COMMUNICATING GENDER FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Integrating gender in communication for development

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Dimitra Project

Contents

Foreword

Information and communication, food security and nutrition and gender equality are three closely linked dimensions of rural development. The importance of the links between these dimensions has been repeatedly highlighted by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), in particular since the publication of its Strategy for Action on the role of information in equal opportunities and food security.

The recently published State of Food and Agriculture report (SOFA 2010-2011)* draws attention to the fundamental contribution of women to the agricultural sector in many developing countries. It emphasises the need to give rural women access to the same resources and opportunities as men in order to produce more and better. Producing better also means having access to information, dialogue, decision-making and action.

It is here that integrating gender in communication for development can play an innovative and decisive role by facilitating a process whereby rural populations, in particular the most disadvantaged, are given the opportunity to take ownership of their own development. The FAO-Dimitra Project has been working in this area for several years, contributing to improve the visibility of rural populations, women in particular, and to break their isolation.

The approach advocated in this publication is closely linked to FAO's mandate, namely to improve nutrition, agricultural productivity and the lives of rural populations, as well as to its strategic objective on gender equality. It also dovetails with the Millennium Development Goals, in particular Goals 1 and 3. In this context, communicating from a gender perspective is essential for addressing the challenges of combating poverty and promoting the economic empowerment of women.

I therefore invite you to read and use this new Dimitra publication which presents an innovative and dynamic approach for mainstreaming gender in development activities.

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* FAO, 2011. Report on The State of Food and Agriculture (SOFA 2010-2011). Women in agriculture. Closing the gender gap for development.

Acknowledgements

Introduction

In rural and agricultural development projects, 'communication for development' and 'gender' approaches are key to ensuring that food security, poverty and gender objectives are met sustainably.

These two approaches are based on common values, namely the active and equal participation of all stakeholders, both men and women, and the empowerment of populations, particularly the most disadvantaged. They are in no way contradictory, and yet very few communication initiatives take the issue of gender into account. No doubt this is because gender is poorly understood, seen as complicated and labelled 'a women's issue'. Moreover, there is a tendency to forget that people's livelihoods and their socioeconomic situation have a huge bearing on their ability to receive and transmit information. Lastly, commonly used methods of communication are supposedly gender-neutral. With gender seen as a 'women's issue' and communication dressed in 'unisex clothing', it is hardly surprising that communication for development initiatives reach and engage more men than women, especially in rural areas.

The experience of FAO-Dimitra has highlighted not only the failure to take gender into account in communication initiatives but also the poor communication capacities of organisations engaged in gender issues. Furthermore, these organisations often run along parallel paths to rural media outlets and communication for development programmes and projects, each group unaware of the complementary strengths and potentials of the other: the former in educating about gender equality issues, the latter in communicating in a less biased, sexist and discriminatory way.

These observations were reinforced by requests from Dimitra's partners and other organisations for more fruitful communication initiatives. In response, the project set about examining the synergy between gender, communication for development and rural areas, primarily by conducting a series of training workshops on the subject. This process, which ultimately led to this publication, allowed for a critical appreciation of the activities, a development of the concepts and a clarification of the links between the gender for development approach and the communication for development approach.

"Communicating Gender for Rural Development" is further justified by the absence, to our knowledge, of any work on this issue in the French-speaking world (NB. the document was originally written and published in French). Until now, the issue of gender and communication has been examined principally in relation to the mass media, advertising, language, literature and new information and communication technologies. Communication for development, on the other hand, remains largely unexplored, despite a certain overlap between the two subjects.

This document is designed to promote the introduction of a gender perspective into communication for development initiatives in rural areas, and suggests practical ways of going about this. It consists of two parts. The first focuses on key concepts and guidelines relating to gender on the one hand and communication for development on the other, as well as on the synergy between gender and communication for development. The second part focuses on the various stages of a communication initiative, "revisiting" them from a gender perspective.

"Communicating Gender for Rural Development" intends to develop reflexes and elicit questions with a view to ensuring that communication for development in rural areas is more inclusive of men and women, while respecting their specificities, needs and capacities, all with the ultimate goal of promoting equality.

Anyone involved in change is inevitably involved in a process of communication. The publication will therefore be useful to all development practitioners. It is also aimed at rural communicators and staff of community radio stations and development institutions, whether or not they work in the fields of information and communication. It will also be of interest to anyone committed to eliminating persistent gender inequalities in development processes.

The two tables below summarise the reasons that led to the production of this publication and the principles on which it is based.

"Communicating gender for rural development"
How did this expression arise? What are the underpinning assumptions? What does it apply to?

The expression was born out of the following observations:

1. It is a recognised fact that: (a) the success of development efforts depends, in part, on the quality of the communication established with the populations concerned and on the taking into account of gender issues, and (b) both communication for development and gender are cross-cutting issues in development interventions.
2. However, the communication processes (methods, content, format) used in rural areas are all too often non-participatory and aimed indiscriminately at a general audience. They do not take into account the fact that the population is responsible for its own development and that it is heterogeneous and highly diverse in its needs and expectations.
3. Lastly, gender issues are still too often addressed out of their context, remaining at the justification stage, without moving on to concrete solutions.

What emerged from the above observations was the need to address the issues of communication for development and gender jointly, so that the resulting synergy could help to minimise the constraints and to maximise the potentials present in rural areas. This requirement was reinforced by the fact that the two issues are often misunderstood even though their principles are generally accepted.

This publication refers to the principles, theories and approaches associated with the two issues and is based on the following assumptions:

1. Gender equality is integral to development: it is not "optional" nor an "extra".
2. The full participation of men and women in communication for development initiatives is the main condition for their taking ownership of change.
3. Men and women acquire and provide information and communicate differently, according to their specific roles and responsibilities and the particularity of their needs.

Communicating gender for rural development **therefore applies to communication for development, which, in order to contribute to sustainable and equitable economic and social change, must include a gender perspective in its methods, contents and formats.**

"Communicating gender for rural development" is a commitment

The approach is justified not only on the grounds of effectiveness but also by the following core principles of justice, equality and solidarity:

- Defence of, respect for and enforcement of rights: the right to equality, food, information, etc.
- Freedom of expression; listening to and disseminating the voice of both men and women at all levels.
- Cessation of discrimination and violence against particular groups, including women and girls.

These principles can be broken down into:

Political strategy	Operational approach	Individual and collective behaviour
- Creation of gender-sensitive policies, strategies, programmes and projects in rural areas aimed at food security and poverty eradication; - Access for all men and women to the resources they need to realise their individual and collective plans; - Equal representation of men and women in decision-making bodies, including those in rural areas and in the field of agriculture.	- Use of participatory methods to highlight the knowledge of men and women and to allow them to generate and disseminate their own information; - Use of techniques and tools that are accessible, understandable and adapted to each population group; - Establishment of exchanges in order to increase knowledge, based on the respect of rights, the recognition of diversity and the existence of differing interests.	- Strong belief that communication is a key element in decision-making and negotiation, thereby promoting the emergence of more equal power relations; - Constant consideration of the social responsibility of communication practitioners towards the plurality of its audience; - Continual concern about the influence of information and communication on opinions and values and hence on society, with a view to eliminating inequalities.

part 1

A dynamic approach for rural communities

The dimensions of gender

Chapter 1
The dimensions of gender

The term 'gender' spans four different dimensions, which partly explains why it is so difficult to understand and why it generates such resistance. Gender is at once a sociological concept, a development approach, an operational strategy and an analytical method.

Sociological concept
- Social and power relationships between men and women

Analytical method
- Vast array of tools available
- Identification of inequalities and their causes
- Sex-disaggregated information

GENDER
Sustainability
Effectiveness
Equality

Development approach
Centred on:
- Men and women
- Equality
- Empowerment

Operational strategy
- Operational and institutional cross-cutting
- Enabling measures
- Specific or non-specific actions
- Institutional practices and competences

1.1   Gender as a sociological concept

It should be remembered that the terms sex and gender are **neither synonymous nor interchangeable**. Sex – a univocal and universal term – is a **biological concept**: at birth, a person's physical, biological and bodily characteristics determine his or her sex: female or male. Except in cases of transsexuality, this sex is irreversible.

Gender, on the other hand, is a **sociological concept which is ever-changing** and therefore has no fixed definition. It does **not mean 'women' and it does not exclude men: they are included**. It expresses the social relations between men and women which are based on culturally acquired values and norms associated with femininity and masculinity. These relations vary constantly from one time and place to another: we do not think in the same way as our grandparents did and a Japanese woman or man does not behave in the same way as a Cameroonian woman or man. Principles, values, beliefs and behaviours evolve and are rooted in specific contexts.

"Sex or gender"	
Sex	**Gender**
Biological concept Biological characteristics (biological sex).	Sociological concept Characteristics and interactions of roles and responsibilities attributed to women and men (social sex).
Innate character Determined at birth (natural).	Acquired character Socially inculcated (not natural).
Universal in scope Every person in the world is either a man or a woman.	Specific in scope Influenced by place, time, culture, religion, social class, ethnic group, etc.
Definitive in nature Does not usually change over time.	Dynamic and evolving in nature Subject to social dynamics, economic developments, political shifts, environmental changes, etc.
Illustration	
In all but exceptional cases, women have a pair of XX sex chromosomes and men a pair of XY sex chromosomes.	Both men and women can lead governments, fly aeroplanes, look after the elderly, be bodyguards, etc. The obstacles are neither physical nor biological; they are the product of society.

Worldwide, social relations between men and women are characterised by inequalities that disadvantage women (see box on page 18). Men are dominant in terms of power, decision-making and access to and control over resources, in all spheres of life. Nonetheless, social structures and productive human work are underpinned by and totally dependent on the domestic work done by women, which remains "invisible and ignored". Gender relations are the ultimate social construct. Codified and asymmetrical, they are not set in stone and can consequently be changed to bring about greater equality.[1]

In its application, the term 'gender' is associated with **equality and equity**, two notions that are complementary but not interchangeable.

Equity measures: a stepping stone to equality

Recognising that the roles and responsibilities of men and women are neither inherent nor irreversible (being determined by society and not by birth) encourages us to question them, change the way we think about them and rally behind the principle of equality. Equity measures may be a necessary stepping stone to equality. They may take the form of actions in support of rural women such as:

- better information for women, supported by communication methods which are appropriate to them;
- literacy content tailored to the nature of women's roles as social actors, economic agents and political stakeholders;
- training in decision-making for women farmers' groups;
- discussion forums (such as listeners' clubs) dealing with issues of relevance to them.

Women cannot be blamed for not being informed, not running for political positions, not speaking up or not asserting their rights if they are hampered from communicating among themselves and with outside parties, if they are not informed, if they cannot read and write and if they cannot move about freely. Measures must be taken to remove these constraints and address these shortcomings before it can be said that women have the same opportunities as men but simply fail to exploit them.

Inequalities exist, the figures show it.[2]

Worldwide

- Women perform 2/3 of the world's working hours and produce over 50% of its food but only earn 10% of its income, own less than 2% of its property and receive less than 5% of all bank loans.
- Of the 1.2 billion people living in poverty (i.e. on less than $1 a day), 70% are women.
- In the space of 20 years, the number of rural women living in absolute poverty has increased by 50%, compared with 30% for men.
- No country has achieved wage equality.
- 60% of workers in precarious jobs are women.
- Around 16% of the adult population are illiterate: 2/3 of these are women.
- 72 million school-age children are not in school: 54% are girls.
- Of the world's 40 million refugees, 75% are women and children.
- One in three women has been raped, beaten or suffered some form of abuse at least once in her life.

In Africa

- Despite restrictions on their rights to own, use and inherit land (in 43 out of 48 countries, land law is characterised by inequalities in land acquisition and ownership), women own just 1% of land and are responsible for over 60% of food production.
- Women have access to only 10% of the credit granted to small farmers and to 1% of the credit awarded to the agricultural sector.
- A woman's working day is 50% longer than a man's.
- In Sub-Saharan Africa, 47% of men are literate compared with 30% of women.
- Research has shown that if women had equal access to farm income, agricultural services and land and if they controlled these resources and their benefits, production could increase significantly.
- It is estimated that women's limited access to education and employment reduces annual growth rates by 0.8%.
- HIV-positive women in Africa account for 58% of all documented cases, and many of these are rural women.
- In Sub-Saharan Africa, 61% of adults living with HIV/AIDS are women; 75% of 15-24 year olds newly infected with HIV are girls and women.

Equality, which is related to law, means that all human beings are free to develop their skills and make choices without the limitations of stereotypes, prejudices and rigid gender roles. The rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men cannot depend on whether they were born male or female. Gender equality means that women and men have equal rights and that their aspirations and needs are considered equally.[3]

Equity, which is more related to justice, means fair treatment for women and men, according to their specificity. "This treatment may be identical or different but should be equivalent in terms of rights, benefits, obligations and opportunities."[4] Equity requires specific measures to compensate for the existing imbalances that disadvantage women. The ultimate goal is equality.

However, **being equal does not mean being the same or similar**. In a population made up of many different individuals, homogeneity is neither possible nor desirable: heterogeneity (i.e. multiplicity and diversity) wins out. Every person has his or her own identity which is shaped by social and economic factors such as sex, age, peer group, social and geographical background, religion, social, marital and family status, health, education and professional position. This identity creates different needs and expectations, specific hopes and aspirations, and particular constraints and strengths.

That is why communication initiatives must never be aimed at all and sundry or at overly broad categories such as women or young people. Rather, they should be targeted at more specific groups such as *women who are young, single, market gardeners, landless, illiterate and members of farmers' organisations.* Such women are very different from those who are *married, non-organised and providing family labour on subsistence farms.*

1.2 Gender as a development approach

As well as being a sociological concept, gender is also a development approach, namely the Gender and Development (GAD) approach, which is often wrongly assimilated with the Women in Development (WID) approach. The confusion between the two, as with the terms 'sex' and 'gender', persists, **but one is not a substitute for – nor does it replace – the other**.

The WID approach[5] recognises women's productive and reproductive roles and seeks to improve their livelihoods. It focuses exclusively on women and mainly involves setting up small income-generating projects linked to women's traditional roles and responsibilities. In rural areas, these projects are accompanied by access to agricultural technologies, technical training and social education. This approach relies on women being able to integrate into existing social and economic structures and processes, thereby becoming both stakeholders and beneficiaries of development. It has undoubtedly gone some way to highlighting the contributions made by women, especially to the agricultural economy. However, WID ignores the unequal power relations between men and women and the subordinate role of women, assuming that these will change automatically as women become fully-fledged economic partners. Consequently, it does not attempt to address inequalities, it does not question the way institutions work and it does not challenge development models.

The GAD approach is based on observations that are valid around the world:

■ women are a disadvantaged group compared with men;
■ women and men have differing needs due to their different roles and responsibilities, and in particular their unequal access to and control over resources;
■ women's position of inferiority and subordination is an obstacle to development because it limits the chances and opportunities of half of the world's population.[6]

GAD aims to ensure the equality of rights, as well as the respect for and enforcement of these rights. To this end it:

■ questions and redefines the roles and responsibilities "traditionally" attributed to men and to women;
■ broadens the debate on inequalities, which slow development, particularly as regards access to and control over resources, and looks for answers;
■ mainstreams equal participation in decision-making as well as the appreciation and social and economic recognition of the contributions of men and women in the private and public spheres;
■ seeks to transform the social relations that generate inequality, without marginalising men.[7]

The GAD approach therefore involves raising awareness about prejudice, discrimination, inequalities and subordination mechanisms with a view to combating them. Looking beyond efficiency and economic utility to long-term sustainability, it focuses on the human level by empowering men and women and ensuring that power is shared equally between them.

TWO APPROACHES TO DEVELOPMENT: WID AND GAD[8]	
WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT (WID)	**GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT (GAD)**
Approach	
■ "The problem is women!"	■ Considers men and women together and interactively
Focus	
■ Women	■ Connections and relationships between men and women
Issue to be addressed	
■ The exclusion of women from the development process	■ Unequal power relations that prevent and restrict women's participation in development
Ultimate goal	
■ More efficient and effective development	■ Effective, equal, equitable and sustainable development
Objective	
■ To integrate women into the existing economic development process	■ To empower the most disadvantaged people, including women
Strategies	

■ Projects for women
■ Project components aimed at women
■ Boosting women's productivity
■ Increasing women's income
■ Increasing women's capacity to carry out tasks related to their role
	■ Participatory identification and consideration of:
	  – the practical needs of women and men in order to improve their livelihoods;
	  – the strategic interests of each group in terms of improving their situation.

1.3 *Gender as an operational strategy*

Gender is a concept and an approach, but it is also an operational strategy which recognises that development initiatives (policies, programmes, projects or activities) are never neutral and that they can actually widen the gaps between individuals and groups. Every initiative, regardless of the sector of intervention or discipline involved, has different effects and impacts on men and women, young people and older people, rural and urban populations.

A gender strategy (or gender integration/gender mainstreaming strategy) involves recognising, examining and addressing gender inequalities and disparities at all stages (from identification to evaluation) of a development initiative. Aside from the obvious inequalities, groups and individuals also differ in their living conditions and experiences, their resources and contributions, their needs and constraints, their priorities and points of view. For this strategy to be effective, development institutions must also mainstream gender into the way they operate (vision, culture, organisation, procedures, skills/expertise).

In other words, **a gender strategy entails more than simply tacking on a gender component, setting up a gender unit or appointing a gender officer**. Essentially cross-cutting in nature, it must – if it is to change mentalities and behaviour – make visible and take into consideration the needs, interests and contributions of women and men; put forward enabling measures (introduction of quotas, parity requirements, etc.); envisage initiatives, whether general or targeted specifically at men or women; develop gender skills and expertise and introduce institutional practices based on equality.

1.4   *Gender as an analytical method*

The final dimension where gender is of importance is analysis. **Gender analysis is relevant to all sectors of intervention** and is not limited to the social sphere. It entails systematically exploring the roles and responsibilities of men and women and the degree to which they have access to and control over resources, benefits and powers. In so doing, it sheds light on disparities, gaps and inequalities and on their causes.

Gender analysis uses a wide range of participatory tools to investigate the reality of a situation, rather than claiming to know it in advance on the grounds that "I've heard/seen/read it all before". It seeks to obtain quantitative and qualitative information by examining the day-to-day lives of men and women.

Information that relates solely to women does not contribute to understanding gender and power relations. Gender analysis is therefore the gateway to combating inequalities and the basis of the gender mainstreaming strategy.
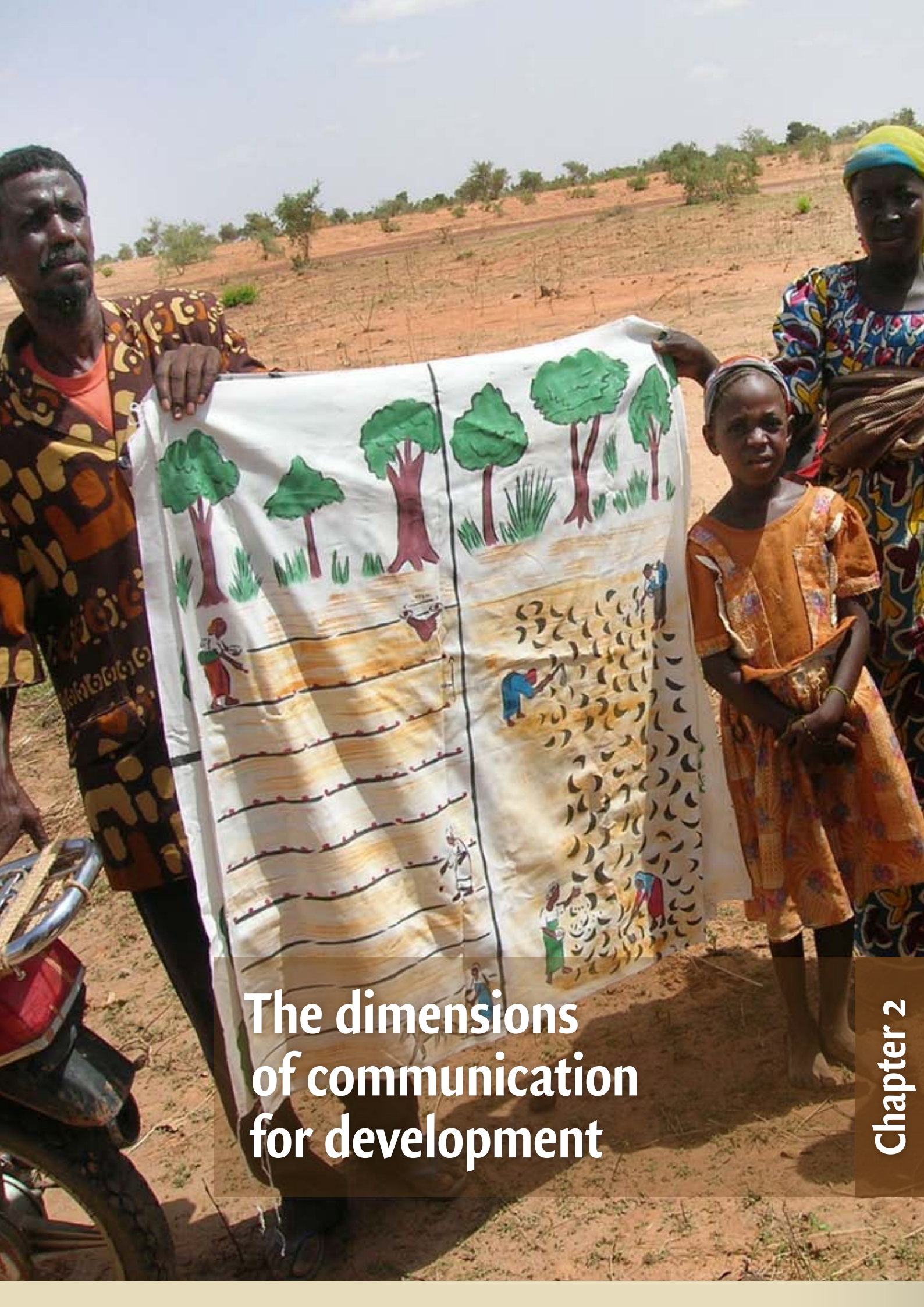
The dimensions of communication for development

Chapter 2
The dimensions of communication for development

2.1 Information and communication – two distinct concepts

Omnipresent in society, information and communication are closely interlinked, so much so that the terms are often used interchangeably. In reality, however, each has its own distinct meaning.

Information and communication are two-sided in terms of their importance and scope. To begin with, they may be essential for supporting and managing change but they are not, on their own, capable of bringing it about. Secondly, information and communication offer enormous benefits but at the same time they present huge risks. They can help reduce social divides by facilitating access to knowledge and promoting exchanges. On the other hand, they can also exacerbate inequalities and exclusion mechanisms if they are controlled by power structures that are adverse to change and the sharing of knowledge (i.e. the knowledge needed for negotiating and decision-making).

It is in this ambivalent context that communication for development acquires its full meaning and scope, extending far beyond the mere dissemination of information or awareness-raising.

Information	Communication
Result of organising data (figures, facts, concepts, etc.) in written, oral and/or visual form so as to give them a meaning, interpretation and intelligibility.	Series of interactive processes by which people transmit, exchange and pool information.
Information is shared through *communication* processes in the course of which it acquires meaning and is transformed into knowledge, which may in turn result in new behaviours, new knowledge and new ways of doing things.	
Neither information nor communication are neutral: they are subjective	
The production of information and therefore its content are invariably shaped by: ■ an intention, goal or objective; ■ the culture, ideology or institutional identity of the person or institution producing the information, whether consciously or otherwise; ■ the skills/expertise and resources available.	Communication encompasses a wide range of issues, including: ■ information: transmitting a piece of news; ■ knowledge: extension of a technique; ■ identity and power: affirming a status; ■ influence: inducing a change of opinion; ■ relationships: establishing a friendship.
Neither information nor communication are static: they are dynamic	
In addition to the reasons listed above, the value, credibility and interpretation of information vary according to: ■ time and place; ■ the individuals and institutions that access then transmit the information.	■ Our body plays a part in communication (most notably through gestures); ■ Communication takes multiple forms: interpersonal, group, mass; ■ Time and place influence methods of communication (internet, drum, smoke signals, etc.).

2.2 Characteristics of communication for development

Communication for development is a vital process in managing and supporting social, economic and political transformations, and one that places rural communities at the heart of development initiatives. All stakeholders in such initiatives, from agricultural producers, rural communities, community radio stations and local authorities through to development practitioners and planners, are considered as equal partners in communication. Consequently, all development actors adhere to the same understanding of communication and to the principle of concerted action.

Communication for development is based on a number of principles, in particular:

- the right to information and communication;
- the importance of information accessibility;
- the recognition and value of the knowledge of every individual;
- the need for the population itself, including marginalised individuals such as women, to take ownership of their development;
- the necessity of participation for negotiated decision-making and to ensure the sustainability of initiatives;
- the value of dialogue, discussion and the consideration of different points of view;
- the benefit of exchanging knowledge;
- awareness of the absence of neutrality in information and communication.

Communication for development is known by a variety of names including 'participatory communication', 'social communication' and 'communication for sustainable development'.

Its definitions are just as varied, although some common features can be identified:

- a desire for change;
- a social process based on dialogue;
- consideration of the perceptions, needs and interests of populations;
- a climate of listening, trust and respect;
- participatory planning of initiatives;
- strengthening of information and communication capacities;
- interaction based on discussions and the sharing of knowledge and experience;
- systematic use of a wide range of information tools, both traditional and modern, and of communication methods ranging from interpersonal interaction to group dynamics, as well as tools such as mass media, rural radio, audio-visual materials and information and communication technologies;
- an approach that theoretically includes both women and men.

This list highlights the **cross-cutting nature** of communication for development, irrespective of the initiative or intervention being implemented. Communication for development is part of a **participatory dynamic process aimed at empowering** men and women. The beneficiaries move from being passive recipients of guidance and advice to active participants in their own development. Through dialogue and discussion between the population and development practitioners on a development issue, practical initiatives are identified and implemented in order to solve a problem or accomplish a goal.

Ready-made blueprint programmes, imposed from outside, have no place in such a dynamic process. Rather, it is the groups and individuals involved who, after due analysis and interaction among themselves and with the relevant institutions, choose which transformations to make in order to solve a problem or accomplish a goal. The differences in process[9] (approach and modalities) between communication for development and conventional communication are summarised in the table on the next page.

Persuasion
Persuasion mechanisms for obtaining rapid but mainly unsustainable changes

≠

Awareness
and understanding of the socio-economic reality in order to move towards empowerment and sustainability

Vertical
The population is in a subordinate position: it is a passive recipient

≠

Horizontal
The population, men and women, is on an equal footing with the intervention team: it is a fully-fledged actor

Static
The activities are all designed by outsiders and imposed on the target environment

≠

Dynamic
Activity planning is based on a process of dialogue and participation

Short-term
Short-term planning geared towards results

≠

Long-term
Long-term action based on skills development and ownership

Conditioned access
Involvement subject to social, economic and political criteria

≠

Shared access
Equal opportunities for all to take part

Conventional communication
≠
Communication for development

Individual
Action geared towards individual interests due to monopolisation of power

≠

Collective
Collective action driven by the interest of the majority

Institutional musts
Initiatives driven by external demands in terms of objectives, methods, funds, etc.

≠

Interests of population
Participatory identification of the problems to be addressed using appropriate resources

Massive
Same techniques used in different contexts and for all groups

≠

Specific
Modalities adapted to each context and group

Imposition
The solutions are alien to the population because they were designed externally

≠

Participation
The content of the action is the outcome of joint solution-finding and decision-making

Gender and communication for development – a necessary synergy

Chapter 3
Gender and communication for development – a necessary synergy

3.1   Women, men and communication in rural areas

Development guidelines, notably those based on the Millennium Development Goals, insist that a high priority be given to the poorest people, a group that includes subsistence men and women farmers.

Poverty is not just an economic issue: it is also social, cultural and political. It also exists in relation to information and communication and is the result of interdependent constraints associated with the circumstances and status of people living in rural areas (see box). Looking at these constraints in the context of rural and agricultural development challenges reveals many paradoxes.

Constraints on access to information and communication in rural areas

There are many such constraints, e.g.:

- a poorly developed economic fabric generating migratory population movements, mainly among young men;
- limited infrastructure, resulting in greater isolation and less media access;
- unlawful customs, stereotypes, prejudices and discrimination, especially towards women and girls;
- low levels of literacy and participation in education, particularly among girls and women;
- male-dominated information and communication institutions with precarious human, financial and technical resources and little grasp of rural issues;
- few information and communication strategies aimed at large-scale dissemination of technical, economic, social and political knowledge;
- limited contact between communication officers and rural populations, preventing the needs of the latter from being relayed;
- disregard for the gender-sensitive use of information collection, processing and dissemination methods and tools.

... amplified by the fact that rural populations tend to be:

- poor, engaged in subsistence farming and forced to use the bulk of their resources just to survive: investing in information is not a priority;
- illiterate or low-literate: communication methods, particularly for training, tend to be designed and implemented for a literate audience;
- geographically isolated: this has consequences on their access to media;
- different in their customs from the dominant culture: they are more reliant on traditional methods of information transmission;
- undervalued in terms of their knowledge and abilities: contacts between communication officers and rural populations are limited;
- without or with little power: the media rarely consults them and therefore fails to relay their needs.

... and this is even more true of women, who are more:

- socially, economically, politically and geographically isolated;
- subject to customs and traditions;
- sidelined from schooling, education and training;
- disadvantaged when it comes to access to and control over resources, especially productive resources;
- deprived of status, which limits their self-confidence and their ability to speak up for themselves;
- absent from rural organisations and cut off from decision-making.

Paradox 1:

Improving agricultural production depends on farmers having access to productive, financial and technological resources i.e. knowledge and skills; farmers' organisations and negotiating/decision-making platforms. This access is largely conditioned by information.

And yet, it appears that the information they need to access these resources is insufficiently reaching the rural and agricultural communities. This being the case, how can we expect any improvement in production that will enhance the food self-sufficiency of rural populations and improve the food security and nutrition of the population as a whole?

Paradox 2:

Information achieves its goal when it is produced in a way that takes into account the specific needs of its target groups and it acquires its full value when validated by those groups.

And yet, it appears that rural people (men and women) are seldom at the heart of information production: their opinions are rarely requested and their knowledge rarely recognised. How can we expect women and men farmers to identify with and take ownership of the information in order to use it in their daily lives, notably in their agricultural work?

Paradox 3:

Information only exists if it is communicated. Communication methods, even those used in development initiatives, tend to be designed or chosen with a literate audience in mind, one that has easy access to information. This is more common in urban than in rural areas.

And yet, due to their socio-economic situation and the context in which they live, rural women and men cannot access channels of communication. How, then, can we expect information to reach these people and be converted into knowledge that will strengthen their capacities and thus enhance their food security?

Paradox 4 (last but by no means least):

Women make up at least half, and possibly more, of the active farming population; their major role as producers and guarantors of food security is acknowledged.

And yet, these women are isolated in multiple ways: the majority are illiterate, excluded from resource management, absent from decision-making positions in farmers' organisations and overlooked by capacity-building initiatives. All communication processes take place without their involvement. How, then, can we contemplate sustainable development, combating poverty and improving food security when half of the population, who make an essential contribution, are excluded from these processes?

In summary, the impact of these paradoxes on agricultural and rural development is not insignificant. A large proportion of the population – more specifically women, many of them farmers – are excluded from:

■ decisions about their future, because their input into discussions is marginal;
■ exchanges of knowledge, because their knowledge is overlooked;
■ opportunities to develop their skills, because their potential is undervalued;
■ social and political movements, because they have no say.

These exclusion mechanisms (see example in box below) hinder and delay development; they generate disparities in access to resources and to the benefits of development initiatives as well as perpetuating inequalities that disadvantage women, who are more heavily penalised than men.

Mechanisms that exclude women farmers from knowledge exchange

A number of evaluations of rural and agricultural projects have shown that women farmers take little part in exchange visits, study tours and meetings. Why?

One explanation relates to their mobility. The reasons cited by women (but which in fact originate with men) relate, for example, to their distance from the meeting venue, the length of the study tour, the accommodation available during the training course, etc. In other words, permission from their husband or head of family is a prerequisite for women to take part in any event held away from where they live.

Another explanation is rooted in preconceptions that belittle women (e.g. they aren't interested, they won't understand) and favour men (they are better educated, they will pass on what they learn, etc.).

Lastly, women farmers are overlooked because in the collective psyche they are viewed as family labour, with no decision-making power, rather than as productive economic agents. This mindset is based on a masculine view of the farming system, which sees it as a monolithic entity, led by a (male) head aided by the members of the household who live on the farm, all of whom adhere to the goals set by the head. There is no acknowledgement of the existence of different internal dynamics, e.g. between men and women.

Therefore, the mechanisms that result in women being excluded are based on the gender relations and patriarchal power relations that govern society. They perpetuate the idea that women should look after the family and remain in the family circle while men are better placed to occupy the public arena. Added to this is the low value attached to the social and economic input of women, while men's contributions are given greater prominence, thereby ensuring that men have more power and are integrated into development initiatives as a matter of course. This results in women being excluded from opportunities to acquire knowledge, expand their skills, access resources, enhance their social status and obtain power.

3.2 Gender and communication for development – a powerful interplay

As well as being cross-cutting in nature, the gender and communication for development approaches coincide, strengthen and enrich one another in two major areas common to both, namely participation and empowerment.

Participation

Experience has shown that involving populations from the earliest planning stages of development initiatives is vital and, although time-consuming, does pay off in terms of results and sustainability. Participation-based practices and methods are major levers for change.

Understanding and assessing the stakes of individual stakeholders is key. The latter, whatever their level, whatever institution (if any) they belong to and whatever the nature of the intervention, will invest their resources so as to minimise risks and maximise benefits. Partnerships and alliances based on participation, understood in the sense of 'working with' rather than 'doing for' or 'getting to do', are to be favoured. This is a fruitful principle for action.

One vital stakeholder is the population itself, both men and women, who know their own situation and needs better than anybody. Their participation, to the fullest extent possible, in all development activities is one of the prerequisites for individual empowerment. Men and women are agents of their own change, provided, that is, that their knowledge and analytical and planning abilities are recognised and accepted.

Participation is a multifaceted concept: it can be understood as a premise or as a goal, or even as a practice or a method. Clearly, therefore, it is important that all stakeholders agree on the meaning of participation and decide what is expected of it.

Similarly, participation can be classified in various ways, with different stages to be completed before full stakeholder participation is achieved. Although the number of phases in the participation process may vary, the ultimate goal is always the same, namely to strengthen and empower men and women. The scale always extends from the bottom rung, in which the intervention is a one-way process (from the institution to the population), to the top rung, where the intervention becomes the responsibility of the population. In the diagram below, the process is broken down into three levels[10]:

1. **Being part/Information:** populations are informed; they are passive recipients: *"they are part of the process ... but do not exert influence"*;

2. **Taking part/Consultation:** populations are consulted by the intervention team; they interact and give their points of view: *"they take part in the process ... and have the potential to exert influence"*;

3. **Taking control/Decision-making:** populations are empowered; they take control of the intervention, are responsible for it and take decisions about it: *"they take control ... and exert influence"*.
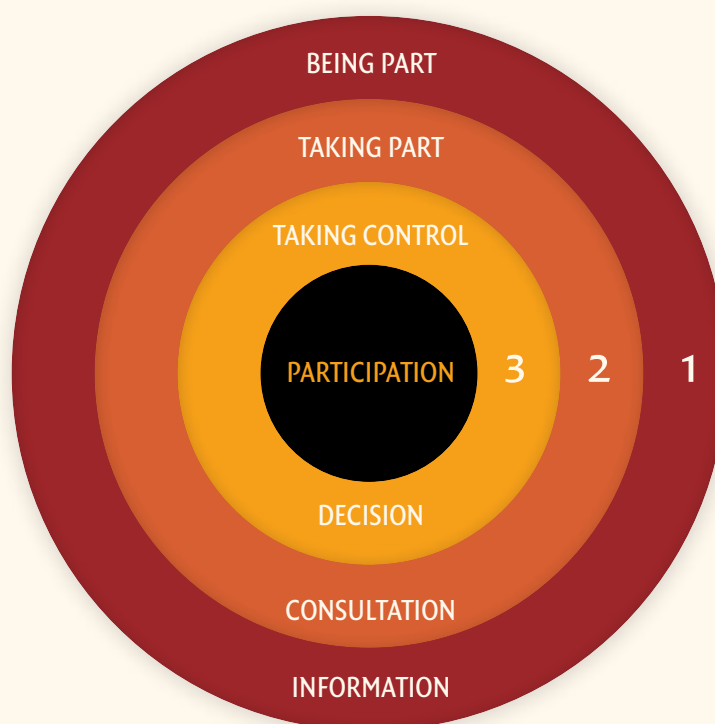
Empowerment[11]

Empowerment can be understood as a gradual process of acquiring individual and collective capacities (self-determination, ability to make choices and informed decisions). These capacities allow their holders to enter the socio-political arena and to access and control resources and power.

Empowerment opens up the possibility of taking decisions:

■ **for oneself:** own decisions, influence over decision-making, control over the individuals delegated to take decisions on one's behalf (e.g. representative of a farmers' organisation);

■ **on behalf of other people:** in some cases, a final decision is taken by a designated individual.

Participation is key in this process of controlling power. However, empowerment is not about 'power over', which is based on domination, intimidation and sometimes violence, but rather:

■ **'power to':** which is creative, leads to decisions and renders its possessor ready for action through the acquisition of intellectual and organisational capacities, and economic resources;

■ **'power with':** which emphasises solidarity and joint organisation and creates a feeling of power as several people come together to achieve the same goal;

■ **'power within':** which is based on self-acceptance and self-respect, and the recognition of others as equals.

Obtaining, sharing and reallocating powers depends on changing the individual capacities of men and women and collective capacities, but also on changes in the political, economic and social environment.

The empowerment process has four dimensions: assets, knowledge and know how, will and capacity. For each of these pillars of empowerment, information and communication play an important role in bringing about social changes and empowering communities and individuals, both men and women (see table on next page).

Empowerment, both individual and collective, generates resistance. It forces people to abandon the acquired image of social relations, in particular gender relations. It shakes up the power relations among individuals and among groups and some may fear a loss of their own prestige and authority. It results in a reallocation and sharing of resources and decisions which can transform society.

In summary, communication and its processes, at both individual and collective levels, are:

■ tools for acquiring and strengthening knowledge, capacities and skills/expertise;
■ aids to decision-making based on analysis;
■ instruments for negotiation backed by solid arguments;
■ drivers of change, resulting in concrete transformations;
■ levers for empowerment in all areas of power;
■ last but not least, vehicles for achieving equality by remodelling social and power relations.

Contribution of information and communication to the four pillars of empowerment

GENDER EQUALITY

ASSETS	KNOWLEDGE & KNOW HOW	WILL	CAPACITY
Economic resources (*power to*):	Social resources (*power to*):	Socio-political resources (*internal power*):	Political resources (*internal power and power with*):
Obtaining: ■ tangible assets: land, income, etc. ■ intangible assets: health, education, time, etc. ■ services: credit, information, etc.	Acquiring: ■ knowledge ■ skills/expertise ■ capacities	■ mobilisation of psychological strength ■ willingness to make choices ■ life plans ■ awareness of challenges	Having the opportunity to: ■ make decisions ■ take on responsibility ■ have freedom of action ■ make use of one's own resources, etc.

CONTRIBUTION OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

Accessing an array of economic resources is made easier through targeted information, disseminated by communication channels tailored to each population category, in particular women.	Acquiring skills/expertise and building intellectual capacities such as technical training and critical analysis leads to new or improved resource-generating activities.	Actions to promote the recognition of different opinions and skills and to create solidarity change the mentalities of both individuals and communities.	Communication for development really comes into its own here and is a valuable tool. It facilitates decision-making in the broad sense, based on analysis, negotiation, consensus and compromise.

EXAMPLES

At individual level: Information sessions about obtaining credit change the attitudes of people who thought they could never get a loan.	At individual level: Teaching men and women to read and write strengthens their skills and abilities and enhances their position in society.	At individual level: Training in decision-making, exchange visits, etc. help to boost self-confidence.	At individual and collective levels: Listeners' clubs, networks, civil society organisations and farmers' organisations promote experience-sharing, advocacy, debate and action: they are forums in which discussion plays a central role. The fact that the debate is based on reliable information and backed up by solid arguments means that women and men are able to make informed choices.
At collective level: Booklets explaining land rights in simple terms and in the local language change perceptions, practices and customs regarding land ownership and use, especially with respect to women.	At collective level: A mobilisation campaign on conserving natural resources encourages communities to better manage their biodiversity and to highlight their knowledge.	At collective level: Live radio shows and listeners' clubs provide forums for changing behaviour, externalising objectives, developing future plans and addressing challenges.	

3.3   *Words and images for communicating gender*

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2" align="center">A riddle</td></tr>
<tr>
<td>A father and son are involved in a car accident. The father dies. The son is injured and is taken to hospital. He needs surgery. The surgeon arrives and says: "I can't perform the operation; he's my son".</td>
<td>The solution to this riddle is simple: the surgeon is a woman and is therefore the boy's mother. However, the answer is not immediately obvious because of our tendency to associate certain occupations with men.</td>
</tr>
</table>

A fundamental aspect of gender-sensitive communication relates to the words and images we use to communicate. Becoming aware of the scope and impact of modes of expression is therefore crucial. Forms of communication – whether written, oral or visual – must be considered carefully since they can perpetuate images of socially-prescribed gender roles and behaviours.

Aside from the term 'gender' itself, which frequently gives rise to misunderstandings, not to mention a degree of resistance, the links between the gender approach and verbal and visual communication deserve to be examined.

Whether in an institutional, interpersonal, group or media setting, the language we use to communicate is of paramount importance. In the specific case of rural communicators, it is particularly important because it is bound up with their social responsibility, as discussed in the previous chapter.

It is also through words and images that the gender approach becomes a reality and can be made more practical and understandable. Consequently, it is imperative that everyone thinks about the issue of language, about their choice of words and images as well as about stereotypes and prejudices (see box below) and other 'pitfalls' associated with communication. This careful attention is required in everyday life and in all other situations, including those involving development issues: in advocacy, in institutional and political discourse, in fieldwork with rural communities, in the language used by the media, and so on.

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2" align="center">Stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination [12] : three related concepts [13]</td></tr>
<tr>
<td>These three concepts are closely related and interdependent. Stereotypes (our beliefs) and prejudices (unfounded attitudes) can account for some instances of discrimination towards an individual or group (through exclusion, only rarely through inclusion). In turn, discrimination can in some sense uphold our existing stereotypes and prejudices or create new ones. Discrimination can be positive, but it is usually negative and takes place in the context of a power relationship (money, social background, rank within an organisation, etc.).

Acquired during socialisation processes, stereotypes and prejudices are part of our cultural heritage and are transmitted in the same way as norms, habits and ways of doing things. They characterise the group we belong</td>
<td>to and shape the way it operates (attitudes and behaviours). Individuals learn them throughout their lives. The primary sources of socialisation are parents, followed by institutions with authority (schools, churches, etc.), friends and peers. The media also plays a role in the socialisation process by helping to entrench social rules.

"Gender stereotypes trigger a dual process whereby female identity and male identity are reduced to a certain number of roles, behaviours, characteristics, attributes or products, thereby requiring individuals to be either a man or a women adhering solely to the roles, behaviours, characteristics, etc. assigned to that sex." [14]</td>
</tr>
</table>

Words and gender[15]

The generic use of masculine forms in French, which only dates back to the 19th century, gives prominence to men while rendering women invisible. The term *Chef d'Etat* [head of state], being a masculine noun, gives the impression that it is only natural for the head of government to be a man. The use of masculine forms to designate positions of responsibility and professions (*directeur* [director/manager], *président* [president/chairman], *ministre* [minister], *docteur* [doctor], *chercheur* [researcher], *technicien* [technician], etc.) might imply that women are incapable of making decisions and holding professional positions.

Written communications, documents, reports and political speeches reproduce this pattern. In rural areas, there are *agriculteurs, producteurs, artisans, commerçants, présidents d'organisations paysannes*, and so on [farmers, producers, craftsmen, traders, chairmen of farmers' organisations]. Are there not also *agricultrices, productrices, artisanes, commerçantes, présidentes d'organisations paysannes* [craftswomen, chairwomen, etc.]? Farmers, journalists, experts and delegates are not necessarily men, despite the generic use of the masculine forms of these words; conversely, secretaries, nurses and midwives are not necessarily women, although the generic forms of these words are feminine (in French, and to some extent in English too).

The way we represent and understand the world is transmitted through non-gender-neutral language. Language reflects our perception of the roles, abilities and opportunities attributed to men and women ('man for the job', 'housewife', 'elder statesman', 'femme fatale', etc.). It conveys and reinforces sexist prejudices and stereotypes. Although language too can evolve, it is restricting the scope of the social, political and economic developments and transformations currently bringing about changes in the division of male and female roles and responsibilities.

Speech and gender

Oral communication, i.e. speech, is more than a collection of words. The fact of speaking or not speaking, the tone and style of speech, the place, circumstances and manner in which speech takes place are, among other factors, a mirror that reflects the functioning and development of society, including social relations such as those between men and women. The brief analysis on the next page, structured around traditional communication questions (what, who, when, where, how and why), illustrates the extent to which speech constructs and consolidates power relations.

The way speech is used creates a vicious circle: we believe that women will be unable (or unwilling) to speak up, that they are 'shy' and less capable; women, in turn, think that they are less qualified, less important and less able and lack the self-confidence to express themselves in public, with the result that men are left to do the talking.

Image and gender

The power of visual communication is beyond question. As the Chinese philosopher Confucius noted 25 centuries ago, a picture is worth a thousand words. An examination of mass media, such as television and advertising, shows that the images projected tend to reinforce traditional roles, functions and responsibilities and perpetuate gender relations. Such images are many and varied and go far beyond 'dolls for girls and guns for boys'. For example:

- a woman in a kitchen extolling the virtues of a domestic appliance and a man in his office marvelling at his new computer (reflecting a traditional division of labour and distribution of tasks);
- a woman entertaining (female) friends in her living room, which is spotless thanks to product X, and a man and his (male) friends in a bar enjoying beer Y (reinforcing a gender-based differentiation between private and public space);
- a female nutritionist discussing children's health and a male political scientist discussing the economic crisis, highlighting female (family) and male (business) responsibilities.

Speech and power relations		
WHAT?	*When male and female topics of conversation are predefined*	Men talk about sport, cars, economics, politics, etc. Women talk about fashion, celebrities, children, etc. A woman who talks about sport and cars is a 'tomboy'. A man who talks about fashion is 'effeminate'.
WHO?	*When men dominate in meetings*	Men make up the overwhelming majority of participants at international meetings, at conferences, political, economic and financial summits, as well as meetings of farmers' organisations, farmers' unions and at rural gatherings. In some cultures, certain population groups (single men, women from a particular social class, young people, women) are either not allowed to speak publicly or must obtain permission to do so.
WHEN?	*When men and women attend the same meetings*	In a mixed group, men are quick to make their voices heard, even if it means interrupting others; women will wait until they are asked to speak. Women are more reluctant to speak in front of a group, to take part in interviews and to 'put themselves forward'; they are less used to occupying public space and fear coming across as arrogant, pretentious or overbearing.
WHERE?	*When the public and private spheres are gender-assigned*	Men are more visible at work-related, political and economic events (meetings, forums, political parties, etc.); women are more prominent at social events and those involving family and friends (birthdays, funerals/bereavements, family celebrations, etc.).
HOW?	*When differences in form act as markers of masculinity and femininity (tone of voice, choice of words, style, etc.)*	Breaching the rules and accepted norms of speech incurs negative judgements: A woman who talks a lot is a 'chatterbox', whereas a talkative man is a 'strong presence'; on the other hand, a woman who says very little is 'discrete', whereas a man 'has no conversational skills'. A woman should talk in a refined way without using strong language or too many gestures, otherwise she is considered vulgar and ill-mannered – as opposed to a man, who is seen as 'forceful, expressive and straight-talking'. A woman with an authoritative tone of voice is 'curt and aggressive', whereas a man who speaks in this way 'knows his own mind'. By contrast, a softly-spoken man is 'camp, indecisive, incapable of making his mind up'.
WHY?	*When speech is power*	Being free to speak and controlling speech are markers of power; they emblematise social relations and highlight relationships of subordination and domination, especially between men and women. Anyone who deviates from the established pattern, as transmitted and learnt, risks being viewed negatively, being belittled, undervalued, etc. Women's voices are heard less than men's owing to a set of social norms and rules that limit opportunities for women to express themselves, be listened to and be taken into account.

Advertising aimed at families tends to depict a traditional scenario featuring dominant men – usually competent, suave and manly – in successful jobs, and submissive women portrayed as protective, gentle and beautiful at the heart of a happy home. News footage, current affairs shows and documentaries remind us, through the people featured, of the established truth that men do politics and women do social affairs. If a woman appears on a programme to discuss politics, a question about her family life is bound to arise; if a man is discussing a social issue, we will inevitably be informed that he has a background in finance and could have pursued a career in that field.

Images are powerful; they shape our opinions of what we – women and men – are and should be, how we view individual groups within society, our attitudes and behaviour. Anyone involved in communication must be profoundly aware of the power of images.

> ### Women farmers: an invisible presence
>
> **Pictures, photos, illustrations:** look carefully at posters, technical booklets and extension leaflets and you may find yourself wondering where all the women farmers are. They are usually nowhere to be seen, unless the subject is considered to be a 'women's issue'.
>
> **Text:** brochures, fact files and the press talk about *agriculteurs* [farmers], *vulgarisateurs* [extension workers], *innovateurs agricoles* [agricultural innovators], and so on, using the generic masculine form. In the French language, they never refer to the feminine *agricultrices, productrices, vulgarisatrices*, etc.
>
> It is said that "*What is not named does not exist*"; it is also said, worse even, "*Not to call things by their correct name is to add to the troubles of the world*". Therefore, at the risk of long-windedness, showing both women and men and using both the feminine and masculine forms in writing and speech would help to change views and attitudes, thereby benefiting women farmers who play a central role in agricultural production.

The language used by the media shapes the way people think. Whether intentionally or otherwise, it serves as a vehicle for stereotypes and prejudices (i.e. baseless preconceptions), helping to perpetuate and strengthen ways of thinking and generating and exacerbating discrimination. It should not be forgotten that information, whether we like it or not, cannot be objective because words and images are never neutral. A video or report on an issue affecting farmers can never be anything but an interpretation, a vision, of that issue, no matter how close to reality it is.

3.4   *Roles and responsibilities*

Communication for development is not limited to the processing of information; it encompasses multiple fields, ranging from information to knowledge management, via extension, training, facilitation, advocacy and networking. Given this range of disciplines, it is not the sole preserve of journalists or the information officers of farmers' organisations: **the great majority of development practitioners are involved in communication for development processes**. The same applies to gender, which is not the responsibility of gender officers alone but of everyone working in development, at all levels. **In short, anybody involved in a change process is a communicator and should therefore be alert to the issue of gender.**

Likewise, any initiative that forms part of a combined communication for development/gender approach will be aimed primarily at populations with multiple characteristics (in terms of age, sex, profession, wealth, educational level, etc.), while also taking account of other stakeholders such as public and private development institutions, civil society organisations, professional associations, media outlets, and so on.

Based on the principle that the communication for development approach and the gender approach involve men and women in the process of transforming society, empowering them and helping them along the path to changing their everyday lives, the role and responsibilities of communicators (in the broad sense of the term, as explained above) are many and varied[16]:

- To develop **two-way communication** and establish dialogue with men and women in rural communities,

  > which means being able to encourage people to exchange information, express their views and respect those of others.

- To **disseminate information and encourage reflection** about the social, economic and political implications of development initiatives,

  > which requires a spirit of enquiry and citizenly attitude in order to understand, assess and convey the challenges involved.

- **To make information accessible to all and ensure that it is circulated** in a format suitable for the intended recipients,

  > which means being aware of the different technical means of communication available, adapted to the target audiences.

- **To facilitate and foster dialogue and exchanges** of ideas and opinions between men and women with a view to taking decisions that will bring about change and equality,

  > which requires an in-depth knowledge and understanding of the context of the action.

- **To assist understanding** of the communication initiative by the groups concerned and their involvement in its implementation,

  > which means that the initiative must be developed in partnership with men and women.

- **To contribute to collaboration** between stakeholders and facilitate partnerships (alliances, networks),

  > which entails monitoring the progress and outcomes of the initiative and disseminating them to potentially interested partners.

- **To report information and people's voices,** notably of women, to policymakers, in order to promote local initiatives,

  > which means becoming a spokesperson and a conduit for conveying the voice of the grassroots to policymakers.

It should be noted that communication specialists have a crucial role to play in all of the varied functions listed above, e.g. in the use of communication tools, the production of support materials, the development of information campaigns, and so on. Their skills are vital.

In terms of gender equality, therefore, where inequalities are socially constructed, anyone performing a communication for development role can exert influence in a number of areas.

Areas of influence of communication actions	
Social norms and values:	**Social and power relations:**
by encouraging the questioning of such norms and values with a view to changing them.	by questioning roles and responsibilities in order to bring about greater equality and sharing.
Communication methods:	**Places of communication:**
by innovating so that men and women exchange their respective knowledge and expertise.	by opening up forums for the exchange of ideas and opinions to ensure that 'silent' voices are heard and taken into account.

All those operating in the field of communication must keep in mind that they are involved in a dynamic process of change, that their role is not a neutral one and that they must gauge the extent of their power to evaluate its impact. Their composite role is important and laden with responsibilities. To fulfil it as effectively as possible, these principles, inspired by the ethics of journalism, can be used as a guide:

- Truth (reliability of the information);
- Respect for human rights and respect for human beings, privacy and morality;
- Impartiality (rejection of proselytism, prejudices and stereotypes);
- Independence (from e.g. political, ethnic, family, economic pressures);
- Social responsibility (behaving in a citizenly manner, which means systematically considering the impact of one's action on society).

These rules are especially important given that development initiatives in rural areas take place in a permeable context which is neither 'inundated' with information nor 'overrun' by communication.
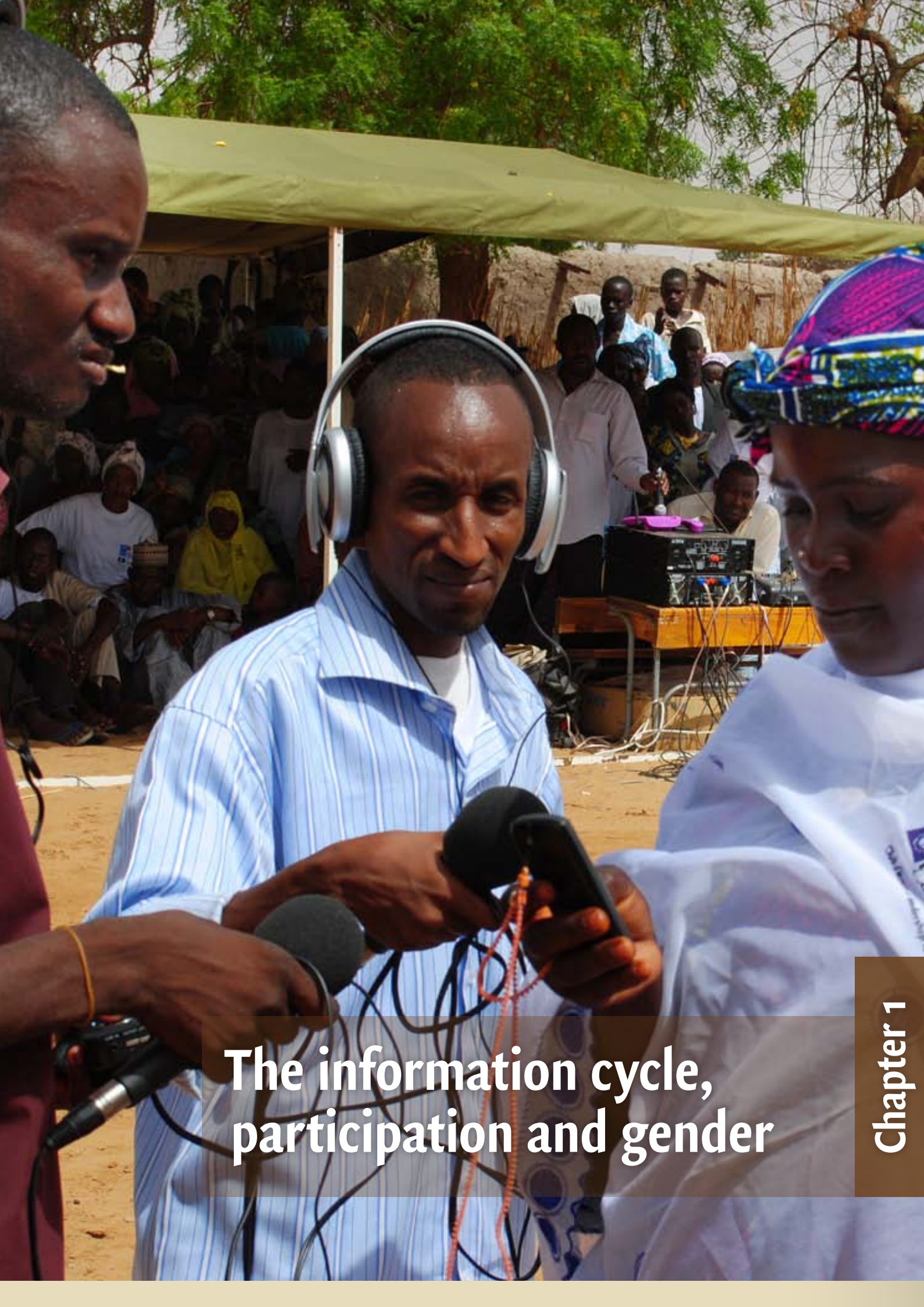
part 2

From words to action

The information cycle, participation and gender

Chapter 1
The information cycle, participation and gender

Every actor has a role to play and a function to perform in the various phases of the information cycle. Members of rural communities, women and men farmer associations, private companies, information and communication officers and practitioners, local authorities, development bodies, government structures: all are affected by information and communication.

The information cycle comprises three key phases: collection, processing and dissemination. Ensuring that the gender perspective is integrated in this cycle requires careful attention throughout the process, but particularly during data collection (since the other phases stem from that one). Such vigilance will prevent stereotypes and prejudices and minimise distortions arising from the non-neutral nature of information. These three key stages in the information cycle are outlined below from a gender perspective:

1. Collection of data

This is the phase in which data are collected, whether primary (obtained from the population concerned) or secondary (derived from reports, studies, statistics, etc.). In either case, it is necessary to have data broken down ('disaggregated') by sex and information that is gender-specific. Precautions must be taken to ensure that both women and men participate in the process and that the subjects addressed are of interest to everybody. The aim is to arrive at a suitably broad understanding of the context and the subject being addressed, by consulting multiple, varied sources and paying attention to the following points:

- choose the right time and place
- choose appropriate methods
- split men and women into separate groups, if necessary
- allow everyone to have their say, including those whose voices are not normally heard
- know how to listen
- know how to observe
- know how to ask relevant questions
- use techniques to prevent influential people from having more than their fair say

2. Processing of information

In this phase, the collected data are exploited in order to shed light on the issue at hand. They are summarised, verified and structured so as to produce appropriate content in a given format, whether it be a report, an article, a presentation, etc. The choice of format must take into account: (i) criteria such as clarity, simplicity, accuracy, concision and objectivity; (ii) questions such as what? who? when? where? how? why?

A critical mind is needed to select from among the available data, cross-check sources and compare points of view – in short to assess the reliability of the information that will be disseminated, while systematically taking gender into account.

3. Dissemination of information

This is the phase in which the information is shared. It is necessary to choose the medium and method for conveying the message and involving the target audience in the communication process (see Step 4, Choosing channels of communication, page 63). Where the target audience is heterogeneous, it may be beneficial to use a mix of channels. The main criteria governing the choice include: appropriateness of the message and content; accessibility for all, women and men; compatibility with the customs and socio-economic capacities of the target group; suitability in terms of the physical and geographical nature of the area.

However, despite the importance of involving populations, men and women, in the information cycle, there is no escaping the fact that the gender approach is often largely excluded from the key stages in the cycle. The following observations have frequently been made:

- Resource and contact persons are mostly men, often influential or prominent in status;
- Women and men are not described and referred to in the same way: men tend to be referred to in terms of their physical appearance, position in society and job, women in terms of their clothes and their marital status;
- Information tends to be general rather than tailored to the specific needs of individual population groups;
- Gender aspects are not highlighted;
- Political and economic subjects prevail over social issues in which women are discriminated against;
- Women are present when the subject is deemed to be a 'women's issue' (the implication being that all other subjects are 'men's issues').

These observations are not limited to the analysis of data collected and disseminated in the context of development projects.

Similar mechanisms are at work in the media, particularly in relation to rural and agricultural communities. This is attested to by the boxes below, which contain selected findings from two media monitoring projects.

Media and women

The findings of the Global Media Monitoring Project 2010 (GMMP)[17] reveal some major gender-based differences:

- Only 24% of the people questioned, heard, seen or read about in the written and audiovisual media are women; 76% are men.
- Only 16% of stories focus specifically on women.
- Fewer than one in five experts interviewed by the media are women.
- Equality issues (as defined in the Beijing Platform for Action) receive on average less than 1.5% of media attention.
- Far fewer stories are reported by women than by men.
- Stories reported by men are half as likely to question gender stereotypes as those reported by women.
- Women figure much more often in stories reported by women than in those reported by men.
- Almost half (48%) of all stories reinforce gender stereotypes.
- Only 12% of stories highlight issues of gender equality or inequality.
- Women are five times more likely to be referred to in terms of personal relationships, e.g. as a wife, mother, etc.

Media and the rural world

In 2008, the International Women's Media Foundation (IWMF)[18] carried out a study into the content of media coverage in three countries in Sub-Saharan Africa: Mali, Uganda and Zambia. The study revealed a profound 'disconnect', with media coverage reflecting exactly the opposite of the everyday lives of rural and agricultural populations. For example:

- Just 4% of all media coverage monitored by the study is devoted to agriculture. Yet agriculture makes up 34% of Sub-Saharan Africa's GDP and 40% of the region's exports, and it accounts for 70% of total employment.
- Farmers' voices, whether female or male, are little heard in media coverage. In agricultural stories, 70% of the sources are government officials and experts or professionals (i.e. academic researchers, business men and UN officials). Just 20% of sources are farmers and agricultural workers.
- Women are little represented in the media. Only 11% of the sources are women, 22% of the reporters are women, and just 7% of the stories focused on women. Yet, women are responsible for 70% of food production, 100% of food processing, 50% of animal husbandry and 60% of agricultural marketing.
- Agricultural coverage essentially exists of news briefs (84%). The media shows little interest in analysis or in-depth investigations, or in matters of rural or agricultural education.

Only by being aware of these challenges and making allowances for a general context that is unfavourable to the balanced processing of information will development practitioners be able to conduct communication initiatives, of whatever kind, in an optimal way that respects both men and women.

Integrating gender in communication for development in practice

Chapter 2
Integrating gender in communication for development in practice

Concretely, how does one go about designing a communication for development initiative that includes the gender dimension? This dimension should, of course, be ever-present since the underlying principles of communication for development require the communication to be aimed at everybody, both men and women, to take all points of view into account and to respond to a variety of expectations. However, this is not always the case.

Accordingly, to illustrate how the gender and communication for development approaches interact on an operational level, **the different phases in the design of a communication initiative will be examined**. They will be visited step by step and questioned in a gender-sensitive way. Once the 'gender reflex' has been acquired, it will then be easy to transpose the approach to a communication for development project, strategy or policy. The mechanism is the same. Following the reasoning set out in this chapter implies adopting a constructive critical attitude, being open-minded and committed to changing the way things are done.

By 'communication initiative' we mean an initiative or action aimed at bringing about a change of behaviour (practice, attitude) or a societal change by using information and communication tools and methods in a participatory way. The initiative may be part of a project and contribute to meeting the project objectives; alternatively, it may be a project in its own right, with its own set of objectives. Examples of communication initiatives include giving a PowerPoint presentation, producing a series of radio spots, running a poster campaign, giving an interview for a website, organising an awareness campaign with the help of traditional communicators, etc.

Every communication initiative consists of three phases: design, implementation and monitoring, and, lastly, evaluation. Its success is heavily dependent on the first phase, which is often overlooked. The steps involved in implementing a communication initiative are set out in the table on page 49. The order of the steps is only an indication, since, in reality, these steps very often occur in a different order or indeed simultaneously. However, monitoring and evaluation must be conceived at the start of the design phase and be an ongoing process throughout the initiative.

The importance of contextual analysis

In a West African country, a mobilisation campaign aimed at encouraging women to stand in municipal elections ended in failure. The groundwork – analysing the context and gaining an understanding of the subject – had been 'skipped' on the grounds of familiarity with the region and the electoral process. Nobody on the communication team had realised that, in order to stand in an election, you had to be registered with a political party – which many women were not.

To ensure that gender is integrated in all of these phases, careful attention must be paid to strategic, methodological, operational and institutional aspects.

- **Strategic aspect:** being alert to the gender equality, sustainability and effectiveness of initiatives, taking into account the differing priorities and interests of women and men.

   Given that a communication initiative benefiting women alone reinforces the marginalisation of women, and one benefiting men alone helps to entrench inequalities, an initiative aimed at both men and women is more conducive to change and to effective transformations.

- **Methodological and operational aspect:** exercising care in the choice of methods and tools, taking into account the core values of communication for development and gender, namely empowerment and participation.

  Given that each individual and each group has preferred modes of communication and self-expression, the methods and tools chosen should reflect this.

- **Institutional aspect:** being alert to the gender sensitivity of the institution promoting the communication initiative, in terms of its policy, expertise, experiences, procedures, the composition of its teams, and so on.

  Given that an institution stamps its own imprint on the actions it implements, it must mainstream gender in its vision and at all levels of its operation.

Steps involved in a communication action		
Step	**Description**	**Questions**
1 Analysing the context and subject	Framework in which the communication action takes place Issue addressed by the communication action	**What?** In what setting is the communication action taking place? What is being discussed?
2 Formulating the objective	What the action seeks to achieve	**Why?** What change is sought?
3 Identifying target audiences	The stakeholders: individuals and groups affected by the communication action	**Who?** Who to communicate to/with in order to meet the objective?
4 Choosing channels of communication	Ways of communicating between and with stakeholders	**How?** What channels are accessible to men and women, and are compatible with their lifestyles?
5 Designing the message	Content which encourages action to meet the objective	**What to communicate?** What message to convey to achieve the desired change?
6 Provisional planning and budgeting	Organisation of activities in time and space and mobilisation of resources	**When? Where? How much?** Timetable? Places where the action is to take place? Human and financial resources?
7 Developing the monitoring and evaluation system	Mechanisms and procedures for collecting and analysing sex-disaggregated qualitative data and gender-specific quantitative data	**How to verify and measure:** ■ progress towards achieving the result? ■ the result achieved? ■ the outcomes and impact of the action?
All of these steps are important, none should be skipped over or skimmed through.		

The more attention is paid to these dimensions, the more gender-sensitive the communication initiative will be (see "The five steps to integrate gender in communication actions" on the next page) and the more significant the results will be in terms of social and economic transformation (see example in box below).

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Community listeners' clubs[19]:
participation, empowerment and social transformation

</div>

The FAO-Dimitra project has championed a communication for development initiative in Niger and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) which provides support to local organisations to set up community listeners' clubs. What is it all about?

The principle behind these clubs is simple: groups of women or men, or both, identify and discuss their priorities for change on the basis of what they have heard on radio programmes, then they decide on the action(s) to take. One person – often a woman – is chosen by the group to facilitate the discussions, and is trained for this role. Community or rural radio stations, which are also trained by the initiative, are then contacted to provide information and relay the debates. This mechanism provides the listeners' clubs with an opportunity to exchange experiences, give their opinions on the information broadcast and take decisions for action. In Niger, mobile telephones are also used to facilitate communication.

Listeners' clubs have had an influence on:
- *behaviour*: in South Kivu (DRC), women no longer see information and communication as the sole preserve of men, specialists and journalists; they speak more in public and have greater self-esteem and self-confidence;
- *practices*: in Katanga (DRC), radio stations are broadcasting more and more programmes aimed at women as well as men;
- *perceptions*: in Borobon (Niger), men's perceptions of women's abilities have changed since they started talking on the radio. The traditional chief has invited women to attend village meetings, from which they were previously excluded.

The five steps to integrate gender in communication actions

5 **Gender-sensitive action**

The initiative addresses the differing priorities and interests of men and women.

Example: participatory functioning of listeners' clubs addressing issues specific to men and women and issues common to both (see previous box).

4 **Positive action**

The initiative addresses the prejudices incurred by a group, examined within the context of society.

Example: advocacy aimed at halting domestic and family violence against women.

3 **Specific action**

The initiative focuses on men or women but does not address the wider context.

Example: a report analysing the specific plight of women affected by HIV/AIDS but not analysing how this is linked to the functioning of society (rejection of condoms, consequences for agricultural production).

2 **Neutral action**

The initiative acknowledges the existence of differences but does not address them.

Example: a radio programme on children's schooling, reporting that girls are less likely to attend school than boys but not analysing the reasons for this.

1 **Insensitive action**

The initiative is based on the assumption that needs are homogeneous (implicitly those of men).

Example: an information campaign aimed at all audiences promoting the adoption of an agricultural technique.
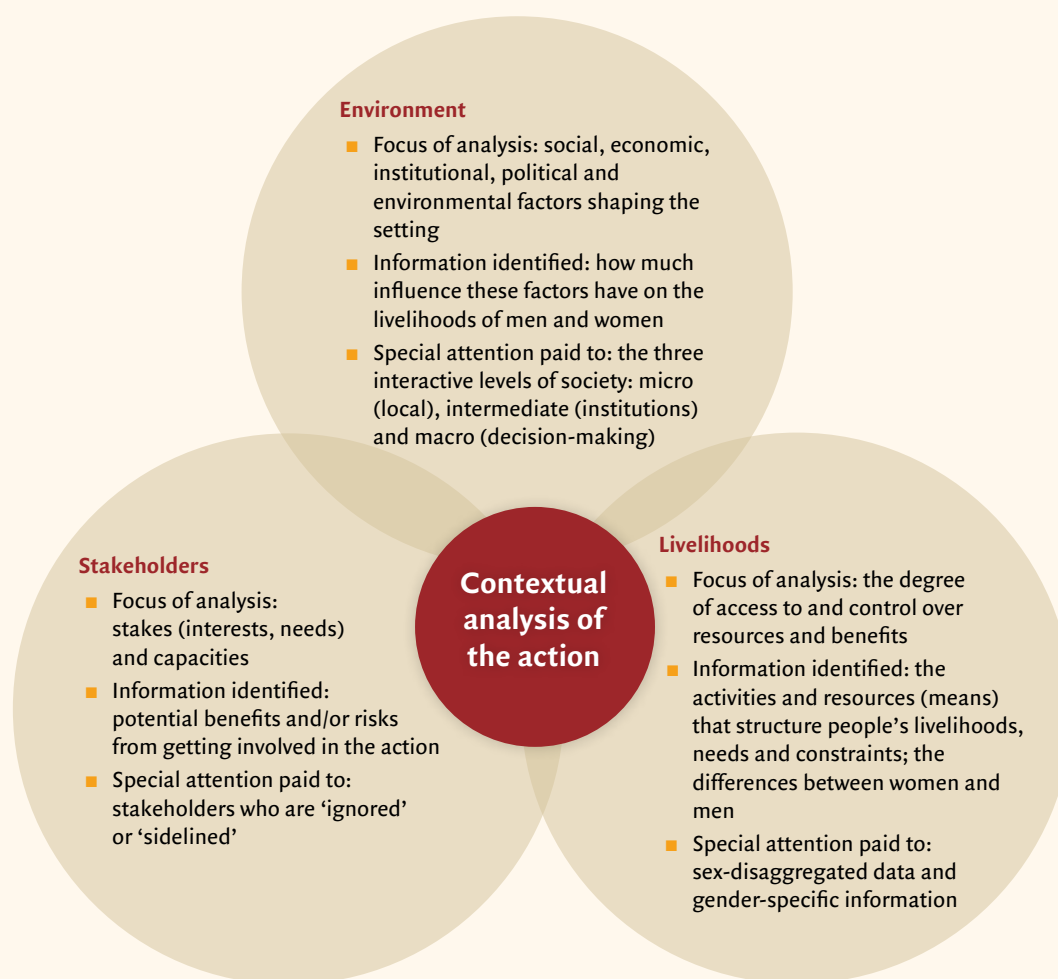
Analysing the context and subject

As a communication initiative aims to effect change, it is vital that the following two components are known and understood from a gender perspective:

- **the subject** (issue addressed by the initiative)
  The various aspects of the subject – sociological, technical, economic, etc. – should be analysed in detail. This knowledge will contribute to a better understanding of the different perceptions that each population category has of the issue in question.

- **the context** (environment in which the initiative will take place)
  Attention should focus on the livelihoods of men and women and on comparisons between them (in terms of resources, possibilities, constraints and needs), as well as the socio-economic and political factors that structure the environment and shape the way it operates. This knowledge will help to ensure a better understanding of the issue (subject) addressed by the communication initiative, from a gender perspective.

These two components should be explored in an interactive rather than a linear way. Knowledge and understanding, of both the context and the subject, are closely bound up with one another and there must be a constant interplay between the two in order to compare and validate the data and information. The level of detail of the analysis depends on this, bearing in mind that a gender focus and 'gender lenses' must be deployed right from this stage in order to ensure a balanced analysis of the fundamentals underpinning the communication initiative: the use of monocles is prohibited.

The subject of the action: two scenarios	
First scenario: **The subject has not been determined**	**Second scenario:** **The subject has been determined**
Knowledge of the context, acquired in a participatory way, is the gateway to determining the subject(s) that is/are of priority importance to the population, differentiated according to gender. Men and women do not necessarily attach the same level of importance to the same subjects.	Understanding of the subject, obtained in a participatory way, is the gateway to the action. The context is assessed through the filter of the chosen subject and will highlight bottlenecks (constraints, difficulties) and openings (possibilities, strengths). The content of the initiative will reflect the strengths and weaknesses identified, which will serve to generate arguments.
Examples - market gardening may be a priority issue for women; - marketing of agricultural produce may be of more concern to men than to women; - the issue of land may be a shared priority but not manifest itself in the same way among men as among women.	*Example* If the subject relates to shared land use, the strengths (arguments for) and weaknesses (arguments against) could be: **Women's arguments** for: equal laws against: existing customs **Men's arguments** for: male rural exodus against: control of land

The context of the action: a gender-sensitive analysis

Environment
- Focus of analysis: social, economic, institutional, political and environmental factors shaping the setting
- Information identified: how much influence these factors have on the livelihoods of men and women
- Special attention paid to: the three interactive levels of society: micro (local), intermediate (institutions) and macro (decision-making)

Stakeholders
- Focus of analysis: stakes (interests, needs) and capacities
- Information identified: potential benefits and/or risks from getting involved in the action
- Special attention paid to: stakeholders who are 'ignored' or 'sidelined'

Contextual analysis of the action

Livelihoods
- Focus of analysis: the degree of access to and control over resources and benefits
- Information identified: the activities and resources (means) that structure people's livelihoods, needs and constraints; the differences between women and men
- Special attention paid to: sex-disaggregated data and gender-specific information

A gender analysis is critical to an examination of the above three components. Fundamentally participatory in nature, such an analysis helps to understand the dynamic at work in the environment, drawing on the opinions and perceptions of men and women about their everyday lives. Because both men and women are stakeholders in the analysis, the information obtained does not relate solely to women or solely to men. It reflects reality, highlighting the gender inequalities and gaps that exist and their causes and consequences.

Gender analysis uses a number of tools, most of them based on participatory rural appraisal (PRA) methods with an added gender component. These tools are valuable for communication for development. On page 54 is a table[20] summarising the key questions associated with gender analysis and the main tools[21] available to answer them.

Different ways of communicating

The different ways men and women communicate and exchange information must be carefully explored:
- Who is allowed to speak in public and how does this happen?
- How literate are the men/women?
- Where do people meet and interact? To whom are these places accessible?
- How do men and women acquire information and communicate?
- When do people meet and interact? Who takes part in such meetings?
- What mass media are used? By whom? How?

The information obtained through gender analysis relates to:

- the allocation of time and the division of productive, reproductive and community work between men and women, i.e. the roles and responsibilities assumed by each;
- the use and management of resources by men and women, together with their constraints and possibilities in all areas;
- the influence of socio-economic and political factors on the livelihoods and status of men and women;
- the practical needs and strategic interests of men and women, i.e. their priorities;
- the degree of participation and decision-making within the household, farm and village, i.e. whether or not power is shared;
- the gaps between men and women in the economic, social and political spheres, i.e. gender inequalities.

Gender analysis: questions and key tools[22]

For all of these questions: What influences what and whom? Social, economic and political factors influencing all these questions Tool: Analysis table of influencing factors at micro, meso and macro levels	Questions	Tools	For each question examine: When? Where? Why? How?
	❶ **Who does what?** *Tasks: productive, reproductive, community* ❷ **Who is responsible for what?** *Responsibilities and roles*	■ Daily activity clock ■ Seasonal calendar ■ Activity profile ■ Farming systems diagram	
	❸ **Who uses what? How?** *Access to resources* ❹ **Who owns/controls what?** *Resource management* ❺ **Who earns what? From what?** *Income* ❻ **Who spends what? On what?** *Allocation of income*	■ Resources map ■ Resources profile ■ Resources picture card ■ Benefits analysis flow chart ■ Income & expenditures matrix ■ Resources and resource control diagram ■ Benefits and benefit control diagram	
	❼ **Who makes decisions about what?** *Power* ❽ **Who is entitled to what?** *Rights, customs*	■ Socio-political and socio-economic profile of men and women	
	❾ **Who benefits from the initiative?** *Results of the initiative* ❿ **Who gains what? Who loses what?** *Outcomes, impact*	■ Table of practical interests and strategic needs ■ Venn diagram ■ Conflict & partnership matrix ■ Flow diagram	

The boxes below illustrate the importance of these tools in analysing the context and subject. They show the purpose of each tool, together with the central question it is intended to address. This is followed by an example of a specific situation demonstrating how using the tool at the design stage avoids problems in later phases of the communication initiative.

Tools	Activity profile, daily activity clock
Purpose	To learn about the division of labour between women and men, their workload, the daily division of time, harvest times, food and financial availability, etc.
Central question	Who does what and when?
Situation	In a West African country, an extension campaign was undertaken to promote the seeding of rice in rows in order to increase yields. Take-up of the practice was low.
Explanation	The campaign targeted male rice producers. Although they prepared the soil, it was the women who were responsible for sowing and cultivation operations such as thinning.
	Impact on the target audience identification stage (Step 3): *Knowing about stakeholder roles and responsibilities helps to identify the individuals who can implement the initiative.*

Tools	Seasonal calendar
Purpose	To learn about the division of time and of tasks between women and men in different agricultural seasons.
Central question	Who does what and when?
Situation	In a Central African country, a project established a credit line allowing women farmers to start up income-generating activities. The credit was intended to be used over a six-month period. At the end of the six months, the funds remained largely intact.
Explanation	The credit line was established at the start of the agricultural season, at which time the family spends all of its time working in the fields. In other words, it is a time of year when women have no free time during the day in which to embark on new activities.
	Impact on the provisional planning and budgeting stage (Step 6): *Knowing about the rhythm and intensity of stakeholders' activities helps in planning the initiative.*

Tools	Resources profile, resources picture cards, income & expenditures matrix
Purpose	To learn about available resources, their use, allocation and control
Central question	Who uses what? Who makes decisions about what?
Situation	In a West African country, a project organised a workshop for women vegetable seed producers, market gardeners and traders in agricultural produce. The aim was to identify ways of collaborating in order to intensify production and facilitate marketing. The workshop did not yield results.
Explanation	Only women had been invited to the workshop, on the grounds that market gardening is often a job done by women. However, in order to intensify production, the use of land must be guaranteed. Aside from their personal plots, women farmers were not guaranteed use of the collective plots and had no power to make decisions regarding the use of land. All the women could do was to acknowledge this fact; they were not able to discuss ways of collaborating.
	Impact on the formulation of objectives stage (Step 2): *Understanding how resources are used and managed enables to determine the objectives of the initiative more effectively.*

Tools	Analysis table of influencing factors (social, economic and political) at local, institutional and policymaking level
Purpose	To understand past, present and future trends of the advantages and challenges of change.
Central question	Which factor(s) influence(s) what and whom?
Situation	In a Central African country, violence against women, rape in particular, is rarely if ever denounced. Yet laws punishing such violence do exist. An information campaign aimed at breaking the silence and bringing the perpetrators to justice focused its message on a very strong word: "Dénoncer" (denounce). This word raised a number of questions.
Explanation	Denouncing yes, but how? To whom? With what guarantees of protection? What impact would it have on the social status in the community of the person reporting the violence? etc.
	Impact on the message design stage (Step 5): *Societal factors influence people's receptiveness to a message. Assessing this influence helps to develop a clear, precise and unambiguous message.*

Tools	Table of practical needs and strategic interests
Purpose	To identify the needs for improvement in living environment as well as the priorities of men and women arising from differences of situation; these needs and priorities (or interests) highlight gaps and help to address inequalities.
Central question	Who needs what? Who has an interest in what?
Situation	In a West African country, a public debate was organised with the aim of combating early marriage of girls in rural areas. The debate was lively but did not result in any solutions for change.
Explanation	The majority of rural people defended early marriage: the women saw it as a mark of social prestige, while the men spoke of the need for alliances between families. Addressing the stakes for each group is vital in bringing about change. The public debate was premature and, more importantly, inadequate to change the practice of early marriage of girls.
	Impact on the choice of communication channels stage (Step 4): *Investigating general and specific needs and interests is key to selecting the right means of achieving the objective.*

Tools	Socio-political and socio-economic profile (farming systems diagram, resource access and control table, income & expenditures matrix, etc.)
Purpose	To better understand how power is distributed, in particular within households.
Central question	Who makes decisions about what and how?
Situation	In a Central African country, a series of radio programmes about the usefulness of corn storage facilities was organised by a food security project. An analysis of the results showed that (i) women farmers were not aware of these programmes; (ii) men farmers were generally opposed, claiming among other things that they led to a loss of income.
Explanation	Men 'own' the family radio and tend not to share it. They also sell the harvest and keep the profits, meaning that the family have less to eat themselves and risk being short of food during the lean season. It was clear, therefore, that (i) women farmers could not be stakeholders in the programmes and (ii) the stakes had not been correctly identified.
	Impact on the monitoring and evaluation system stage (Step 7): *Gauging stakeholder powers provides a means of verifying the results of the initiative and makes the initiative more likely to succeed.*

In summary, analysing the context and subject of the communication initiative through the filter of gender-analysis tools is a necessary step to ensure that the initiative is implemented as effectively as possible and delivers the desired results. It serves to identify bottlenecks in a given situation and to pinpoint problems. This is illustrated in the following example.

Situation: A federation of farmers' organisations (FOs) is concerned by the fact that women farmers are underrepresented in grassroots FOs and in the federation. This situation is affecting the representativeness, credibility and effectiveness of these organisations. The federation's managing bodies wish to change this state of affairs.

Bottleneck analysis: An analysis is carried out and identifies a number of factors blocking women farmers' access to representative positions. These include:

- *at socio-cultural level:* the low status of women, etc.;
- *at economic level:* the degree of importance of the product varieties controlled by women farmers;
- *at institutional level:* the weak organisational structure of women farmers groups, etc.;
- *at political level:* the absence of measures to combat inequalities, etc.;
- *among men farmers:* blaming the situation on women farmers, etc.;
- *among women farmers:* a lack of confidence; etc.

Problems associated with the bottlenecks: Examining these bottlenecks highlighted a number of key problems, all of them interlinked, e.g.:

- women farmers are less literate than their male counterparts and therefore find it difficult to occupy representative positions and make decisions on behalf of FOs;
- women's limited access to and control over land limits the scope of their activities and therefore limits the importance of them being represented in FO decision-making bodies;
- women farmers' groups are poorly structured and are geared more towards principles of solidarity than towards achieving economic objectives; etc.

Central problem: The lower literacy rates among women farmers is chosen as the central problem to be addressed by the initiative. This problem is then explored in depth to determine its causes and consequences.

Causes and consequences of low female literacy			
Causes	Lack of awareness about the benefits of literacy	Absence of literacy programmes	Girls (the women farmers of the future) are less likely than boys to attend school	Customs that discriminate against women
Consequences	Women have little self-confidence	Men underestimate women's abilities	Women are dependent on men	Men do not share their power

- During data collection: who spoke? from whom was the information collected?
  Are these people representative of the population in question?
  Are male and female voices equally represented?
- Is the information gathered for the context and subject analysis sex-disaggregated and does it reveal gender specificities and differences?
- Do the results of the subject analysis highlight
  - gender disparities and inequalities?
  - differences in perception and point of view?
  - the needs and interests of each population category?
  - the methods and channels of communication used by each population group?
- Is the environment favourable/unfavourable to the initiative? Why? What advantages and disadvantages might the initiative bring? Do these apply to everyone or only to some people?
- Are the conditions in place to enable everyone, both men and women, to participate?
- Could the initiative potentially bring about a change in gender and power relations? Why? How?

STEP 2
Formulating the objective

Step 2 is about giving a direction to the communication initiative and formulating the objective(s). The focus of the initiative is derived from the observations made in Step 1, keeping in mind to act on the causes and not the consequences, and remembering, on the one hand, that a communication initiative helps to resolve a situation but is not a panacea and, on the other hand, that its aim is to change a behaviour or practice.

Once the focus of the initiative has been decided, the objective(s) is/are drawn up and the result(s) to be achieved is/are defined based on the following questions:

- *Why this communication initiative?* What is the desired situation compared with the current situation as analysed in Step 1? The answer to this question will be instrumental in determining how the communication initiative will contribute to achieving the desired results.
- *What is the communication initiative about?* What behaviour or practice is it intended to change? The answer to this question will determine the objective or the result to be achieved by the communication initiative.

Formulation of the objective/result must be based on the SMART principle, but also taking into account the gender dimension; it must be a gender-sensitive SMART objective or result.

Criteria of a SMART objective/result	Meaning of the criteria	Factors to be included in a gender-sensitive SMART objective/result
Specific	Precise	**S**pecificities of men/women
Measurable	Quantitative, qualitative	**M**easurement of inequalities
Acceptable	In terms of the social, economic, political and institutional context	**A**ttention paid to gender and power relations
Realistic	Achievable	**R**eality of men's and women's lifestyles
Time-bound	Set in a given timeframe	**T**imeframe based on consensus

If we take the example used on page 57 to illustrate the analysis of Step 1 that led to the identification of the central problem (i.e. the low literacy levels of women farmers), the objective and the result to be achieved might be formulated as follows:

Contribution of the action (Why this action?) *(ultimate goal, long-term impact)*		The action itself (What is the action about?) *(content, medium-term outcomes)*	
Objective	Result	Objective	Result
To strengthen women's capacity to access decision-making positions in farmers' organisations (FOs)	Positions of responsibility in FOs distributed equally between men and women farmers	To increase the literacy rate of women FO members by x% in three years	x% reduction in the literacy rate differential between men and women FO members in three years

The activities to be implemented stem from the formulated objective/result. These activities are translated into expected outputs, which will in turn yield the expected immediate results of the communication initiative (see box below, based on the example used throughout this step). However, it should be remembered that these activities, outputs and results will be consolidated and refined over the subsequent stages.

Activities to be implemented	Expected outputs	Expected immediate results
■ Situational analysis and needs assessment in terms of literacy content ■ Raise awareness of FO members at all levels about the benefits of literacy ■ Inform women farmers about the existence of literacy classes ■ etc.	■ x literacy curricula levels produced ■ x workshops held at x FO federations ■ x information meetings held with grassroots FOs attended by x men and x women farmers ■ x discussion days held, attended by x women farmers ■ x radio programmes broadcast ■ x posters produced ■ etc.	■ x women farmers have learnt to read and write ■ Literacy officers appointed within x FO federations ■ x literacy centres set up by FOs ■ etc.

This objective/result formulation approach requires practitioners to bear in mind at all times that processes are as important as results where communication for development is concerned. The changes of behaviour and practice that will result in the adoption of suitable solutions depend on the momentum generated with the men and women affected by the problem to be resolved.

Taking gender into account in Step 2: Checklist of key questions

■ Will the objective and result of the initiative contribute to a change in gender and power relations? Why and how?
■ Will the result contribute to gender equality? Why and how?
■ Is the result of the initiative gender-sensitive and SMART?
■ Whom (men, women) will this result benefit? Why and how?
■ Could the result disadvantage men? Women? In what way? Why and how?

STEP 3
Identifying target audiences

In Step 1, the stakeholders – i.e. all of the individuals, groups of individuals and institutions that have something to lose or gain from the initiative – were identified, together with their respective stakes. In Step 2, the goals to be met and the activities to be carried out were determined.

Drawing on this information, the next step is to identify the target group(s). This is done by asking three questions: "Who are we working with and why?", "Who is affected by the communication initiative and why?" and "Who are we aiming the communication at?".

Before this subject is addressed in detail, the term 'target audience' needs to be clarified. The term is a conventional one in the field of communication: messages are generally conveyed to a particular audience. Such communication is a one-way process, involving neither dialogue nor interaction. Communication for development has retained the term, but on the understanding that the target audience is an active partner rather than a passive recipient. It is the communication which is targeted, with a view to working with specific groups.

Furthermore, a distinction needs to be made between primary and secondary target audiences:

- The primary target audience consists of the men and/or women directly affected by the intended change;
- The secondary target audience consists of the men and/or women, institutions and groups that may facilitate the communication process and the behavioural change process.[23]

Audiences of a communication initiative aimed at reducing illiteracy rates among women FO members	
Primary target audience	**Secondary target audience**
■ Illiterate women FO members ■ Illiterate men FO members	■ Members of FO governing bodies ■ All FO members, both men and women ■ Traditional authorities and influential persons in FO villages and communities ■ Literacy NGOs ■ etc.

Using the results of the analysis carried out in Step 1 is key to identifying the primary target group(s). This identification goes far beyond simple gender distinctions. A communication initiative cannot claim to take gender into account merely on the ground that the target audiences are female or male. The words 'men' and 'women' encompass multiple realities. Just as important as gender, if not more so, are:

- the socio-economic characteristics of individuals;
- the differences and disparities between men and women in terms of roles and responsibilities (in particular as regards the division of labour in time and space) and in terms of needs and interests;
- the behaviour and opinions of men and women in relation to the subject of the initiative;
- the potential degree of participation in the initiative.

Secondary audiences are determined based on their ability to contribute to and/or influence the initiative. The involvement of these groups is often extremely useful in ending a deadlock or boosting the initiative.

These audiences may be:

- institutions (technical services/departments, NGOs, development cooperations, etc.) whose involvement in the initiative may be vital;
- government, civil, religious or traditional decision-making individuals or bodies who need to be sensitised to the issue at hand (through information or advocacy, as appropriate).

In addition, individuals and/or bodies opposed to or sceptical about the initiative also need to be taken into account (although not necessarily included in the target audiences) in order to minimise any negative influence they may exert and possibly also to change their views.

The identification of target audiences therefore requires a detailed understanding of the characteristics of those groups and an awareness that extends beyond the level at which the initiative is taking place. It must be grounded in the three levels at which society is organised:

- **Local/micro level:** the population categorised according to such criteria as age, sex, profession, language and standard of living, as well as (and more importantly) needs, interests and perceptions;
- **Intermediate level:** public services, other actors;
- **Macro level:** policymakers.

The care taken at this stage will help to determine the choice of modes and channels of communication (next step).

Example	Katanga Provincial Assembly, DRC
Situation	Under-representation of women in political institutions.
Objective	To help ensure that women win 30% of seats in the Katanga Provincial Assembly at the next elections
Primary target audiences	- Governing bodies of political parties - Deputies in the Provincial Assembly - Prominent opinion leaders (both male and female) in various fields - Political activists - Men and women voters
Secondary target audiences	- Women's rights groups - Gender advocacy NGOs - Katanga women deputies' action group

Taking gender into account in Step 3: Checklist of key questions

- Are there different target groups? How involved/important/interested are they?
- Which criteria were used to identify these groups?
- Are women/men presented as homogeneous groups?
- Were gender and power relations taken into account when identifying these groups?
- Has anyone been overlooked (individuals, groups or institutions)?
  What proportion are men? What proportion are women?

STEP 4
Choosing channels of communication

At this stage, the following steps have been completed:

- Analysis of the situation, including the information and communication capacities and resources of both the environment and the individuals concerned, and determination of the key issue(s) to be addressed.
- Formulation of the objectives/results to be achieved and the activities involved in the communication initiative.
- Identification of the target audience(s) participating in the initiative.

Step 4 is about choosing the channels of communication (media/methods, support materials) used to relay the message and involve the audience in the communication process (see box on pages 64-65).

Communication channels are **not an end in themselves: they are instruments serving the initiative**. These channels are many and varied, ranging from folk media and traditional social groupings to new information technologies, listeners' clubs (see box on page 66), video forums, theatre-debate, exchange visits, training courses and knowledge- and experience-sharing, to name but a few.

A combination of channels is often required because no one channel will suffice to achieve the desired result. Such a media mix might combine interpersonal and mass communication tools, traditional and modern, written and visual, etc., each one having its own particular strength. Used together, these methods enhance and complement one another, making the communication initiative more likely to succeed.

The choice and combination of communication tools should be determined in consultation with the men and women involved in the initiative, keeping in mind that:

- Women and men have knowledge about different things;
- Women and men have different knowledge about the same things;
- Women and men may organise their knowledge in different ways;
- Women and men may receive and transmit their knowledge by different means.[24]

The choice and combination of communication tools must therefore take into account cultural, socio-economic and gender conditions and the specificities and capacities of each group, as well as the goal of the initiative. Accordingly, accessibility for target audiences, compatibility with local practices and appropriateness for the environment must be considered, as well as suitability for the content of the initiative. Cost is another factor to bear in mind.

Some surprising choices of communication channel …

For example: in a rural village characterised by poverty, illiteracy and a lack of infrastructure, television and "paper" are certainly not the best channels to choose for a communication initiative; traditional channels, or possibly radio, are preferable. An obvious statement, one might suppose. But apparently not, to judge by the numerous television programmes produced for the benefit of farmers who have no TV sets to watch them on, or the piles of complex fact sheets and brochures gathering dust in offices, which consist mainly of text and were certainly produced for use by farmers, many of whom are barely able to read…

Gender and channels of communication in rural areas[25]

Mass media (commercial, private, public)

Radio	■ One of the most powerful and accessible means for reaching isolated rural areas; a channel for education, awareness-raising and knowledge acquisition; a tool for influencing the dynamics of social relations and addressing gender inequalities; close to listeners in the case of rural and community-based radio. ■ Issues to consider: many women do not own a radio and/or have no access to one; languages in which programmes are broadcast; need to choose topics of interest to women or young people (male and female); can be combined with other channels of communication to enable interaction (e.g. listeners' clubs).
Television	■ Channel for propaganda, great impact (positive or negative) on young people; awareness-raising and source of knowledge; a persuasive and attractive method for drawing policymakers' attention to issues relating to rural populations, especially women. ■ Issues to consider: absence of coverage and electricity in rural areas, and hence lack of accessibility; expensive to produce/receive; rural and agricultural issues (and rural women in particular) not covered; often monopolised by powerful interests; no interaction with viewers.
Press	■ Dissemination of news; possible role in a democratic context with a critical or opposition press. ■ Issues to consider: illiteracy, especially among women; print media not distributed in rural areas; cost.

Traditional media

Song, dance, music, stories, poetry, masks, proverbs, puppets, etc.	■ For generations, rural populations, both men and women, have relied on oral traditions and other traditional forms of communication as a means of sharing knowledge and information and providing entertainment. They are important channels for promoting learning, behavioural change and participation. Traditional communicators are respected and influential. ■ Issues to consider: traditional channels of communication may lack prestige compared with modern media; they require close collaboration between development practitioners and traditional folk artists and, above all, a great deal of skill to incorporate development messages advocating change (in gender roles, for example).

Audio-visual and written tools (support materials)

■ Valuable for motivating and assisting in training and working groups, as well as promoting self-confidence and empowerment; cheap; persuasive; enable interaction; equipment now more affordable, lighter and more suitable for use with women and men in rural areas.

■ Issues to consider: to be used at the most convenient times and places for community members, particularly women, who often have less free time; cost of the equipment; training needed for participatory use of these media; men and women must be able to identify with the images and topics chosen.

Film screenings Video forums	Generate enthusiasm because seen as an 'event'; used to relay information and stimulate debate; can be used to discuss problems and as the first step to raising awareness; separate screenings and debates for men and women, depending on the topics discussed.

Photographs Picture boxes Participatory video	A range of uses for various purposes: picture box for technical illustration, to visualise a situation (photos, photo novels, illustrations). These materials can be produced by the populations themselves. Rapid developments in small-format technology mean that participatory video or photography is a powerful means of communication which can help communities take ownership of their own development; it can also help to enhance women's status within their communities and organisations.
Posters, leaflets	Allow a simple message to be conveyed in multiple locations simultaneously; can be made visually appealing through balanced use of text (kept to a minimum) and illustration (as many photos and pictures as possible).

Communication methods

- Communication methods and knowledge-sharing tools boost self-confidence and enable interaction, exchange, debate, collaboration, participation, etc.
- Issues to consider: these methods and tools often require a high level of gender awareness and sensitivity to group and interpersonal dynamics. Women are often subject to various kinds of constraints that prevent them from travelling outside their village for visits, training or events. Speaking in front of mixed groups may be problematic. These constraints must be addressed in order to foster active participation by women and young people. The language of communication must be the everyday language of the community.

Group discussions, debates	Opportunities to get people together (large or small groups, mixed or single-sex). Issues to consider: risk of the discussion being monopolised and the "powerless" (often young people and women) having no say; some subjects are off-limits.
Theatre-debate	Can be produced and acted by the population with the help of a drama team and followed up with fruitful discussions. Possibility of forming separate groups.
Exchange visits, training	Help to raise awareness and enable exchange of experiences and solutions; participants feel comfortable about speaking because they are familiar with the subject matter; widens horizons; unlocks potential.
Fairs, events	Opportunity to highlight experiences and reach a large audience (through advertising); boost self-confidence and self-esteem. Issues to consider: mobility issues for some groups within the population; offering guidance and assistance at the fair/event to make it easier for everyone to participate, using tools such as the World Café, the carrousel, peer assist, proverbs, knowledge tree, etc. (see tools at www.kstoolkit.org).

New Information and Communication Technologies (new ICTs)

Mobile telephones, telecentres, networks, Internet, etc.	Used effectively, new ICTs can help to combat isolation, forge alliances, create platforms, promote knowledge of the world and boost empowerment. Issues to consider: cost, inaccessibility in rural areas, illiteracy (particularly among women), lack of user training and infrastructure, languages used.

The power of communication tools: listeners' clubs supported by Dimitra in the Democratic Republic of Congo

As explained earlier, listeners' clubs are citizens' groups which enable their members (men and women) to share their concerns and needs, acquire otherwise unobtainable information and take joint action. The results are exemplary:

- In Bugobe (South Kivu), the club noticed that men were using fertile wetlands to grow sugar cane, none of which was used to feed local households. It therefore conducted awareness-raising campaigns and contacted the administrative and customary authorities. A system of fees was introduced, which dissuaded the men. Now some 70% of the wetlands are used for market gardening.

- The South Kivu listeners' clubs ran a campaign against HIV/AIDS. Addressing the subject openly on radio programmes and at panel discussions, followed by a number of practical initiatives, helped to demystify this taboo issue. Behaviours changed, leading to: fewer misconceptions, more voluntary screening by couples, more husbands accompanying their wives to prenatal consultations, and so on.

- Kasumbalesa, a border town in the province of Katanga and a trading hub for the region, is an area where gender-based violence is very high. Such violence tends to be settled out of court rather than denounced to the authorities. The club organised a series of programmes and a mobilisation campaign against these settlements. Since then, according to the Kasumbalesa public prosecutor's office and evidence from victims' families, the number of rapes reported to the authorities has risen.

Thanks to the listeners' clubs:

- Rural populations, particularly women, can access, use and share information more easily;
- Rural women are more self-confident, express themselves in a citizenly manner and participate more in community, family and farm decision-making;
- Men have changed their attitudes to the division of roles and responsibilities and are more recognising of women's abilities and rights.

Taking gender into account in Step 4: Checklist of key questions

- Which criteria were used to select the channels of communication?
- Were the target audiences involved in these choices?
- Will the chosen methods reach both men and women? Are the chosen support materials appropriate for both men and women? Were the specific characteristics of each group, especially gender characteristics, taken into consideration?
- Are there groups who control access to and use of these channels?
- Can the selected channels be accessed and used by all audiences, including women?

STEP 5
Designing the message

The array of channels available for a communication initiative favours the multiple transmission of its message. The content of the message is determined by a) the characteristics of the target audiences and b) the nature of the change to be effected. The message can be visual, written or spoken. Whether the audience takes ownership of the message and puts it into practice will depend on how easy it is understood, and the interest and attention it generates.

Attention must therefore be paid to style (simplicity), volume (length), vocabulary (accessibility), language (no stereotypes or prejudices, easy to understand) and images (meaning, representation).

Very often, rather than a single message, a group of consistent, complementary messages is developed to support the initiative. However, to avoid confusion and loss of focus, each channel of communication used should only relay a single message.

The assistance of specialists is often required to develop the message, notably to check the technical and conceptual content.

Always be gender-alert
Gender stereotypes and prejudices are lurking round every corner: images, words, proverbs, idioms and slogans are full of them.	Constant vigilance is therefore required when using language, even by those who are heavily involved in gender issues.

The message, together with the mean(s) chosen to transmit it, must be pre-tested and retested. This will enable assessment of the message in terms of attention, understanding, interest, credibility and acceptation. The perceptions and reactions observed will enable the message to be fine-tuned (if necessary), approved and presented, and will confirm the suitability (or not) of the chosen media.

Taking gender into account in Step 5:
Checklist of key questions

- Are the message and its language 'preachy'? Do they convey gender stereotypes and/or prejudices?
- Does the message reinforce gender inequalities or the traditional division of roles?
- How are men/women portrayed?
- Does the information convey a positive or negative message about certain individuals or groups of individuals?
- Has the message been tested on women? How representative was the sample?
- Is it tailored to men/women? Is it perceived in the same way by men and women? What reactions does it elicit?
- Will the information have a positive impact on gender relations? Will it uphold traditional gender relations and inequalities?

STEP 6
Provisional planning and budgeting

After completing Steps 1 to 5, there is a tendency to skip what is actually an essential part of the process, namely provisional planning and budgeting. This phase is based on the results of the previous steps and, at its simplest, takes the form of a dashboard. At its most complex, it comprises tables, flow charts, diagrams, etc. Whichever option is chosen, a review should take place at the start of the implementation phase and at regular intervals throughout that phase.

The chosen tool or tools will be used to produce a schedule featuring the dates and venues of each intervention activity, the associated responsibilities, the target group(s), the channels of communication, the required equipment and the costs. Although the schedule is provisional at this stage, it is an excellent way of checking whether the planned dates and venues coincide with the availabilities of the target audiences (using the gender-disaggregated seasonal calendar) and their ability to travel to and participate in specific events. This is particularly important for women.

Specific attention must be paid to the necessary human resources, whose profile and responsibilities must be well defined. Gender training needs often emerge at this stage, and arrangements for the strengthening of knowledge and capacities in this area should be foreseen. Examining which individuals need to be involved offers an ideal opportunity to ensure the formation of a team encompassing all of the required skills, as well as ensuring gender equality in terms of number and responsibilities.

Lastly, if resource persons are to be employed, this is an opportunity to define the criteria that will apply when entering into partnerships with other individuals, institutions and bodies. Gender (knowledge, skills/expertise, experience) must be one such criterion.

Taking gender into account in Step 6: Checklist of key questions

- Has the planning taken into account seasonal and daily availabilities? Mobility and travel capacities and possibilities? Of men and of women?
- Have gender-training needs been assessed? Have they been budgeted for?
- Is the proposed team gender-balanced? In terms of numbers and responsibilities?
- Will the mobilised resources benefit men and women? Both? Equally?
- Will gender criteria be taken into account when entering into partnerships?

STEP 7

Developing the monitoring and evaluation system

Monitoring and evaluation are better described as processes rather than a 'step' and should be built into the initiative from the outset. This document will focus not on developing the monitoring and evaluation system but rather on highlighting, for each step or group of steps, the vital ingredients needed to ensure that the gender perspective is included. A reminder of the key concepts should be given.[26]

Monitoring is about checking that the intervention is on the right track, in terms of the expected results. It is a regular, continuous process incorporated into the intervention cycle and an internal part of the intervention mechanism.	**Evaluation** focuses on measuring and assessing the results of a completed intervention. It is an ad-hoc exercise, usually external to the intervention mechanism.

By virtue of its cross-cutting nature, **gender is an integral part of monitoring and evaluation**, rather than something incidental or supplementary to it. The level of participation of men and women, the effects on gender disparities and social relations and the impact on gender equality are crucial measurements to be considered.
In addition, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms and procedures require the participation of the population, both men and women.

What follows is a gender-based rereading of the monitoring/evaluation component for each step in the design of a communication initiative:

- **Step 1: Analysing the context and subject**
  This step resulted in a picture of the initial situation, known as the 'baseline'. This will form the basis for assessing and measuring the results and changes generated by the initiative, for the purposes of both monitoring and evaluation. Characterising the baseline situation in terms of gender requires sex-disaggregated data and gender-specific information about gender relations, power relations, disparities and inequalities. The use of participatory rural appraisal, supplemented by gender analysis, will guarantee the quality of the baseline.

- **Step 2: Formulating the objective**
  The objective/result serves to assess changes between the baseline and the final situation (see box below).[27] The expected change in situation, behaviour or practice must be gender-disaggregated. The same applies to the quantitative and qualitative indicators. The results of the gender analysis are a helpful tool for achieving this.

Operational result: output of the intervention at a given moment in its progress. It is usually an 'immediate' or 'intermediate' outcome; *Example:* Twelve new literacy centres set up in the Tahoua region (Niger).	**Developmental result:** evidence of behavioural changes; this may take years to materialise. It is generally an 'ultimate' outcome; *Example:* Greater compliance with and enforcement of the Land Law to the benefit of women farmers.

Indicators are qualitative or quantitative measurements for identifying the progress made towards achieving the desired results compared with the baseline. Indicators must be gender-disaggregated in order to better pinpoint the influence of results on gender relations and equality.

Quantitative indicators are expressed in terms of number, frequency, percentage, ratio, gaps, output levels, income level, etc. *Example:* Percentage of women and men in farmers' organisations (FOs).	**Qualitative indicators** describe the quality, satisfaction levels, degree of influence, relevance and appropriateness of interventions for bringing about change, etc. *Example:* An increase in the number of women holding decision-making positions within FOs (compared with men).

- **Steps 3 to 5: From identifying the target audience to designing the message**
  Since these three steps are a direct outcome of the previous two, the focus on gender during Steps 1 and 2 will be critical for gender-based monitoring and evaluation in Steps 3 to 5.

- **Step 6: Provisional planning and budgeting**
  The key dimension to be considered is measurement and assessment of the change in the way gender is taken into account within the intervention mechanism, particularly as regards organisational management. This means: understanding of gender, institutional gender policy, strengthening of skills/expertise in this area.

Taking gender into account in Step 7: Checklist of key questions

- Does the baseline situation include knowledge of gender relations?
- Do the results set include a change in traditional norms and behaviours and do they incorporate gender equality?
- Are the indicators sex-disaggregated?
- Are there plans to assess institutional changes with respect to gender?
- Are the monitoring and evaluation procedures and mechanisms participatory?
- What place do men and women occupy in these procedures and mechanisms?

By way of conclusion

This publication is a practical starting point for making communication for development more gender-sensitive. It is not an end in itself: it is an instrument. Therefore, rather than drawing conclusions, what we should do – each and every one of us – is pause to reflect, and in so doing galvanise our commitment to communicating gender for rural development more effectively.

However, we must be aware that from the moment we launch into the dynamics of gender, our assumptions about ourselves and the world around us are challenged, the way we view families and institutions changes, and our personal and professional relationships evolve. It is little wonder, therefore, that reticence exists. Subscribing to "gender" provokes mixed impressions and feelings, characterised by fears about loss of control and power as well as the possible distortion of identity. This in turn raises doubts about the need for a commitment to gender equality. Resistance to change is inherent to human nature. The reasons for such resistance in relation to gender are both personal and institutional. Understanding the former will allow us to better address the latter.

The pause mentioned above is therefore an opportunity to gather together some advice and guidance about a reflex to acquire and a position to adopt, a change of attitudes to be effected and a working practice to be changed.

A reflex and a new stance:

- Banish preconceptions, prejudices and stereotypes.
- Think "gender" and wear "gender lenses".
- Be proud to be 'gendered'; leave aside the jokes and the pointless, counterproductive polemics.
- Proclaim your commitment to gender equality.

A change of behaviour:

- Analyse and question your acceptance of traditional divisions of power, roles and responsibilities within your family and institution.
- Treat your interlocutors, both men and women, equally.
- Reject the tired cliché "We work for everyone, without distinction".
- Be aware of the stereotypes and prejudices (especially sexist ones) harboured by everyone – including ourselves.
- Use gender-sensitive language (reflecting the presence of men and women).
- Avoid descriptions, presentations and explanations that conform to society's expectations.
- Seek out the people who are 'missing'.
- Avoid making assumptions about gender roles and responsibilities.
- Do research to better understand the extent and implications of the gender issue.

A change in working practice:

- Go directly to sources rather than working through intermediaries; listen to people.
- Consider multiple points of view, opinions and input – those of both women and men and not just individuals in positions of authority and power.
- Ensure a diverse and balanced mix of resource and contact persons. This will also enhance the validity and credibility of the information obtained.
- Ask yourself repeatedly what effects and impact your action will have on gender relations and gender equality.
- Constantly examine the degrees of male and female participation and decision-making within the initiative, as well as the level of access to and control over resources by men and women.
- Do not restrict women's involvement to so-called 'women's issues'.
- Refer to women by their exact title and job title, rather than their marital status.
- Highlight the effects of gender relations.

Notes

1   Adapted from: Le Monde selon les femmes - CIEF genre, Réseau Genre en Action, Adéquations, Aster-International, 2010, Référentiel pour les formatrices et formateurs en genre et développement, Brussels.

2   Extracts from: OIF, Égalité des femmes et des hommes en Francophonie, Quelques statistiques générales, http://genre.francophonie.org/spip. php?articlei83; APF Support Unit and NEPAD, Gender and Economic Empowerment of Women 2007 Briefing Paper 3: http://www.oecd.org/ dataoecd/16/42/39921766.pdf; also, Adéquations, Chiffres et données sur les inégalités femmes-hommes, http://www.adequations.org/spip. php5article363, and the links provided, e.g. The World's Women 2010: Trends and Statistics; OECD Gender Database, Opinions of the Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, etc.

3   Adapted from: Global Gender Climate Alliance (GGCA), Training Manual on Gender and Climate Change, (Reference to Aguilar et al., 2006), Costa Rica, March 2009, http://www.gender-climate.org/pdfs/Training%20Manual%20on%20Gender%20and%20Climate%20Change.pdf

4   Op. cit.

5   Adapted from: Association québécoise des organismes de coopération internationale (AQOCI), 2004, Trousse de formation Genre et développement, Quebec.

6   Adapted from: Op.cit.

7   Adapted from: Op. cit.: Référentiel pour les formatrices et formateurs en genre et développement

8   Adapted from: Canadian Council for International Co-operation (CCIC), MATCH International Centre (MATCH), Association québécoise des organismes de coopération internationale (AQOCI), 1991, Un autre genre de développement, Ottawa.

9   Adapted from: Alfonso Gumucio Dagron, 2000, Making Waves. Stories of Participatory Communication for Social Change, Rockfeller Foundation, New York, http://www.communicationforsocialchange.org/pdf/making_waves.pdf

10 Adapted from: UNICEF, 2006, Comunicación, desarrollo y derechos humanos, Buenos Aires.

11 Extracted and adapted from: Commission on Women and Development, The women empowerment approach. A methodological guide, Brussels, June 2007, http://diplomatie.belgium.be/en/policy/development_cooperation/CWD

12 Stereotypes: "shared beliefs about the personal characteristics of a group of people, generally personality traits but often also behaviour". Prejudices: "attitudes entailing a judgement of a person or social group based on incomplete information". Discrimination: "unjustifiable behaviour towards a particular person or social group" : definitions taken from AFPS (Association française de psychologie sociale), Préjugés & Stéréotypes, http://www. prejuges-stereotypes.net/main.htm

13 Inspired by op. cit. and Légal J.-B. and Delouvée S., 2008, Stéréotypes, préjugés et discrimination, 2008, Paris.

14 CEFA asbl 2009, Analyse n° 9, Qu'est-ce qu'un stéréotype appliqué au genre?, Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium, http://asblcefa.be/cefa

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16 Adapted from: Guy Bessette, 2004, Involving the Community: A Guide to Participatory Development Communication, Southbound.

17 GMMP, Global Media Monitoring Project, 2010, http://www.whomakesthenews.org/images/stories/restricted/highlights/highlights_en.pdf

18 IWMF, 2009, Sowing the seeds, A Study of Media Coverage of Agriculture and Women in the Agricultural Sector in Three African Countries: Mali, Uganda and Zambia: http://www.iwmf.org/docs/SowingTheSeeds_final.pdf

19 On listeners' clubs, see Dimitra Newsletters 13, 16, 17 and 19, available on the Dimitra website: http://www.fao.org/dimitra/home/en, and FAO-Dimitra, 2011, Community listeners' clubs, a stepping stone for action in rural areas.

20 Adapted from: Burn, N. 2007, Trousse à outils analyse genre et formulation de programmes, UNIFEM, Rabat; and Monsieur, C. and Elegbe, V., 2009, Manuel de prise en compte des aspects genre dans les actions du MAEP, Ministry of Agriculture, Breeding and Fishery (MAEP), Cotonou.

21 FAO, Socio-economic and Gender Analysis Programme (SEAGA), Rome, http://www.fao.org/sd/seaga/1_en.htm

22 For more information on such tools, see the SEAGA guides and handbooks at http://www.fao.org/seaga

23 Adapted from: FAO, 1994, Social communication in nutrition: a methodology for intervention, Rome.

24 FAO, 2002, SEAGA programme, Intermediate Level Handbook, Rome.

25 Adapted from: FAO, 1999, Voices for change: Rural women and communication, Rome.

26 Inspired by: Association québécoise des organismes de coopération internationale, 2008, La gestion axée sur les résultats (GAR) en lien avec l'approche genre et développement (GED), Montreal.

27 Op. cit.

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Meeting food security, nutrition and gender equality objectives entails applying development approaches that allow rural communities to participate and take control of their future. Of the many approaches used by FAO, there is one that is particularly effective at enabling the most marginalised groups, including women, to take ownership of their development and achieve economic and social empowerment: introducing gender into communication for development. Capacities for harnessing the full power of this approach are fairly limited and there have been relatively few theoretical examinations of the subject.

In *Communicating Gender for Rural Development*, the FAO-Dimitra Project shares its experience in this area. Aimed at all development practitioners, the publication encourages the inclusion of a gender perspective in communication for development initiatives in rural areas. It suggests practical ways of going about this, thus aiming to change attitudes and working practices so that projects and programmes take greater account of the specificities, needs and aspirations of men and women.