than the poor rural villager. Because of economic and socio-cultural differences, the two views of risk are likely to be entirely different.

The below illustrates several possible dimensions of risk. Any combination of these or certain additional ones may be perceived as

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involved in a given situation.

1.1 Is there risk of life or health involved?

The adoption of a new crop or variety may involve a marginal increase or decrease in the income of a rich farmer. For a poor farmer who depends entirely on what he grows to feed himself and his family, it may mean risking starvation, or not having the money to buy his family health care or medicines when they need it.

Because he has no margin of security, any small setback for him will be likely to have disastrous consequences. He can therefore afford adoption of a new agricultural practice far less than a farmer who is better off because relatively, his risk is greater.

Such risk is more obvious in the adoption of a new health practice. The individual may also see himself or herself risking his or her life or that of a member of his family for whom responsibility has been taken. For example, the mother of a child, in feeding it something new, or not feeding it when the doctor prescribes avoidance of solid foods, may see the risk as that of the life of her child.

1.2 Is there financial risk involved?

It is obvious that in trying a new crop or variety, or a new use of fertilizer, there is a certain financial risk involved even if it falls short of risk of life. However, there is also financial risk, although perhaps more limited, in trying a new food or a new form of preparation of the food. Other health practices also many involve economic risk, since services and materials are often not free.

In development programs it has not been so much a problem of not recognizing the economic risk, but in underevaluating the

magnitude of such a risk for the poor rural villager. He sometimes simply cannot afford the trip to the hospital, the medicines prescribed for his child's diarrhea, or eating the eggs he normally sells in the market. It must also be remembered that poverty is not equally distributed even among the "rural poor" in less developed countries. Some smallholders are better off than others, and they may be able to afford an economic risk that the poorer ones are unable to do.

Thus recommending a certain practice to all agricultural producers in a given area will most likely mean that the existing inequalities will be increased rather than decreased, (although such inequalities may be small in the eyes of the "rich" viewer from outside). In part this will be due to the fact that those farmers who are better off (and usually own more land) are better able to afford an economic risk than the poorest of the poor.

1.3 Is there risk of social censorship involved?

Development experiences and the social sciences have underlined the role of the significant group members in encouraging or discouraging change. In traditional societies, the social norms are more likely to favor maintenance of the status quo rather than new practices. The new is more likely to be feared than sought after, and the innovator is more likely to be censored and perhaps socially ostracized than admired. All this is self-evident, but social risk has nonetheless often been forgotten in development practice.

Any farmer who has tried a new way of preparing the soil with

the laughter of his neighbours ringing in his ears as they gather around his land to watch him, knows the meaning of such social censorship. The young woman who takes her child to the clinic instead of the indigenous health practitioner may experience criticism at the hands of her mother-in-law, her own mother, her husband or all three -- and the neighbours.

A whole family may be censored by the other community members if they eat a pig that is traditionally kept for the funeral of an ancestor. Or they may be censored if they isolate from other children the elder daughter who has tuberculosis because by doing so they may be going against traditional practices and beliefs. Furthermore by acknowledging that their daughter is capable of transmitting the disease, they may be implying that she has powers of witchcraft.

Numerous illustrations are found in the literature. What is important is to realize that it is not at all infrequent for even the most poor or most sick to forego potential financial or health benefits because of the risk of social censorship.

1.4 Is there risk of loss of autonomy involved?

Often the rural people's appreciation of autonomy and fear of losing it is underestimated in development programs. Market involvement may be seen as threatening because of the government limiting one's power of decision and establishing certain controls on action. Again, often a credit union is seen as threatening to one's autonomy because of certain restrictions, specifications or information requests associated with credit.

A health care system may be seen as threatening for similar reasons, particularly when certain health practices are viewed as of a private nature, in which no stranger has a right to interfere.

Co-operation with other community members or with other communities may also be feared because of perceived threat to one's autonomy.

1.5 Is there risk of foregoing pleasure involved?

In many cultures, eating is not only viewed in terms of its health function, but in terms of the social or sensual pleasure it provides. To prepare a food a new way (for example, cooking vegetables less time in order to help preserve their nutrition value) or to eat a new kind of food, often means giving up a certain amount of pleasure, especially at the initial stages when one is unaccustomed to the new taste.

Going to a hospital might mean giving up one of the sole pleasures of being ill -- the special attention and care bestowed on the patient by relatives. Using a latrine might mean giving up the pleasurable social experience of gossip which is often engaged in within the community sanitation area.

Again, listening to an agricultural radio program may mean risking missing Sunday morning mass, and important even in Latin America.

Even the poorest of the poor enjoy certain pleasures, and are loathe to lose them -- a fact development planners, who define poverty as unalleviated misery, tend to forget.

1.6 Is there risk of losing time involved?

Those in developed nations often live under the mistaken notion that the poor rural inhabitant of a less developed country has unlimited time. This is often far from being the case. In fact the time budget of the farmer or the farmer's wife may be such that it is very difficult to adjust it to a time-consuming trip to obtain credit, obtain fertilizer, or to time-consuming procedures for soil conservation, fertilization, drainage or even water boiling.¹

If the farmer is presently involved in harvesting, he may feel that taking his children for immunization against diphtheria is too time-consuming. The same situation has been known to apply to community health actions.

In sum: losing time may itself be an important risk for the individual involved, and may outweigh any perceived benefits.

2. What are the benefits perceived in adopting the new practice?

Benefits, as much as risk, can vary from people to people with the same innovation, and from one point of time to another even with the same population concerned. Development projects have often placed too great emphasis on the obvious benefits of a certain practice. In agriculture it has usually been the economic benefits of change, and in health programs, the emphasis has been on the health benefits of change. However, a critical analysis of development successes and

¹While it dealt with the urban poor and not the rural poor, one of the most vivid illustrations of the risk of time and its importance is given by Edward Wellin, "Water Boiling in a Peruvian Town," in Benjamin D. Paul, (ed.), Health, Culture and Community, New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1955.

failures argues also for more consideration of other benefits perceived by rural people. Some examples of questions to be asked in any integrated rural development situation where the focus is on the rural poor, are discussed briefly.

2.1 Is there any health benefit or life benefit involved?

Possible health and life benefits are generally recognized in development planning and especially health programs, and therefore need not be dwelt on. Two points should be noted however. One is that where health benefits are perceived by project planners, they are not always perceived by the rural poor of developing countries who may possess different ideas about health and what promotes or protects health. The reverse also applies: health benefits may be seen by the rural people, where none are seen by project planners, or may seem greater to rural people than the development staff.

For example, the modern health system in developing countries sometimes finds what seems to be a disproportionate reaction to the cure of a relatively minor disease. However, while the disease might have been minor from the point of view of the health team, it might have been viewed as a major and in fact miraculous cure from the point of view of the patient and his relatives, perhaps overawed by the speed of the cure. Once more these points argue for understanding the rural people's point of view, which can only be known through a meaningful dialogue with rural people.

2.2 Is there any financial benefit involved?

Financial benefits have often been overemphasized in development planning. Too often those professionally interested in agricultural productivity are convinced that every new practice is beneficial in economic terms and would therefore motivate the poor farmer to adopt it. In actual fact, while the economic need of the farmer might be very great indeed, the promise of a 8% or 12% yield increase without complete guarantee, might not persuade him at all if he lives in an area where such fluctuations in yields are a common occurrence. The yield increase may be seen as proportionally small compared to additional risks involved.

Again, many possible gains in income are lost along the way for the powerless poor rural villager who is unable to protect himself from the injustices of social structures which have discriminated against him for centuries, and in many countries continue to do so. This does not mean that financial benefits are not important to the poor. They are, but the poor of many countries are only too aware of how uncertain such benefits are for them, and therefore less easily convinced by promises of economic rewards than planners expect.

2.2 Is there any social benefit involved?

Social benefits, along with social risks, have been often underestimated in rural development planning. Where projects have managed to make development a pleasant social activity,

success has been more likely. For example, if the promotion of a development activity is woven into a village fiesta in Latin America, or where environmental sanitation is accompanied with a holiday atmosphere of song and conversation, as in China, such activities yield benefits which often make them acceptable.

Social-psychological benefits are also to be considered. For example, the eating of a certain food can have prestige value, if associated with certain highly perceived social groups or populations (e.g. urban dwellers, upper classes). Again, a preventive health practice can have the same kind of benefit. Even the building of a latrine can contribute to social status, which is why in some areas it is located in the place of most visibility. Agricultural practices can also at times be presented in such a form that they come to provide social benefits.

2.4 Is there any autonomy benefit involved?

It is much easier to illustrate how development might involve loss of autonomy than how it might involve gain in autonomy. However, where development helps people to have more authority and increased control over their own actions and their own future, it can be accepted as contributing to autonomy.

2.5 Is there any benefit of saving time involved?

Not to be forgotten is the often more practical benefit of saving time or energy. This can occur for example, with an easily preparable or easily accessible food item, in facilitated

access to agricultural inputs through improving access roads, in having house visits of health staff, and so on.

3. What is the relationship between risks and benefits?

Minimally three issues might be considered in comparing risks and benefits: comparative certainty of each; the time gap between risks and benefits; and the total size of perceived benefits as compared to risks.

3.1 What is the comparative certainty of benefits and risks?

Here "certainty" is defined as including both the assured likelihood of occurrence, and the degree of unmistakable evidence of existence when it does occur. In other words, a benefit that has a "high degree of certainty" will be almost one hundred percent assured upon the taking of the prescribed risk, and will be perfectly visible when it does occur. The same criteria apply to risk.

There are of course few benefits in health, agriculture, nutrition, population or any other area that can be completely certain in these terms. There is usually a certain amount of uncertainty. In agriculture, the market price of the product might drop, or there might be an unexpected drought or rainy season which ruins the crop. In the case of curative health, the causal agent of a certain disease might not be sensitive to a prescribed antibiotic, or the time lapse between onset of the symptoms and appropriate treatment might be too great for the

patient to respond to a normally effective treatment. Thus benefits cannot always be guaranteed and the rural people are often aware of this.

The literature is particularly vivid in its illustration of the lack of assurance of recovery of the modern health care system as creating a barrier to adoption in societies where the traditional medical system generally promises such a guarantee of cure.

Not only may the occurrence of the benefit be relatively uncertain, but also who benefits. In some cases the risk-taker gets all the benefits that result from his action -- or the person or persons for whom he intended the benefits obtains them (e.g. an infant, a close relative). However, in other cases, and especially those of group action or community action where all the members of the community may not join in, the risk-takers are not the only ones who benefit. They may obtain only a part, or at times they may in fact get no personal benefit whatsoever, (as in voluntary labor for other individuals or groups).

The findings generally indicate that a personal benefit has the strongest appeal for the rural villager of a less developed country (see Volume I). However, it is equally obvious that there are exceptions to the rule.

Risks as well as benefits also vary in their certainty. For example, social censorship may or may not occur, and the certainty of time loss may not exist. The extent of financial

risk is also often uncertain. Again, risk can be that of the individual, his family or the community. Risks, since they often precede benefits, often seem more certain in relative terms to the poor villager than benefits.

3.2 What is the time gap between the taking of risk and the appearance of benefits?

Another important dimension of change in practices which would be related to ease or difficulty of change, is the length of time that has to pass between the taking of major risk and the seeing of the resultant benefits. This varies according to the practice in question.

For example, any change in nutrition practices -- as mentioned above, will not only need regular and long-enduring repetitions of the particular practice, but it will be a long time in most cases before actual benefits in terms of health become evident. Of course, other benefits such as time and/or labor saving might become evident more quickly.

In the case of some curative health practices, on the other hand, the time lapse between the taking, application or injection of the medicine and the disappearance or lessening of symptoms might be very quick indeed.*

With agricultural practices related to new crops, new varieties, new treatments for crops, and so on, the benefits

*This is in fact one of the problems in obtaining persistence in compliance with prescribed treatment procedures: Disappearance of symptoms is often associated with cure.

might become visible at various stages of growth of the crop and take a number of months.

In general terms there is good reason to believe that the shorter the time that has to lapse between the taking of risk and the seeing of beneficial results, the easier the change.

However, again it must be emphasized that there are other variables bound to be involved, such as for example, the perceived magnitude of the risk taken and the benefit expected.

Finally, with some practices the length of the "gestation period" can be shortened or supplementary benefits introduced. The time span should therefore not be considered as a given, but as potentially modifiable.

3.3 What is the total size of the perceived benefits as compared with the total size of risks?

It is self-evident that the perceived comparative size of the risks and benefits involved in adopting a new practice will be directly relevant to the ease or difficulty of introducing the practice in a given situation. However the question of magnitude is a difficult one to deal with and can only be done at this stage in a suggestive form.

The total magnitude of risk or benefit has several dimensions. For example, it should be kept in mind that at times risk or benefit involves the individual, at times more persons such as a family, a group, or even a community.

For a change in habits or practices to seem attractive to

people, the sum of perceived benefits needs to outweigh the sum of perceived risks. Only then will there be incentive for change. However, development experience reviewed suggests that while the promise of a larger benefit, as compared to the size of the risk, will provide incentive for change, the promise of too great a benefit may meet with disbelief. Again, the promise of a benefit without any risk (e.g. free health care) may lead to devaluation of the benefit.

In sum, benefits need to be greater than risks, but not so great as to lead to negative effects.

Again, the total risk or benefit will not depend on any one of the above discussed dimensions of risk, but on the total sum of the magnitude of all relevant dimensions of risk or benefit. The weighting of any given kind of risk or benefit will vary for different peoples and at different times for the same person. Magnitude of each will be perceived not only according to economic criteria but according to social and cultural criteria.

The influence of economic criteria has already been illustrated above. It is difficult to generalize about the influence of economic criteria in such dimensions as autonomy, pleasure, or social acceptance. Certain other social criteria such as age, sex, social status and so on also define relative importance of different risks. For example, the lower weighting of social risk because of the social factor of non-assimilation can be illustrated in the case of the migrant, or the new-comer to a

community who may care less about social censorship occurring because he or she is already an "outsider" to those around her. Again, health benefits are often likely to be less meaningful to the young than the old.

Cultural criteria also determine the importance of different kinds of risks or benefits. What is defined as pleasurable varies from one cultural context to another, and what may be viewed as a considerable risk of pleasure in one socio-cultural context will not be considered a risk, or be considered a minimal risk in another. Even the value placed on human life varies.

In sum, the total magnitude of risk or benefit is here suggested to minimally consist, for the individual concerned, of the sum of the magnitude of all risks or benefits involved in altering a practice. Perceived magnitude as well as actual risk or benefit is not static but will vary according to time and situation.

4. What is the degree of innovative difficulty of the new practice?

Apart from any considerations of risk or benefit, practices themselves may involve greater or lesser degrees of innovative difficulty. It is risky to generalize cross-culturally and say that, for example, agriculture is less difficult than preventive health, because exceptions exist. It is necessary in any given situation to assess the practices involved. Certain key issues are suggested below.

4.1 To what extent is the new practice dependent on any services or materials which are uncertain in their availability?

Whereas some changes can virtually take place in the absence of new physical inputs or different kinds of institutional inputs, others can rarely take place without these. Obviously the degree to which a practice is seen as feasible by the people involved, will to a large extent be dependent on access to, and acceptability of any necessary inputs.

For example, a farmer may want to adopt fertilizer to increase his maize yield, but cannot because he does not have the economic means to buy fertilizer. If credit on suitable terms is available to him, this may be the answer. However, even in cases where it is available to him, he may not find it acceptable. He may not want to use it because he is afraid of either economic risk involved or risk in terms of his autonomy. Or he may not accept credit as he does not want to join the credit cooperative because he does not get on with the people who belong to it. All these cases and others have been documented in the literature.

Again, whereas a poor rural farmer may believe in the value of medical care for his seriously ill wife, he may not have a health post within his reach. Even such a simple event as cooking a separate meal for young children may be impossible for lack of a second pot, or the drinking of milk by the expectant mother may be impossible because there simply is no milk to be had for her.

The less certain the availability of necessary inputs, the more difficult a new practice will seem.

4.2 To what extent does the adoption of the new practice mean giving up old and valued practices?

Many development programs tend to forget that a new practice does not enter a vacuum. Adults, who are usually the age-group immediately involved in rural development projects, already have certain ways of responding to sickness, and certain practices oriented towards preserving their health. Again, if they are engaged in farming they have certain agricultural practices which they repeat with regularity, and so on. Such practices have most likely been used by their fathers and forefathers. They are also likely to be used by most other people in the same community, and to be venerated as something important and reliable. Most changes brought into the lives of people, will therefore mean giving up a practice which they have been taught to respect and value.

We have usually emphasized the learning of new practices in development programs, but we have placed little emphasis on the unlearning of existing practices. Where unlearning of incompatible existing practice is necessary, (that is the new practice can not simply be "tacked on" to existing ones) there is evidence that change will be more difficult to introduce.

To illustrate how such incompatibility might actually work in a given problem situation, the case of infant gastroenteritis can be taken. Many cultures have certain beliefs associated with this common

condition, and associated practices. These may or may not include going to an indigenous health practitioner for diagnosis. They may or may not include the taking of certain foods or liquids, or compliance with certain magical practices.

If the mother is to start taking the infant to the clinic within the first few hours of the symptoms, she may have to "unlearn" taking the child to the indigenous healer, (herbalist, sorcerer, etc.) At the clinic she will probably be prescribed certain medicines and home treatments for the infants, including the avoidance of solid food and intake of quantities of liquids. If in the past she has been accustomed to giving a child corn or rice at the occurrence of the symptoms, she will also have to unlearn this practice, and so on.

The same kinds of illustrations can be drawn in the case of the farmer who adopts new soil preparation or conservation, drainage, planting, fertilization, plague control, harvesting, storage or marketing practices. Even if he does not have to "give up" an accustomed technique of agriculture, he may still have to spend less time on some task in order to have available the necessary time to spend on the new task.

Any practice might be either compatible or incompatible with existing practices for a variety of reasons, including cultural, social, economic and situational ones.

In some cultures certain practices will be incompatible whereas in others they will not be. Many food practices or health practices could be used to illustrate this. For example, breast feeding a child and eating certain nutritious foods may be possible for mothers in one culture but not in another. Again, use of both modern and traditional health care systems may be perfectly compatible within one cultural con-

text, but considered incompatible in another.

An illustration of incompatibility of a practice based on social factors is the often occurring case of a practice being traditionally associated with a certain social class or group, and considered unacceptable to those above or below them in the social hierarchy.

Thus a new practice promoted in rural development may or may not be compatible with already existing practices. But it is more likely than not that something will have to be given up or modified if the practice is adopted. A key difficulty in altering health practices in particular, is that they are often so very interwoven with other socially and culturally important ideas or practices, that to change them involves a great many other changes.

One possible solution is for the practice itself to be modified to make it more compatible with what already exists. Sometimes people themselves modify a practice to make it compatible with existing ones when they adopt it. This has happened with many religious and health practices. It can also be done by planners. For example, in China modern health practices were made compatible with traditional health practices.

Development programs have been known to err on both sides of the issue: to consider a practice incompatible when it was compatible, or could be made to be, and, more frequently, assuming a new practice compatible when actually it was not.

In sum: it is important to stress the need for understanding and appreciating incompatibility, and for establishing compatibility of any new practices introduced.

4.3 To what extent is the new practice already familiar?

There is sufficient evidence both in development experience and in the social science literature to indicate that a more familiar practice will have more chance of being adopted by the rural poor of less developed countries than an unfamiliar one, and that familiarity is often a key variable in compatibility (above discussed).

There are of course various degrees and kinds of familiarity. For example, the practice might not exist at the present time but might have existed at some earlier time among their ancestors. Or the practice might exist among some members, but not all members of a community and therefore have some familiarity. Or the practice might be known to exist among neighbouring communities or perhaps in urban areas.

The evidence suggests that where development programs in rural areas have made use of such knowledge to "familiarize" a practice (either consciously or unconsciously) it has usually helped to promote the adoption of the practice.

It should be noted that while familiarity is related to compatibility it is not equivalent to compatibility. For example, people may be familiar with a new practice, such as eating of eggs, but it is nevertheless incompatible (as in the case of the very poor farmer who has to sell eggs to buy medicines). Again, new practices such as drinking milk or growing beans may be compatible with other existing practices, but not familiar for a given people. They may not adopt the practice perhaps on no other basis except that "In our village we have never done it."

Familiarity, like compatibility can be developed. One key prerequisite for developing familiarity of a new practice is an understanding and appreciation of what currently exists in its place. For example, health personnel promoting new health practices in rural areas have frequently found that if they understand and even use certain traditional health practices, (such as always taking the pulse of a patient or prescribing some dietary change as part of the "cure,") thus modifying the new health care system to make it "less new," it is more likely to be accepted. Again, if a new agriculture practice, such as soil preparation or fertilization is explained in terms of traditional beliefs or already existing similar practices, it again becomes more familiar and acceptable. Communications methodologies can play a key role in such familiarization of practices.

4.4 To what extent is the new practice divisible?

Some practices lend themselves to being adopted gradually whereas others have to be adopted entirely or not at all. Obviously the risk in a gradual adoption is lessened, because one can wait to see benefits before proceeding to a full adoption, or at least see that no unpredicted negative consequences accrue as a result of adoption.

Many agricultural practices such as fertilizer use, a new crop or variety, are divisible. They allow for a trial on a small basis in the corner on one's plot. However, some agricultural practices like plant disease control may not be divisible to the same degree.

In nutrition, it is sometimes possible to divide a practice, that is, to start eating a little of a new food product, or to accept part of the entire range of dietary recommendations, but the problem here is that

such an adoption may produce little or no benefits. It may therefore lead to rejection of a complete adoption. But, where taste is a barrier to adoption, or the barrier is the perceived difficulty of food acquisition or preparation, such a trial adoption may have certain advantages.

However, in many curative health practices and preventive health practices, divisibility may be difficult, because it would eliminate any or most of the positive benefits of adoption.

4.5 To what extent is the new practice visible?

The more visible a new practice is to significant other people in one's environment, the more likely it is to be observed and censored by them, and therefore the greater the social risk in adopting it.

Such censorship may come as soon as a new way of doing things is adopted or it may come only in the case of failure or success. Indeed, it is important to emphasize that success should not be considered as offering any degree of protection from social criticism. In those cultures where someone who does better than his neighbors is suspected (for example, of being in league with evil powers), this may in fact be the very event that activates social criticism.

As a general rule, it is important to remember that in most small rural communities people are likely to know and be aware of what others are doing, even in the more private details of their lives. It is obvious, however, that certain practices have a higher degree of visibility than other practices.

Practices may also differ as to the length of time that they are observable. Agricultural practices such as the adoption of a new crop or variety are as a general rule fairly visible, and visible to a large number of people for a long period of time — perhaps until the agricultural cycle is completed. They should therefore be considered as being on the far end of any scale ranging from "private" to "public" using such terms as synonymous with nonvisibility and visibility. On the other hand, acceptance of immunization may be visible only for a very brief moment. Certain hygiene practices such as washing of hands before cooking an infant's food or feeding an infant, may be unobserved except with immediate members of one's family and should therefore be considered as fairly private. Certain practices of contraception should be very "private" indeed, but a necessary trip to a clinic sometimes removes them from this "private" domain and makes them "public." This has been documented as increasing the difficulty of adoption of family planning.

The general rule then is that a "private" practice involves less social risk and is in this sense easier to change. However, clearly certain other factors, such as resentment of interference in a "private domain," would operate against this. As a result it is the less visible but not socio-culturally defined as "private" practices which are most amenable to change along the dimension of visibility.

A final word -- the visible nature of a practice should not be considered as always operating negatively in terms of adoption of the practice. Visible practices can be made to have prestige value, and this may operate to promote the practice. Again, the public nature of a practice can be a definite asset in ensuring adoption as in cases where it is a community decision or even a significant group decision.

4.6 To what extent is the new practice reversible?

A practice that is perceived as reversible, of course involves less risk than a practice which is perceived as committing one to a long-term course of action or several interdependent risks. This would especially apply to practices that are not divisible (in terms discussed above).

There are of course various degrees of reversibility, and times where a practice is reversible or not reversible because of certain situational or socio-cultural factors.

For example, attending a clinic in the event of illness may be a practice which is reversible in one socio-cultural situation, but not as easily reversible in another, because of the either/or attitude toward traditional and modern health care. Again, where treatment is not urgent, going to a witch doctor before trying modern medicine may do the patient very little harm, if there is not a large time-lapse, whereas in another instance it may do the patient a great deal of harm by delaying effective treatment or in other ways worsening his condition, and make the practice irreversible.

Again, in some situations an agricultural practice is less reversible than in others. For example, where credit has been involved in the purchase of fertilizer or of farm implements, the farmer may find himself caught in an inescapable cycle which commits him to certain agricultural practices. In other cases, the commitment may only be for the duration of the agricultural cycle, which, while long in itself, is still predictable in its length.

Summary

The objective of this section has been to suggest a way to analyze and classify practices which would be useful to planners of rural development communications. It has searched for a "language" and concepts that would be meaningful to subject areas such as education, agriculture, population and health, and applicable to most rural situations that involve the poorer sectors of the population. There has been a conscious attempt to emphasize socially, culturally and psychologically based approach to the question of practices and change of practices.

The key issues suggested have been in the area of risk and benefits involved in change, their interrelationship, and the innovative difficulty of the practice itself. The series of questions posed should not be considered as definitive of the field, but rather as opening up the field. However, insofar as they are based on critical analysis of development experience and social science knowledge, they will assist in deciding whether in a given situation a certain kind of practice will be feasible or not.

Implicit in this argument is that while certain kinds of practices will be relatively easy to change in certain situations, others will be difficult or almost impossible. Planners need to learn to recognize the differences in order to effectively decide the objectives and plan the strategies of development projects. This applies to development communications components as well as other components.

This discussion has established a human basis for the planned use of development communications, by emphasizing that the dependent

variable -- practices -- is a complex one. The effectiveness of communication methodology or technology will depend on the nature of the practices involved, and associated risks and benefits, as well as on how the communication component is itself designed and implemented.

Such considerations of practices are also important for the design of communications strategies because communications can influence the way such risks, benefits and practices themselves are perceived.

III Recommendations and Basic Conclusions

BASIC CONCLUSIONS

There are certain basic themes or conclusions which have recurred throughout the reports of the study. These are outlined below:

- In most cases the planning of an integrated communication component is necessary for rural development projects to affect the practices of the poorer sectors of the population in less developed countries.
- The single greatest problem in rural development, as in the use of communication methodology and technology to support such development, has been the lack of active participation of the local people. In communications this has meant an overemphasis on the transmission of information by project managers and staff to the rural people, rather than on transmission of information from rural people to each other and to project staff and development decision-makers.
- Where development communications are to directly influence the rural poor, the approach most likely to affect their practices is local, flexible, action-oriented, and participatory, based on an understanding of local people and their behavior.
- There are various degrees of ease or difficulty in changing different practices or the same practice under different conditions, resulting in the task of development communications being both different and more possible in some situations than in others.

- The greatest improvements in the use of communication media for rural development could be obtained not through development of more sophisticated technical tools, but through expanding the uses of existing communication media to help support the different kinds and levels of effective communication required for effective rural development.
- The greatest immediate contributions to our knowledge about effective use of communications in the service of rural development is not likely to come from academic social science research but from careful analysis and comparison of development experience in which social sciences play a major role.

STRATEGIES AND APPROACHES

1. General Considerations

Given the partial state of our knowledge about the human element involved in development, and in particular, about the activities and practices of the rural poor in less developed countries and how and when these change,¹¹ it is recommended that rural development communications planning consider:

- The need for some kind of a compromise between political and administrative pressures for quick and massive results and the time it takes to plan and implement effective programs built on adequate understanding of local needs, capabilities, and existing patterns of behavior.
- The need for flexible planning of development communications to: a) allow more general needs of national or regional plans to be made specific at the local level in response to existing socio-cultural and situational differences; and b) allow objectives to be modified or revised in response to feedback from the field.
- The need for participation of the local people in the decision-making about specific actions to be taken by them in order to ensure appropriateness and responsiveness of plans to rural people's needs and possibilities.
- The need for the provision of more effective and continuous feedback mechanisms from the field to both correct any problems that might arise, provide general monitoring of the program, and add to the sum of our knowledge about effective development communications.
- The potential of innovative uses of communication media in facilitating various kinds and levels of development communications, and the new methodologies of media use that these call for.

¹¹ See Volume II, Section III for discussion of this issue.

2. The "Dialogue" Model of Rural Development

Many kinds of information flow processes can take place in development communications, and it can perform many different functions, as suggested in this report. Much attention will however continue to be given in development to its use to directly reaching rural people and provide them with the knowledge and motivations needed to accept new technology whether the technology be in agriculture, health, family planning, nutrition or other areas.

The present section suggests a different strategy to such development communications planning, based on the considerations discussed in this report. This is an action-oriented approach. It is explicitly designed to effectively promote needed changes in health, agriculture, nutrition, population and other practices among the poorer rural people of developing countries so that these most needy people can be better involved in development processes, and benefit from the results of development. To propose an approach to development communications, it is necessary to consider it as an integral part of rural development programs. Thus this section actually outlines a strategy for rural development planning in which communications and human considerations are a fundamental part. What is proposed is an approach to development based on research in the social sciences as well as field experience in development.

The use of communications in this approach is locally oriented but mass media can still play an important role if their activities are re-oriented to have a more local focus and allow for active two-way communications. In general, communications planning in the model

helps to define, promote, support, interlink and interpret specific actions, and is basic to the approach.

The key components of this model are:

- Incremental action
- Minimal risk
- Recognition of group/community needs and resources
- Learning through participation in action
- Group focus
- Two-way use of communications

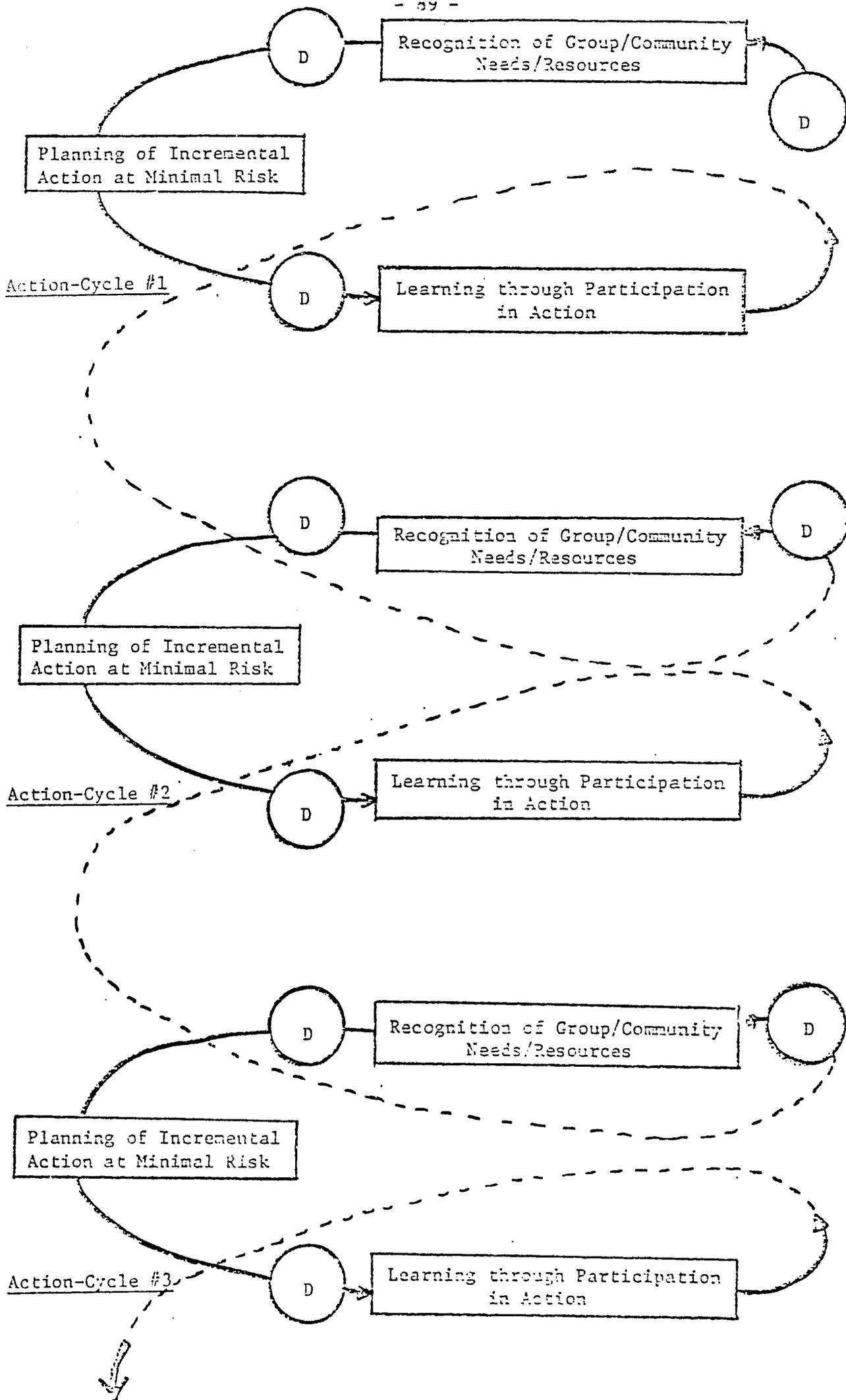
2.1 Incremental action

The stress is on the incremental achievement of specific practical actions and the role of communications in facilitating such action. Essentially this means, where possible, the below:

- A general movement from a small and relatively easy or small risk change to a larger and more difficult change.
- The basing of initial actions and, where possible, subsequent actions, on a state of readiness and commitment for change on the part of the rural people.
- The building of each successive change on the achievement of the preceding one.
- An emphasis on making benefits as immediate, significant, frequent and visible as possible.

This component is based on the belief that real change, that is, appropriate and lasting change, can only take place when people are ready for it, and committed to it.

In most cases the kind of people we are talking about are not ready for large changes, except perhaps in certain crisis situations



THE 'DIALOGUE' MODEL FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT

(*D=Dialogue)

where their whole life-style is threatened. A gradual process of preparation for change, and development of confidence in one's ability to change and in the change agency is therefore indicated, with communications playing a major role.

It is important that the first specific change proposed should meet the criteria of:

- high priority in terms of the people's felt needs
- minimal risk
- high degree of participation by the local people
- high visibility of benefits
- short gestation period between the taking of the risk and the appearance of benefits

Benefits should not only be viewed solely as the final result of an action but as continual supporters and maintainers of action. Where benefits are not fairly immediate or visible at any stage of the total program of changes in habits or practices, other visible benefits might be purposively built into the program. This can be done through various means such as competitive awards, bestowal of prestige through attention, and so on. Communications can present, interpret, and make known, the rewards.

2.2 Minimal risk

Both perceived and actual risk is seen as minimized four main ways:

- building larger changes on the achievement of smaller changes
- a group or community action focus
- reliance on local resources wherever possible
- participation by local people at all levels of the plan

The incremental approach to action, above discussed, serves to minimize perceived, and at times actual risk, through beginning with relatively small actions and moving to larger ones, with communications helping people to do so.

This process of small but gradually increasing changes will help to cut risks through:

- minimizing fear of change through a gradual process of change.
- development of people's understanding of their reality and confidence in their own ability to act to improve it.
- establishing mutual understanding and appreciation between rural people and project staff.

Actual social risk is also minimized by a group or community focus, which ensures that social censorship of actions taken will be less likely or less drastic than where "isolated individuals" are the focus.¹² Communications planning may be needed to mobilize and maintain the group.

¹² This is discussed in Volume II, Section II.

Risk is also minimized by reliance on local resources wherever possible. In many cases such a reliance on locally available materials or products will be less costly for the rural people and will therefore minimize actual economic risk involved in adopting a practice. It will also minimize perceived risks by providing greater familiarity. Both perceived and actual risk will be minimized in such a reliance on local resources because there will be greater chance of such resources continuing to be available upon the withdrawal of the project.

Finally, participation by local people at all levels of the plan will ensure that actions are in agreement with their perceived needs and possibilities, thus limiting perceived and actual risk.

2.3 Recognition of group/community needs and resources

Both in terms of cost and effectiveness considerations it is important, where possible, to use any locally existing resources. It is also generally accepted in theory that programs and projects should respond to felt needs. But it is clear that this is often inconsistent with development practice where plans are formulated at a higher level, with often little understanding of local people's needs or resources, and with difficulty in responding to the wide variety of needs in a given area.

Ideally programs would be flexible enough to allow increased specification of more general national or regional project objectives as they come closer to the local level (adapting to local needs). Failing this, projects can try to establish what amounts

to a compromise between the people's perceived needs and the constraints under which rural development must operate.

The incremental action approach to rural development provides such a possibility for compromise or partial response to people's needs in allowing at least the initial action to meet unplanned for, but priority needs, of people. Communications planning will help identify what the needs are and help define and implement actions.

It may mean that the initial action will have minimal value in terms of development and/or the project's objectives. For example, it might mean facilitating the painting of the church, improvement of the graveyard, or treating a relatively minor but visible skin infection before meeting such program objectives as infant gastroenteritis, family planning, or promotion of miracle rice. But in the long run such confidence building action should make the major program objective much easier to achieve and to maintain.

The degree of response to local needs that is possible, will depend on the nature of the people's needs in a particular situation, and the given objectives and flexibility of the program or project. It will also depend on good communications planning.

2.4 Learning through participation in action

A sole focus on the achievement of specific limited actions would have little long-term value. It is important to plan for the

conceptual linkage of each specific action not only to the preceding and following one, but to a general philosophy of change to provide learning. In practice this means the conscious promotion of self-awareness and responsibility for action on the part of the rural people. Thus knowledge-change precedes, parallels, and follows actions taken, and communications planning is essential.

Such self-awareness and sense of responsibility is only possible through the rural people's participation in development actions. On the other hand, if they are not involved in decisions, and they simply become passive objects of change, the learning and resultant appreciation of change will be minimal.

Selfawareness and a sense of responsibility takes time to develop. They will not occur overnight, even if people do participate, but it is worth the effort.

Participation is not an either/or issue. There are various kinds and degrees of participation. The ideal situation of maximum participation would mean active involvement of local people in:

- initial planning and decision-making about objectives and solutions.
- in the implementation of the project
- in the evaluation of the project

The degree of participation possible in any given local situation will at a minimum depend on:

- the general political context in which the program takes place: obviously some political systems permit a larger participatory role of the mass of the people than others, depending on whether a system is willing to risk greater power for the peasants, by allowing their voice to be

heard or whether it is only willing to allow a facade of social change to quiet the discontent of the poor.

- o the specific nature of the program itself and the extent to which it has been pre-structured, and the extent to which such prestructuring has responded to felt priority needs of the rural poor in question.
- o the participatory potential of the local people involved, which will depend on such factors as existing appropriate organizational structures, previous history in participation, certain socio-cultural factors which either facilitate or discourage participation.

2.5 Group focus

The present approach proposes more attention to the existing groups and the community in development. It emphasizes linking onto local organizations and encouragement of group discussion, decision and action with communications planning playing a major part in this.

The main argument is that:

- o the group or community approach is more in agreement with the socio-cultural reality of rural areas of less developed countries, than the individualistic approach.
- o the group or community focus helps facilitate participation of local people in decision-making, action and communication processes.
- o group change is stronger than individual change through minimizing counter-change pressures in the community by establishing pro-change social unit, which will serve to both effectively implement and effectively maintain change.
- o the group focus provides a wider scope for action than does an individual focus, allowing for pooling of human and material resources and exchange of resources.

Thus attention should be given to promoting dialogue within and between groups to promote collective action. Main areas are:

- o within groups or communities to encourage definition of needs and solutions, implementation of plans and evaluation of actions taken.

- between communities to motivate each other for action to pool resources for action, to exchange resources for action.

2.6 Two-way Use of Communications

As earlier stated, planned communications activities, are an integral part of the "dialogue" approach. There are two important points to note in this context: 1) such activities are not limited to transmission of technical information, but operate in a variety of ways and at several different levels, with two-way flow of information, ideas, motivations, etc. being paramount; 2) the development communications activities are at all times related to specific kinds of actions (individual or group) not simply to giving people knowledge. The basic philosophy is that knowledge and attitude change follows as well as precedes change of practices.

The communications activities in the "dialogue" model of rural development create the necessary informational environment for action. They help define the action to be taken, make them possible through helping to minimize risk involved, help promote actions on the part of the indicated individuals, provide support for action at various stages to ensure that actions are appropriately carried through and maintained for the necessary period of time, and interpret action by linking actions to each other and to a general philosophy of change, resulting in self-awareness and learning.

In this sense communications facilitate incremental action, minimal risk, recognition of group/community needs and resources, and initiates and maintains in operation a group focus as has been

noted in the discussion. It is of central importance in the effective implementation of the other components of the model.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations made for rural development communications are primarily addressed to external assistance agencies, but many of them could also be relevant to less developed countries. They are based on conclusions reached in the study, and especially directed toward increasing development benefits among the rural poor.

1. Development of Human Resources

It is suggested that one area in which the resources of external assistance agencies can be most usefully employed is in increasing the supply of lower-level development communication staff in less developed countries, especially at local and regional levels. A contribution can be made by: 1) helping less developed countries define priority training objectives; 1) helping less developed countries achieve their training goals through assistance in the definition of subject matter, methodology and delivery systems for training; 3) providing technical advice to less developed countries in the implementation of such training programs in different situations.

Key areas suggested for focus for promoting integrated rural development in interested countries are:

a) Training of rural people

- Training of multi-purpose village level development promoters, selected from rural populations, who could act to promote certain kinds of self-help community action, (e.g. in environmental sanitation, housing, transportation, etc.)

- Training of community level workers to use communications media to support their work or expand their activities into new areas for integrated rural development, (e.g. agricultural extensionist to supply nutrition information; health educators to supply agricultural information).
- Training of women as special development promoters among other women in countries where women play an active role in agricultural production.
- Training of rural people with some secondary education to become intermediate level communication technologists to provide technical support for rural development programs.

b) Training of national and regional level specialists

- Graduate training of development communication specialists to have a sound grounding in behavioral sciences and especially anthropology, and in institutional communications, but be practically oriented toward application of communication methodology and technology to development problems.

2. Institution Building

Certain institutions are suggested as of priority importance for improving the effectiveness of integrated rural development and especially of the communication component of development projects. External assistance agencies can provide help to less developed countries in the form of financial and technical assistance for the strengthening or establishment of such centers. Three specific kinds of centers are proposed for consideration.

2.1 Regional or sub-regional information centers

Small information centers can be established for directly defining and serving the various information needs of rural people in different regions of interested countries. They can function for:

- Training of rural local level workers . For example, primary health care workers, multi-purpose workers, intermediate level communication technologists, etc.
- Learning and problem solving by rural people . People could come to the center with their problems instead of waiting for an extension worker, health specialist, etc. to come to them. Learning would be visually oriented to circumvent problems of illiteracy.
- Referral of rural people to the right sources for information or services, where these were beyond the scope of the Center.
- Feedback to decision-makers on the needs of rural peoples to facilitate the development of programs, projects and services to meet those needs.

2.2 Regional level integrated development communications centers

Such centers could be of considerable value in enhancing the use of and the effectiveness of communica-

tions in rural development projects and generally helping to promote integrated rural development. They could be modeled on the UNDP Development Support Communication Service Center in Bangkok, but on a more limited scale:

Main functions of such Centers could be:

- Training of various levels of field workers and professionals from different backgrounds in communication methodologies and basic use of communication technologies.
- Assistance to development projects in the planning of the communication component of projects.
- Design, production and distribution to rural development projects in the region of appropriate communication materials (such as video-tape recordings, films, slide sets, printed materials, graphics, etc.)
- Distribution to development projects in the region of communication equipment as needed (projectors, tape-recorders, cameras, etc.) on a loan basis.
- Establishment of an information bank of materials as these are developed for projects for future use or adaptation in other projects in the same region or lending to other regions of the country.
- Channeling of feedback from rural populations to government planners and decision-makers on needs of populations and effectiveness of projects.

2.3 National or International "Community Health Action" Centers

This Center would serve as a focal point for promoting community involvement in integrated health delivery through communication and education. The Centers would have four basic interrelated functions: *

*The institutional outline which served as a departure point for the present one was developed in collaboration with Dr. Nilo Vallejo of PAHO/WHO, for Latin America and the Caribbean.

1) Training activities of the Center

Two basic types of training are envisaged.

- a) Professional training of specialists in education and communication for promoting community health involvement.
- b) Short-term training of local development staff from a variety of professional backgrounds for integration into health activities, training could focus on:
 - Understanding of the importance of health problems of the community and the implication of such problems for socio-economic development.
 - Development of their abilities and skills as promoters of social and economic well-being of the community through influencing others in their area to consider health problems of the community and the implication of such problems for social and economic well-being.
 - Facilitation of their own effective collaboration in the planning and implementation of education and communication activities for community health programs as these become relevant within their areas of professional activity.

2) Research and technical assistance activities of the center

These two functions are treated together because interrelationship is considered of fundamental importance. The Centers would carry out operational research associated with activities of technical assistance to less developed countries. Such research would involve:

- The elaboration of a common culturally appropriate philosophy with respect to education and communication for effective community involvement in health in the country or countries.
- The development of policies and strategies with respect to the above.

- The development of materials for actions undertaken with respect to the above.
- The development of evaluation models for establishment of the effectiveness of actions undertaken related to the above.

3) Health information diffusion activities of the center

The Centers would also engage in the establishment and operation of a clearing house for the training, research and service institutions and organizations of the country. This clearing house would be responsible for dissemination of information with respect to community involvement experiences in other parts of the world as these become relevant and are needed by the less developed countries.

3. Recommendations for Technical Assistance to Developing Countries

It is suggested that short term assistance and advice can be profitably provided by external assistance agencies to less developed countries through the below kinds of activities:

- Assistance and advice to interested countries in the development directed utilization and coordination of their communication resources and help in strengthening the resources where this is needed.
- Assistance and advice to interested less developed countries in the linking of the formal educational systems and communications media systems to rural development priorities and activities, to increase available resources for education and communication activities.
- Assistance and advice to interested countries in the definition of appropriate areas for community action, and elaboration of communication projects to promote and support such action. This especially is important in those instances where needs of rural people can not be adequately met by available resources in the public sector.
- Assistance and advice to interested countries in the use of communication technology and methodology for such functions as supervision, motivation and upgrading of rural development field staff, (e.g. in health, population, agriculture, community development, etc.)
- Collaboration with interested less developed countries in setting up of well worked out low-cost field models demonstrating the use of communication methodology and technology for motivating cooperative action for effective rural development or for spreading the effects of development. It must be stressed that the emphasis here is not on pilot projects to test basic ideas, but on models to demonstrate already tested methods and for adapting such methods to a particular context and to an area in which the particular less developed country has shown interest.

4. Research

It is suggested that the greatest immediate contributions to knowledge about development communications will come from studies of accumulated development experience, where such experience is submitted to adequate analysis. The effectiveness of communications for rural development can be promoted through research in developed countries such as the United States in the following priority areas:

- Cross-cultural study of communications pilot projects in less developed countries to determine reasons for success in influencing the host country's policies and actions or reasons for their failure to have any such long term effects.
- Cross-cultural study of effective rural community participation in different socio-cultural contexts, at planning, implementation and evaluation stages of development projects, to establish guidelines for planning communications activities to support such actions.
- Cross-cultural study of the experiences of various developing countries in the interface of modern and indigenous health systems and their resolution of the issue, with special attention to identification of types of traditional healers who can be effectively integrated into the health system, and the role of development communications in promoting such integration.
- Cross-cultural study of the degree to which agricultural information made available to male farmers is transmitted by them to the female members of their families and to children, where these are, or will also be, active in agriculture.
- Cross-cultural study of the image of the woman and her social role in less developed countries as this is projected in public communications channels.
- Development of methodologies for doing development communications resource inventories in different countries, which can be made available to developing nations.

- Development and testing of methodologies for effective and innovative use of communication technology in the promotion of dialogue between various levels in the development hierarchy and between various groups and communities at the local level.
- Elaboration of communication technology based methodologies for the identification of rural peoples' needs as they see them, to assist in rural development program planning.
- Development of low-cost simple evaluation procedures, which could be effectively used by non-specialists, and used in a politically non-threatening way for formative evaluation of the development communications implementation system.

It is suggested that priority support be given to problem-oriented interdisciplinary research teams, involving social scientists from various disciplines, and where possible and relevant, specialists in agriculture, health, nutrition, housing, or other areas.

It is also suggested that provision be made in the funding of research for making the results of such research available to interested organizations and decision-makers at appropriate levels in less developed countries.

5. Development of a Knowledge Base

It is recommended that a permanent system for storage and retrieval of information about development communications be built. This could be a center based either in a developing country or in a developed country. Activities might include:

- Development of a retrieval system for the collection and evaluation of relevant experiences in development communications in rural areas in less developed countries, with emphasis on its use to benefit underprivileged populations.
- Development of innovative methodologies which would help in the improved application of communications in rural development programs to help the rural poor.
- Promotion and assistance in the inclusion of relevant aspects of behavioral science based development communications in the education and training of less developed countries professionals in health, agriculture, nutrition, etc.
- Diffusion of needed information on development communications to key policy-makers and planners in education, health and agriculture sectors in less developed countries, especially focusing on the exchange of relevant experiences between less developed countries.
- Organization of annual or semi-annual regional conferences for key educators and key policy makers and planners of less developed countries to discuss communications policy and planning for support of national economic and social goals.

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