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Planning of Communication Support (Information, Motivation and Education) in Sanitation Projects and Programs

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Technology Advisory Group (TAG)



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PREFACE

This paper by Heli Perrett is on "Communication Support" activities, which are designed to encourage the participation of beneficiaries in a project and to ensure that it proceeds as planned and achieves its development objectives. It describes the types of problems in sanitation projects which communication support may help to solve or avoid, and the various types of information, motivation or education techniques that may be applied.

It is one of a series of informal technical papers prepared by TAG^{1/} which are being published informally by the World Bank, as a joint contribution with the United Nations Development Programme to the International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade. The papers were originally prepared as internal discussion documents and the views and interpretations in them are those of the author(s) only. The wider distribution of these documents does not imply endorsement by the sector agencies, government, or donor agencies concerned with the programs, nor by the World Bank or the United Nations Development Programme.

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Cover photograph: World Bank Photo by
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SUMMARY

The term "communication support" as used in this note refers to information, motivation and education (IME) activities which are specifically designed to encourage the participation of intended beneficiaries in a project and to improve the project's impact on development. It is related to, but not identical with health education (it is broader and more concerned with changing practices), marketing (it usually uses different strategies) and public relations (communication support is more concerned with two-way communications).

Communication support activities are likely to solve, or help to avoid, several kinds of problems in low-cost sanitation programs, including: low interest in improving sanitation; dissatisfaction with the technology options selected; difficulties with self-help contributions; poor use of latrines; abuse of the facilities provided; and poor maintenance of latrines.

Among important considerations in designing communication support activities for low-cost sanitation programs is the need to keep the plan simple and costs down. Timing has to be carefully worked out in relation to the construction schedule, and care taken that the impact is rapid.

The strategy building blocks out of which a communication package is usually constructed include one or more of the following: field workers, media, materials, volunteers and models of latrines. The final nature of the combination and exactly how each is used will be situation-specific.

Introduction

1. This note deals with communication support as part of low-cost water supply or sanitation projects and programs, with particular attention to sanitation. It is intended for a dual audience:

- (a) the engineer, management specialist, financial analyst, program or project officer who is working on or concerned with low-cost water supply or sanitation but has no background in communication support; and
- (b) the communication specialist or health educator who knows his or her own field well but has no direct experience in applying this knowledge to low-cost water supply or sanitation planning or implementation.

What is Communication Support?

2. The term "communication support" in this context refers to planned information, motivation and education (IME) activities, together with any associated training, monitoring and evaluation activities, which are specifically designed to:

- (a) encourage certain kinds of people to participate in the project;
- (b) make sure that they obtain full benefits from their participation; and
- (c) help to ensure that the project makes an overall positive contribution to development.

Above all, communication support deals with changing the behavior of people.

Some Illustrations

3. The following are five examples of what such communication support activities might look like in a sanitation program. The examples should not be viewed as models.

Example 1: The government hires and trains temporary field workers, who are made responsible for promoting the program, encouraging self-help inputs, and educating beneficiaries on proper use, care and maintenance of latrines. The government provides the field workers with educational materials to improve their effectiveness. These field workers are progressively phased out after latrine construction is finished, and local volunteers (such as religious workers and teachers) are increasingly involved in the program. The main role of volunteers is to continue encouraging proper use and care of latrines.

Example 2: The government is unable to hire and pay the salaries of new staff for the sanitation project, so instead existing health educators in other towns are temporarily seconded to provide communication support for a short period (four months). Because their available time is limited, they are not brought in for the promotion stage. This is done by the town engineers and assistant engineers, with the active cooperation of the town councils. The health educators' main role is to encourage beneficiaries to use and care for the latrines properly, and at the same time to monitor these aspects. Once the health educators return to their normal postings, these activities are continued by the town engineers, but at a lower level of intensity. The health educators continue to visit the project area intermittently, as part of their normal duties.

Example 3: Because there are active community organizations in all project areas, and community leadership is accustomed to playing an active role in development, the communication strategy relies on these structures. Most of the promotion is done by the project engineers, who first meet with local leaders and later address public meetings. The engineers use charts and slides in their presentation. These materials have been prepared by a cooperating government institute in consultation with the engineers. They also leave pamphlets with the community leaders to remind them on how pits need to be dug or on other technical aspects. The local leaders are the ones who assume responsibility for compiling a list of applicants and for making sure that self-help inputs materialize. They set up temporary sanitation task forces of local people to see that latrines are properly used, paid for and cared for.

Example 4: The program covers a very large metropolitan area, but due to institutional weakness and budget constraints there is no possibility of hiring sufficient field staff. However, there is a local radio station, which has a good listening audience with very little spillover into non-project areas. Therefore, heavy use is made of radio to promote the program and later on to remind people about the importance of proper use and care of latrines. Radio spots are the primary means of promotion. A radio (comic) soap opera format is also used, employing locally popular actors to act out scenes which depict the importance of good health habits and proper latrine maintenance.

Example 5: Because of limited initial delivery capacity, care has to be taken not to generate demand which cannot be met. Therefore, it is decided to match supply and demand by using small contractors to do most of the promotion of latrines and, once they are built, to instruct on proper usage and care. In order to help the contractors in their efforts the government agency supplies them with materials such as leaflets, pamphlets, and manuals, and also pays for and arranges additional publicity through billboards and advertisements in local newspapers.

Related Activities

4. Communication support then refers to a fairly diverse group of activities. It is related to, but different from, health education, marketing and public relations, particularly when practised in developing countries and in connection with development projects. However, it owes something to each of these.

5. Health education: Health education (in its traditional formulation) differs from communication support in its objectives and methods: it tends to be more concerned with increasing knowledge over the medium-to-long term. Communication support, on the other hand, is primarily interested in changing behavior over the short term. Health education tends to employ didactic one-way methods and appeals to reason, while communication support uses a variety of techniques, media and materials, frequently employs heavy emotional appeals, and is concerned with two-way communication. Finally, the connection between health education activities and other activities (such as construction or improvement of facilities) is often weak--although this need not be the case. This need for direct connection is the very reason for existence of communication support as a part of low-cost water supply or sanitation activities.

6. Therefore, when dealing with low-cost water supply and sanitation programs or projects, health education usually should be considered as only one aspect of a communication support package. It is generally more important during the post-construction stage than before or during it, and has the primary role of ensuring proper hygiene habits during use of the improved water supply or latrine.

7. Marketing: Marketing is the association of disciplines and techniques which are used in the design, pricing, distribution and promotion of goods and services. The major differences between it and communication support lie in: (a) the available budget and strategy used; and (b) in the community-wide and longer-term interests of the latter. Marketing usually has a much larger budget to work with, is more concerned with behaviors that are easier to change (such as change from one brand-name to another) and is satisfied with securing a reasonably small share of the market, whereas sanitation programs need to have a high percentage of acceptors and sustained usage if community and individual health benefits are to be fully realized. (Communication support is also often in the position of having to try to change long-standing practices which are closely interwoven with a culture and with social structure.)

8. As a result, marketing makes greater use of short, intensive mass media campaigns and has the budget to conduct extensive background research and to design and implement such campaigns well. There are instances when communication support can also make use of such strategies, but only in the case of a very large and well-financed program. Even then they will almost

always still need to rely upon a system of field workers, organization of groups of listeners or viewers, or at the least a system of dedicated volunteers.^{1/}

9. Public relations: Public relations, on the other hand, tends to be more interested in changing perceptions and attitudes than in altering behaviors or encouraging new ones (as is the case with communication support). It also emphasizes one-way communication rather than the two-way communication encouraged by the latter. Its objectives are also usually much more limited. It has, however, an important role to play in the overall communication support package--for example, in reassuring householders that, if they invest in improved sanitation, the executing agency will assist them in their dealings with private contractors, will provide and administer loans, and will empty latrines on demand--often contrary to the image the public may have of the agency.

Whose responsibility is it?

10. There are four basic institutional options available to an agency which needs the support of communication activities for its sanitation program. These are:

- institutionalize;
- collaborate;
- integrate;
- contract out.

11. The decision is a complicated one and several factors are involved. Here only a few words will be said on the subject, with emphasis on how the agency's long-term commitment or interest affects the decision.

12. Institutionalize: If the agency is convinced that it will have a long-term need for communication support, then it may choose to create a new unit or division within its existing institutional structure. However, this requires a fairly long-lead time, which is often not available.

13. Collaborate: The decision could, however, be to collaborate with another agency which has suitable experience and staff (which could be, for instance, a Ministry of Education or Health, a community development agency, or one or more voluntary agencies). This solution is attractive if the agency is unsure or cautious, does not have sufficient time or flexibility, or simply believes that such people and skills will not be needed after the project terminates.

14. Integrate: The third alternative, integration, occurs when the agency decides to build the duties and required skills on to existing staff (such as sanitation inspectors, health educators, or community development

1/ A frequent mistake is to adopt the techniques of marketing without a budget sufficient to do the necessary background research concerning the audience and other important aspects.

workers) through in-service training, as well as, at times, with provision of financial incentives. It may, however, hire specialized staff to supervise and coordinate activities. This approach allows the agency either to phase out or expand the function, in the light of its experience as the project develops.

15. Contract out: The fourth option is that of contracting out all or most of such activities to an outside entity, such as a university, an advertising firm, a private institute or organization. Probably this alternative is most suited to those communication activities which rely primarily on use of media rather than field staff.

Who plans it?

16. In theory, communication support activities are planned by communication specialists. If there is also a sociologist or anthropologist on the team, then they work in close cooperation, particularly on background data collection for the project and on monitoring and evaluation of impact.

17. However, practice is never as tidy as theory. Many communication specialists are not qualified to do communication planning to support sanitation activities for any of a number of reasons: because of the type of training they may have received, their lack of development experience, lack of understanding of sanitation activities, and so on. Communication specialists are not always available. Others, such as health educators, community development specialists, sociologists and anthropologists may fill the role if they can handle the planning side and are familiar with sanitation activities. Care must be taken that overemphasis on the message and the media does not overwhelm the need for working within affordable budgets and feasible delivery systems.

18. Finally, there may be instances where the engineers have to play a major role in planning simply because no-one else can be hired. In that case it is a good idea to recognize that such activities are not as easy to plan as they look. Three basic rules may help: (a) get a good understanding of your audience and the problems to be dealt with before you make decisions; (b) keep it simple; and (c) make arrangements for trying out everything first with people very like those in the project communities before full-scale implementation.

Specific Tasks that Communication Support can Perform in Sanitation Programs

19. Communication activities play a supportive role in sanitation programs or projects. That is, they serve to strengthen the parent project and help it achieve its objectives. They do this by providing critical input at certain key points (not all of them in every project, of course). They are summarized below (for fuller details, see Table 1):

At the planning stage:

- (a) providing a better basis for planning by making explicit, through data collection, the important gaps that exist between people's actual interest, knowledge, behavior, etc., and project expectations;

TABLE 1
THE COMMUNICATION SOLUTION TO PROBLEMS IN SANITATION PROJECTS

PROJECT STAGE	EXPECTED PROBLEM	LIKELY CAUSES	POSSIBLE COMMUNICATION ACTION	NON-COMMUNICATION ACTIONS ^{1/}
Pre-implementation or implementation	Lack of interest in improved sanitation	(a) No knowledge about improvements available	Promotion campaign, which may use health arguments but usually works best if it also relies heavily on others (e.g., privacy, prestige, convenience).	
		(b) Lack of understanding of the health or other benefits of improvement.	— ditto —	
		(c) Dissatisfaction with cost of improvement	— ditto —	Increase level of subsidy/arrange financing/choose lower-cost technology.
		(d) Satisfaction with existing alternatives	— ditto —	Legal action to prevent use of existing alternatives, if these are unsatisfactory on health or other grounds
		(e) Distrust of responsible agency	Public relations campaign stressing new approaches (better loans, technology, institutions, etc.)	Move to more interested populations Coordinate with another more trusted (often voluntary) agency for field staff.
	Dissatisfaction with the technical options offered	(f) Previous bad experience (own or neighbors) in construction or operation.	— ditto —	
		(a) Desire for more costly options, which have been in houses of high-status people.	Education or motivation to explain the advantages of the options provided; and to persuade people to adopt them.	Provide a wider technology choice or upgrade to technology desired.
		(b) Poor presentation or explanation of available options.	— ditto —	Change project area.
	Inappropriate choice of technology by the clients or those who represent them, (e.g., leaders)	(a) Wrong technology package presented.		Change technology package.
		(b) Choice too narrow to suit everyone.		Expand the number of options available.
Implementation	Delays in self-help (e.g., pit-digging, or erection of superstructure).	(c) Information given with the package inadequate for clients to make a sensible choice.	Provide better information to clients or their representatives (e.g., on space constraints, water dependency, or recurrent costs) so they can make a more satisfactory choice; build model or demonstration units.	
		(a) Lack of time.		Reschedule project to suit householder's free time (e.g., to suit seasonal labor effects).
		(b) Problems in access to materials or money.		Provide better access to materials, technical advice, loans, etc.
		(c) Insufficient interest.		Eliminate self-help input from strategy.
		(d) Self-help component beyond technical competence of beneficiaries.	Description and explanation of legal and other constraints and of acceptable options.	If self-help critical to project finances, change project area. Revise component or provide external technical assistance, or both.
	Mistakes in type of superstructure selected, (resulting in contravention of building codes, rapid destruction, etc.).	(a) Lack of necessary information on building codes, etc.		Revise building codes to accommodate low-income families' options.
		(b) Lack of access to alternative materials, cash.	Information on available sources of materials, credit.	
	Abuse of facilities		Motivation or instruction, or both.	Assistance with financing or delivery of materials.
		(a) Superstitions or beliefs.	— ditto —	
		(b) Poor understanding of how technology operates or its limitations.		Improve supporting service.
Operation and Maintenance	Poor use	(c) Breakdown of supporting services (e.g., water system needed for PT).		
		(a) Poor appreciation of the necessity to do so (especially older people, children).	Motivation and education to encourage those who are reluctant to use	
	Poor hygiene practices	(b) Inconvenience or unpleasantness involved (e.g., distance, rain or flooding, lack of light, poor access to water, etc.).		Adjust details of the design or siting, to the extent possible at this stage.
		(a) Custom	Motivation and education.	
	Poor maintenance of facilities	(b) No understanding of the need for better practices, or lack of familiarity with them.	— ditto —	
		(a) Low value placed on facilities.	Motivation and education.	
		(b) Belief that maintenance is someone else's responsibility.	Clarify responsibilities.	
		(c) Ignorance of need for maintenance or of proper maintenance procedures.	Motivation and instruction.	
		(d) Poor access to necessary materials.		Facilitate access to materials.

^{1/} Depending on the particular circumstances, the best solution to the problem may be through communication support, through non-communication actions, or through a combination of the two. These various solutions should never be considered to be mutually exclusive, nor should one type of solution be assumed automatically to be preferable to the other.

- (b) helping arrive at the best technology, delivery system, and financing and pricing mechanisms, through setting up a dialogue between planners and intended users (or their representatives--such as leaders and community organizations);

Pre-construction:

- (c) encouraging demand (where no list of applicants exists or it is too small) through promotion or "advertising";

During construction:

- (d) smoothing the construction process by ensuring that the relationships between the program and its beneficiaries develop as expected (through: public relations; providing information to beneficiaries to help in selection of latrines; motivating local people to provide labor or materials if needed; and improving feedback to management);

During operation and maintenance:

- (e) increasing the life-span of facilities through motivating and educating beneficiaries on proper care and by discouraging destructive practices (such as breaking of the traps in the case of water-seal latrines);
- (f) taking some of the financial cost and workload off the public sector, through motivating and training people themselves to take a part in collection of payments or actual maintenance activities;
- (g) improving impact on health, through encouraging and teaching proper use and associated good hygiene habits.

The Planning Process

20. Communication support activities are planned in close association with the project or program decisions on hardware, delivery system, cost-recovery procedures and institutional arrangements. It is therefore important to ensure that the person responsible for communication forms part of the project team and so can have an ongoing dialogue with other team members such as engineers, financial analysts, economists and management specialists. If the team also includes a sociologist or anthropologist, then this person lays the basis for the communication component. If not, the communication specialist should be competent in background data collection and social analysis, so that he or she can perform a dual task. Most communication specialists (unless they only specialize in communication hardware) will be able to do this. Therefore, in most cases, the critical person for the communication planner to liaise with is the engineer. An initial briefing by the engineer, as well as later meetings to check and

cross-check communication decisions with engineering ones, will be essential. In the ideal working situation, the cross-checking works both ways: the communication specialists also checks those engineering decisions that rely on client response, to make sure they are feasible.

Steps Involved in Planning

21. In general terms, the planning of a communication component of a sanitation project usually proceeds as follows:

Role of the Engineer or other Team Members

Task of the Communication Specialist

Identifies overall project scope and objectives, technology options, strategy, timing, institutional arrangements, target areas.

→ 1. Identifies specific needs for communication activities through:

- (a) review of the health and environmental situation of the populations involved; their sanitation conditions and related practices, beliefs, views or preferences; and resources (such as cash, time, or special skills);

Provides information on technology options being considered, delivery systems under review, cost-recovery/self-help expectations.

→ (b) review of the proposed technology options, delivery strategy, financial arrangements and assumptions made about response of the benefiting populations;

- (c) identification of specific problems or gaps between program expectations and people's likely response, which would be amenable to IME or similar inputs.

2. Identifies a communication package or component, which at this stage would usually include initial proposals (which may later be revised) on:

Reviews such arrangements to see how they fit in with overall institutional arrangements for the project/program.

← (a) institutional responsibilities (or two or three alternative arrangements to be discussed further by government);

Checks these objectives to make sure they are correct in technical terms.

(b) specific objectives (wherever possible, defined in behavioral terms);

(c) type of communication strategy or package that will be used or, again, two or three alternatives from which a most cost-effective alternative would later be selected;

Checks against construction schedule to see whether, e.g., piloting is feasible.

(d) coverage and timing, vis-a-vis the latrine project or program (e.g., covering all of it; only the lower-income areas; or one or two pilot communities);

(e) costs (in general terms, to provide an initial estimate), or, again, two or three alternative cost scenarios for different strategies.

3. Prepares the detailed design of the communication package or component, which will usually include:

(a) institutional responsibilities, both overall and for specific aspects (such as staff training, design and pre-testing of materials or media messages, materials distribution, monitoring and evaluation);

Provides latest information on technology option(s) selected or being made available for selection by beneficiaries, on delivery systems and cost-recovery/self-help arrangements, and updates this as further changes occur.

(b) specific objectives;

(c) identity of audiences, and relevant information about them (such as access to channels to be used);

(d) personal and media communication channels to be used and how they will operate (this should include the level of effort and duration of each activity, and which objectives each will focus on);

- Provides latest construction or upgrading schedule. —————→ (e) timing of activities vis-a-vis the construction and operation and maintenance activities (i.e., before/during/after);
- Reviews linkage into general project/program monitoring and evaluation activities. ←————— (f) plan for monitoring and evaluation;
- Checks incremental costs per latrine constructed to ensure that they are reasonable. ←————— (g) costs (to include incremental costs per household served with a latrine, or an equivalent measurement, and detailed costing for at least the first year of implementation);
- Checks for compatibility with agency or donor procurement requirements. ←————— (h) procurement procedures (if relevant);
- Checks on coordination with construction/upgrading schedule. ←————— (i) implementation schedule (in as much detail as possible, particularly for the first year);
- (j) poverty or other target group impact (depending on project objectives and possibly on the requirements of the likely funding agency).

Strategy Building Blocks

22. The communication package or component usually includes one or more of the elements in the following paragraphs. The relative importance of each will vary, depending on the strategy selected.

23. Field workers. These may be health auxiliaries, sanitation auxiliaries and inspectors, promoters, health educators or others, but rarely do they have responsibility solely for supporting latrine construction, upgrading and operation and maintenance. As a result, special controls and incentives may have to be worked out to make sure that the field workers are there when needed, even if their input is later decreased or even phased out. Engineers or engineering assistants may also share responsibility for instructing and motivating householders on the more technical aspects during the construction stage (for instance, on how to install the latrine, build the superstructure, or use and take care of the new facility).

24. Mass Media (such as radio, television, newspapers and billboards) which are free standing (that is, normally do not require someone to be

there, close to the audience, to transmit the message) can serve to promote the program in general and to make it and its objectives widely known. But they usually reach an audience larger than the immediate program beneficiaries. This may be valuable when the wider audience needs to be encouraged to participate in the narrower program (for example, if tariff increases for sewer service are envisaged to help finance a sanitation program or if some aspects of community behavior, such as indiscriminate dumping of garbage, threaten the narrower program). It also serves to make the sanitation program more highly "visible" and so may give it political momentum and boost the morale of the program staff. On the other hand, mass media are extremely difficult to coordinate precisely with the sanitation program: at least in its initial stages, the program is likely to have limited delivery capacity, and mass media may give rise to unfulfilled expectations and so to disillusion. Mass media are also unlikely to effect the necessary behavioral changes on a wide scale, except in the case of very simple and easy to change behaviors and in a very homogeneous situation, where one set of messages will have general relevance; this rarely applies in sanitation programs.

25. Local media and materials, in contrast, reinforce the efforts of field workers by giving their efforts greater audience attention, better impact and by spreading them more widely. Such materials may include cassette/slide presentations, films, charts and other similar media. Local program staff may need to be specially trained to use materials and should, to the extent possible, be involved in their selection and pre-testing. Traditional media (such as puppet shows, folk theatre, or community debates) can also be effective, and can be combined with more modern media (for example, the use of loudspeakers with a puppet theatre, or suitable leaflets or posters used in combination with puppet shows). These local media and materials can usually respond better to different local situations and to changes in program timing or detailed implementation procedures than can mass media. (See Annex I for further information on media, materials and techniques.)

26. Models of the available latrines (preferably actual size) or sometimes scale models of entire blocks (e.g., with a small bore sewer system) can be located in places where they can be viewed by large numbers of the intended beneficiaries and where questions can be asked and answered (e.g., at the community meetings, at the local office of the responsible agency, the municipal office yard, in the market place--with an educator/attendant on the spot). There may need to be models at various stages of completion so that both customers and builders can understand exactly what is involved.

27. Volunteers: These may be formal or informal leaders who are already in the area and have good relations with and influence people who should be included in the latrine program, or workers of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) or private voluntary organizations (PVOs), if they are available in large enough numbers. A major argument for involvement of local volunteers is that they are likely to be fairly permanent residents of the area and therefore could continue their input into the operation and maintenance stage; they may even be able to help expand the program after the responsible construction agency moves on. They are also likely to be knowledgeable about people's preferences, their ability and willingness to

pay or provide labor, and the best timing of any such contributions. Finally, they allow considerable savings--if their commitment to the sanitation activities can be ensured. If it cannot, then it is better not to rely on them as the key element in a communication plan.

Tailoring Communication Packages to Particular Situations

28. The communication specialist is likely to take the following factors into account in deciding how the communication "building blocks" described above should be combined in a given sanitation program or project:

- (a) the type of people to be reached, and where they are;
- (b) the availability of or easy access to each of the "building blocks";
- (c) the scale and geographic distribution of the latrine project or the program;
- (d) the type and difficulty of the problems to be addressed;
- (e) the available budget (or a judgement on what³ is "reasonable");
- (f) the commitments and capabilities of the responsible institutions;
- (g) existing organizational arrangements, responsibilities and experience in this area;
- (h) existing timing constraints (established by the construction program or by other factors);
- (i) past experience (successful or unsuccessful) in using one or other of the "building blocks."

Special Considerations in Planning Communication Activities for Sanitation Programs

29. There are a number of special considerations which must be kept in mind when planning communication components for low-cost sanitation projects or programs. Those discussed below are general enough to allow the engineer/mission leader or project officer to satisfy himself that they are adequately covered in the work of the communication specialist.

- √ 30. Costs need to be kept down. These sanitation programs are designed to benefit the poor, and every effort is being made to reduce the costs of the physical installations. A corresponding effort should be made to keep the costs of communication support activities within reason. However, no clear rule-of-thumb has yet been developed which indicates what is "reasonable" in this context, and costs will, of course, vary according to the problems communication activities have to deal with. There may be a

tendency, particularly at a time when there is relatively little hard evidence to support one level of expenditure rather than another, for project managers to regard the "additional" costs of communication support as excessive. Such an attitude ignores two important aspects of sanitation projects. Firstly, that communication support is an essential element if the overall project package is to have the desired impact; it cannot be regarded as an optional extra component. Secondly, on-site sanitation will in most cases remain by far the least-cost solution to a community's needs irrespective of communication support costs. For example, if in a particular case the costs of providing on-site sanitation were 15% of those of conventional sewerage and disposal, then the addition of a communication support component costing 20% of the "hardware" costs--a percentage that might at first alarm planners--would still only increase the cost of the on-site option to 18% of the off-site alternative. Further research and case studies on this question are needed. Meanwhile, it will normally be useful at an early point in planning to prepare several proposals, estimate the costs and likely impact of each, and, as with most engineering problems, select the most cost-effective.

- ✓ 31. The communication plan should be simple. This is important for several reasons. More often than not, the implementing agency for communication support is institutionally weak and unable to cope with an ambitious and managerially complex activity, or it may give low priority to software (as would often be the case where the agency responsible for latrine construction is also the one that will take responsibility for communication support). While institution-building activities may be desirable, time constraints frequently do not allow proper staff training, motivation, or hiring of new staff. Also, the leverage that a comparatively small component can have on enforcing major institutional changes will be limited. It is therefore usually advisable to try to adjust the component to existing organizational structures and management and technical skills, together with any additional skills that can be brought in temporarily through short-term consultants or technical assistance. Minimizing managerial complexity also requires that the number of agencies involved in implementation should be limited.
- ✓ 32. Impact has to be rapid. This is particularly the case where pre-construction and construction stage communication activities are concerned, since otherwise they may hold up the building process. In order to serve the project effectively, communication activities not only have to affect what people think or know, but how they act. This implies:
- (a) putting primary emphasis on reaching adults directly through non-formal activities, rather than trying to reach adults through children; and
 - (b) wherever possible, relying on person-to-person contacts reinforced by media or materials, but not on media alone, since the former strategy is more likely to effect rapid changes in people's behavior.

33. Timing has to be carefully worked out and accurate. That is, the information, motivation and education activities have to be carefully tied in with construction, and operation and maintenance activities. Firstly, this means that they have to be ready in time, even though the lead time available is often very short. Therefore they should, to the extent possible, build on already existing structures, activities and materials, rather than attempt to set up new ones (this also keeps costs down). Secondly, the emphasis on timing requires that every communication activity be specifically related to stages in construction or operation and maintenance in as much detail as possible (and the project engineer, therefore, needs to make the construction schedule available as soon as possible to the communication specialists). Thirdly, good coordination in terms of timing calls for a degree of flexibility in the communication strategy to adjust to any changes in the construction schedule; this is usually achieved better with field workers than with a mass media-based approach.

34. Primary emphasis is on out-of-school activities. Unless there is heavy involvement in school sanitation, it is usually more important to reach adults than children, because: (a) adults are the main decision makers on sanitation in the community and the household; (b) it is usually important to encourage an immediate response or change; the next generation is not soon enough.

35. Phasing is usually a good idea. At this stage in our knowledge of the subject it is advisable, when possible, to start with some sort of a pilot test of the communication strategy, to evaluate and adapt the design as needed, and only then to expand.

Main Difficulties Likely to be Encountered

36. Experience so far suggests that there are three main problems which can be expected in planning and implementation of communication activities to support sanitation projects or programs. These are: (a) the question of institutional responsibility; (b) lack of interest or understanding about the subject; and (c) difficulties in coordination with construction or upgrading activities.

37. Institutional responsibility. The question of institutional responsibility may well involve the project in a series of difficult decisions. Typically, the agency responsible for construction will be a "hardware"-oriented agency with little experience of software support. Should it go to the trouble of establishing a new unit to deal with the software aspects of its work (a unit which may become partially or totally redundant after completion of the project)? Or should it, on the other hand, seek to enter into collaborative agreements with the traditional software agencies - in particular the Ministries of Health and Education - which may involve delays while these agencies are reoriented to sanitation program support, may lead to loss of control over essential project components, and can result in difficulties in budgeting, staffing and coordination generally? At present there is no final solution to this question, with each case decided individually. As in the case of costs (para. 30 above), this is an area about which we are still learning.

38. Lack of interest or of understanding. Sanitation and water supply agencies, Ministries of Planning, municipalities, or others involved in sanitation frequently have little understanding of communication support, or appreciation of its importance. This is particularly the case where most of the experience in the past has been with conventional sewerage rather than low-cost alternatives. It is therefore another obstacle to be overcome: the first action in communication support is often to change the views and attitudes of decision-makers about the need to include it in a program.

39. Difficulties in coordination. In the actual planning and implementation process, coordination of communication activities with upgrading or construction ones has proved to be another difficulty. A major cause seems to be timing: once the construction schedule is finalized, start-up of communication activities may already have been delayed.

Pre-Testing, Monitoring and Evaluation

40. Finally, a word about associated pre-testing and monitoring and evaluation. These are vital in determining the best communication plan, and adjusting it, if necessary, during implementation. They also cost money. Therefore they need to be allowed for in the budget.

41. In order to take the results of monitoring, and sometimes of evaluation (e.g., of a pilot phase), into account, the communication plan itself should be fairly flexible, much more so than the latrine design. The engineer should not be surprised if the communication specialist argues for changing it considerably after the first year or so of implementation. It does not mean that the original plan was wrong: new information may have become available or other factors may have changed (such as the community's whole attitude as a result of the initial project activities) which call for resultant changes in communication. It is important to remember that communication support is an attempt to change human behavior - and this is an area about which we are learning every day, and about which we will never know enough.

ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF DIFFERENT
MEDIA, MATERIALS AND TECHNIQUES FOR COMMUNICATION SUPPORT

- A. People-based
B. Mass media
C. Other media, materials

A. PEOPLE-BASED	MAIN ADVANTAGES	MAIN DISADVANTAGES	COMMENTS
1. Public meetings and lectures.	Easy to arrange. Reach many people. Can have more than one speaker. Create public interest and awareness. Stimulate follow-up discussion.	Audience is usually passive. Speakers may not understand audience's needs. Difficult to assess success. Audience might not learn the main points.	Handouts should be used. Presentation should be clear. Use visual aids when possible. Audience should be encouraged to raise questions and to participate. Speaker should establish two-way communication.
2. Group discussion.	Builds group consciousness. Individual members of the group can understand where each member stands in regard to the discussed issue: provide chances for exchanging opinions and increase tolerance and understanding.	Some members may dominate. Sometimes difficult to control or to keep focusing on the main issue. Requires trained leaders.	Should be used with an interested audience to discuss a definite problem. Procedure should be flexible and informal. Summary of discussion should be presented at the end of discussion. Decision should be made by group members regarding its stand on the issue discussed. Requires the selection of good chairman.

Source: This table has been taken from "Using Communication Support in Projects: The World Bank's Experience", World Bank Working Paper No. 551, December 1982, by Heli Perrett.

This is largely based on Shawki M. Barghouti, Reaching Rural Families in East Africa, Nairobi: FAO Programme for Better Family Living in East Africa, 1973.

PEOPLE-BASED	MAIN ADVANTAGES	MAIN DISADVANTAGES	COMMENTS
3. Role playing.	Facts and opinions can be presented from different viewpoints especially on controversial issues. Can encourage people to reevaluate their stand on issues and can invite audience participation. Deepens group insight into personal relations.	Cannot be used in community meetings. Some role-players may feel upset by playing a role they do not agree with. Requires careful preparation for the selection of the issue and actors. Careful preparation is essential.	Can only be used in training courses. Follow-up discussion should focus on the issue rather than on actors' performances. Source material about the issue should be provided to the actors to prepare their arguments.
4. Drama.	Groups can be active "learning by doing". Can attract attention and stimulate thinking if situations are effectively dramatized.	Actors require attention in training and preparing script. Preparations might be too difficult for the field worker. Difficult to organize because it requires considerable skills and careful guidance by the field worker.	Should be restricted to one issue. Can only be used during training courses. Can be used as entertainment if well prepared before a public meeting.
5. Case study.	Can illustrate a situation where audience can provide suggestions. Can elicit local initiatives if the case corresponds to local problems.	Difficult to organize. Rewording of events and personalities might reduce the effectiveness of the case. Some audiences may not identify themselves with the case.	Should be clearly prepared. Can be used in training course. Questions and discussions should lead to recommendations for audience action. Audience should be encouraged to prepare case studies relevant to its experience.

PEOPLE-BASED	MAIN ADVANTAGES	MAIN DISADVANTAGES	COMMENTS
6. Home visit.	Establishes good personal relationships between field workers and families. Can provide information about rural families that cannot be collected otherwise. Encourages families to participate in public functions, demonstrations and group work.	Field worker cannot visit every family in the community. Only families in accessible localities can be visited.	Records should be kept for families visited. Schedule of home visits should be developed to assure allocation of time for field work activities. Handouts should be given to families visited.
7. Demonstration (with a small group).	Participants can be active and learn by doing. Convinces the audience that things can easily be done. Establishes confidence in field worker's ability.	Requires preparation and careful selection of demonstration topic and place. Outside factors can affect demonstration results and consequently might affect confidence in field worker.	Demonstration processes should be rehearsed in advance. Audience should participate in the actual process. Educational materials should be distributed to the participants at the end of the demonstration. Should be suitable for people to attend.

B. MASS MEDIA	MAIN AVANTAGES	MAIN DISADVANTAGES	COMMENTS
1. Radio.	<p>Radio technology available in all countries and can reach mass audience cheaply. Receivers are inexpensive and available in the remotest communities. Messages can be repeated at low cost. Easy to reach illiterate audience. Can be used to support other channels of communication. Efficient to announce events and development activities, and, if properly used, can mobilize audience to participate in public events and projects of value to the community. It is flexible, and style can include drama, lectures, folklore songs, interviews and variety shows. Excellent in regular teaching and out-of-school correspondence courses. Radio is effective in creating awareness and setting agenda of priorities for people's attention.</p>	<p>One-way channel. Complicated technical issues. Difficult to illustrate. Audience reaction, participation or interest in messages delivered, difficult to assess. Requires special skills and continuous training of radio personnel. Content may not be tailored to small communities and tends to be general in nature and is usually prepared for national audience, or special ethnic or language group thus reducing relevance to local problems. Difficult to use material broadcast as a reference without investment in radio documentation. Texts of radio programs are usually needed for effective follow-up. This is not always possible.</p>	<p>Radio messages should often be supported by personal follow-up. Radio effectiveness increases if messages used in group discussions (e.g., farm forums) or regular training courses. Desirable for radio to cover local events, assist in explaining and promoting local projects and development efforts. Programming should maintain balance between national and local coverage interviews and lectures, news and profile coverage of development issues.</p>

MASS MEDIA	MAIN ADVANTAGES	MAIN DISADVANTAGES	COMMENTS
2. Television.	<p>Its novelty attracts audience and can be the main captivator in rural communities. Can be used to explain complicated messages because of its combination of sound and picture. Programs can be repeated at cost. It is suitable for mixed presentation of issues. Suitable for motivation through utilization of folklore art and music, community events, and animated public speeches and debates. Efficient in bringing issues to public attention, and powerful in setting public agenda for action and participation in development effort. Successful in creating awareness. Suitable for illiterate audiences if they have access to receivers or to TV clubs.</p>	<p>Expensive to operate. Receivers not available in many rural areas and among poorest population groups. Has traditionally been used for entertainment and politics more than for development and educational purposes. Programming skills more likely to be available for entertainment. Educational programs may face severe competition from entertainment. No audience participation. Present state of technology in many developing countries does not allow immediate coverage or timely relay of local community actions and events. Requires more planning and preparation, and technical, creative, and communication skills than other media. Difficult to use material televised as a reference without investment in television documentation. Texts of television programs are needed for follow-up. This is not always possible.</p>	<p>Local television stations can play an important role in development. More educational training is required for staff. Easy to exchange information, and programs are scheduled in advance, well-documented, with heavy involvement of and focus on local problems. Very effective for activating group learning when used in viewing centers or as part of multi-media campaign for education-information and motivation.</p>

MASS MEDIA	MAIN ADVANTAGES	MAIN DISADVANTAGES	COMMENTS
3. Newspapers.	Can provide detailed information. Easy to present technical data in clearly designed text. Important topics can be covered in a series of articles. Can influence the attention of audience by where they place information and on what page. Influential in creating awareness and mobilizing public opinion. Material published can be shared and used as reference. Can be used to support radio and television for education purposes and follow-up on lessons, issues and topics discussed by the other two media.	Can be used by literates only. Difficult to reach isolated communities. Can be expensive for poor families. Requires special writing and editing skills, which are not always available. Like all other mass media, it is one-way communication channel. Feedback is difficult because of audience reluctance or inability to contact the editor. Difficult to publish at regional level. Small communities can not afford to publish their own newspapers without continuous support from national government.	Best source of information if topics of development are covered on regular basis. Can be used to establish community local papers and bulletin boards. Can be circulated to community members to reduce cost per individual family. Could be used to support literacy classes: sectors could be prepared especially for poor readers and semi-literates.
4. Cinema.	Captures attention well. Reaches big audiences in selected countries and can be very cheap (particularly with semi-permanent and travelling cinemas). Can reach lowest strata in certain countries and even have large rural audience.	Is expensive in some countries and may only reach certain sub-groups in the target audience (such as the rich, youth, females). Distribution can be a problem. May be distracting setting for educational messages.	Great care must be taken in preparing the film clips.

MASS MEDIA	MAIN ADVANTAGES	MAIN DISADVANTAGES	COMMENTS
5. Folk theatre.	Culturally relevant. In some countries is easily available and inexpensive. Often more credible to the traditional elements of society than the modern media.	Can lose control of the message. Format can distract from content.	Flexibility of the form can vary from country to country. One of the best uses is often a combination with a modern medium such as television, radio, or supported by loudspeakers.
6. Wall paintings. Billboards.	Potentially available to large audience. Low costs per person reached if well located.	Can be easily ignored. Limited to simple messages.	Message must be extremely well designed and pretested. Siting is critical to be able to reach the kinds of people intended.
7. Mass media group listening.	Combines mass media and personal channels. Can be prepared and used for many audiences over a period of time. Encourages group participation.	Requires preparation for recruiting groups, training group leaders, and preparation of educational material. Can be expensive. Drop-out can be a problem if special efforts are not made.	Should be regularly held. Participants should be provided with educational material. Can be effective in enforcing literacy and adult education. Programs selected should be about local problems. Tape recorders can be used. They are flexible. Can be used to tape role-playing, group discussion and interviews with local personalities.

C. OTHER MEDIA AND MATERIALS	MAIN ADVANTAGES	MAIN DISADVANTAGES	COMMENTS
1. Publications and loose leaflets.	Excellent for indepth presentation of issues and technical information. Can cover more than one topic. Easy reference and can be directed to specific audiences. Can be illustrated and made attractive. Can support other media for education purposes.	Expensive. Can only be effective if well designed and produced. Poorly printed publications may be expensive but not be read. Require special editing, design and production skills.	Should be used to support special campaigns, such as literacy and adult education. Most useful if topics are covered in series of publications. Could be used successfully in group discussions and as back up for public meetings. Can also be used for in-service training of field staff and to keep up morale, particularly if field staff are widely dispersed.

OTHER MEDIA AND MATERIALS	MAIN ADVANTAGES	MAIN DISADVANTAGES	COMMENTS
2. Video (Forum).	Can be used to introduce new ideas to selected audiences. Excellent tool for micro-teaching. Can introduce complicated concepts and technical issues in a series of presentations; can record field operations and activities and use them on numerous occasions; can be used to teach skills and change attitudes. Feedback to the broadcaster can be immediate and relatively accurate. Can be handled by model farmers and community leaders; can build useful libraries for teaching in the case of literacy and adult education classes.	Is expensive. Forum members tend to drop out. Breakdown in hardware is common, and batteries are often exhausted. Forum requires highly skilled personnel and extensive hardware. Restricted to communities where trained field agents are available. Requires continuous servicing and maintenance and up-dating. Can become negative tool for development if it fails to attract different sub-groups in the community (such as the poorest, and religious or racial minorities). Sometimes, because of difficulty in finding needed materials or training manpower, many events in the community go by without being recorded or utilized.	Forums require continuing attention from professional organizers. Most successful in small group learning. Group discussion leaders must be carefully selected and trained. Training materials and programs must be carefully organized and kept in order. Its efficiency increases if used in combination with booklets and handouts at the end of the discussion. Should be used to teach special skills, for structured instruction and, where possible, as a tool to generate participation among a rural community or one that is for other reasons isolated from ongoing programs or slow to cooperate.

OTHER MEDIA AND MATERIALS	MAIN ADVANTAGES	MAIN DISADVANTAGES	COMMENTS
3. Films.	Use of sight and sound can attract audience's attention. Can make great emotional appeal to large audiences.	Good films are rare. Equipment costly to buy and maintain. One-way communication unless properly used. Requires skill in running film projectors.	Best if combined with discussion groups. Much work to be done regarding getting good films made. Attention should be given when getting audience to evaluate the film. Films should be used for stimulating discussion rather than for teaching alone.
4. Filmstrips.	Much cheaper and easier to work than films. Easily made from local photographs. Encourages discussion.	Usually sight only. Not so dramatic as motion pictures. Could be expensive.	Can have recorded commentary. Strip can be cut up and individual pictures mounted as 2" slides: then can be selected and re-arranged.
5. Slides.	Have all the advantages of film strips plus more flexibility and can be more topical. They can be used in a series to illustrate a concept.	Could be expensive. Difficult to have them on all subjects of teaching.	They should be used after careful preparation of logical sequence and a good commentary.
6. Flannelboard.	Can be portable and mobile. Can be prepared by expert in advance. Little skill required in actual operation. Could be used to make presentation more dynamic.	Can only be used for what it is prepared. Cannot adapt to changing interest of group. More elaborate equipment than ordinary blackboard. Difficult to keep up-to-date.	Very useful but only for the prepared talks. Audience can participate. It should be used step-by-step. Flannel materials should be stored properly for future use. Flannel-graphs should be numbered according to their order in the presentation.

OTHER MEDIA AND MATERIALS	MAIN ADVANTAGES	MAIN DISADVANTAGES	COMMENTS
7. Bulletin Board.	Striking, graphic, informative, flexible, replaces local newspapers. Keeps community up-to-date with information.	Requires preparation and attention to community needs.	Should be combined with maps, talks and photographs. Very suitable for posting articles, announcements and news of development in the community.
8. Flip charts (turnover charts).	Cheap and simple. Can be stopped at will for analysis. Can be prepared locally. Ideas could be illustrated in sequence. Illustrations on flip chart could be used many times for different audiences in different sessions.	Soon torn. Can only be seen by a few at a time. Can be difficult to illustrate complicated ideas.	Should not be overlooked for illustration of simple sequences - especially with small groups. Lectures should be prepared in advance for use on several occasions.
9. Models, exhibitions and displays.	Appeal to several senses. Can be used in various occasions and situations. Can illustrate ideas in detail.	Not many workers can build them or use them properly.	Useful models and exhibitions could be built up locally. Should be used in familiar places - centers.
10. Maps, charts, diagrams.	Visual appeal. Should simplify details. Permit leisurely study. Can develop sequence on display boards.	May mislead by over-simplicity. Can create transport and storage problems.	Should be made especially for groups. May need careful explanation at first. Could be used as summary of information. Symbols and layout should be familiar to the audience.

OTHER MEDIA AND MATERIALS	MAIN ADVANTAGES	MAIN DISADVANTAGES	COMMENTS
11. Blackboard.	A flexible tool. Easy to make and to use. Can be very attractive if used properly. Use of colored chalks can add to its visual appeal. Can be portable.	Requires some manipulation skill (though quickly acquired). Requires teaching skills to make best use.	Should be essential in every group. Very useful for schematic summaries or talk or discussion. Audience can participate. Small blackboards can be portable. Writing should be clear and organized.