



PLENARY 2
**Media for Social Transformation:
Advocacy for Peace**
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Abstract

The practice of communication for development has evolved and undergone changes and adaptations during the past fifty years or so. Radio and expert-led instruction of the early years have evolved today into Internet-based interactive wireless facilities aimed at promoting community participation.

Our understanding of what should drive development has also been in constant flux. Early priorities focused on increasing crop yields on farms. This soon broadened to redress the inequalities inherent in the world economic system that favoured the rich developed countries while curbing the full potential of developing nations. Presently, the excessive depletion of natural resources to satisfy the expansive activities of industries and governments have caused communities to fight for the conservation of the commons and their cultures via people's movements mustered by vibrant participatory processes. This fight has now increased in its urgency due to the current financial meltdown and the on-going wars in various regions of the world, which are shattering the fundamentals of our socio-economic system (driving the endless growth axiom) and undermining human nature and peace. Therefore, Pope Benedict (2009: 88) proclaims that "the economy needs ethics in order to function correctly - not any ethics whatsoever, but an ethics which is people-centred".

The much talked about Millennium Declaration with its Millennium Development Goals (MDG), though an important milestone, still looks at development as an 'engineering problem' to be solved from a top-down perspective. We think that it is important to start from the perspective of local communities and to cooperate with organizations (UN, governmental, NGOs, the public and the private sector, and civil society) that have developed a trust within a community in order to achieve sustainable change in society.

Communication media do play a crucial role in these societal change processes. Often their contribution is positive, unfortunately not always. And, in order for change to be effective and lasting, media have to be looked at in a contextual and integrated way. Therefore, communication for social change could be seen as the nurturing of knowledge aimed at creating a consensus for action that takes into account the interests, needs and capacities of all concerned. *It is thus a social process*, which has as its ultimate objective *sustainable development* at distinct levels of society. *Communication media and Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)* are important tools in achieving this process but their use is not

an end in itself. *Interpersonal, group and traditional communication* must also play a fundamental role.

“‘Caritas in veritate’ is the principle around which the Church’s social doctrine turns, a principle that takes on practical form in the criteria that govern moral action. I would like to consider two of these in particular, of special relevance to the commitment to development in an increasingly globalized society: *justice and the common good*”

Pope Benedict XVI (2009: 13)

With these words His Holiness Pope Benedict introduces one of the topics of this world congress in the latest encyclical letter. Indeed, the search for justice and the common good should be guiding lights in today’s globalized world. The collapse of the Soviet Union in the late eighties, coupled with the rise of the US as the only remaining ‘superpower’, the emergence of the European Union, regional powers -- such as China, India and Brazil—gradually coming to the foreground, and the recent meltdown of the world financial system with its disastrous consequences for people everywhere, necessitates a re-think of the ‘power’ and the ‘principles’ of development.

The study of communication for development and social change has been through several paradigmatic changes during the past decades. From the modernization and growth theory to the dependency approach and the participatory model, the new traditions of discourse now are characterized by a turn towards local communities as targets for research and debate on the one hand, and the search for an understanding of the complex relationships between globalization and localization on the other hand. Our present-day ‘global’ world, in general as well as in its distinct regional and national entities, is confronted with multifaceted crises: economic and financial, but also social, cultural, ideological, moral, political, ethnic, ecological and security crises. Previously held traditional modernization and dependency perspectives have become more difficult to support because of the growing interdependency of regions, nations and communities in our globalized world.

While significant progress has been made in theorizing the practice and practicing the theory, old problems such as poverty, inequality and information divides persist. Therefore, the discussion needs to be positioned in the context of *socio-economic and cultural rights and freedoms*, culminating in the *Millennium Development Goals* (MDG). As Nobel Prize winner Amartya Sen (2000: 298) concludes, “Development is indeed a momentous engagement with freedom’s possibilities.” Identifying what makes some development initiatives succeed and what makes others fail remains a challenge for scholars and practitioners involved in communication for development and social change.

In this presentation we attempt (a) to summarize the past of Communication for Development and Social Change; (b) to identify the roadmap for the future of Communication for Development and Social Change; (c) to understand the

implications of these theoretical changes for policy-making by way of the distinct Communication for Development and Social Change approaches available in the field and for the Millennium Development Goals; and (d) to assess in more detail the crucial role of Advocacy Communication for Peace-building from a twofold perspective: its impact on policy- and decision-makers, and on media and journalists.

1- SUMMARIZING THE PAST

There are at least three ways of summarizing the past at three different levels: by identifying the different theoretical (1) development and (2) communication paradigms, and (3) by looking at the research priorities in different time periods:

(1) Development paradigms

1. After the Second World War, the founding of the United Nations stimulated relations among sovereign states, especially the North Atlantic Nations and the so-called developing nations, including the new states emerging out of a colonial past. During the cold war period the superpowers—the United States and the former Soviet Union—tried to expand their own interests to the so-called Third World or developing countries. In fact, the USA was defining development and social change as the replica of its own political-economic system and opening the way for the transnational corporations. At the same time, the developing countries saw the ‘welfare state’ of the North Atlantic Nations as the ultimate goal of development. These nations were attracted by the new technology transfer and the model of a centralized state with careful economic planning and centrally directed development bureaucracies for agriculture, education and health as the most effective strategies to catch up with those industrialized countries (McMichael, 2008).

This mainly economic-oriented view, characterized by endogenism and evolutionism, ultimately resulted in the *modernization and growth theory*. It sees development as an unilinear, evolutionary process and defines the state of underdevelopment in terms of observable quantitative differences between so-called poor and rich countries on the one hand, and traditional and modern societies on the other hand (for more details, see Servaes, 1999, 2003, 2008).

2. As a result of the general intellectual ‘revolution’ that took place in the mid 60s, this Euro- or ethnocentric perspective on development was challenged by Latin American social scientists, and a theory dealing with *dependency and underdevelopment* was born. The dependency approach formed part of a general structuralist re-orientation in the social sciences. The ‘dependistas’ were primarily concerned with the effects of dependency in peripheral countries, but implicit in their analysis was the idea that development and underdevelopment must be understood in the context of a world system (Chew & Denmark, 1996).

This dependency paradigm played an important role in the movement for a New International Economic Order (NIEO) and New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) from the late 1960s to the early 1980s (Boyd-Barrett, 1977). At that time, the new states in Africa, Asia and the success of socialist and popular movements in Cuba, China, Chile and other countries provided the goals for political,

economic and cultural self-determination within the international community of nations. These new nations shared the ideas of being independent from the superpowers and moved to form the Non-Aligned Nations. The Non-Aligned Movement defined development as political struggle.

3. Since the demarcation of the First, Second and Third Worlds has broken down and the cross-over center-periphery can be found in every region, there was a need for a new concept of development which emphasized *cultural identity and multidimensionality* (further discussed in De Cuellar, 1995; Garreton, 1999, Robertson, 1992; Sen, 2004; Servaes, 1999, 2008, Tomlinson, 1999).

From the criticism of the two paradigms above, particularly that of the dependency approach, a new viewpoint on development and social change came to the forefront. The common starting point here is the examination of the changes from 'bottom-up', from the self-development of the local community. The basic assumption was that there are no countries or communities that function completely autonomously and that are completely self-sufficient, nor are there any nations whose development is exclusively determined by external factors. Every society is dependent in one way or another, both in form and in degree. Thus, a framework was sought within which both the Center and the Periphery could be studied separately and in their mutual relationship, both at global, national and local levels.

More attention was also being paid to the *content of development*, which implied a more normative, holistic and ecological approach. Pope Benedict (2009: 40) contends that "progress of a merely economic and technological kind is insufficient. Development needs above all to be true and integral". 'Another development' questions whether 'developed' countries are in fact developed and whether this genre of progress is sustainable or desirable. It favors a multiplicity of approaches based on the context and the basic, felt needs, and the empowerment of the most oppressed sectors of various societies at divergent levels. A main thesis is that change must be structural and occur at multiple levels in order to achieve sustainable ends.

(2) Communication paradigms

1. The above more general typology of the so-called development paradigms can also be found at the communication and culture level. The communication media are, in the context of development, generally used to support development initiatives by the dissemination of messages that encourage the public to support development-oriented projects. Although development strategies in developing countries diverge widely, the usual pattern for broadcasting and the press has been predominantly the same: informing the population about projects, illustrating the advantages of these projects, and recommending that they be supported. A typical example of such a strategy is situated in the area of family planning, where communication means like posters, pamphlets, radio, and television attempt to persuade the public to accept birth control methods. Similar strategies are used on campaigns regarding health and nutrition, agricultural projects, education, HIV/Aids prevention and so on.

This model sees the communication process mainly as a message going from a sender to a receiver. This hierarchic view on communication can be summarized in

Laswell's classic formula, -- 'Who says What through Which channel to Whom with What effect?' --, and dates back to (mainly American) research on (political) campaigns and diffusions in the late 40s and 50s (Lerner, 1958; Lerner & Schramm, 1967; Schramm, 1954, 1964; Schramm & Lerner, 1976).

The American scholar Everett Rogers (1983, 1986) is said to be the person who introduced this *diffusion theory* in the context of development. Modernization is here conceived as a process of diffusion whereby individuals move from a traditional way of life to a different, more technically developed and more rapidly changing way of life. Building primarily on sociological research in agrarian societies, Rogers stressed the adoption and diffusion processes of cultural innovation. This approach is therefore concerned with the process of *diffusion and adoption of innovations* in a systematic and planned way. Mass media are important in spreading awareness of new possibilities and practices, but at the stage where decisions are being made about whether to adopt or not to adopt, personal communication is far more likely to be influential. Therefore, the general conclusion of this line of thought is that *mass communication is less likely than personal influence to have a direct effect on social behavior*.

2. Newer perspectives on development communication claim that this is a limited view of development communication. They argue that this diffusion model is a vertical or one-way perspective on communication, and that development will accelerate mainly through active involvement in the process of the communication itself. Research has shown that, while groups of the public can obtain information from impersonal sources like radio, television, and nowadays the Internet, this information has relatively little effect on behavioral changes. And development envisions precisely such change. Similar research has led to the conclusion that more is learned from interpersonal contacts and from mass communication techniques that are based on them. On the lowest level, before people can discuss and resolve problems, they must be informed of the facts, information that the media provide nationally as well as regionally and locally. At the same time, the public, if the media are sufficiently accessible, can make its information needs known.

Communication theories such as the 'diffusion of innovations', the 'two-step-flow', or the 'extension' approaches are quite congruent with the above modernization theory. The elitist, *vertical or top-down orientation of the diffusion model* is obvious (for more details, see Fraser & Restrepo-Estrada, 1998; Mody, 1997, 2003; Servaes 2003, 2008; XXX, 1997).

3. The *participatory model*, on the other hand, incorporates the concepts in the framework of multiplicity. It stresses the importance of cultural identity of local communities and of *democratization and participation at all levels*—global, international, national, local and individual. It points to a strategy, not merely inclusive of, but largely emanating from, the traditional 'receivers'. Paulo Freire (1983:76) refers to this as the right of all people to individually and collectively speak their word: "This is not the privilege of some few men, but the right of every (wo)man. Consequently, no one can say a true word alone—nor can he say it for another, in a prescriptive act which robs others of their words". Or, dixit Pope Benedict (2009: 93): "There is need for the active mobilization of all the subjects of civil society, both juridical and physical persons".

In order to share information, knowledge, trust, commitment, and a right attitude in development projects participation is very important in any decision-making process for development. Therefore, the International Commission for the Study of Communication Problems, chaired by the late Sean MacBride, argued that “this calls for a new attitude for overcoming stereotyped thinking and to promote more understanding of diversity and plurality, with full respect for the dignity and equality of peoples living in different conditions and acting in different ways” (MacBride, 1980:254). This model stresses reciprocal collaboration throughout all levels of participation (for more details, see Jacobson & Servaes, 1999; Papa, Singhal & Papa, 2006; Servaes, Jacobson & White, 1996).

Also, these newer approaches argue, the *point of departure must be the community* (see, for instance, Fuglesang, 1982; Geertz, 1973; Omoto, 2005; Servaes & Liu, 2007). It is at the community level that the problems of living conditions are discussed, and interactions with other communities are elicited. The most developed form of participation is self-management. This principle implies the right to participation in the planning and production of media content. However, not everyone wants to or must be involved in its practical implementation. More important is that participation is made possible in the decision-making regarding the subjects treated in the messages and regarding the selection procedures.

One of the fundamental hindrances to the decision to adopt the participation strategy is that it threatens existing hierarchies. However, participation does not imply that there is no longer a role for development specialists, planners, and institutional leaders. It only means that the viewpoint of the local groups of the public is considered before the resources for development projects are allocated and distributed, and that suggestions for changes in the policy are taken into consideration.

(3) Research priorities

1. Development communication in the *1958–1986 period* was generally greeted with enthusiasm and optimism. In her PhD-thesis Jo Ellen Fair (1988; summarized in Gazette, 1989) examined 224 studies of communication and development published between 1958 and 1986, and found that models predicting either powerful effects or limited effects informed the research.

“Communication has been a key element in the West’s project of developing the Third World. In the one-and-a-half decades after Lerner’s influential 1958 study of communication and development in the Middle East, communication researchers assumed that the introduction of media and certain types of educational, political, and economic information into a social system could transform individuals and societies from traditional to modern. Conceived as having fairly direct and powerful effects on Third World audiences, the media were seen as magic multipliers, able to accelerate and magnify the benefits of development.” (Fair, 1989: 145)

Three directions for future research were suggested: (a) to examine the relevance of message content, (b) to conduct more comparative research, and (c) to conduct more policy research.

2. As a follow-up to this research, Jo Ellen Fair and Hemant Shah (1997) studied 140 journal articles, book chapters and books published in English *between 1987 and 1996*. Their findings are quite illuminating: “*In the 1987–1996 period, Lerner’s modernization model completely disappears*. Instead, the most frequently used theoretical framework is participatory development, an optimistic postmodern orientation, which is almost the polar opposite of Lerner who viewed mass communication as playing a top-down role in social change. Also vanishing from research in this latter period is the two-step flow model, which was drawn upon by modernization scholars” (Fair & Shah, 1997:10).

3. *Both periods* do make use of theories or approaches such as knowledge gap, indirect influence, and uses and gratifications. However, research appearing in the years from 1987–1996 can be characterized as much more theoretically diverse than that published between 1958–1986.

In the 1987–1996 study, the most frequent suggestion was “the need to conduct more policy research, including institutional analysis of development agency coordination. This was followed by the need to research and develop indigenous models of communication and development through participatory research” (Fair & Shah, 1997:19). Therefore, nobody was making the optimistic claims of the early years any longer.

4. Recently, Hemant Shah (2007) completed an analysis of 167 items (123 journal articles, 38 book chapters and 6 books) covering the *1997–2005 period*. Though the meta-research technique may still need some fine-tuning, some of the findings are noteworthy:

* *Most authors work at Western institutions* (70% compared to 48% fifteen years ago), rather than in the Non-Western world (29%) or at Inter-Governmental (IGO) or Non-Governmental (NGO) Organizations (1.5%). Of those working in the Non-Western World, 47% work in Asia, 33% in Africa, and only 7% in Latin America and 1.6% in the Middle East. This was clearly different in the past.

* *Funding for development communication has decreased over time*: While 36.2% of studies were funded in the previous periods, only 11% were funded in this period. “In the 1997–2005 time period, US university funding disappeared almost completely. In contrast, funding of development communication research from IGOs and NGOs and US government funding (exclusively from USAID, however) increased in 1997–2005” (Shah, 2007: 9).

* Surveys, secondary data analysis, content analysis and meta-research were the most popular quantitative methods used in 1997–2005; whereas on the qualitative side these are interviews, case studies, observation, focus groups and ethnography.

* On the content side, *modernization theories remain dominant* (51%), followed by participatory development (38%), dependency (22%), feminist development (19%) and globalization (6%).

* A comparative analysis of media theories used to assess media impact on national development, leads to the following interesting observations: “First, *Lerner’s model of media and development has reappeared in the 1997–2005 time period* after totally disappearing in the 1987–1996 period. Second, only two other theories from the traditional US-based behavioral science approach, social learning theory and

knowledge gap, appear in the 1997–2005 period... The third trend to note is that the two most prominently mentioned theories in 1997–2005 – participatory communication and social learning – reflect two popular development communication project orientations that were mentioned as innovations in the 1987–1996 study: *participatory development and edu-tainment*” (Shah, 2007: 13). Shah explains the persistence of ‘old’ ideas, especially Lerner’s model (1958), from a technological deterministic perspective: “Each new technological innovation in the postcolonial world since 1958 – television, satellites, microwave, computers, call centers, wireless technology – has been accompanied by determined hope that Lerner’s modernization model will increase growth and productivity and produce modern cosmopolitan citizens” (Shah, 2007:24).

* The *consequences of development communication* are very much associated with the more traditional views on modernization; that is, media activate modernity (45%), and media raise knowledge levels (42%). This more traditional perspective makes a strong return, as it was less pronounced during the 1987–1996 time frame. The three other consequences listed are more critical to modernization: media create participatory society (29%), media benefit certain classes (22%), and media create development problems (22%).

The *optimistic belief* that there are overall positive impacts of development communication on individuals, dominant in 1958–1986, has consistently dropped from 25% (in 1958–1986) to 6% (in 1997–2005). Increasingly, however, it is pointed out that *more attention needs to be paid to theory and research*. “Aside from the conclusions urging attention to development theory, the studies also urged more attention to development communication campaign planning by taking into account, as implied by other conclusions, local culture, gender issues, and multimedia delivery of information, and to improving research methods” (Shah, 2007: 20).

* *Suggestions for future research* prioritize the development of new development communication models and the examination of content relevance (both 27%), the need for indigenous models (24%), the study of new technologies (21%), more comparative research (18%), the need for more policy research (8%), and the development of a new normative framework (5%).

The findings by Jo Ellen Fair and Hemant Shah present us with a clear but at the same time complex picture of our field. The suggestions for future research may need to be complemented with other ones --new and old -- mentioned or discussed at other pages or meetings (see, for instance, Gumucio-Dragon & Tufte, 2006, Kim, 2005, Lie, 2003, Mody, 2003, Morris, 2001, Servaes, 2007b, 2008, UNESCO, 2003; or the recommendations by the Scientific Committee for the World Congress on Communication for Development, held in October 2006, in *Annex 1*).

However, *the implicit assumptions on which the so-called dominant modernization paradigm is built do still linger on and continue to influence the policy and planning-making discourse of major actors in the field of Communication for Development and Social Change (CDSC), both at theoretical and applied levels.*

2- MAPPING THE FUTURE

In view of the above, what are the substantial components needed to identify the core for the future of Communication for Development and Social Change (CDSC)?

In my opinion, the best theoretical round-up so far has been produced by Rico Lie (2000, 2003). He identified the following components: (1) the interrelated processes of the emergence of interdisciplinarity, (2) the increasing role of the power of culture, (3) the birth of a new form of modernization, (4) the changing role of the nation-state, and, (5) the emerging attempts to address the link between the global and the local.

(1) Interdisciplinarity

Because of the complexity of societies and cultures, especially in a 'world-system' perspective, the future of the social sciences seems to lie in interdisciplinarity. Theory on the impact of culture on globalization and localization has become a truly interdisciplinary academic field of study (Baumann, 1999, Bayardo & Lacarrieu, 1999, Hopper, 2007, Wilson & Dissanayake, 1996). Marxists, anthropologists, philosophers, political scientists, historians, sociologists, economists, communication specialists and scholars in the field of cultural studies are attempting to integrate the field. The 'meeting' of different perspectives, or in Geertz's terms 'blurred genres' (Geertz, 1983), on socio-cultural phenomena seems to be the most adequate way to grasp the complexity. It is these united attempts that can provide fruitful insights and shed new light on old and new emerging problems.

(2) The power of culture in homogeneity and diversity

Culture has long been regarded as only *context*, but more and more culture is becoming *text*. At the same time it looks as if culture is also the concept that constitutes the common interests of the different disciplines and is as such responsible for interdisciplinarity. Robertson (1992) termed this increasing interest in culture 'the cultural turn': "For not merely is culture increasingly visible as a topic of specialized concern, it is evidently being taken more seriously as a relatively 'independent variable' by sociologists working in areas where it had previously been more or less neglected" (Robertson, 1992:32). Moreover, culture is also increasingly seen as an important factor in international communication, social processes, *social movements and civil society* (Castaneda & Alfaro, 2003, de Sousa Santos, 2007, Esteva & Prakah, 1998, Held & McGrew, 2007, Johnston & Klandermans, 1995, Mato, 2001, 2004, Mattelart, 2007, Omoto, 2005, Wolton, 2003). More focus on culture, and the increased attention that is being given to culture and cultural identity, has changed the debate from its inception with modernization, dependency and 'world-system'-theory. In the Latin American context, authors like Lawrence Harrison (1985) or Carlos Rangel (1977), started arguing in line with a Weberian perspective that *culture is the principle determinant of development*. "In the case of Latin America, we see a cultural pattern, derivative of traditional Hispanic culture, that is anti-democratic, anti-social, anti-progress, anti-entrepreneurial, and, at least among the elite, anti-work" (Harrison, 1985:165; see also Harrison & Huntington, 2000). In order to change this cultural pattern, Harrison argues, at least seven issues need to be resolved: leadership, religious reform, education and training, the media, development projects, management practices, and child-rearing practices (Harrison, 1985: 169-177). Therefore, Anne Deruyttere, former Chief of the Indigenous Peoples and Community Development Unit at the Inter-American Development Bank, pleads

for *development with identity*: “Development with identity refers to a process that includes strengthening of indigenous peoples, harmony and sustained interaction with their environment, sound management of natural resources and territories, the creation and exercise of authority, and respect for the rights and values of indigenous peoples, including cultural, economic, social and institutional rights, in accordance with their own worldview and governance” (Deruyttere, 2006: 13)

(3) A new form of modernization?

Globalization represents a new form of modernization that no longer equals westernization (Bhambra, 2009, Hannerz, 1996, Marling, 2006). However, in the current age of modernism, post-modernism, late or high modernism, or whatever new prefix is used, to grasp the current modern state of the world, it is important to once again point out the linear implications of this thinking. Globalization, which is highly associated with modernisms, as a process of the changing cultural state of the world, is quite linear in its conceptualization (Held et al., 1999; Held, 2000, Sparks, 2007). Although the process is less American oriented and no longer equals westernization as crudely as theories on cultural and media imperialism in the '70s did, it does not *fundamentally* change the thinking that the world has a modern end state which is determined by external forces (Hafez, 2007, Lie, 1998, Wang et al, 2000).

(4) Nation-states and national cultures

Nation-states are seen by most scholars, especially Marxists (Hirst & Thompson, 1996), as the basic elements in a world system and the main actors in the process of globalization, but is this also true for cultural globalization? Does the globalization thesis automatically imply that national cultures are the main elements or actors in a ‘global culture?’ Are the nation-states and national cultures the central points of convergence and main actors in globalization? (Anderson, 1983, Sunkel & Fuenzalida, 1980).

On the one hand the globalization thesis centers the nation-state as the main actor. This has become even more apparent since the financial meltdown of 2008. Many national governments have not only moved to forms of protectionism unheard of a decade ago, but they also tend to argue that this might be the only realistic way out of the crisis (Delcourt, 2009). On the other hand different scholars try to escape from the limitations of state-centrism. This problematizing of state-centrism is in essence what the globalization thesis is all about. According to Bayart (2004), Scholte (2005) and Sklair (1991) we must go beyond the nation-state and develop a sociology of the global system. The same seems to be true for the cultural field. Discussions on global and local culture seem to go beyond discussions that centralize the nation-state and thus center national culture, national identity and nationalism. The nation-state might be the most significant political-economic unit into which the world is divided, but a cultural discussion on globalization must include other levels, because the nation-state is not the only cultural frame that is used for the construction of a cultural identity (Servaes & Lie, 1998). Tomlinson (1999) also showed us by analyzing the discourse within UNESCO, where cultural identity seems to be seen as an equivalent to national identity, that this statement cannot stand ground, because

cultural identity transcends national identity (Tomlinson, 1999:70–75) (see also Canclini, 1999, Hall & Du Gay, 1996).

If culture at the national level is identified as being only one level that structures and frames the construction of identity, we need to initiate a discussion on other levels that play roles in the process of identity construction. There is little discussion possible about what the global level incorporates. There is no bigger socio-cultural or economic-political analytical frame possible. But there seem to be some different interpretations possible about how local, 'local' actually is. Is it an extended family, a village, a tribe, a neighborhood in a town, a city, a county, a region, an island or even a nation-state? Or should it go beyond a nation-state and become associated with 'local' global communities, both real or virtual? These are important issues that also need to incorporate discussions on macro-micro linkages in the social sciences (Elliott & Lemert, 2006; Wilhelm, 2004).

(5) Linking the global and the local

Globalization and localization are seen as interlinked processes and this marks a *radical change in thinking about change and development*. As Anthony Giddens (1995:4–5) observed: "Globalization does not only concern the creation of large-scale systems, but also the transformation of the local, and even personal, context of social experience." Potentially, it integrates global dependency thinking, world-system theory and local, grassroots, interpretative, participatory theory and research on social change (Bauman, 1998, Berger & Huntington, 2002).

Obviously, the debates in the general field of 'international and intercultural communication for development and social change' have shifted and broadened. They have shifted in the sense that they are now focusing on issues related to 'global culture,' 'local culture,' '(post)modernity' and 'multiculturalism' instead of their previous concern with 'modernization,' 'synchronization' and 'cultural imperialism' (Grillo et al, 1998). Therefore, in contrast to mainstream views on globalization, which center on the political economy, the global industry and have a capitalist-centered view of the world, here, the focus is *on situating the field of globalization in the local* (Boonsiripunth, 1994; Haribdranath, 2006; Martinez-Gomez & Lubetkin, 2008).

At the same time the debates have shifted from an emphasis on homogeneity towards an *emphasis on differences*. Therefore, the total conglomerate of changes accounts for something new, and especially the last issue of linking the global with the local can be identified as a central point of change. But how can this conglomerate of global changes be linked to development and political-economic and social change at local levels and from within local levels?

And, finally, this 'explosion of worldwide interdependence' requires "an ethical approach to globalization and development, so too *the meaning and purpose of the media must be sought within an anthropological perspective* ... Just because social communications increase the possibilities of interconnection and the dissemination of ideas, it does not follow that they promote freedom or internationalise development and democracy for all. To achieve goals of this kind, they need to focus on promoting the dignity of persons and peoples" (Benedict, 2009: 136).

3- FROM THEORY TO PRAXIS

The above theoretical changes in Communication for Development and Social Change (CDSC) --*modernization, dependency, multiplicity*-- have also reached the level of policymakers. As a result, different methodologies and terminologies have evolved, which often make it difficult for development agencies, even though they share a common commitment to the overall goals of development communication, to identify common ground, arrive at a full understanding of each other's objectives, or to co-operate effectively in operational projects. Consequently, it is difficult for development organizations in general and UN agencies in particular to reach a common approach and strategy (Martinez-Gomez & Lubetkin, 2008; Servaes, 2008). To understand the implications of these theoretical changes for the praxis in the field, we assess (1) the distinct Communication for Development and Social Change (CDSC) approaches, (2) the so-called Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and (3) the relationship between Communication Technologies and Culture and its implications for policy-making in more detail.

(1) Distinct Communication for Development and Social Change (CDSC) Approaches

1. Differences of opinion about priorities, and about how much and to whom development aid or assistance should be directed, could be explained by critically analyzing the *ontological, epistemological and methodological assumptions* underlying the general perspectives in the Communication for Development and Social Change (CDSC) field.

In Servaes (2007a) I have developed the argument further at *three levels*: (1) the difference between a top-down and a bottom-up CDSC model, (2) different CDSC strategies used by UN agencies, and (3) the role and place of different interpersonal and communication media in CDSC approaches.

UN agencies deploy different elements of communication strategies because they adhere to different mandates, objectives and methods. Distinct development communication approaches and communication means used can be identified within organizations working at distinct societal and geographic levels. Some of these approaches can be grouped together under the heading of the so-called diffusion model, others under the participatory model. As most often no proper ontological or epistemological assumptions are considered, many approaches (I have counted 14 in my article) contain references to both diffusionist and participatory perspectives in obvious contradictory and illogical ways. Adam Rogers (2005a, b), formerly Head of Communications and Information at UNCDF and now with the UN Development Group (UNDG), aptly summarizes it as '*Participatory diffusion or semantic confusion*': "Many development practitioners are avoiding the semantic debates outlined above in order to harness the benefits of both approaches. For them, what is most important is not what an approach is called, the origins of an idea or how it is communicated. What is critical is that we find the most effective and efficient tools to achieve the noble objectives outlined in the Millennium Declaration" (Rogers, 2005b: 183-184).

Since the so-called 'top-down' approaches have fallen out of grace in the highly political development aid community, many statements and reports are now advocating 'bottom-up' approaches with references to participation, empowerment and providing 'a voice for the voiceless'. Hardly anybody seems to be concerned about the implicit contradictions these forms of 'hybridity' pose at both theoretical and applied levels.

2. In general, these approaches and methodologies could be summarized at *two overlapping levels*: (1) the *communication channels and media used*, and (2) the desired or expected outcomes.

Regarding the first level, in Servaes (2007b, 2008) and Servaes & Liu (2007) it was proposed that communication strategies for development and social change should be subdivided at five levels:

- (a) *Behavior change communication* (BCC) (mainly interpersonal communication),
- (b) *Mass communication* (MC) (community media, mass media and ICTs),
- (c) *Advocacy communication* (AC) (interpersonal and/or mass communication),
- (d) *Participatory communication* (PC) (interpersonal communication and community media), and
- (e) *Communication for structural and sustainable social change* (CSSC) (interpersonal communication, participatory communication and mass communication).

Interpersonal communication and mass communication form the bulk what is being studied in the mainstream discipline of communication science (see, e.g., de Melo, 1998, Ihlen, van Ruler & Fredriksson, 2009; Knapp & Daly 2002; McKee et al, 2000, and McQuail, 2005). Behavior change communication is mainly concerned with short-term individual changes in attitudes and behavior. It can be further subdivided in perspectives that explain individual behavior, interpersonal behavior, and community or societal behavior.

Behavioral change communication (BCC), mass communication (MC), and advocacy communication (AC), though useful in itself, will not be able to create sustainable development. Therefore, participatory communication (PC) and communication for structural and sustainable social change (CSSC) are more concerned about long-term sustained change at different levels of society.

Looking at *desired or expected outcomes*, one could think of four broad headings: (a) approaches that attempt to *change attitudes* (through information dissemination, public relations, ...) , (b) *behavioral change* approaches (focusing on changes of individual behavior, interpersonal behavior and/or community and societal behavior); (c) *advocacy* approaches (primarily targeted at policy-makers and decision-makers at all levels and sectors of society); and (d) *communication for structural and sustainable change* approaches (which could be either top-down, horizontal or bottom-up). The first three approaches, though useful by themselves, are in isolation not capable of creating sustainable development. Sustainable social change can only be achieved in combination with and incorporating aspects of the wider environment that influences (and constrains) structural and sustainable change. These aspects include: structural and conjunctural factors (e.g. history, migration, conflicts); policy and legislation; service provision; education systems; institutional

and organizational factors (e.g. bureaucracy, corruption); cultural factors (e.g. religion, norms and values); socio-demographic factors (e.g., ethnicity, class); socio-political factors; socio-economic factors; and the physical environment (Servaes, 2009).

For instance, The Rome Consensus agreed at the World Congress on Communication for Development (Rome, 25–27 October 2006) states that “Communication for Development is a social process based on dialogue using a broad range of tools and methods. It is also about seeking change at different levels including listening, building trust, sharing knowledge and skills, building policies, debating and learning for sustained and meaningful change. *It is not public relations or corporate communication*” (emphasis added) (<http://www.devcomm-congress.org/worldbank/macro/2.asp>)

However, major aspects of many projects and programs currently being promoted and implemented are, I believe, nothing but ‘public relations or corporate communication’ wrapped in participatory diffusion rhetoric (see also Morris, 2001)

3. The field of communication for social change is vast, and the models supporting it are as different as the ideologies that inspired them. However, generally speaking, we see two approaches: one aims to produce a common understanding among all the participants in a development initiative by implementing a policy or a development project, that is, *the top-down model*; the other emphasizes engaging the grassroots in making decisions that enhance their own lives, or *the bottom-up model*. Despite the diversity of approaches, there is a consensus today on the need for grassroots participation in bringing about change at both social and individual levels. Therefore, as Amartya Sen (2004: 20) argues, “The deciding issue, ultimately, has to be one of democracy. An overarching value must be the need for participatory decision-making on the kind of society people want to live in, based on open discussion, with adequate opportunity for the expression of minority positions.” Many believe that the UN campaign to reach the Millennium Development Goals by 2015 is an appropriate objective to aim for.

(2) The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

1. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) initiative follows decades of debate over how nations might collaborate on long-term strategies for a global social agenda. Wealthy countries were asked to increase development aid, relieve the debt burden on poor countries, and give them fair access to markets and technology. While people like Alston (2005) argue that, for development communication, the MDGs “are the most prominent initiative on the global development agenda”; Silvio Waisbord (2006: 3) “cannot help but notice that communication goals are absent... While everyone seems to think that communication is important, apparently it is not crucial enough to make it into the (MDG) list”.

Each Millennium Development Goal (MDG) has its own set of targets and benchmarks that provide a measurable way to track its implementation (UNDP, 2006). However, questions can be raised about the feasibility and appropriateness of setting the same global targets for governments worldwide:

“The MDGs can justly claim to generate a bit of buzz about duties a government might otherwise neglect... Sadly, however, they cannot do what they purport to do, which is to provide credible benchmarks against which governments can be judged... Some goals cannot be met, others cannot be measured... The goals are supposed to be everyone’s responsibility, which means they are no one’s. Poor countries can blame rich ones for not stumping up enough cash; rich governments can accuse poor ones of failing to deserve more money” (The Economist, 2007: 13).

In essence, development is about the development of people and the transformation of society. The Millennium Development Goals (MDG) in general look at development as an ‘engineering problem’ to be solved from a top-down perspective. “Sixty years of countless reform schemes to aid agencies and dozens of different plans, and \$2.3 trillion later, the aid industry is still failing to reach the beautiful goal (of making poverty history, JS). The evidence points to an unpopular conclusion: Big Plans will always fail to reach the beautiful goal” (Easterly, 2006: 11). *Table 1* presents a number of roles which Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) could play to achieve the MDGs.

However, in the UN system conflicts seldom concern the MDGs as such, but rather the means of achieving them. In line with my above argument the MDGs should be assessed from *a people’s perspective*. In other words: What can MDGs do for the poor and ‘voiceless’? “Setting a prefixed (and grandiose) goal is irrational because there is no reason to assume that the goal is attainable at a reasonable cost with the available means” (Easterly, *ibid.*). Even UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-Moon, expressed his disappointment and concern in the 2007 interim report on the MDGs: “The lack of any significant increase in official development assistance since 2004 makes it impossible, even for well-governed countries, to meet the MDGs” (UN, 2007:3).

It is therefore essential to start from the perspective of local communities and to cooperate with organizations (UN, governmental, NGOs, the public and the private sector, and civil society) that have developed a trust within a community in order to achieve sustainable change in society.

4. ADVOCACY COMMUNICATION FOR PEACE-BUILDING

Advocacy communication seems to be a key action word in nowadays development discourse in general and for the issue of conflict-resolution and peace-building in particular. Issues of peace and war, security and safety have been around for ages. Around 250 armed conflicts were fought in the twentieth century, over 110 million people got killed, and many more wounded, crippled and mutilated. By the end of the century, some figures indicated the existence of 233 groups in 93 countries -- one-sixth of humanity!--engaged in political or military struggles with more than 20 million refugees on the run (Adolf, 2009, Manoff, 1998, Marsella & Noren, 2003). The first decade of the new millennium has not shown any change in this pattern. To the contrary, with 9/11 and the ‘war on terror’ other frontlines have been opened and more humans subjected to physical and emotional hardships.

Analyzing the multilayered and complex factors which caused these wars and conflicts is not the objective of this paper. Some of the reasons may be found in structural (including economic, social, cultural and political) issues relating to wealth distribution and inter-ethnic relations, the degree of politicization and ethnic consciousness, sharp economic and social crises, inter-group tensions and the collapse of central authority (Costy and Gilbert, 1998: 12; see, e.g., also Elias, 1993, Guseva, Nakaa et al. 2008, Kaldor & Kalyvas, 2009, Kalyvas, 2006, Marsella & Noren, 2003, Nagel, 2003, Servaes, 2009). “Generally the political structures in a society largely determine what role the media can play both as an arena and actor in tension areas” (Sida, 2004: 10). However, here we wish to discuss the role and impact of advocacy communication for conflict-resolution and peace-building.

However, a first rather sobering point to make is that there still is no consensus on a definition of advocacy or the process of advocating. “The key point is that advocacy seeks to increase the power of people and groups and to make institutions more responsive to human needs” (Wallack et al, 1993: 28). Advocates are usually *'issue' or 'program' oriented* and do not often think in terms of an on-going process of social change in general or peace-building in particular. The resolution of an issue or the initiation of a program are ends in themselves. Thus the primary aim of advocacy is to foster public policies that are supportive to the solution of an issue or program. Since public policies must be viewed as an integral part of the social and economic development process, the kind of advocacy we would like to put forward is that which is *participatory*. The focus in this approach is on ‘listening’ and ‘cooperation’ rather than on ‘telling what to do’ and presumes a dynamic two-way approach towards communication.

Therefore, a general working *definition of advocacy* could be:

“Advocacy for development is a combination of social actions designed to gain political commitment, policy support, social acceptance and systems support for a particular goal or program. It involves collecting and structuring information into a persuasive case; communicating the case to decision-makers and other potential supporters, including the public, through various interpersonal and media channels; and stimulating actions by social institutions, stakeholders and policy-makers in support of the goal or program” (Servaes, 1992: 2).

After (1) some general introductory observations on advocacy communication, we plan to assess the crucial role of advocacy communication for peace-building from a twofold perspective: (2) its impact on policy- and decision-makers, and (3) on media and journalists.

(1) Types of advocacy strategies

1. The usual pattern for mass media has been predominantly the same: informing the population about projects, illustrating the advantages of these projects, and recommending that they be supported. Generally a number of media are used to achieve a persuasive or informational purpose with a chosen population, the most common examples being found in politics, advertising, fund-raising, and public

information for peace and safety. Often, in the process of interpersonal communication (through opinion leaders, gatekeepers and/or change agents) the concerns of the general public are identified, issues debated and decisions to adopt or not to adopt are reached through interactive processes. It is through such interactive processes that public pressure and demand are developed to influence policymakers. Therefore, the general conclusion of this line of thought is that mass communication is less likely than personal influence to have a direct effect on attitude and behavior change.

Newer perspectives, advocating a more bottom-up or participatory approach, claim that this is still a limited view. They argue that active involvement in the process of the communication itself will accelerate change. Adequate knowledge and desirable attitudes are not necessarily followed by appropriate practices. The gap between knowledge and practice is well recognized. Behavior change and acceptance of new practices become possible and feasible when there is material and human support from the community. Also other factors play a significant role in bringing about desirable behavior conducive to change. Therefore, the support of society is an important factor in making choices for action. *The point of departure should be the 'community' or the 'public'*. It means that the viewpoint of the local groups of the public is considered before the resources for development projects are allocated and distributed, and that suggestions for changes in the policy are taken into consideration. However, experience has shown that no single approach in itself can suffice to ensure successful advocacy for development-supportive public policies. Advocacy is most effective when, besides mass media, individuals and groups and all sectors of society are engaged in this process (Further elaborated on in DFID, 2004; Fraser & Estrepto-Estrada 1992, 1998; Papa, Singhal & Papa, 2006; Omoto, 2005; Servaes, 1999, 2008).

Mass media can play two kinds of advocacy roles: (a) they can support development initiatives by the dissemination of messages that encourage the public to support development-oriented projects; and (b) they can provide the decision-makers with the necessary information and feedback needed to reach a decision. Policy-makers usually respond to popular appeal, to lobby groups, and to their own social network of policy- and decision-makers. Therefore, advocacy, political commitment and supportive policies are often themselves a product of social support systems and empowerment of people. *Advocacy should therefore be viewed in conjunction with social support and empowerment strategies* (for more details, see Servaes, 2000).

Advocacy is most effective when individuals, groups and all sectors of society are involved, through three interrelated strategies for action:

- (a) *Advocacy* generating political commitment for supportive policies and heightening public interest and demand for health issues;
- (b) *Social support* developing alliances and social support systems that legitimize and encourage development-related actions as a social norm; and
- (c) *Empowerment* equipping individuals and groups with the knowledge, values and skills that encourage effective action for change.

2. As mentioned, there are a wide variety of advocacy strategies. In any strategy *three basic dimensions* of action can be distinguished: (a) the organization of activities; (b) the substance of activities, and (c) the 'climate' of human relations in which activities take place. At all these dimensions media and public pressure do play a major role.

Divergent theories in each of these three dimensions of action need to be reviewed in an attempt to uncover the source of behavior in different types of strategies. Special attention should be given to the impact of attitudes and behavioral sciences on (a) *organization theory*, (b) *knowledge utilization*, and (c) *policy analysis*.

The choice of advocacy strategies will vary with the nature of the issue and the expectation of the people or the stakeholders. It depends on the pattern of involvement of particular *policy stakeholders* -- that is, individuals or groups, which have a stake in policies because they affect and are affected by governmental decisions. Policy stakeholders often respond in markedly different ways to the same information about a policy environment. A policy environment, which is the specific context in which events surrounding a policy issue occur, influences and is in turn influenced by policy stakeholders and public policies. Hence, policy systems contain processes which are dialectical in nature, meaning that objective and subjective dimensions of the policy-making process are inseparable in practice.

3. Policy systems are subjective human products created by the conscious choices of policy stakeholders; policy systems are an objective reality manifested in observable actions and their consequences; policy stakeholders are products of policy systems. Policy analysts no less than other policy actors, are both creators and products of policy systems.

In order to identify the appropriate advocacy strategy, one or more of the following important characteristics of policy problems have to be considered:

1. *Interdependence of policy problems*: This implies that one should not only use an analytic but also a holistic approach.

2. *Subjectivity of policy problems*: Besides 'objective' realities, subjective judgments and values come into play in the decision-making process. Advocacy strategies must address both.

3. *Artificiality of policy problems*: Problems have no existence apart from the individuals who define them, which means that there are no 'natural' states of society that in and of themselves constitute policy problems.

4. *Dynamics of policy problems*: There are as many different solutions for a given problem as there are definitions of that problem.

(2) Advocacy Communication for Decision-Making versus Decision-Reaching

1. *Advocacy for policy design and decision-making versus advocacy for policy implementation or social mobilization*: Confusion remains about what should be the *main focus* in the advocacy strategies. In general, one can distinguish between (a) advocacy for policy design and decision-making aimed at ensuring political, social and legislative support for a peace issue (e.g. a general amnesty); and (b) advocacy for policy implementation which requires intensive efforts for mobilizing social forces, individuals and groups for development actions (e.g. rebuilding a country).

Both are important and must be addressed. The aim in advocacy strategies is to foster political and public engagement as well as professionals through a process of social mobilization.

Different kinds of problems and situations may call for different solutions. However, there is no universal approach that can be used in all circumstances, flexibility is required in selecting appropriate strategies. Basically, one can distinguish between two fundamentally opposite strategies, which in practice should be viewed as extremes on a continuum: (a) strategies for *decision-making* (top-down); and (b) strategies for *decision-reaching* (participatory). Therefore, one could propagate either a combination of policies or strategies, or the creation of a *hybrid approach* drawing on several theories.

2. *The decision-making process in policy development:* Policy- and decision-makers face the challenge of decision-making among alternative solutions and competing demands as well as providing for the implementation of decisions made. Choices not only about the communication problems they address and the solutions they propose in their plans, but also about the way in which decisions will be implemented and carried out (Grindle & Thomas, 1989, Lindquist, 2003). Therefore, policy- and decision-makers may feel the need for a general conceptual and operational framework. One of the reasons for this is that policy and decision-making is not only a theoretical but at the same time an applied discipline: “A process of conducting research on, or analysis of, a fundamental social problem in order to provide policy-makers with pragmatic, action-oriented recommendations for alleviating the problem” (Majchrzak, 1984: 12).

Every policy decision seems to go through a so-called '*policy life cycle*' in which four phases can be identified: (i) recognizing the problem; (ii) 'defining' the problem; (iii) solving the problem; and (iv) maintaining control over the problem (see Box 1).

Box 1: The phases of the policy life cycle.	
Policy life-cycle phase	Methods of communication
Recognizing the problem	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular opinion/attitude surveys • (Mass) media content analysis • Analysis of communication-materials (newsletters, leaflets, websites) of NGO's, consumer groups • Systematic and continuous network (both in real and virtual space) with NGO's, interest groups, scientific institutions • Regular briefings/interviews and meetings with interest and lobby groups
Formulation -	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge/Attitude/Practice ('KAP') surveys

understanding the problem	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrating communication in the mix of policy instruments • Design of communication strategy • Informative extension/communication (to disclose issues and policy options) to those who will get involved
Solution of the problem	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication as an independent instrument • Communication complementary to other instruments • Informing groups on the use of other instruments (new laws, subsidies, etc) • Ex-ante evaluation through qualitative research
Maintaining control of the problem	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public information • Informing on changes of policy design and implementation • Regular opinion/attitude surveys (since age-linked target groups slowly will be replaced by younger generations)

Adapted from Winsemius (1986)

It is important to recognize that decision-makers will only be willing to make a decision or change a policy under a number of conditions: (1) when they consider the issue economically or politically viable; (2) when there is enough public pressure or support; and (3) when there is strong supportive evidence and the need is felt to prioritize the issue.

3. *Decision-Making versus Decision-Reaching*: Decision-making builds on a number of 'resources': (a) expertise/knowledge; (b) availability/control over information; (c) political access and sensitivity; (d) assessed stature and personality; (e) group support/empowerment; and (f) a favorable socio-cultural and political-economic environment. Decision-making ideally has to be based on knowledge/expertise and the technical merit of the issue. Politics however will always play a role in the process and outcome of decision-making.

(a) The *knowledge/expertise* needed for social problem solving is diverse (McMahon, 2001). Multiple sources and forms of knowledge are needed to know more about the nature of the problem in order to be able to examine alternatives and make choices. Each stakeholder group can make a valuable contribution in creating knowledge about the social problem, from its own perspective and experience. This includes the knowledge of local people, policy makers, researchers, economists, health workers etc. This socially constructed knowledge can help define the nature of the problem and serve as a rational basis for the decision-making process.

This knowledge can be communicated with the actors through information in various communication forms. Not every message that is being communicated is

automatically 'information' to the addressed person. The receiver or user decides whether the content of the message is 'useful' or not. Data will become information if they have a specific meaning to the receiver. Relevant evidence-based information reduces the uncertainty on the issue in the decision-making process and therefore speeds up consensus building and action (Crewe & Young, 2002).

One could call attention to *four major shortcomings* of available analytic methods. These are cogent reasons why we cannot expect the work of professional policy analysts to eliminate the play of power and the bargaining that goes on among contending interest groups within every organization, which typically enter into the formation of a policy decision and the modifications that are introduced when attempts to implement it are not successful: (a) professional analysts are fallible and power holders (often) know it; (b) the work of professional analysts is often very slow and costly; (c) professional analysts often have limited predictive evidence about the value of various competing alternatives or priorities; and (d) in the absence of 'harmony of interests or values among individuals or contending groups' within the organization, the professional analysts may find it difficult to propose a policy solution satisfactory to all parties.

(b) *Information* may become an instrument for advancing, attacking, or defending status. The structural location of many decision-makers offers them particular advantage with regard to the control over organizational communication. In this regard, they are well positioned to take on the role of technical gatekeepers. As such they are potentially able to influence the resource allocation process in their organization through a process of collecting, filtering and reformulating information. This may especially be the case in the uncertain conditions surrounding innovative decisions.

Therefore, *decision-makers* are expected to reach decisions on the basis of three kinds of questions: (1) values whose attainment is the main test of whether a problem has been resolved; (2) facts whose presence may limit or enhance the attainment of values; and (3) actions whose adoption may result in the attainment of values and the resolution of problems (Weiss, 1977a,b). Even when decision-makers are motivated to base their actions on the evidence that social science provides, they may have to face other constraints as well, as listed by Weiss and Bucuvalas (1980): (a) Decision-making in public agencies is often a fragmented enterprise. Decisions are not necessarily the province of a single individual or even of a clearly defined set of individuals; (b) Decision-makers change jobs with considerable frequency; (c) Decision-makers tend to be in a hurry, (d) Decision-makers have to deal with much of the world as given, (e) Policy issues shift rapidly; (f) Many decision-makers have been immersed in the substance of program and policy issues for decades, (g) The findings and recommendations from social science research studies may not match the jurisdiction and authority of any agency; (h) The findings and recommendations from social science research may call for action that is beyond the sources (funds, staff, skills) of the cognizant agency; (i) The findings and recommendations from social science research may suggest changes in policy that are outside the ideological and philosophical boundaries of the administration, the agency, or the attentive public; and, finally, policy makers are interested not only in the application of the best evidence to the resolution of problems but also in reconciling differences and teaching compromises that maintain the stability of the system. Therefore, in the

interests of responsiveness, consensus building or 'hard-core politics', they may be willing to sacrifice the 'best solution' offered by research.

(c) In the decision-making processes the validity or weight of the evidence may not always be the decisive factor. The amount of support a decision-maker gets is likely to be conditional on the structure and nature of his/her direct and indirect interpersonal relationships. Therefore, the politically aware decision-maker is likely to be conscious of the span of her/his *social network*.

(d) The *status of the decision-maker* in the power hierarchy as well as the consequence of decision on his future status will influence the decision-making process. Expertise, control over information, and political access and sensitivity are necessary but not sufficient conditions for the decision-makers' power. The possession and tactical use of these power resources needs to be considered in the context of the decision-makers' assessed stature in the social network. One important variable therefore is the amount and kind of group support given to the decision-maker by his/her 'peers' and outside 'lobby groups' will be an important factor in decision-making/reaching.

(e) Lastly, as stressed already a number of times, the socio-cultural and political environment, favorable or hostile, will also have an impact on decision-making/reaching (Figueroa et. al, 2002, Lie, 2003, Servaes, 2008).

4. *Decision-linked research for policy-making*: Decision-linked research has to play a key role in the process of reaching informed decisions. Such research must address the issues of concern to decision-makers and ensure the involvement of stakeholders, planners and program managers. Research findings are often not used because the critical issues are not addressed, or often not utilized, or the stakeholders are not involved as the findings are not timely and well communicated. The *traditional model of scientific research* for decision-making assumes a linear rational process and disregards the political environment and multiplicity of decision-making. The model posits a decision-maker who has a problem and calls upon a scientist to do research to help solve the problem. The scientist conducts the research and communicates the results and recommendations. The decision-maker applies the findings and the problem is solved.

A basic problem concerning this model is that the last assumption generally does not happen. In general, social research is not used in decision-making due to a variety of reasons. Most important is the lack of: (1) involvement of stakeholders; (2) planning; and (3) communication.

Social problems demand *an alternative utilization focused model*, which involves all relevant stakeholders in shaping the policy research. They are involved in the research before collecting data. At the same time, also data gathered in non-scientific ways (during political campaigns or emotional exchanges) could contribute to the decision-making process.

Involving identified decision-makers and information users in the making of measurement and design decisions is based on the assumption that utilization is enhanced if users understand, believe in, and have a stake in the data.

Each stakeholder group has its own perception of the nature of the problem and its causes. All the stakeholders can contribute towards creating more insight. The following considerations are important:

- (i) Defining relevant stakeholder groups concerning the issue;
- (ii) Involving those stakeholders in the research process;
- (iii) Defining the problem for each stakeholder group;
- (iv) Conducting a discussion amongst stakeholder groups towards a ‘shared scope’ of the problem;
- (v) Developing a shared definition of the problem on the basis of which questions will be designed whose answers are likely to shed more light on the ‘solution’ of the problem;
- (vi) Conducting empirical research based on the designed questions;
- (vii) Discussing the results of the empirical research with the stakeholders in order to come to a basis on which possible policy and action can be negotiated;
- (viii) Negotiating a plan of action and implementation;
- (ix) Performing and guiding action and implementation; and
- (x) Organizing cycles of monitoring, evaluation and possibly adoption of the action in which all relevant stakeholders are involved

This decision-linked research requires an interactive process towards developing a shared understanding of the problem, which is the basis for negotiation on action.

5. *Planning of advocacy and communication strategies:* Advocacy and communication strategies have to be planned and targeted. Providing information to decision-makers does not guarantee that something will be done. The issue is not primarily ‘how to get the message across’ but ‘how to improve the use of the advocacy information in decision-making’. In order to improve the utilization of information and advocacy messages the following issues are considered important (see *Box 2*).

Box 2: Important criteria for the success of advocacy messages	
Relevance	The issue has to be considered relevant to the several stakeholder groups.
Timing	The issue has to be brought up on the right time.
Validity	The information and statistics provided have to be valid.
Cultural sensitivity	The information should be tailored to the audiences and be in line with the understandings and expectations of people or stakeholders.

Orientation of the relevant stakeholder groups	Stakeholder groups have to be trained in interpreting data, so that they are able to understand them.
Planning	The advocacy strategies and communication should be planned in advance to improve utilization of the information.
Communication	Interaction and reaching mutual understanding(s) between relevant stakeholder groups
Action orientation	Advocacy strategies have to provide information for concrete action.
Dissemination of information	Advocacy messages and information can only be used by decision-makers if they are disseminated properly.

Once again it needs to be stressed that communication and dissemination are important but not the only factors to improve the advocacy efforts towards decision-making/reaching. The various elements in the advocacy act are interdependent.

Moreover, in order to be effective, *advocacy strategies should focus on the users of the information as well as on the message*. People are actors and subjects, not objects, in advocacy efforts. The content and form of the advocacy messages have to be adapted to the specific audience of decision-makers and be based on their needs, issues, concerns and interests to be able to catch their interest and potential engagement. *Coalition building and networking* with various interest groups and actors in the decision-making process are critical elements in advocacy strategies.

(3) Media and Peace-building Interventions

1. It is the instrumental role of the media in the public ‘negotiation’ of the above factors that is of interest here. So-called ‘hate’ media and both commercial and partisan media’s sensationalist and propagandistic reporting and attacks on the ‘others’ are important ‘players’ in conflicts and wars (James, 2004, Elias, 1993). For Hamelink (1997: 32) it is through the media that national or ethnic propagandists can “suggest to their audiences that ‘the others’ pose fundamental threats to security and well-being of the society and that the only effective means of escaping this threat, is the elimination of this great danger.”

Despite evidence supporting a more ‘selective effects’ approach, many international, bilateral and national governmental and non-governmental organizations believe that *specially ‘designed’ peace-building media interventions* can have a positive impact and stop violent conflicts. The idea behind media interventions and peace building is clearly a problematic one to make. The *mainstream line* of thought behind ‘media and peace building’ goes that journalists are not supposed to ‘take

sides' on the conflict in question, other than the side of 'peace' (Galtung, 1998; Lynch & McGoldrick, 2005).

2. The findings and recommendations from a major project of the international NGO, *Search for Common Ground* involving fifteen cases where media peace-building projects were carried out in conflict areas around the world (Afghanistan, Benin, Cambodia, Central Asia, Colombia, Cyprus, DG Congo, Greece, Indonesia, Kenya, Macedonia, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Turkey) may be of interest. We summarize from Howard, Rolt et al (2003) and Terzis & Vassiliadou (2008).

The selected projects have striking differences, "but they all begin with a basic premise: that violent conflict is fuelled by ignorance and misunderstanding, and that knowledge and accurate information are vital building blocks of peace, stability, and reconciliation" (Howard, Rolt et al, 2003: 82). Some of the *basic questions* raised during these projects were: Who defines peace? , How is peace conceptualized?, How many types of peace exist for the various stakeholders and how do these apply in particular conflict areas?, On which criteria, premises and priorities are journalists' choices based over the target audience and/or the issues to be addressed? , Which accountability systems are held in place in order to take into consideration for eventual fallbacks? Who decides if media interventions are indeed 'constructive'?, Should media interventions take place at all?, Which are the defining conditions for such interventions and what is the justification for the [often international] organization's presence in areas of conflict?, To which extent are they imposing their own value-system while attempting to introduce a media culture of peace?, To which extent are these media interventions funding driven and in which ways does it affect the process and the outcome?

Since no two ethno-political conflicts or media environments are the same, these questions led to a variety of answers and suggested solutions. There is *no such thing as a one-size-fits-all* in this. It is important to distinguish between the various stages of media intervention and the suggestions provided below are meant as 'guidelines' rather than 'must-follow recipes'. Therefore, the Canadian-based organization 'Journalists for Human Rights' (JHR, 2007) has started the publication of country-specific handbooks for a number of countries in Africa.

3. The various stages of media intervention projects are the following: (a) the 'Pre-Project Assessment' section, deals with the first stage of conducting media peace-building projects, that is, feasibility studies and pre-project assessment work; (b) the 'Project Planning/Design' section categorizes media projects into three broad categories, namely training, provision of hardware, and media content and provides a comprehensive outline of questions and themes that need to be addressed before a project takes place; (c) 'Monitoring/Evaluation' addresses two challenging and often controversial stages of any media [and other] peace-building project, that of implementation and evaluation. It points to important issues to consider throughout these two stages and provides guidelines on how these can be carried out most effectively. (d) Lastly, the 'Sustainability' of the project needs to be taken into account.

(a) *Pre-Project Assessment and Planning*: A feasibility study may be needed to find out more about (1) the conflict situation per se, (2) the media environment and whether that allows the space for media-based intervention for peaceful conflict transformation, and, if so, (3) to identify the type of this intervention based on the overall results of the previous two.

At this level, questions like the following need to be answered: What is the conflict about?, What is the history of the conflict and as told by whom?, What is the current level of ethnic, political and economic tensions?, Are there any contextual issues such as land disputes, poverty, religious fundamentalism, mine risks, power struggles, gender relations [rape, wife battering], child abuse, etc.. The identification of power structures in terms of ethnicity, class, age, and gender amongst others, as well as the most dominant values and accepted social norms are vital data on which to base any potential project. What are the views of the peoples on the various sides of the conflict? What do they perceive to be the reasons for the conflict, as necessary factors for its resolution and as a desirable solution? What are their needs for security, identity and development? (Castles, 2000, Howard et al., 2003). Which communication avenues are available? Who owns/controls them? The diversity of the media needs to be explored and assessed and the support of the commercial sector for a variety of independent media, which are widely available to the public needs to be explored (Gilboa, 2000: 275–309).

The *time-line of the conflict* is important: Pre-Conflict (Latent), Open Conflict, and (or) Post-Conflict. Although quite simplistic, such time lines can provide an indication on how to proceed. One way this could be approached is in terms of what the official line is, what the international community says, how the people experience it and so on.

Also important to this multi-dimensional assessment is designing the questions according to the local variables. Such a *case-specific approach* would allow the implemented strategies to vary widely according to the nature of the conflict, the cultural geography of the field and the local media landscape. Finally, it is not only the questions which are important to the assessment, but the selection of the people asking those questions and who they choose to ask. “*The bottom line is to identify the local and international power structures at various levels and thus first be aware of ‘who says what to whom and why’ and the researcher’s own positionality in the process*” (Terzis & Vassiliadou, 2008: 379).

(b) *Project Planning – Design*: The political, economic, cultural, religious, and educational variables of the area of concern need to be taken into consideration while planning/designing the project. Cultures of democracy and tolerance, financial media independence, and applied, fair legislation are all indicators that the project is more likely to have a longer lasting effect. This section could be subdivided under three headings: (1) Training, (2) Media Content and (3) Provision of Hardware.

Training journalists can be ineffective in a totalitarian environment; using the print media for a population with high illiteracy rates will not have the desired affects;

neither will use of television as a medium for the project in areas where most people have no access to televisions sets, or even electricity.

The conflict situation and the state of the local media landscape will determine which one (or combination) of media contents and genres is more appropriate. These could include hard-news journalism, the Internet and internet dialogues, advertising and public service announcements, public relations, television and radio programs, including inter-ethnic peace reporting, soap operas, comedies, drama series, documentaries, movies, roundtable talk-shows, peace songs, call-in shows on the radio, wall posters and matchbooks, cartoons on television and in magazines, video dialogue, street theatre, popular music, editorial exchange, and social marketing.

Because of the partial or complete destruction of the media infrastructure in areas of conflict the provision of media hardware is increasingly been recognized as an important area of humanitarian assistance (for more details, see Beckett & Kyrke-Smith, 2007, DFID, 2000)

(c) *Monitoring and Evaluation*: It is important that monitoring and evaluation are conducted on a systematic and regular basis and that the results are used to provide feedback on how to sustain the project's impact and develop further projects in a manner that addresses the needs of local people and project participants. "Evaluations have to be put into perspective in relation to other political, economical and social trends in a region. In other words, they must be based in a regional context, not only in the context of the particular conflict setting whether the project is carried out" (Galama & Van Tongeren, 2002: 22). One cannot thus assume that the resulting effects of any project are isolated from events within the conflict and the region in general (for more details, see Eknes & Endresen, 1999, Hieber, 2001, Kelman, 1995, O Siochru, 2005, Ross, 2001).

(d) *Sustainability and 'Handover' Strategy*: In order to ensure that a media intervention project is not driven primarily by funding, and that its' implementers do not impose their own value-system while attempting to introduce a media 'culture of peace', but rather that they are interested predominantly in the project's sustainability of the project, a 'handover strategy' must be an integral part of the project design and objectives. Handing over the project to local community groups or professional organizations and the implementation of this strategy will enable the organization to incorporate local capacity building as an integral part of the project strategy (Kaldor & Kalyvas, Guimaraes, 2005, Reychler, 2007). However, "it appears that the media projects which incorporate such strategies are rare" (Terzis & Vassiliadou, 2008: 387).

6- BY WAY OF CONCLUSION

"Violence puts the brakes on authentic development and impedes the evolution of peoples towards greater socio-economic and spiritual well-being"
Pope Benedict XVI (2009: 52-3)

Today almost nobody would dare to make the optimistic claims of the early years any longer. The experience of the past fifty years has demonstrated that development is possible, but not inevitable.

As many others, we are in search of a new paradigm for development and social change, one which looks at development as a *transformation of society*. In such a perspective “change is not an end in itself, but a means to other objectives. The changes that are associated with development provide individuals and societies more control over their own destiny. Development enriches the lives of individuals by widening their horizons and reducing their sense of isolation. It reduces the afflictions brought on by disease and poverty, not only increasing lifespans, but improving the vitality of life” (Stiglitz, 1998: 3). We have referred to this paradigm as *multiplicity* (Servaes, 1999).

This perspective argues that considerations of communication need to be explicitly built into development plans to ensure that a mutual sharing/learning process is facilitated. Such communicative sharing is deemed the best guarantee for creating successful transformative projects. Therefore, I define Communication for Development and Social Change as:

Communication for social change is the nurturing of knowledge aimed at creating a consensus for action that takes into account the interests, needs and capacities of all concerned. It is thus a social process, which has as its ultimate objective sustainable development at distinct levels of society.

Communication media and ICTs are important tools in achieving social change but their use is not an end in itself. Interpersonal communication and traditional group media must also play a fundamental role.

The new starting point is examining the processes of ‘bottom-up’ change, focusing on self-development of local communities. The basic assumption is that there are no countries or communities that function completely autonomously and that are completely self-sufficient, nor are there any nations whose development is exclusively determined by external factors. Every society is dependent in one way or another, both in form and in degree. Hence, “a sustained commitment is needed so as to promote a person-based and community-oriented cultural process of world-wide integration that is open to transcendence” (Benedict, 2009: 80).

This also implies, as argued by Southern scholars like Kwame Anthony Appiah (2005, 2006), Wimal Dissanayake (2006), Shelton Gunaratne (2005), or Majid Tehranian (2007) that a cultural perspective has to be fully embraced. Wimal Dissanayake, for instance, argues for a *new concept of humanism*: “Humanism as generally understood in Western discourse ... places at the center of its interest the sovereign individual – the individual who is self-present, the originator of action and meaning, and the privileged location of human values and civilizational achievements. However, the concept of the self and individual that is textualized in the kind of classical works that attract the attention of Asian communication theorists present a

substantially different picture. The ontology and axiology of selfhood found in Buddhism differs considerably from those associated with European humanism. What these differences signpost is that there is not one but many humanisms” (Dissanayake, 2006: 6).

Many humanisms may lead to what Appiah calls *the cosmopolitan challenge*: “If we accept the cosmopolitan challenge, we will tell our representatives that we want them to remember those strangers. Not because we are moved by their suffering – we may or may not be – but because we are responsive to what Adam Smith called ‘reason, principle, conscience, the inhabitant of the beast’. The people of the richest nations can do better. This is a demand of simple morality. But it is one that will resonate more widely if we make our civilization more cosmopolitan” (Appiah, 2006: 174).

Attention is also needed to critically analyze the *content of development agendas*. An understanding of the way in which development projects both encounter and transform power relationships within (and between) the multiple stakeholders who are impacted by such projects; and an understanding of the way in which communication plays a central part in building (or maintaining or changing) power relationships is needed.

Therefore, *three streams of action* are important:

- Media must be activated to build public support and upward pressure for policy decisions.
- Interest groups must be involved and alliances established for reaching a common understanding and mobilizing societal forces. This calls for networking with influential individuals and groups, political forces and public organizations, professional and academic institutions, religious and cause-oriented groups, business and industry.
- Public demand must be generated and citizens' movements activated to evoke a response from national leaders. It may not always be easy to build up a strong public movement around development issues -- but even a moderate display of interest and effort by community leaders could stimulate the process for policy decisions and resource allocation for combating the problem.

Advocacy, in essence, implies gaining political commitment and policy support through organized social action with the involvement of committed individuals, support from influential forces and the involvement of concerned sectors of society. But we will have to understand advocacy better in order to apply it.

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Table 1: Role of ICTs in achieving MDGs*

<i>MDGs</i>	<i>Role of ICTs</i>
1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase access to market information and lower transaction costs for poor farmers and traders• Increase efficiency, competitiveness and market access of developing country firms• Enhance ability of developing countries to participate in global economy and to exploit comparative advantage in factor costs (particularly skilled labour)
2. Achieve universal primary education	
3. Promote gender equality and empower women	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase supply of trained teachers through ICTs enhanced, distance training of teachers and networks that link teachers to their colleagues• Improve efficiency and effectiveness of education ministries and related bodies through strategic application of technologies and ICTs enabled skill development• Broaden availability of quality educational materials/resources through ICTs• Deliver educational and literacy programmes specifically targeted to poor girls and women using appropriate technologies• Influence public opinion on gender equality through information/communication programmes using a range of ICTs
4. Reduce child mortality	
5. Improve maternal health	
6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enhance delivery of basic and in-service training for health workers• Increase monitoring and information sharing on disease and famine• Increase access of rural care-givers to specialist support and remote diagnosis• Increase access to reproductive health information, including information on AIDS prevention, through locally appropriate content in local languages

7. Ensure environmental sustainability

- Remote sensing technologies and communications networks permit more effective monitoring, resource management, mitigation of environmental risks
- Increase access to/awareness of sustainable development strategies, in areas such as agriculture, sanitation, water management, mining, etc.
- Greater transparency and monitoring of environmental abuses, enforcement of environmental regulations
- Facilitate knowledge exchange and networking among policy makers, practitioners and advocacy groups

8. Develop a global partnership for development

- Enable LDCs, landlocked countries and small islands to link up with the global market to accelerate their progression and full integration into the world economy
- Distance working facilitated by ICTs opens up opportunities to create service-sector jobs in developing countries in such industries as call centers, data entry and processing, and software development
- Telecenters provide access to telecommunications and create direct employment for men and women
- Improve youth learning skills, employability to meet the challenges of the knowledge-based global economy of the 21st century
- Provide online databases on drugs
- Combine low and high technology to achieve relative ubiquity of access to effective and affordable ICTs tools
- Promote digital literacy through e-learning
- Develop a critical mass of knowledge workers with the technical capabilities to provide and maintain ICTs infrastructure

* Adapted from Marker et al., 2002, and Siriginidi, 2009.

Annex 1: Recommendations by the Scientific Committee of the World Congress on Communication for Development

Members¹ of the Scientific Committee of the World Congress on Communication for Development (Rome, 25–27 October 2006), identified the following main challenges for communication for development and social change (Servaes, 2007b: 112–114) to be recognized as a field in its own right and to be adopted systematically in development initiatives:

1. *Good governance, transparency, accountability and development communication go hand in hand.* Good governance and a good government are not the same. Good governance is based on the participation of all people concerned. Decentralization of governmental institutions does not necessarily imply people's participation. Decentralization does not always mean democratization. In reality the motives for decentralizing may hide a wish of central powers to get rid of certain responsibilities while tightening their control. This blurs the lines of accountability. For this reason, local media have a crucial role to play in facilitating a mutual understanding between those in power and the communities.
2. Participatory concepts in the context of communication for development can *be* complex and challenging. Communities consist of fluid interests and shifting relationships.
3. *Participation can take place at different levels:* (a) decision making; (b) benefits; (c) evaluation; and (d) implementation. Participation is about changing power relations. While empowering one group, it may do the opposite to another. Meaningful participation requires organization around common interests and awareness on how to handle power relations.
4. It is important to reinforce *independent and pluralistic media* to foster good governance and transparency. Print media can play a special role in society as they are sometimes more independent and pluralistic than radio and television. However, all media need to be sensitised and become more participatory. Currently there is often a gap between what media report and the realities of a country. Pure commercialism avoids tackling the crucial issues of a country because such issues do not sell. It undermines the role of

¹ Jan Servaes, Nicholas Carah, Martin Hadlow, Eric Louw, Pradip Thomas (University of Queensland), Silvia Balit (independent consultant), Maria Celeste Cadiz (University of the Philippines Los banos), Nabil Dajani (American University of Beirut), Cees Hamelink (University of Amsterdam), Tom Jacobson (Temple University), Ullamaija Kivikuru (University of Helsinki), John Mayo (Florida State University), Rafael Obregon (Ohio University), Doug Storey (John Hopkins University), Thomas Tufte (Roskilde University), and Karin Gwinn Wilkins (University of Texas at Austin).

media as watchdogs. *Press freedom is never guaranteed, not even in a democracy.*

5. Communication for development has not made full use of the *potential of radio*, which in some regions could be the most effective participatory tool. Radio has the highest penetration in many rural areas in developing countries. It is not too late to rediscover radio. In particular community radio (often linked to the global world through the Internet) has proven its ability to make participation effective and sustainable. Therefore, also ICTs are an important tool to facilitate good governance provided that application and operation systems are made available in local languages.
6. *Policies and resources* – communication for development initiatives need to be properly enabled by concerted actions, and adequate policies and resources. These should consider longer timescales. It is essential to bridge the digital divide by supporting community access to relevant information in their own language and at an affordable cost, for example through community telecenters/multimedia centers. This should also involve support for the production of content by the local communities. It is crucial to encourage the production of diverse local content in local languages for the media and ICTs, bearing in mind the potential of interactive technologies to carry multimedia content.
7. National governments should implement a *legal and supportive framework* favoring the right to free expression and the emergence of free and pluralistic information systems, including the recognition of the specific and crucial role of community media in providing access to communication for isolated and marginalized groups. There is a need to influence policy on communication for development through advocacy, not only with governments and international agencies but also within development agencies, private corporations and civil society partners, for communication for development to be successful.
8. *Building alliances*. There is a need for effective linkages which give voices to the poorest and have the ability to engage with policy and influence decision-making on sustainable development. To this end, special attention should be given to fostering local, national and regional communication for development processes.
9. *New global partnerships* are necessary with the media, development agencies, universities and governments. It is important to identify possibilities for convergence and for complementing existing work and to coordinate and document such work via a truly independent scientific body.