Communicating for change

Workbook for sustainability educators and communicators in the Pacific

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PO Box 240
Apia, Samoa
T: (685) 21929
F: (685) 20231
sprep@sprep.org
www.sprep.org

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1. Pacific environment for sustainable development: Overview

In the Pacific, land and sea are life; livelihoods and the natural environment are inseparable. Culture, tradition and livelihoods, are underpinned by the incredible biodiversity of the nearly 3,000 islands and atolls of the Pacific. However, high birth rates, unsustainable use of natural resources, increasing dependency on the cash economy, labour migration, and the deterioration of traditional social systems, are changing traditional lifestyles.

Globally, the Pacific is considered a unique region in the world, from both marine and terrestrial perspectives. However, the Pacific is also one of the most threatened with more extinctions per capita than anywhere else in the world. Less than 30% of the forest cover remains in a natural state and what is left is being removed at up to 4% per annum on some islands.

The threat of extinctions will continue as more coastal areas are degraded by increased land based sources of pollution, the modification of critical habitats, the increasingly unsustainable exploitation of resources, and the impacts of climate change.

Sustainable development

"development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."

Bruntland Report

2. The role of education communications in sustainable development

As humans use up the Earth's resources at an astonishing rate, amidst global calls for sustainable development, education and communication are now being recognised as key factors for supporting behaviour change.

For years, education has been seen as an activity which follows the central planning processes. However, the benefit of integrating communications into project planning supports the achievement of goals and objectives through reinforcing key messages, and streamlining communications into broader project activities.

The benefits of integrating communications in project planning:

- Consistent messages
- Streamlined communications means efficient use of resources
- Stronger understanding of project goals and objectives
- Agreed understanding of target audiences
- Greater potential to access funding for education and communication
- Supports reporting mechanisms

There is also a growing recognition of the need to not only KNOW more but to ACT more, a focus on behaviour change tools, such as social marketing.

In the Pacific, more than 80% of the land is held in customary tenure or community land management. By focusing on how to motivate people, we are able to design programmes that encourage people to adopt a desired behaviour.

3. Education and communications challenges

What are the challenges facing educators?

- Make something 'boring' and 'remote' to most people, real and relevant
- Use waste to leverage change on broader scale
- Need to communicate what results are wanted
- Access the hearts and minds of your target audience

Reasons for limited success in our projects

- Assumptions that facts and topic are convincing and compelling on their own. However, what people perceive is influenced by emotions and socialisation, as well as by reason and knowledge.
- Expectations that the word and image alone will solve a problem.
- Communication activities are done on an ad-hoc basis (with little or no planning)
- Little or no evaluation (How do we know how successful our activities are?)

4. Environmental education in the Pacific: an overview

A 1970 report by the World Conservation Union (IUCN) first defined Environmental Education as:

> a process of recognizing values and clarifying concepts in order to develop skills and attitudes necessary to understand and appreciate the inter-relatedness among man, his culture, and his biophysical surroundings. Environmental Education also entails practice in decision-making and self-formulation of a code of behaviour about issues concerning environmental quality.

In 1977, the world's first Intergovernmental Conference on Environmental Education in Tbilisi, Georgia established three broad goals for Environmental Education:

- Foster clear awareness of, and concern about, economic, social, political and ecological interdependence in urban and rural areas
- Provide every person with opportunities to acquire the knowledge, values, attitudes, commitment and skills needed to protect and improve the environment; and
- Create new patterns of behaviour in individuals, groups and society as a whole towards the environment.

It is generally agreed on that for these goals to be achieved, Environmental Education needs to focus on developing skills in the following areas: problem-solving, decision-making and participation, values clarification and futures thinking. The ultimate aim of Environmental Education is "for every citizen to have formulated for him or herself a responsible attitude towards the sustainable development of the Earth, an appreciation of its resources and beauty, and an assumption of an environmental ethic."

5. The different definitions of Environmental Education

In practice, however, Environmental Education tends to be interpreted and approached in different ways by teachers, school principals and curriculum developers. There are three distinct types of Environmental Education:

1. Education *about* the environment, which is knowledge-based and encourages the learning of facts and processes about the environment (i.e. environmental science or environment studies)
2. Education *in* the environment, which focuses on instilling in learners an appreciation for the environment by providing them with opportunities to learn within the natural environment (often associated with nature studies, field studies and outdoor activities)
3. Education *for* the environment, which encourages learning how to take action and make appropriate changes to help protect or better manage the environment

In theory, education *for* the environment is critically reflective, whereby the learner makes decisions based on their own analysis of a situation. In practice, however, education for the environment usually involves students taking predetermined actions such as tree planting or cleanups. Some educators argue that education *for* the environment is too simplistic and may give students false hope that all environmental problems are easily solved by simple actions.

It is argued that effective Environmental Education must address the political processes that are involved in environmental decision-making such as negotiation, lobbying etc. Without this, Environmental Education may only produce people who have no real power to bring about any kind of environmental reform and Environmental Education will remain simply another subject that students must learn and teachers must teach.

The current dialogue on Education for Sustainable Development adds a further dimension to this debate.

6. Education for sustainable development — a process of change

Education for sustainable development (ESD) has been defined as an “emerging but dynamic concept that encompasses a new vision of education that seeks to empower people of all ages to assume responsibility for creating a sustainable future” (UNESCO).

ESD is a far-reaching concept aimed at changing the way people think and live, as well as eventually changing social, economic and political structures to bring about more equitable and just societies. ESD in effect, challenges society to reconsider current models of development, economic growth and even the way we manage our environment. It encourages long term, “big picture” thinking that acknowledges that issues relating to environment, peace, health, democracy, economic independence and human rights are all inextricably linked. Environmental management and conservation is one pillar or component of the vast concept of sustainability. Environmental Education, therefore, is considered an integral element of ESD.

ESD requires the application of learning approaches that enable people to:

- Learn to reflect critically on their place in the world and what sustainability means to them and to those around them
- Envision alternative ways of living (alternative futures) and determine what their own vision is
- Work with each other to negotiate different visions and determine pathways for achieving these
- Learn to think in a systemic, holistic manner that will allow them to see other perspectives and understand different interactions

7. What is ‘communications’?

Communications can be broadly described as “using the *right* tool, product or approach to deliver the *right* message to the *right* people, at the *right* time”. The foundation for effective communications is clarity – understanding the issues, target audiences, and the roles of the various tools, are critical to communicating effectively.

Communications is often used to describe the use of *tools*: media, website, posters, as well as *approaches*: awareness raising days, information sessions, advocacy and public dialogues.

A communications strategy describes the process of articulating objectives, identifying target audiences, developing clear and concise messages, and identifying how, when and where tools/approaches are used to achieve the identified objectives. An effective communications strategy reflects an organization's mission, goals and objectives, is well integrated into daily operations, and strongly supported by management and staff members. A communication strategy also consists of ongoing feedback between planning and evaluation.

Strategic communication extends beyond information dissemination, education or awareness raising, but strives for behavior change. While the former are necessary ingredients of communication, they are not sufficient for getting people to change long-established practices or behaviors.

Research supports the assertion that changing knowledge and attitudes does not necessarily translate into behavior change. In order to effect behavior change, it is necessary to understand why people do what they do and understand the barriers to change or adopting new practices.

Communications: common assertions

While the role of communication is increasingly being recognised as a key element in project implementation, strategic communications is far from being systematically applied.

Here are some points to keep in mind when developing communications activities:

Communication as a process not a one time event
Communication is a process – coordinating awareness days does not necessarily guarantee that the message we are trying to convey reaches the right people. Strategic communications places an emphasis on using the *right* tools at the *right* time.

Effective communication programmes rely on planning
We have to remember that education is lifelong, and while we hope that our communications activities might have an impact, their effectiveness depends on careful planning and thinking about the key messages we are trying to convey.

Communications needs to be integrated with other strategic tools
For years, education has been seen as an activity which follows the central planning processes. However, the benefit of integrating education and communications into project planning supports the achievement of key aims and objectives through reinforcing consistent messages, and streamlining activities.

Successful communication focuses on changing behaviour
Information alone is not enough. The biggest gap in human behaviour exists between what people know what they practice.

Effective communication focuses on understanding your audience, and what factors will influence their behaviour. Fostering behaviour change depends on offering incentives and removing the barriers (real or perceived) to adopting a certain behaviour.

8. The communications process: what, who and how

All communications should prompt people to think, feel, and act differently.

There are four key questions to keep in mind when developing any education/communications plan:

1. **What do you want to achieve?**
2. **What do you want to say?**
3. **Who are you saying it to?**
4. **How are you going to say it?**

1. What do you want to achieve? OBJECTIVES

Determining your key issue
Before you start out, you need to be clear about what you hope to achieve. As communications is a tool to support broader objectives, you need to have a complete understanding of the issues and their context. As we have learnt, communications should be integrated into broader project initiatives. Perhaps you are working to encourage water conservation. You will need to work out the key issues to be addressed ie: water is wasted by leaking taps, water is not being switched off at the taps, the true cost of water is not being reflected and therefore not valued as a resource and so on.

If you are not working within a broader project or programme context, start small, start with an issue that will provide tangible results for your efforts.

Often the “environment” is portrayed as an abstract concept, and we get lost in the rhetoric and forget what we are trying to achieve. In our efforts to “save the environment” we could actually be wasting valuable time and resources in the process. Communicating for the sake of communicating is NOT communications – it’s a waste of time, money and brainpower!

Be clear about the key issue you are trying to address. Make it your business to learn about that issue, and see how it may tie in with broader initiatives happening in your community. You may find that keeping it simple may lead to a greater engagement and ultimately a greater change and impact on the environment.

Determining your key objectives
Have a vision for your community or world, but set clear, realistic and measurable objectives for how you will make positive impact.

- Work with your fellow colleagues to determine broader organizational or strategic priorities
- Research the key issues behind a topic and establish the key points that will be suitable for your target audience
- Ensure that your communications activities are tied to organizational outputs
- Highlight a key issue within the community (eg: plastic bags, mangrove destruction, waste etc)
- Determine a realistic and achievable issue to tackle based on the target audience

A simple acronym used to set objectives is called **SMART** objectives**.** SMART stands for:

1. Specific – Objectives should specify what they want to achieve.
2. Measurable – You should be able to measure whether you are meeting the objectives or not.
3. Achievable - Are the objectives you set, achievable and attainable?
4. Realistic – Can you realistically achieve the objectives with the resources you have?
5. Time – When do you want to achieve the set objectives?

2. What do you want to say? KEY MESSAGES

A “message” is a clear and concise point you want to convey in your communications activities. A communications strategy identifies a range of key “selling points” for the identified audiences.

Benefits of preparing key messages
There are many messages facing us through the media including health, environmental, and cultural ideas. Using clear and succinct statements about your key issue is an effective way to ensure clarity about the project’s key objectives.

Different messages for different audiences
Your message has to be appropriate for your various audiences and platforms. For example, the way you communicate your organization's message to the media might be very different from the way you communicate with your members.

Focus on the benefits/incentives
To be effective any communications programme must be designed to help local stakeholders understand the problems, create a sense of ownership over the solutions, and motivate ongoing participation in management activities.

Develop simple messages
Once you know your target audience, only then will you know what to say. What is important to you may not be important to others. The key is trying to work out what engages your audience, what motivates them, what gets them moving each day. Often we assume things about our target audiences without actually doing our homework.

Global issue, local context
Make the issue relevant for your audiences. When developing communications messages and tools use the ‘so what?’ factor. Why should they care about the issue? Make them understand why it’s important to *know* about climate change, and more importantly what they can *do*.

Futures thinking
Offer solutions. A vision is attractive. It creates its own motivation. Commitment to a vision is one of the most powerful forces for change. Empower people through communications to have their own vision for the world.

Appeal to emotion
Don’t rely on rational arguments to get your message across. We’re human after all. While we may know about the harms of our actions, we may not always act in accordance to what is ‘right’.

Create positive associations
Build your messages on values, culture, tradition, identity, what people care about. You can do this indirectly through using a beautiful photograph, a moving song.

Don't rely on people's concern for the future of their children. Don't rely on people's concerns for their own future.
People are rarely motivated to act by threats to their long-term survival. Think about how many people participate in certain behaviours although the impacts and threats are well known.

Fear factor
Fear is a good way to get people's attention, however, fear can also turn people away by focussing on the negative. Use it as a gimmick, but focus on positive messages to incite action. Don't create fear unless you also provide positive solutions about what people can do about it.

Use humour
We all like to laugh. Put some fun in somebody's life. Think about the advertisement that makes you laugh. Why can't we use this strategy to promote positive messages about the environment?

ALWAYS pre-test messages
A crucial step in message development is pre-testing. Communicators can make expensive errors when they simply assume that their message is appropriate and understandable. Pre-testing is a semi-guarantee that your message will appeal to your messages. Pre-testing can be as basic as asking your target audiences what they think about a certain message; if it's clear, makes the point, is easily understood, and will cut through the other messages that people hear every day.

Sell the benefits
Sell the real or perceived benefits. People will respond better when they think they will benefit from the use of the product.

Sell the image, feeling, not the product
Think about cars, shoes, and perfumes. How are these products sold to us? Those $200 sports shoes will make you fly? Unlikely, but we like the fantasy, so by wearing the sports shoes, we are part of the dream.

Don't focus on the technical background of the product
Why would somebody want to know what makes up the product? Do not focus on the details or technical aspect of your issue/product *unless* it's a feature in itself that interests your target market.

CASE STUDY: Selling bananas not rubbish
SPREP is working with countries to encourage people to plant Banana Circles, to help sort their rubbish, reuse their organic waste, and protect their water supply. However, because bananas are not readily available on Tarawa, the biggest incentive for building "Banana Circles" might be free bananas. Therefore, the benefit or incentive of adopting a certain behaviour is bananas or fruit for your family, or even extra cash.

3. Who are you saying it to? AUDIENCE

In order to develop key messages, it is vital to understand who we are communicating to or our *target audience*.

Defining your target audiences

One of the greatest achievements in our work is to understand what drives a certain individual. What are the motivating factors that will encourage a certain behaviour? We also need to know the best way to reach them (their media diet), the key influencers in their lives, understand the village/family structure etc. To understand this is to be able to create a plan that will not only entice them to start a certain behaviour, but continue it, and promote it to their community.

In order to promote a new behaviour, we need to know how they act NOW. The best way to segment your target audience is to go directly to your community and ask them what they think and do in relation to the problem you are trying to address.

Segmentation: separating into similar groups

Segmentation is the process of dividing the community into groups of people that have the same views or habits. Narrowing down or "targeting" the audience in this way can help you to tailor your messages to appeal to the different groups.

Understanding your target audience

In order to find out about the target audience, you will need to know everything about them, who they are, where they are from, what makes them who they are, what they like to do in their spare time etc. Getting to know your audience is one of the most important elements of the communications process. If you don't know who you are talking to, then how do you know what to say?

Not all audiences are worth focussing on

Focus on those audiences that will have influence on others. Study the Case Study below, is this something you can use to separate your audience?

> **CASE STUDY: Innovation Diffusion Theory**
> *First developed by Everett R. Rogers*
>
> *Promoters/Change agents:* People who act, in effect, as marketers and communicators for new ideas. They convince people to try something new. The people they convince go on to convince other people…and so on. That's *diffusion*.
>
> *Transformers:* The most important people to convince who have influence over the rest of the social system. They may be the unofficial role models, whom everyone looks up to, or they may be senior officials, or decision makers. Or they may be very popular with lots of friends. By endorsing a new idea, and adopting it themselves, they given an idea legitimacy in the eyes of the mainstream.
>
> *Reactionaries:* People who oppose change (even if it is obviously for the good). Their reasons for opposition may run from self-interest, to fear, to genuine concern for the good of the whole (which they believe, rightly or wrongly, that the new idea is threatening).

Researching your audience

There are various research methods to find out about your target audience, however, their use will be determined by a range of other factors (time, money, expertise, and access to the audience).

1. Focus Groups

Focus groups is one of the best ways to gain a better understanding of what your target audiences think about an issue, and their ideas about solutions. A Focus Group is basically a group of representatives from your key target audiences who are asked questions relating to your particular issue.

2. Interviews

Personal interviews provide a good way to obtain in-depth information from members of your target audience.

3. Observation

Unfortunately there is usually a great deal of difference between *what people say they do* and *what they actually do*. When people are asked what they do they tend to exaggerate, or downplay, their own behaviour. One of the best things to do is to actually look at what people are already doing.

4. Surveys

Surveys are a good way to find out about your target audience. Ensure that your questions are clear, concise, and not open ended.

4. How will you say it? Tools and approaches

Determining which tools and approaches to use depends on a range of factors such as your communication objectives, target audiences, resources, and timeline.

Flagship species

Flagship species is a species chosen to represent an environmental cause, such as an ecosystem in need of conservation. These species are chosen for their vulnerability, attractiveness or distinctiveness in order to create support and acknowledgement from the public at large. Thus, the concept of a flagship species holds that by giving publicity to a few key species, the support given to those species will successfully leverage conservation of entire ecosystems and all species contained therein.

Media

The role of the media

One of the most cost effective ways to reach your target audiences is through the media. The media gives people a way to communicate, providing invaluable information, opinions, news stories and entertainment. Many of us assume that media is a free medium to raise awareness of our issue. However, engaging the media in your topic often depends on a clear strategy and relationships with various media members. When a media release you prepare does not generate the desired article, remember that the role of the media is to present information that is accurate, objective, and fair. The media is under no obligation to promote your issue unless it involves a regular column a Letter to the Editor.

Here are some points to keep in mind when developing media releases:

Currency
Look for a news “peg” (an issue that is currently in the news) to tie your information into current events.

General interest
Make your news as relevant to the general community as possible. Connect the information to a common situation that people encounter.

Local angle
People want to know how the big story relates to them.

Human interest
Provide a human face to your story.

Novelty
People pay attention to new ideas, or stories. Use the novelty of a policy, meeting etc as the hook of your story.

Timeliness

- **Newspaper and television** reporters work on tight deadlines everyday. To have your story on the news team’s roster for a given day, you need to factor time into your submission. Be aware of the risks involved if you do send your news release late in the afternoon to your local television or newspaper. Newspaper and television deadlines may differ so it’s good practice to talk to your media representatives about their expectations from you.

- **Radio** is the most immediate medium of mainstream media communication. Some radio stations broadcast news on the hour or according to a certain agreed schedule. Your media release has a high chance in getting airtime because of its nature for immediate coverage.

How to write a media release

The media release is the most common channel to get your message out, but you are competing with other individuals or entities for news coverage. Politics and business are two sectors that tend to get the media on their feet so the onus is on you to create a media release that will stand out. A journalist works on a deadline and the submission of your press release at 3pm when the reporter is wrapping up his or her stories for the day, may result in your press release sent to the To-Do-Later tray.

1. Write an eye-catching headline
This can make all the difference! You can write your headline last or first. Journalists may use it or may write their own.

2. Use the inverted pyramid writing principle
Sum up the key message in the first paragraph. Remember the 5Ws and 1H (What, When, Where, Why, Who and How).

Write further paragraphs of the media release in descending order of importance.
The easiest way to edit a newspaper story or magazine article is to cut the last few paragraphs, so put the main aspects of the story near the beginning.

3. Use plain language writing techniques
Keep your sentences short. Use everyday words — cut any jargon. Don’t use acronyms in the first instance – write it out in full with the acronym in brackets and use the acronym on second reference.

4. Include plenty of quotes
Facts are dull; people are interesting. What people say or think is newsworthy. Include quotes in your draft media release, and then get the agreement of the person you're quoting. To avoid liability, contentious comments must always be attributed.

If your release is on a global or regional event, ensure you keep it relevant by providing a local example.

5. Keep the media release to a page or a page and a half at the most
Look at the length of your media release from the reader's point of view. If journalists want more information, they'll contact you.

6. Follow up
Ring journalists after you have sent out the release to ensure they have received it.

If you want to provide more information, write a separate background sheet, using a question and answer format.

7. Include your contact details at the end of the release
Include your contact telephone numbers and email address. Make it easy for journalists to contact you.

8. Thank the journalist
If your media release does result in some publicity, drop the journalist/editor a quick thank you note to let them know that you appreciate their interest.

Building and maintaining a good working relationship with the media will support your communications strategy. Compile a media database with right spellings of names, contact details and any information that might help determine who to send your media releases to.

Think about pre-briefing sessions with media about certain issues, make sure you get information to the media when you promise, and regularly contact the media to let them know what you are working on.

How to write a media advisory

A Media Advisory alerts the media to an upcoming event.

Example:

MEDIA ADVISORY

SPREP introduces 'Bring your own bag' campaign
The Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) will introduce its regional 'Bring your own bag' campaign on 5 February 2008. The campaign includes television and radio advertisements as well as a regional children's contest to design the campaign's poster. The most recent data on the cost of waste on Pacific tourism will be announced at the event.

Participants:	Mr Mark Ricketts Solid Waste Officer SPREP Dr Frank Griffin Pollution Prevention Advisor SPREP
Date:	5 February 2008
Time:	11am
Place:	SPREP Headquarters Vailima, Apia, Samoa
Contact:	Ms Nanette Woonton Media Officer SPREP (685) 21929

How to write a letter to the editor

A letter to the editor can be used in many ways – to respond to an article of editorial that you disagree with, to agree with a piece and provide supporting facts, or to comment on an issue relevant to your community that has not necessarily been covered by the publication. To increase the likelihood of your letter being published, keep the following in mind:

- Be brief and to the point. A good length for a letter to the editor is approximately 100 words.
- Do not personally attack the author of an article. Provide a rational, well throughout response to the points with which you disagree.
- Include your name, address, and phone number with the letter. An anonymous letter probably will not be published and the editor might need to call to confirm that you are the author before printing it.
- Your letter is likely to be edited or shortened to fit the space available so try to edit the letter and keep it simple and to the point.
- Include the name of your organisation in the letter or below your signature.

How to write an op-ed

Op-eds provide your point of view on a particular issue. Use them to being a community-wide discussion on a particular topic or to weigh in with your side's arguments in an ongoing debate. To make your op-ed as effective as possible, keep the following in mind:

- Present your opinion clearly and without ambiguity. Every sentence in the op-ed should bolster your case.
- Support your premise with facts and figures. Make statistics relevant to the people reading the article.
- Offer solutions. Do not just write the fact that a problem exists.
- Keep the op-ed brief. It should be no longer than 800 words.
- Time the submission of the op-ed with a holiday or other event such as the kickoff of your campaign to make it more newsworthy.
- Have a recognised expert of someone with credentials related to the topic sign his or her name on the op-ed. This will increase the chances that the article will be printed and lend it more credibility.
- Send the op-ed to the editorial page editor.

TV

TV is also an effective way to reach Pacific communities. By producing TV programmes, DVDs or videos, you will be able to promote your issue on a larger scale.

Producing videos is also a good way to articulate the key issues you are addressing, and to find positive solutions. However, don't just produce a DVD for the sake of it. Again, consider the key messages and audience you are aiming at. There's no point producing a DVD if there is no way that people can watch it.

Radio programmes

Radio is a key medium in the Pacific to get raise awareness of a certain topic. Here are some points to keep in mind when developing your radio programme.

1. Command attention
Drama, with its fascinating characters and exciting plots, can attract and hold the listeners' attention throughout many episodes. Drama also can direct attention to a social message by making it stand out from all the other information a listener receives in the course of a day, by demonstrating how the message is relevant and useful to listeners, by showing that it is compatible with listeners' beliefs, and by making it attractive.

2. Cater to the heart and the head
Emotional involvement is every bit as important as information when it comes to attracting an audience and motivating listeners to change. An emotional response will increase the time and energy a listener spends thinking about the message. Furthermore, decisions that are reached logically are strengthened if the decision is also emotionally rewarding. Drama has the ability to involve listeners in a range of emotional experiences as well as to provide them with information to help them to improve their lives.

3. Clarify the message
Messages must be clearly understood in order to be effective. Drama allows the message to be presented by various characters in language and in situations that the audience can understand and readily recall. By demonstrating the message, role-model characters make the message much clearer than any abstract description.

4. Communicate a benefit
Listeners will be more likely to risk trying a new behaviour if they believe it has real advantages. Through role modeling by the various characters, drama can demonstrate to listeners the benefits to be gained from a change in their life styles. It can quickly illustrate the consequences, both good and bad, of various behaviours.

5. Create trust
As listeners become personally and emotionally involved with role-model characters in the drama, they come to see the characters as real people whom they can trust and rely upon. If the drama features experienced, knowledgeable characters who can relate to listeners' lives, then listeners will trust the message that they are delivering.

6. Call to action
People need encouragement to discuss new ideas, to make difficult decisions, and to attempt a new behavior. Characters in dramas have the power to inspire and motivate listeners to try a new behaviour and to advocate it to their families and friends.

7. Be consistent
Because a detailed Writer's Brief guides the creation of serial drama for development, the drama always delivers the message to the listening audience in a consistent, appropriate, and relevant manner no matter how many characters restate the message in how many different ways. Consistent repetition of the message helps listeners to understand new ideas, to learn how to perform a new behaviour, and to rehearse mentally how they might act.

Fossard, 1998

Community theatre

In several countries throughout the Pacific, community theatre is a popular and effective medium for communicating messages at the community level.

CASE STUDY: Wan Smolbag

Wan Smolbag is a non-government organization that has developed a unique approach to promoting social and environmental issues. It creates plays, songs, videos and cassette tapes on a broad range of topical issues and takes these to villages and schools throughout Vanuatu. Its effectiveness relies on its close collaboration with the hosting villages before, during, and after the production of a play. The plays are not just theatre: they are community development tools that allow issues to be raised, often in humorous ways. After the performance, Wan Smolbag promotes discussion within the village until solutions are sought and implemented.

In 2003 Wan Smolbag was awarded the Pacific People of the Year award by the [Pacific] Islands Business magazine for its effectiveness. Its award citation said Wan Smolbag's messages: "are about the basics of modern life in the Pacific, and about how to manage and improve upon them. They are education delivered in the most effective possible way: as entertainment. The success and impact of Wan Smolbag is easy to gauge. It is the instant response and the understanding flaring in the eyes of the grassroots audiences."

The play on turtle conservation was developed by the actors who traveled to coastal communities across Vanuatu to collect information and stories on sea turtles. This information was then incorporated into the play "I'm a Turtle", which has now been performed in hundreds of Vanuatu villages, often more than once. Each performance ended with an open discussion with the village and village chief on the issues raised in the play, and possible solutions.

The play appeared to be catalytic and many villages banned or restricted the harvest of turtles as a result. As part of the performance's follow up, most villages nominated an interested and influential person to become a turtle monitor whose function was initially to monitor sea turtle activities. Subsequently the monitors expanded their activities to include tagging turtles, protecting nests and collecting data on turtles and nesting successes. Wan Smolbag worked with various environmental agencies and donors to offer on-going support to the monitors, including an annual meeting where they receive additional training and encouragement.

The movement continues to grow. There are now about 200 monitors in over 100 villages on many of the islands of the Vanuatu archipelago. To reflect their new and expanded role, the turtle monitors have changed their name to Vanua (land)–Tai (sea) Resource Monitors.

Celebrating Pacific island biodiversity: case studies of island life, 2006

Sponsorship

Within the ongoing sustainable development dialogue, it is crucial to start looking at how we can engage the private sector in our communication work. Sponsorship not only provides the valuable resources needed to undertake communications activities, it also ensures that we help streamline the private sector into planning for future activities.

Writing for the web

Using websites can be an invaluable tool for information dissemination. When writing for the web, ensure that you write simply and concisely, do not attached large documents that might require a lot of time to download, and most importantly, ensure that you include contact details if people require more information.

Promotional materials (hats, t-shirts, badges)

Producing promotional materials is a great way to get your message out there; people wearing the shirts are walking billboards, and in the Pacific, a great and cost effective way to promote a simple message. However, just producing materials should not be considered key element of your campaign. As with any campaign, the tools you use must be developed to achieve an objective. Merchandise for the sake of merchandise may be considered a waste of resources.

Factsheets

A factsheet is a one to two page summary of an issue. A factsheet provides the relevant background information, and highlights the key activities that you are undertaking around this issue. This tool is also a good way to raise awareness about your organization or agency.

Newsletters

Regular newsletters (electronic or printed) are good ways to keep people up to date with your activities. It is also a great way to keep people motivated, and to reinforce the key messages of your strategy.

Education kits

Materials produced for students is a great way to get students engaged – if they are a target audience. When developing education materials for schools, ensure you liaise with the relevant departments (such as the Ministry of Education) to find out how your materials may complement the national curriculum. Also, find out what opportunities exist to engage teachers in the process of developing materials, as well as training in the use of the materials.

Competitions

Everybody loves a challenge – particularly when there are fun prizes at the end!

9. From education to behaviour change

Our aim is not to get people to KNOW MORE THINGS. We are trying to get people to CHANGE WHAT THEY DO. Changing people's behaviour is the next step from changing people's attitudes.

Behaviour change is usually a process, it doesn't happen in one step. Raising awareness does not necessarily translate to behaviour change. Education lays the foundation for initiating and promoting changes in attitudes and behaviours. There are many influential factors to consider when aiming to change individual and collective behaviour.

Consider this example, the levels of solid waste in the Pacific are growing at suprising rates. However, while many campaigns extol the virtues of recycling and other waste minimization strategies, the reality is most Pacific countries do not have established recycling systems. While people may be aware of the importance of recycling, if external systems do not provide alternatives to current behaviours, it does not make sense to invest energy in promoting new behaviours.

In order to encourage environmentally-friendly behaviours we need to do more than increase awareness of the problem. We need to help people find ways to change what they are currently doing. We need to find ways to listen and to understand exactly what these communities and individuals need to be able to change. We also need to find ways to measure the impact of our projects on both the audience and the environment.

CASE STUDY: Education as a universal panacea

'Education' has become the universal panacea of public policy. If there is an environmental problem, we tend to depend on education and awareness to decrease the issue. If we want people to recycle, we will often develop a campaign that involves raising awareness, radio jingles, TV ads, a whole host of tools to increase knowledge about an issue.

But what is this thing called education? What do we mean when we say ‘education and awareness raising’, and once people know about the issue, what’s the guarantee that they will adopt new behaviours?

Whatever 'education' is, it's not going to be easy. After all, 'education' is really a misnomer - our aim is not to get people to KNOW MORE THINGS. We are trying to get people to CHANGE WHAT THEY DO. Changing people's behaviour is the next step from changing people’s attitudes.

It's worth noting that many of the techniques and tools of 'education' have been developed in the advertising and public relations industries. But these fields have quite different goals to 'education'. Advertising, for instance, is mostly NOT about changing behaviour. It's about changing *brands*. We still drink beer...We still buy the car...We just buy a different brand of beer or car.

PR, on the other hand, has nothing to do with behaviour at all, it's is about manipulating the media to project your interests into the public realm.

Social change marketing, however, looks beyond advertising and PR techniques. It extends to things like community development, recruitment, training, infrastructure planning and more.
So...as a panacea 'education' is not only elusive, it's always going to be a demanding and tough discipline.

Social Change Media

What is ‘behaviour’?

Behaviour is how we act, what we do. It is has a close relationship with attitudes, which are formed through socialization, culture, education, which are developed from beliefs. Here are some points to keep in mind when thinking about why to consider behaviour when developing your strategies:

- The behaviours of individuals effect the environment
- Awareness about an environmental issue does not necessarily lead to behaviour change
- Behaviour change can be achieved through removing barriers and offering incentives
- Behaviour change strategies may require a set of motivators depending on the context
- Behaviour change can be achieved through a mix of other tools (such as regulation and education)
- Communication strategies should focus on the key behaviours you want a certain audience to adopt.

Behaviour change research has demonstrated that:

- People naturally gravitate toward actions that yield high benefits and for which there are few barriers
- Perceived barriers and barriers vary dramatically among individuals. A benefit to one person may be a barrier to another.
- People choose between behaviours. If they decide to do something differently, it is usually because that behaviour provides more benefits and has fewer barriers that what they are currently doing.

There are three things that act as a barrier to people adopting a new behaviour:

1. They don’t know what the “benefits” are
2. They might feel there are too many barriers or difficulties
3. They might think they get the most “benefit” most by doing what they’re already doing

The stages of change model

It is generally agreed that there are six stages that people can go through to reach an adopted behaviour. The model highlights the strategies that you can use in your plan to encourage or promote a desired behaviour.

Stages	**Features**	**People**	**Strategies**	**Example: encouraging recycling**
Unaware	Not considering, not knowing or engaging in environmentally unfriendly behaviours	*I don't know anything about it.* *I don't intend to change.*	Raising awareness Education Access to information	Workshops in village about the benefits of recycling Providing information on what services are available to support recycling efforts
Contemplating	Starting to think about it	*I know about it and thinking about trying it.*	Provide an enabling environment Removing barriers (real or perceived)	Establish what the barriers are (perceived and real), and aim to remove these barriers through more workshops, or liaison with village heads
Preparing	People intend to take action soon	***I'll give it a try***	Provide incentives	Provide more information Provide or promote incentives for recycling: "cash for trash", feelgood factor, clean environment
Taking action	Trying it out Adoption of behaviour	*I've tried it – it was successful/unsucessful*	Provide incentives Positive reinforcement of adopted behaviour Prompts	Prompts on bins to encourage recycling Reinforce good behaviour
Maintaining	Adopted behaviour becomes a norm or customary practice	*The more I do it the easier it is.* *It is becoming part of a routine/habit.*	Positive reinforcement of adopted behaviour	Continue to provide positive messages on the benefits of recycling
Advocating	Multiplying the behaviour by encouraging others to do the same	*This change has been important.* *I am encouraging other people to do it*	Promote "champions"	Promote champions within communities

Social marketing

Social marketing is a communications approach that attempts to encourage people to adopt a certain behaviour. Social marketing identifies the key factors that determine and promote behaviours in target audiences. Learning about the desired behaviour is only the first step. Often there are many barriers that can deter people from adopting this behaviour. Many times, people need to see an incentive before they will take up a certain behaviour. Social marketing presents a map for navigating these influences but recognizing the various stages in behaviour change.

Social marketing is the use of commercial marketing techniques to encourage people to adopt a new behaviour. If your project is not about trying to change a specific behaviour, like getting people to compost their food scraps at home, then it is not social marketing.

In social marketing there is also no such thing as working with the "general public". The social marketing approach is based on understanding the needs of the different audience groups we are trying to influence.

Social marketing recognises that the people we are trying to reach are often at different stages of the behaviour change process. For example, while some people in the community are not even aware of composting, other people may already be composting all the time.

The diagram below shows how social marketing is used to target those people who are most receptive to the message and likely to "voluntarily" adopt the new behaviour. Whenever possible we also need to work with those "champions" who are already "doing" (or likely to do) the new behaviour. Once we have identified these people then we can work together with them to try and influence the wider community.

Target for social marketing

20% of people will only do it if they have to **REGULATION**	60% of people will do it if you can convince them	20% of people are doing it already **CHAMPIONS**

This diagram also shows that we need to think carefully about how our project fits with other "behaviour change tools" such as regulation and education. Education works on the basis that knowledge leads to behaviour change, while regulation relies on using enforcement and penalties to influence those people who will not change voluntarily. For example, sometimes penalties (such as fines) may be required to get people to stop littering.

With social marketing we recognise that, if we really want people to change, we need to find ways to match our messages with:

- community services and incentives that will help people to change (such as composting equipment or recycling bags) and;
- the threat of regulations if people don't change (such as fines)

Can I do social marketing?

You *can* develop your own social marketing project and you can do it on a small budget. All you need to do is to develop the ability to think from your “customer’s” point of view. Social marketers know that to create effective programmes, they must talk (and listen) to the people in their target audience to find out exactly what will help them to act in new ways.

As communicators and educators we can often feel under pressure to just produce materials without having a good look at the situation, our resources, and the audience we are trying to influence. Often it’s easier to prepare and distribute posters, or put advertising messages on the radio, without really thinking about what we want people to do. However, the fact is that we almost never “just know” why people do what they do. Before we can start to develop our social marketing strategy we need to find ways to understand our audience and what will really motivate people to change.

It may take many years to see any improvements in the environment or the quality of life of your community. As social marketers we all need to understand that, if we do our jobs well today, we can greatly improve the chances of success in the future.

10. Developing a community campaign

Here are some points to keep in mind when developing your community campaign.

- What do you want to achieve?
- What is the issue – how do you define the problem?
- Which audiences will have to change in order for you to achieve your objectives?
- What do they currently feel, think and do?
- Who influences them?
- What do we need them to think and act?
- What can persuade them to change?

CASE STUDY: Campaigning to "Use the Greenbag" in Kiribati

In Kiribati, the biodegradable Greenbag had already been promoted by an NGO as a potential tool to encourage people to keep their organics out of the country's new landfills. After assessing the existing situation the Kiribati International Waters Project (IWP) realised that it would have the biggest impact on reducing waste by encouraging the public and councils to adopt the Greenbag as a key waste minimisation tool.

The project set a target of achieving a 20% reduction in the volume of waste generated by the pilot community by the end of 2006. By the end of 2005 it had achieved a 50% reduction in waste volumes - a full year ahead of schedule.

The project employed a series of tools to promote the Greenbag including: community competitions, posters, radio jingles, talkback, community theatre, project videos, and community "champions". At the end of one Greenbag competition more than 10 tonnes of inorganic waste had been removed from the pilot community. This built pride and confidence amongst the community and the sight of stacks of Greenbags during the competition raised curiosity from the neighbouring villages.

In order to build on its success at the community level the project began to lobby the local councils to adopt the Greenbag scheme as the basis of a new and more efficient user-pays system for the entire country. There has now been a great jump in the use of the Greenbag throughout the capital atoll of South Tarawa - from 3% in October 2004 to 17% December 2005.

Five principles to keep in mind when developing your campaign plan

1. **Assess:** what's the problem, intended audience, current knowledge and behaviours, and barriers (real and perceived) to the acceptance of desired behaviours

2. **Plan:** What behaviours are you trying to change and how are you going to try and do that?

3. **Develop and pre-test:** Test your materials on the target audience. Do they have the desired impact?

4. **Deliver:** Develop a plan for implementing your strategy (eg: how will the materials reach the intended audiences in the most effective way, placement of radio and TV spots etc)

5. **Monitor and evaluate:** A monitoring system should be in place to see if the messages reach the intended audience, are used as planned, and are effective. Monitoring data provides the opportunity to address problems and assess the impact of your communication efforts.

Campaign Plan

Here is a basic structure to support you develop your strategy. Not all questions will be relevant to your work, and you can even add more areas that you might wish to expand on.

1. Background

Provide information on the project/activity

Situational analysis

Use this section to provide information about the key issue/s you are trying to address.

- What are the key issues you are trying to address?
- How widespread is the issue?
- What are the consequences of the issue?
- Have baseline studies undertaken or do you plan to undertake baseline studies?
- What can be done to address the issue?
- What are the possible solutions to this problem?
- What activities are currently being undertaken to address this issue?
- What knowledge, attitudes, beliefs and behaviours are related to the problem? (are there differences between men/women, young/old, urban/rural?)
- What's the current knowledge about this issue?
- What are some of the attitudes and behaviours around this issue?
- What are the main barriers (real or perceived) to a changed behaviour?

Goal/Objectives

Outline the overarching goal and the objectives that you will aim to achieve

- What do you want to achieve?
- Are the objectives clear, measurable, achievable?
- What is the timeframe to achieve these objectives?

Target audience

In this section you identify who are you talking to.

Separate this section into Primary and Secondary audiences.

Primary Audience: Specific by - behaviour/social norm/policy - and important variables such as race/ethnicity; sex; age; language; vested interest.

Secondary Audience: Those who influence the primary audiences or help implement the programme, e.g. family/friends; healthcare providers; local parenting groups; police.

- What behaviour change do you want to see?
- What motivates them to stay with the present environment?
- What would motivate them to change?
- Who are the decision makers?
- Who influences the decision makers?
- Why do they behave in a certain way?
- What are the social norms, cultural and traditional factors, economic and environmental factors surrounding people?
- What are the available resources (human, financial)?
- What are the perceived barriers to adoption of a certain behaviour?
- What are some incentives to encourage people to adopt a certain behaviour?
- Who are you "targeting" with your strategy?
- What do you know about them?
- What are their demographics?
- What are their psychographics?

- What is their “media diet”?
- What is the context that they live in?

Key messages
- What you are trying to say?
- Are your messages clear and designed for your target audience(s)?
- Are you saying enough? Are you saying too much?

Communication channels
What tools will you use to reach your target audiences? For each audience, identify specific objective, relevant tools or approaches, and specify timeline.

Monitoring and evaluation
A good communications strategy takes evaluation very seriously. This component is often overlooked, but is critical to ensure that you are using the available resources the best way possible. Make sure that you keep evaluation in mind when you create and implement your communications plan.

Timeline and role of staff
Who will do what and when? This is an important element of the strategy.

Funding and budget
Specify all programme development and implementation activities and costs, including review and approval with dates, people responsible and funding sources highlighted.

TIPS

- Be inspired! If it doesn’t inspire you, then how can you expect change?
- Build on what is happening
- Go with what you know
- Make it fun and easy for people
- Know what they listen to, watch and read
- Who are those in the know? The opinion leaders?
- Introduce the change quicky!
- Try to innovate

11. What are the keys to success?

1. Take advantage of what is known and what has been done before
Don't reinvent the wheel. Have a good look around for other similar communities who have also tried to address the same issue.

2. Start with the target markets that are most ready for action
Don't waste your time trying to change people who don't want to change. Work with those people who are most receptive to your message (early adopters) and keen to promote the new behaviour to the rest of the community.

3. Promote a single doable behaviour, explained in simple clear terms
Don't try and get people to do everything at once. Focus on one, simple, behaviour that will help to get people started.

4. Consider incorporating and promoting a tangible object with the target behaviour
For example, if you want to get people to sort their rubbish provide them with separate bins. If you want to get people to compost provide them with a compost bin or instructions on how to make and use one.

5. Understand and address perceived benefits and costs
The best way to motivate people is to understand what they really *think* about the positives and negatives of adopting the new behaviour. Your audience might currently think that "composting toilets" are a great idea but they also might think that they would be far too expensive and smelly to ever use themselves.

6. Make access easy
If you really want people to recycle don't make them travel all the way to the other side of town to separate their recyclables. Try to provide services that make it easy for people to adopt the new behaviour.

7. Develop attention getting and motivational messages
Use your audience research to really find out what gets people's attention and motivates them to act. You message should always be about motivating people to actually do something.

8. Use the media or communications methods that will reach your target audience
Find out when and where to communicate with your target audience. Why focus on radio advertising if the best place to influence your audience is by running backyard demonstrations of the new behaviour in the target community.

9. Provide easy ways for inspired audiences to act on recommended behaviours
Don't waste opportunities to tap into the energy that might already exist in the community. Think about working with enthusiastic members of the target audience to engage and involve more people in the programme.

10. Allocate adequate resources for media and outreach
Make sure you have enough resources to reach the people you intend to target. If you don't then you might want to think about focusing on a smaller audience.

11. Allocate adequate resources for research
Don’t invest all this time, energy and money unless you can make sure your programme meets the needs of your audience and you can measure your impact.

12. Track results and make adjustments
You will make mistakes – you need to make sure that you are able to learn from them. And you need to know when you are making a difference in the community and the environment.

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13. Contacts

Tamara Logan
Education and Social Communications Advisor
SPREP
tamaral@sprep.org

Nanette Woonton
Media Officer
SPREP
nanettew@sprep.org