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Sustaining Effective Policy and Practice for Education in Africa

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Session 5:
Communication strategies for promoting education

Communication for education and development: Enhancing stakeholder participation and commitment

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. Education in Africa brings together the interests and activities of a wide range of stakeholders .To ensure successful collaboration among this vast array, communication is a necessity . Such communication is increasingly the object of strategic planning to ensure that it is comprehensive, and inclusive, and that its style and content enhance dialogue. Through information-sharing, through building consensus and confidence, through advocacy and social mobilization, communication strategies help to provide support for education policies and their implementation among leaders, communities, civil society groups, media and donors, all of whom are recognizing the need to work together.

2. Strategic communication is not generally institutionalized in the structures and practices of many ministries of education and NGOs working on education issues .Many African countries have yet to create the enabling policy environment and instruments through which national or sectoral communication strategies, including those for education, can emerge. Increasingly, through the COMED curriculum for joint training of communication officers of ministries of education, and journalists reporting on education, some basic elements of a multi-dimensional communication strategy for education are being considered at sub-regional and national levels.

3. This background paper, and the ADEA Bienniale session on Communication for Education, to which it contributes, are designed to: (i) demonstrate that communication is an essential tool for education policy makers in their quest to go to scale; (ii) provide examples of how different forms of communication have been used successfully in enabling dialogue among stakeholders; (iii) emphasize the need for a policy and strategic approach to the use of communication in support of education in Africa.

4. The paper argues that a policy and strategic approach to communication for education provides an important point of departure for the massive mobilization of resources and energies required for implementing Education For All, EFA, and other crucial programs of educational reform .

2. INTRODUCTION: WHY COMMUNICATION?

5. Education has become everyone's business. Parents, teachers and their unions, students, communities, civil society groups, NGOs, education ministries and government program managers… all have their roles, interests and responsibilities. Increasingly all need to have their **say**, in an environment in which they may not always have their **way**. Negotiating the gulf between what each group wants and what it can get from interacting with other groups, is rich soil for communication.

Communication is an inevitable ingredient of the relations among and between education stakeholders .Whether those relations are good or not, constructive or not, will be reflected in how they communicate, just as how they communicate could help in shaping the tone and outcomes of relationships.

Attention to the strategic elements that are involved in communication can help to ensure social relations that are productive, through creating the kinds of environment which favor harmonious development of the education sector.

All partners in education can therefore take deliberate steps to plan and implement communication activities based on an understanding of what promotes, and what impedes, successful collaboration.

6. This background paper, and the session on Communication for Education to which it contributes are designed to:

- Demonstrate that communication is an essential tool for education policy makers in their quest to go to scale
- Provide examples of how different forms of communication have been used successfully in enabling dialogue among stakeholders
- Emphasize the need for a policy and strategic approach to the use of communication to support education in Africa.

3. SOME PURPOSES OF COMMUNICATION FOR EDUCATION

7. Communication is about people creating, learning and exchanging meaning.

In the education sector, one of the goals of communication is to assist each stakeholder group to make sense of its roles and responsibilities while seeking to understand and to accept those of others.

Successful partnerships emerge when most of the parties see themselves and the others as moving in the same direction, working for similar interests, sharing the same meanings about educational issues, reforms, programs etc. Mutual trust is a basic requirement and outcome for these relationships. Communication can help build trust.

Awareness of mutual interest, commonalities and building of trust are not 'givens'; they do not just happen, naturally or spontaneously. They can be the result of planned communication.

8. Communication can serve many functions in partnerships for education, among them:

- **Information**: providing factual statements and explanations about the common enterprise and how the various stakeholders relate to it. Examples include: (i) how a teacher redeployment program will work, who will be affected, when and where it will be applied; (ii) school enrolments by sex and region; (iii) the performance of schools on national examinations; (iv) pupil unit cost by region; (v) student-teacher ratios by region. Such information levels the playing field when it comes to information used in their dialogue.
- **Dialogue and confidence-building**: ensuring that all the various points of view are expressed, providing clarifications and addressing any hesitations about the issues concerned. For example, what do mothers feel about girls' going to school all day? Will teachers lose seniority if moved to other locations? Will government's plan of returning management of primary schools to religious organizations not mean blocking certain groups from attendance? A communication strategy will provide for group meetings, person-to-person discussions, workshops, newsletters, etc. to tackle the various aspects of these kinds of situation, and ensure that major misunderstandings are removed, so that partners can be comfortable with their present and future roles.
- **Consensus**: Once stakeholders are informed and have a chance to express their views, and their worries are addressed adequately, it may be possible to get agreement on lines of action, on schedules, on division of responsibility etc. For example, if targets have been set for girls' education in a community, who will ensure that girls actually show up in school? If special resources are required for this, how will they be made available? What is the role of parents and families, of religious groups, of education managers in meeting targets? Will they agree to undertake their roles? If sanctions for non-performance are to be invoked, are they understood and accepted by all? A communication strategy will seek ways of effectively managing these issues. It will keep track through monitoring feedback, of the evolution of understandings and the achievement of commonly-decided objectives.
- **Advocacy**: Influential individuals and institutions may be unwilling to change habits of thinking and reacting, and may be inclined to block new ideas, if they consider them threatening or undesirable. Communication can be a means of engaging centers of power and influence to encourage them to 'move' with the times; and to lend their

influence to progressive directions. For example, will village traditional rulers and family elders allow girls to continue in school rather than be married off at puberty? How can they be reassured, and thus help to reassure other influentials, that continued schooling will not breed 'irresponsible' wives and mothers? These are advocacy issues, and some of them can be controversial. There are special communication approaches for advocacy; for enhancing the support of influential individuals and groups for proposed changes, which may be in legislation, policies, regulations, programs, cultural values and behavior.

- **Social mobilization**: How can the large numbers of people at the 'grassroots' and periphery be brought into supporting education reforms and programs? For example, how can the EFA 'movement' become acceptable and gain majority support in communities across nations, rather than remain only commitments that Ministers of Education made at international conferences, of no relevance to their people? Communication campaigns and structured programs can be created for involving people at different levels of society in decisions about proposed education programs[1].

[1] See Sylvie Cohen, **Partnering: A New Approach to Sexual and Reproductive Health**, UNFPA, New York, 2001, which says that "Advocacy is also about addressing controversy", p83. Chapter Five of this text, pp 81-103, is a useful resumé of gender-aware advocacy strategies, practices and experiences, with examples drawn from the reproductive health literature.

4. CHANNELS AND MODES OF COMMUNICATION

9. From the uses of communication sketched above, it can be seen that various individuals or groups can initiate communication, and can also be the recipients in a communication situation. Ministries of education often feel that it is their responsibility and role to initiate ideas and programs about education programs for which they would need the collaboration of the other stakeholders. Similarly parents or teachers or religious groups may react to curriculum content (e.g. sexuality education modules) and seek to have the Ministry make changes in line with their home and community values[2].

10. **Participatory communication**, which has proved to be effective in building confidence and ownership, involves frequent interchange among people and groups in communication situations. In other words, it is a mode of communicating in which all the parties concerned should feel able to initiate discussion and to respond freely when addressed, rather than be just passive receivers of other peoples' monologues and commands.

11. According to Alfonso Dagron: "The main elements that characterize participatory communication are related to its capacity to involve the human subjects of social change in the process of communicating."[3] Dagron goes on to enumerate nine " issues that distinguish participatory communication from other development communication strategies." Among these are: horizontal vs. vertical, process vs. campaign, long-term vs. short-term, collective vs. individual, with vs. for, specific vs. massive, people's needs vs. donors' musts, ownership vs. access, consciousness vs. persuasion. These bi-polar opposite terms each describe various ways of communicating, the first in each pair being more favourable to participatory communication.[4]

12. Some communication efforts use **mass media**: press releases, news –bulletins, programs, announcements on radio and television, etc. Some involve **group and interpersonal communication** through meetings, parent-pupil-teacher conferences, workshops, seminars, rallies, demonstrations, etc. Other communication modalities use **institutional channels** such as the political/administrative, the school/educational system, development networks, NGOs. Also used increasingly are **traditional or socio-cultural channels** of communication, involving local opinion leaders, informal groups, indigenous and popular media, such as theatre and festivals, and places and events where people gather regularly, markets, worksites, marriages, naming ceremonies, wake-keepings etc. Other channels are those used in the **commercial system** for marketing goods and services, for example, bookstores, neighbourhood stores, kiosks.

13. The most recent opportunities for mass communication are provided by what have been called the 'new information and communication technologies', increasingly in use through e-mail, websites, electronic fora, distance learning and other computer-based applications.

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[2] As happened in Kenya with the attempted introduction by the Ministry of Education of a Family Life Education curriculum, containing elements of sexual education, much opposed by a coalition of religious groups and parents, who expressed themselves vocally in newspapers, radio and television and public meetings. The Ministry was obliged to postpone the introduction of the proposed curriculum.

[3] Alfonso Gumucio Dagron **Making Waves**, *Stories of Participatory Communication for Social Change*, The Rockefeller Foundation, New York, 2001, pp 34-35

[4] ibid

14. Mass media tend to reach large, undifferentiated audiences, and are useful for information that is of general relevance. In African countries, radio is the mass medium of choice. It is the most widespread, is accessible to most social classes, including the poor and illiterate, as it uses national and local languages and dialects. In many urban areas local and community radios (especially on **fm**) are creating a new dynamic, focused channel, more targeted to the realities of specific localities. In some communities, these stations have become channels of broad-based dialogue, cutting across social groups and classes, united in their determination to expose and find solutions for local problems and to hold public officials and institutions accountable.[5]
More and more these can be programmed through the internet and the wide, wide web.

15. Television has been used more in urban areas for reaching policy-makers and the urban and peri-urban elite. It also reaches people in lower socio-economic groups. Video clubs and other viewing opportunities are growing in influence in many urban areas; and their use has been experimented in rural areas for social change programs.[6]

16. Depending on what is to be communicated, mass media content may be factual (as in news and documentaries) or oriented towards didactic entertainment, to enable people learn and change, while having a good time. Examples such as 'Soul City' show how this can be done in radio and television[7].

17. Many African countries have experimented with mass media 'enter-educate' or 'edutainment' approaches for social change programs involving environment issues, voter's registration, HIV/AIDS prevention, family planning, instigating urban-rural migration, censuses etc.[8] Some of these have also used drama and popular culture and traditional arts performances to get their 'message' across[9].

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[5] Alfred E Opubor , 'Popularization of Population Information in Africa: Issues and Approaches' , **African Media Review**, vol. 4, No 1, 1990, pp 42- 51.; Alfonso Gumucio Dagron, op cit; Alfred E Opubor , 'If community media is the answer, what is the question ?' , in **Promoting Community Media in Africa** , UNESCO, Paris, 2000, pp 11-24; Akin Fatoyinbo,' The development of communication media in Africa', **Report of the COMED regional consultation, ADEA, Paris, 1998**.

[6] Video 'clubs', where people, especially youth, pay a small entrance fee to view films in someone's living room, or a room attached to a drinking place, as well as commercial video rentals, are becoming more popular in urban as well as rural areas in Africa.

[7] 'Soul City', the South African soap opera and multi-media educational tool is to be the subject of detailed discussions in another session at the ADEA Biennale.

[8] See esp pp167-180 in Hugues Kone and Jacques Habib Sy (eds), **La communication pour le développement durable en Afrique**, PUCI, Abidjan,1995 ; Heidi Noel Narimon, **Soap Operas for Social Change: Towards a Methodology for Entertainment-Education Television,** Westport, Praegar,1993.

[9] K. A. Bame, "The Ghana Concert Party", in A.Opubor (ed) **Communication in Rural Africa, Rural Africana, No. 27, Fall 1975**; Dagron op cit. pp 163-168 profiles the work of the mobile Network of Educational Theatre, funded by UNICEF, which produces theatrical performances on health and children's rights issues travelling throughout rural communities in Nigeria; see also Opubor 2000, pp 18-19, for a description of the Zimbabwe Association of Community theatre, ZACT; and also chapters 2, 3, 4 of the same for theatre in East and Southern, West, and Francophone Africa.

5. WHY A COMMUNICATION STRATEGY?

18. Many discussions of communication tend to focus on channels and messages, perhaps because these are the most visible, most controllable, and generally perceived by most people in authority as the source of their 'problems'. But channels and messages constitute only two elements of communication. As shown so far, communication involves various **sources and receivers**, using various **channels** to convey various **messages** to achieve various **effects** or results[10]. It is really the interaction among all of these elements which should interest the serious communicator, since that is what matters in the final outcome.

19. A communication strategy attempts to deliberately and consciously use what is known about the various key elements of the communication process, as a **system**, in order to achieve communication objectives. It is this **comprehensive, systemic, purpose-driven framework** that is often missing in how ministries and other national institutions communicate with their internal audiences and with those outside their structures[11].

For example, many ministries of education pay a lot of attention to the mass media. They appoint public relations or press officers whose duties consist mostly of press relations, refuting media misrepresentation, and making sure that the ministry is favourably mentioned on radio, television and in newspapers and magazines.

20. However, a lot of the communication that is required to support education sector issues and programs may involve constituencies which cannot be easily reached by mass media . There may be need to address small groups for which interpersonal communication is more appropriate than radio or press announcements. Many civil society groups such as NGOs and Parent/ Teacher Associations, PTAs, carry out a lot of their communication through interpersonal activities, and have developed expertise in these areas. According to 'lessons learnt' from the COMED training program, "We need to expand understanding of communication and its role in social development, especially in promoting collaboration among partners in education. This includes looking beyond mass media to interpersonal, group and traditional African channels of communication."[12]

21. Social mobilization campaigns often require that more than one channel of communication be used at the same time; so focusing on the mass media has its place; but it can often be misplaced. In fact research has shown that the most successful communication efforts require multi-media, multi-channel approaches. Specifically, the combination of mass media and interpersonal channels is effective for linking information-giving with the possibility of producing behaviour change. As Cohen, 2000, advises from lessons learned: "Use multiple communication channels to create synergistic effect. Effective… programs use several channels to deliver their messages. Research shows that individuals that are exposed to a message from multiple sources – mass media and community-based media and interpersonal communication – are more likely to take action than those exposed to a message from a single source."[13] [This means that, like several other stakeholder groups, ministries of education should see themselves as

[10] Communication effects can be short-term or longer term, including : learning, attitude change, behavior change, on the part of individuals, groups or institutions.

[11] The example of Mali, presented later, which provides a comprehensive strategy for a national education ministry would appear to be one of the exceptions; though with the COMED training program, it is hoped that these strategies will become more common.

[12] A. Opubor, 'Review of Activities and Lessons Learnt, 1998-2000', **COMED Evaluation Workshop,** 2000.

[13] S.Cohen,, 2000, p.108. This is also the conclusion of the Guinea profile presented in this paper.

managers of multidimensional/multi-media encounters, and therefore include interpersonal communication more explicitly in the job descriptions, and professional development of their Communication Officers].

22. Communication for supporting education policies in Africa needs to be based on a more strategic approach. It should pay greater attention to the needs, resources and expertise of the various stakeholders, and explore the use of the multiplicity of channels and modes of communication which may prove effective for them, as they seek to promote their relations with other education stakeholders.

> *To ensure the effectiveness of communication strategies for education, ministries and other education stakeholders may require the collaboration of public and private communication agencies whose expertise is the design and implementation, including the proper costing, of communication strategies.*[14]

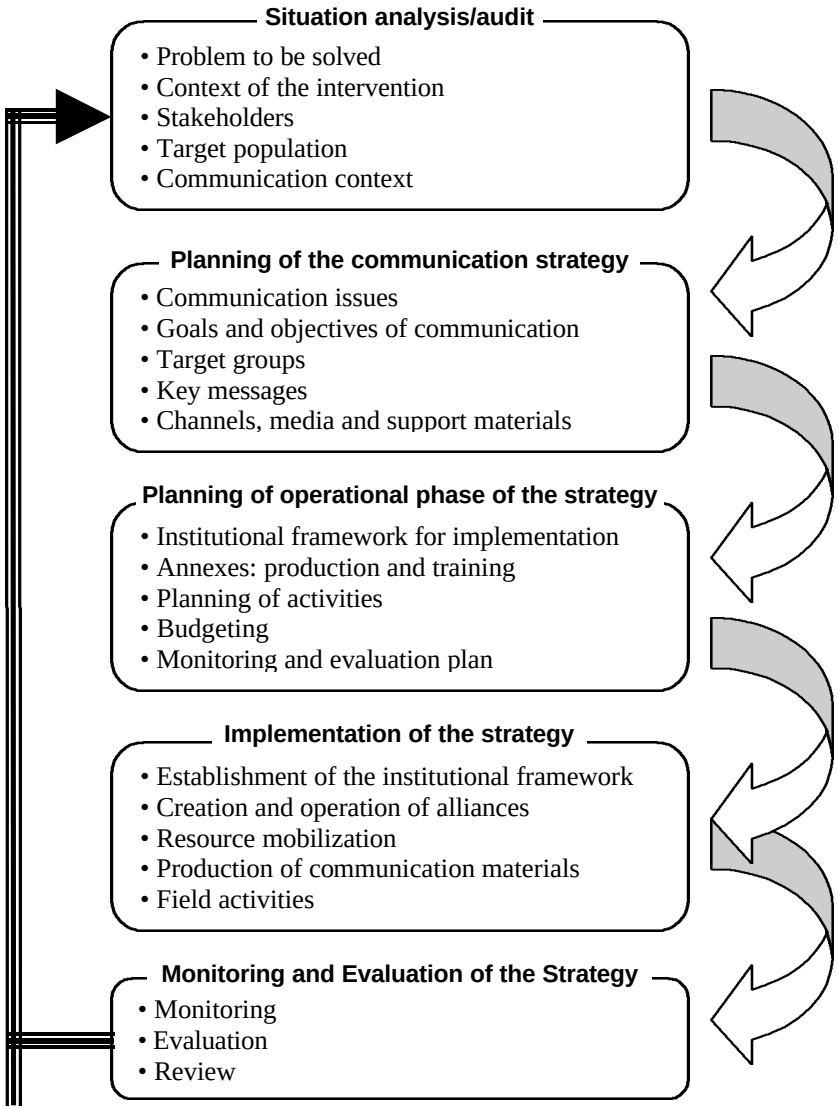
[14] The COMED training workshops in Yaounde and Harare in 2000, took Communication Officers from ministries of education on field visits to advertising/marketing/communication consulting firms, where the work of these firms was presented. There was general appreciation among participants that such private sector firms could make valuable contributions to educational promotion as they had been doing to other government programs in health or election publicity.

6. ELEMENTS OF A COMMUNICATION STRATEGY FOR EDUCATION

23. **A communication strategy** may derive from a **communication policy**, which is a statement presenting general objectives, guidelines and standards which should guide the use of communication for achieving the development goals of a state or the strategic goals of an institution.

24. The communication strategy is a framework that combines the communication interventions which are considered as necessary for achieving the specific changes in knowledge, attitude and behavior on the part of relevant individuals and groups. A communication strategy operates within a time frame, taking into account available material and human resources.

25. The communication strategy development and implementation process may be visualized thus:[15]



[15] Hugues Kone, COMED Tool kit slides, 2001 (in preparation); see also Sylvie Cohen, **Developing Information, Education and Communication Strategies for Population programmes,** UNFPA, New York, 1992

7. SOME AFRICAN EXAMPLES OF COMMUNICATION FOR EDUCATION[16]

26. There is a growing body of information on recent attempts to employ communication strategies, techniques and processes as conscious elements of interventions in support of educational policies and their implementation. A few examples are profiled below;

Benin: National parliamentary Dialogue on Education

27. Before introducing new legislation on educational reform, the Commission on Education, Culture and Employment, of the Parliament of Benin, decided on a wide-ranging consultative process to obtain the views of the people, in May 2000. Traveling all over the country, they met with communities and citizens groups and various stakeholders, even in the remotest regions, in the nation's twelve provinces. According to a field report, "The purpose of the consultation was to raise awareness of the proposed law on the future direction of education, to gather suggestions and reactions, and to elicit the concerns of various actors in education….Representatives of the main actors in the education sector (students, parents, members of the teachers' unions, university lecturers, NGOs, and others) were invited. The hearings were well attended, with an average of about one hundred people at each".

28. The hearings were basically face-to-face group meetings. The media were kept away to avoid politicizing the consultation, and to emphasize the Commission's heterogeneous membership. What did the process achieve? The report sees the results as going beyond the education sector: "For nearly ten years the country has sought to ground its political life in a spirit of consensus and dialogue… The hearings are a perfect example of what the people and their elected officials have attained. The important issues of education have facilitated the practice of a democratic dialogue among elected officials and participants. Finally, participants' propositions and suggestions have given new impetus to the understanding of education issues in Benin." As a communication exercise, the consultations were regarded as ' a revolution' in Benin, because it was the first time that Members of Parliament were canvassing public opinion outside election campaigns! The success of this experience has encouraged discussion of possible introduction of the idea to other countries in the region.[17]

Guinea: Deployment of Teachers[18]

29. In 1992–93, Guinea redeployed teaching staff and administrators across the country. This move increased enrolments in urban and rural schools, at no additional cost. In support of the exercise, the Ministry of Education included communication as part of its general strategy. The communication objectives were: firstly, to reach all groups to be directly affected by the proposed redeployment, i.e. teachers and administrators; education administrators at the central level, regional inspectors, and directors at

[16] Some of these cases will be more fully presented at the ADEA Bienniale Session on Communication for Education**.**

[17] See Justin Dovoedo, "Benin: An experiment in direct democracy for Education", **ADEA Newsletter**,Vol. 12, No. 4, October- December 2000, pp 11-12.

[18] See "Guinea: A Communication Strategy to Facilitate Teacher Redeployment", (based on a contribution by Mamadou Aliou Sow), **ADEA Newsletter**, Vol. 12, No. 4, October-December 2000, pp 15-16.

prefectural and community levels; community representatives and associations of parents and teachers; and secondly a multi-media public awareness campaign based on already existing initiatives. The communication activities included various types of broadcast programs on national, regional and rural radios, enabling key officials responsible for the exercise to provide information and explanations; publications in the government newspaper, as well as dispatches by the national news agency, which carried stories from the regions.

30. An important strategic feature was that: "Interpersonal communication was the prime means of official disclosure, directly reaching important groups of people during official gatherings and allowing opportunities for immediate reaction. Interpersonal communication permitted listening and dialogue among skeptical groups, particularly unions and political parties. It directly engaged opinion leaders in NGOs and Parent-Teacher Associations, who proved to be powerful supporters of the deployment plan."

31. Some of the problems encountered included the lack of credibility of certain spokespersons in communities where did not enjoy support; the limited reach of the national broadcast signal (50 % of national territory), and the consequent need for extensive personal appearances, which proved more costly. Since evaluation of the communication component had not been foreseen, it was not possible to quantify the impact of the measures undertaken.

32. But it seems to be generally agreed, among those who organized the process, that partnerships with the media and their mobilization, greatly enhanced the achievement of the goals of the exercise. It would have been especially valuable to have had information on the impact of the massive use of interpersonal communication.

Ethiopia: Education Mass Media Agency, EMMA

33. To compliment in-school education programs, the government of Ethiopia established the Educational Mass Media Agency (EMMA) in 1968. The objectives of EMMA have been:

- to train teachers in radio utilization;
- to introduce innovative teaching methods;
- to extend the coverage of vocational training programs, the literacy campaign, correspondence education and rural development programs to as many as possible;
- to provide qualitative education by multiplying the skills of the limited number of professionals;
- to enrich the progressive cultural and artistic life of the broad masses;
- to teach the official language (Amharic) as well as to utilize and develop the languages of different nationalities; and
- to introduce science and technology to broad masses.

34. EMMA has gone through several changes. Basically designed to support the literacy program of an earlier period which reached 20 million people, EMMA became a vehicle for adult education, with several national radio transmitters and a channel/network devoted exclusively to education programs and a dozen production studios creating education broadcasts in Amharic and regional languages, on development topics.

35. The programs of EMMA have filled the educational gap for the out-of-school population. The Education Mass Media Agency operates eleven regional radio

transmitting stations whose signals cover more than 90% of the country, providing parallel broadcasting services to the national network controlled by the Ministry of Information; the one concentrating on educational programs in support of pedagogical efforts, the other concerned mainly with news, information and entertainment broadcasts in support of government programs and the political process. Channel 2 on radio is for Adult Education, including work with extension and development agents, covering topics in health and agriculture etc; it involves also use of audio-cassettes in Community Education Centres constructed by communities.

36. Radio is the most accessible medium of public communication in Ethiopia, with a national penetration of about 63%. There are between five and seven million radio sets in the country, and a listenership of about 30 to 40 million people. Television services follow the same pattern, with a national government-oriented channel, and an educational service for instructional programming. The distribution of radio and television sets shows an overwhelming urban bias, as well as marked differences in regional ownership. While 78% of urban residents owned radio sets, only 22% of people in rural areas did; and television ownership was an entirely urban phenomenon, with over 100, 000 sets concentrated mainly in the Addis Ababa area.[19]

Nigeria: Social mobilization for Basic Education and Literacy[20]

37. Forty-eight per cent of Nigeria's population (of about 120 million) is illiterate. Therefore the nation's Universal Basic Education (UBE) program, is faced with important challenges. Already there are problems of the high rate of school drop-outs, and the large number of street children; and what to do with the education of nomadic and migrant groups. Girls marry very early in some areas of the country, and they are generally not in school. On the achievement side, about 22.7 million children are expected to be in primary schools throughout Nigeria in 2001, and they are expected to be taught by 585, 000 suitably qualified teachers. Advocacy working visits have also been a feature of the grassroots mobilization for UBE. Working visits have been undertaken to numerous states of the country. Each visit involved meetings with communities and working sessions with a variety of stakeholders, press conferences, public lectures, visits to institutions, and the commissioning of new schools.

38. Policy changes, the mobilization of resources, support from parents, communities, religious, cultural and civic leaders, local and state governments. ….all of these and more require constant communication, using different media. The most effective approaches have involved communicating in places where people gather: mosques, churches, markets, etc, involving traditional and religious authorities, chiefs and imams, appealing to cultural values and symbols, in a vast program of social mobilization. It is intended that these approaches which have proved successful in parts of the country for supporting literacy and other education programs in the past, will now be replicated and be scaled up to facilitate achievement of the targets of the UBE program.

[19] UNFPA Program Review and Strategy Development, PRSD, Report 1993.
[20] Information from presentation at COMED Trainers Workshop, Abuja, Nigeria, May, 2001, by Dr. Musa Moda, Federal Director of Social Mobilization for the Universal Basic Education program, UBE.

Mali: Communication strategy for the Ministry of Education[21]

39. After the civil unrest, and subsequent change of government in Mali, in 1991, the new leadership was determined to democratize not only national institutions but also the whole development process (and especially the development of education), to link them more closely with the wishes of the people. It was felt that the vertical approach to communication had had its day. The fundamental question had become how to encourage participation, debate and exchange of ideas, and what system needed to be put in place to coordinate efforts at all levels.

40. The national education authorities felt that a national communication policy for the school was a possible solution and regarded its formulation as crucial. Such a strategy would facilitate understanding among the authorities and the people and enable school administrations and their partners – technical, social and financial – to mutually inform one another about their activities and concerns. For a country such as Mali, which was pursuing a democratic path, a communication policy was indispensable for obtaining the participation of the people and of social partners for the identification and implementation of priority education programs.

41. During a national workshop in October, 1993, discussions focused on the importance of communication, and a decision was made to create a communication unit within the Ministry of Basic Education. In the establishment of the New Foundation School, a working group on "Information and communication " was formed to provide support to the new communication unit. The mission of this working group was to prepare the information and communication strategies for dealing with the partners of the school and of different national entities. Four technical committees support the work of the working group: 1) a Committee on Electronic and Print media, with responsibility for preparing and implementing information, sensitization and training programs in line with the interests of the Ministry of Basic Education; 2) a Committee on Printing, Drawing and Illustration with responsibility for creating graphics and illustrations for messages on basic education, 3) a Committee on Documentation and Archives for collecting, preserving and managing the documents of the Ministry; 4) a Committee on Public Relations, in charge of organizing the Ministry's internal and external communication activities.

The COMED Program

42. The Communication for Education in Africa, COMED, Program was launched in 1998, with the aim of promoting the use of communication to support national education policies and projects in Africa, by helping to develop communication capacities within Ministries of Education and improving media understanding of education issues.

43. Under the Program, a series of sub-regional and national-level training workshops has been held in which over 100 journalists and communication officers of Ministries of Education from 30 African countries participated. These training workshops were held in Cotonou, for West Africa, (13–18 September 1999); in Harare for East and Southern Africa, (16–26 February, 2000); and in Yaounde, for Central Africa and the Indian Ocean, (28 June– 7 July, 2000).

[21] Information provided by Dr. Djeneba Guindo-Traore, Ministry of Education, Mali at COMED Trainers Workshop, Abuja, Nigeria, May 2001. See also Annex 2 of this document for graphic summary of the strategy, translated into English by the author.

44. The main objectives of the workshops were to enhance the participants' professional skills and to encourage the development of working relationships between journalists and ministerial communication officers. Another objective was to encourage the creation of regional networks of education communicators. A needs assessment in September 1998, had indicated that education managers and communication officers in ministries of education were distrustful of journalists and of media reports on education, which they considered generally sensationalist. On their part, journalists considered education ministry officials difficult to access and fond of hoarding information of public interest. They felt ministry communication officers put barriers in their way, and that especially, they shielded ministers and top officials from the press. In view of this atmosphere of mutual suspicion, frustration and hostility, the COMED program decided to train journalists and communication officers together, in order to increase their mutual understanding and build trust.

45. Other activities undertaken under the COMED Program included: (i) a pilot national training workshop in Dakar, Senegal in April 2000 for Senegalese education journalists and communicators; (ii) the sponsorship of journalists to attend events related to education, including the ADEA Biennial Meeting and the EFA Sub-Saharan Africa Conference in December 1999, the World Education Forum in Dakar in April 2000, and the Zimbabwe International Book Fair in August 2000 ; (iii) a sub-regional training course in the use of educational statistics for journalists from some francophone West African countries, in Dakar, in June, 2001; (iv) technical assistance to the Parliament of Benin during the national consultations prior to introduction of legislation on educational reform; (v) assistance to the Fédération Africaine des Associations des Parents d'Élèves, FAPE, in creating a communication strategy and program for its network.

46. An evaluation was held in Cotonou, (7–9 December 2000), with key partners, to establish lessons learnt and chart future directions for the COMED program. Among its key findings[22]:

> *"Journalists are becoming more conscious of ethical considerations and professional standards in their reporting of education. While this might remove some of the criticism of sensational reporting about education, it may not necessarily eliminate the irritation of education managers, sensitive to close investigative scrutiny or sharp editorial comments.*
>
> *Countries where education reporters and correspondents are organized in a professional group or network tend also to have more structured and less conflictual relationships with communication officers and education news sources, leading to seemingly more continuous, diversified and better-informed coverage of education issues (e.g. Senegal, Kenya and Nigeria).*
>
> *The COMED regional workshops, by providing opportunities for journalists and communication officers from the same country to function as a team in preparing certain exercises and reports, and to acquire information about other country situations, seem to have helped to build better mutual appreciation, more collegial and less threatening relationships among them, which hopefully will translate into increased collaboration in communication for education back in their home environment."*

[22] A. Opubor, op cit. See also Annex 3.

47. COMED activities have been funded by ADEA, and by the World Bank through the Norwegian Trust Fund for Education in Africa.

48. In 2001, the Program is also consolidating cooperation among African journalists and communication officers in the education sector through the initiation of an electronic network, and an Internet-based discussion forum. The next phase of the capacity development program involves national workshops for diffusing the COMED training curriculum and for strengthening partnerships and networks at the national level. About six of these are to be held in 2001, with workshops for about 20 countries planned for 2002, resources permitting.

Tanzania: Ma-Ma, A Video Magazine and Television Series for Environment Education[23]

"Mazingira yangu; mazingira yetu" [ma-ma]'
is "my environment; our environment"

49. With the advent of television in Tanzania and the proliferation of video outlets around the country, together with the timely revision of the educational system, an environmental television series which addresses essential environmental concerns and challenges to a Swahili speaking audience, can be a very powerful tool for change through awareness building.

50. Two 30 minute programs will be produced and aired each month on national television and re-edited for distribution to village video outlets and as audio visual material for educational use in schools. The initial run of the series is 12 months.

The goal of this television series is to educate, inform and entertain the Tanzanian public in issues of real environmental significance, and to stimulate action on all levels. It is to drive for action through awareness. The strategy is to take the patient on-going interactive approach. First a problem is highlighted, revealing it to the viewer on a cognitive level, imbuing it with emotional punch by the correct use of the audio and video elements, returning at a later date to show the results once the problem is tackled successfully, and in due course making a significant change in the attitude of the viewer. The television series lays the cornerstone for the development of a general comprehensive environmental informational and educational campaign. The production of an environmentally concerned series has never been attempted in Tanzania, by a Tanzanian company, in Kiswahili for the Tanzanian audience

51. Over the past two years, three privately owned television stations have been inaugurated in Tanzania. They are broadcasting to most of the urban centers in the country and the viewing public is escalating rapidly. Most small villages have video viewing parlors or a video screen at the local church or town-halls of which there are hundreds all over the country. Hundreds of thousands of Tanzanians have access to video viewing whether at home, in a social hall, at the church, in school, on buses or at a video club. A network of over 250 outlets will be developed for monthly distribution of the environment education series.

52. Both during research process and through the two way Network, viewers will be encouraged to participate in the program identifying issues of local importance and by giving feedback on items already broadcast. This is an attempt to establish an active relationship between series' hosts and the public. This way the subjects researched and

[23] Information provided by M.Beatrix Mugishagwe of **Abantu Television**, Dar-es-Salaam, series producer.

included in the line up will reflect the burning issues of our audience; and changes can be made to the style of presentation if the content is not entirely clear and entertaining. This will also be useful in the continual monitoring and evaluation of the series.

South Africa: Communication Policy Support for Education[24]

53. In the context of its programs of political and administrative transformations to support post-apartheid change, the government found it necessary to re-examine its public information machinery, especially in the face of the constitutional requirement that all citizens had a right to information. Consequently, a government communication and information system that would also reach the grassroots was designed, on the recommendations of a Task Force set up by the Office of the Deputy President. Key questions related to strategies for communicating development, especially in the rural areas, improving the competence of government communications, promoting media diversity, and government-media relations. Pursuant to a Cabinet decision, Ministries were required to restructure their Ministerial/Departmental communications, including the appointment of a Head of Communications of senior rank, preferably at Chief Director level. Departments participate in the system-wide communication strategy through the Communication Secretariat in the President's Office which coordinates the strategy and chairs the meeting of all Heads of Communications Units. The Head of Communication works closely with, and advises both the Minister and the Director-General, and is in charge of all communication, with specific responsibility for strategy development, supervision of media liaison, coordination of speech-writing, planning and supervision of public opinion and related research, including media monitoring; supervision of publications, advertising and liaison with provinces; and is a member of the departmental management meeting. An element of the government communication strategy is emphasis on the importance and use of information technology.

African News-media for education[25]

54. The African media are gradually recognizing that education is a major source of interesting news that can sell newspapers. An increasing number of newspapers are paying special attention to education stories, and giving them prominence in headlines. Grouped together periodically, education news and features are now packaged into special sections, supplements or pullouts. This is accompanied with specialized advertising by providers of educational services and materials: booksellers, publishers, manufacturers and retailers of science equipment etc. Indeed media managers are beginning to understand that stories about education can be good business!

55. In Uganda, **New Vision**, a daily newspaper, provides perhaps a good case study. **New Vision** has a policy on education that allows the establishment of an education desk. The education desk produces a weekly four- page pull out published every Monday. Appropriately it has the catchy title, **Education Vision**, which highlights topical issues on education. There are columns by education specialists ; there are opinions and letters and profiles on education matters. Besides that, **New Vision** also carries supplements on education issues e.g. when children or students are going back to school, it's common to see a "back to school" supplement. Around graduation time, there is a special supplement

[24] Information from participants at COMED Regional Consultation on Communication for Education, Cotonou, Benin Republic, September 1998.

[25] Some of this information was contributed in Country Reports by participants attending the COMED training workshop for Southern and Eastern Africa, in Harare, Zimbabwe, in February 2000.

on graduation, with articles on what opportunities graduates can expect in various fields. **New Vision** also carries educational news as a normal item in its daily . For example, when the results of the major primary school examinations were released, the paper carried a lead story.

56. In Kenya, all the five dailies in the country have educational pull-outs. There are weekly supplements devoted specifically to education. The **Nation** newspaper has a pullout called "Black Board" which appears every Monday. It is usually five pages, sometimes six pages, and carries news stories as well as commentaries on education. Experts from all over the country are invited to express their views, and there are often letters from lecturers, from parents and donors. The pull-out also carries book reviews. The education desk has a staff of two, the education editor and a reporter. They are in charge of the pullout and are responsible for every educational story, and of writing editorial commentaries on every major education story, if required.

57. This situation is virtually being repeated in several other countries. In Senegal, the major newspapers, **Le Soleil**, and **Sud-Quotidien**, and in Nigeria, the **Comet**, the **Guardian**, the **Vanguard**, as well as the News Agency of Nigeria, NAN, have developed special columns, pages, sections and dispatches on education matters, with specialized desks of editors, reporters and correspondents.

58. Coverage of education by the African electronic media includes regularly scheduled broadcasts on education topics on radio and TV. In addition there have been special programs and phone-in shows where heads of education departments, program managers, and even Ministers participate and respond to questions from the public. The Nigerian Television Authority, NTA, has a special Development Communication Unit, with studios and production equipment, as well as reporters and crew, covering education news on a regular basis.

59. Increasingly also, news and features on African education are appearing on the Internet. This is not only because the major national newspapers mentioned earlier, now produce on-line versions, but also because of the activities of specialized Africa-oriented news agencies with their own web-sites. Prominent among these are the Pan African News Agency, PANA, headquartered in Dakar; the Inter Press Service, an international third-world development-oriented alternative news agency, whose African head offices are in Harare, and the All-African News Network, based in the United States. All of these organization publish hundreds of stories every week on African issues, and their education rubric is a veritable goldmine of news and opinion about the situation of education on the continent. The variability in the quality of the dispatches, and the scarcity of news from several African countries, present challenges for organizations such as COMED, charged with responsibility for ensuring the improvement of media coverage of African education.

The respective web sites are: www.pana.com, www.ips.com, and www.allafricanews.com

The profiles presented are summarized, in terms of their basic strategic thrusts, in the following table:

Interpersonal Communication	Mass Media	Multi-media	Comments
Benin Parliamentary Dialogue on Education	**Ethiopia** Mass Media Agency • radio broadcasts • also recorded cassettes for groups **Kenya** Newspapers • weekly pullout education sections, e.g. Blackboard (Daily Nation newspaper) **South Africa** • press • radio • television • e-mail • internet **Tanzania** Ma-Ma ; • Environment Awareness • television series • video magazine for rural video clubs and schools **Uganda** Newspapers • weekly pullout education section e.g. Education Vision (New Vision newspaper) **Pan African News Agency, PANA** News agency dispatches • e-mail • internet Inter Press Service, IPS **News agency dispatches** • e-mail • internet	**Guinea** Deployment of Teachers • interpersonal contacts/ meetings/discussions • radio(national, regional, rural) • newspaper • newsletters/bulletins **Mali** Ministry of Basic Education Communication Strategy • interpersonal contacts • informational/informal meetings • field visits • workshops • training sessions • radio • television • group video • brochures **Nigeria** UBE Social mobilization • working sessions • traditional/social structures • public rallies • public lectures • workshops • institutional visits • press conferences • radio • television • press	The **Guinea** and **Mali** and **Nigeria** cases are examples of comprehensive, articulated strategies; but perhaps **only Mali seems to have** enunciated a sectoral communication **policy** for education. South Africa probably also has such a policy, derived from the general national public-sector policy on communication; but it is not clear if the Ministry/Department of Education communication strategy involves regular use of non-mass- media communication. Even though the **Tanzania** and **Ethiopia** cases are classified as 'mass media', the use of videos in rural 'clubs' and schools could also be accompanied by a social process, as is habitual in ' media discussion forums'; which would make them 'multi-media'; which is to indicate that these classifications are just for illustration of general approaches. Most action on the ground tends to be multi-media seemingly by default, rather than strategic design.

Scaling up Communication for Education: Towards National EFA Campaigns

60. As the next stage of its capacity development activities, COMED is organizing national training workshops using its recently- finalized curriculum. One of the modules of the curriculum is devoted to the design and development of a national communication strategy to support education. The strategy can be directed either towards the education sector as a whole, or towards a specific education issue or theme or event, for example, girls' education or the national Education For All campaign. The modules are designed to be used by different groups of education stakeholders, working together to define the issues of relevance, and undertaking jointly, the strategy development process for the production of a draft strategy. In general such strategies are comprehensive, involving the eventual participation of different groups in strategy implementation, and the use of different media and institutional structures. The suggestions provided in the modules are as follows:

a) creating a national communication strategy for EFA

61. Participants in consultations to define national communication strategies fro education should include:

Partners in Education, for example

- **Ministries**: Education, Planning, Agriculture, Industries, Youth, Justice etc.
- **Beneficiaries of Education**: pupils, students in secondary, vocational and apprenticeship institutions; parents, teachers, educational administrators, proprietors
- **Media and communication professionals**:journalists, broadcasters, writers, film editors and producers, etc.
- **Civil Society**: NGOs, associations, trade unions, opinion leaders, religious and denominational entities, national donors
- **Local and community groups**
- **Educational technical service providers**: research, teacher training and related institutions
- **Communication Technical services providers**: communication, advertising, marketing companies which handle the design, execution and evaluation of communication strategies
- **Media support systems**: providers of commercial (or otherwise) of space for diffusion, announcements, press releases and different message types
- **Others**: organizations which have competence in communication research, training, materials production, etc.
- **Consultants** ('free-lancers') providing any of the above services.

b) the role and functions of the media

National Media Strategy for the Coverage of Education

62. The mass media and other communication channels can make significant contribution to the development of education by disseminating information intended to promote awareness and understanding of education issues by the people. This will facilitate dialogue between the authorities and the public and the building of consensus on these issues which, in turn, will lead to popular support for national education objectives and programmes.

This can be achieved through continuous, systematic and purposeful coverage of the education sector by the media. Ensuring such coverage requires the development and implementation of a national media strategy on the coverage of education.

63. The general objective of the strategy will be:

To improve the quantity and quality of information disseminated on education issues by the mass media.

Specific objectives:

1. To promote continuous and systematic coverage of education issues by the media;

2. To promote in-depth treatment of education issues by the media;

3. To strengthen collaboration between the media and the education sector.

4. To create a network on communication for education.

Activities

1. a. Media executives take a policy decision to make the education sector one of the areas of coverage;
   b. Training to promote specialization in education journalism;
   c. Creation of education desks in the editorial departments of media organizations;
   d. Institution of regular columns and pages on education in the print media and programmes on education in the electronic media;
   e. Provision of resources to ensure effective and uninterrupted coverage of education;
   f. Establishment of mechanisms to ensure easier and continuous access to information on education by journalists.

2. a. In-depth reporting of developments in the education sector;
   b. Writing of feature and other in-depth stories on education issues;
   c. Interviews with experts on education issues;
   d. Production of documentaries and other special programmes on education by the electronic media;
   e. Production of discussion programmes on education issues.
   f. Creation of a databank on education information.

3. a. Establishment of a national committee on communication for education, with membership including the ministries of education, information/communication, national planning; media organizations; religious organizations; international partners; and local NGOs;

b. Creation of close relations and channels for permanent contact between the communication officers in the ministries of education and education journalists;
c. Regular press briefings by the ministries of education on major issues;
d. Press conferences on important developments in the education sector.

4. a. Organisation of a workshop to draw up a plan for the setting up of the network, set objectives for it, determine its membership, modus operandi and resources needed, and make arrangements for its launch.
b. Launch of the network.

Expected results

1. Continuous and systematic coverage of education issues by the media;

2. In-depth treatment of education issues by the media

3. Collaboration between the media and the education sector strengthened;

4. Network on communication for education established.[26]

[26] See also Annex 1.

8. FROM STRATEGY TO POLICY AND BACK

64. While the design of a communication strategy for education could be undertaken as a 'pragmatic' exercise to support programs, it is often the case that communication is seen as a 'once-in-a-while' activity. Usually when there is a crisis, when the press reports an unfavourable story about education on the front page, when a community rises up in anger against education managers or policies, Ministers and permanent secretaries push their press officer to try to fight the fire. If they succeed in managing the situation and containing the damage, they breathe a sigh of relief and forget about communication until the next emergency.[27]

65. Some governments and private sector institutions have moved beyond this fire-fighting crisis-oriented communication mode. They have found that institutional communication is a management function that should be adequately analyzed and provided for in the structure and resource allocations of their organization. Therefore they have made communication a policy issue and set policy guidelines to regulate the structure and functions of communication in their government departments or enterprises. The government of South Africa has adopted this approach. As indicated earlier, there is in place in that country, a national communication policy, which applies to all government ministries and departments in a uniform manner. From this policy, individual institutions can derive their strategies and operational guidelines for implementing relevant communication programs and activities.

66. Two of the lessons learnt from the COMED Program so far, may be instructive here:

- Issues of access to information, freedom of expression, the general national policy on information and communication, and specific education sector guidelines on information and communication, influence communication for education. Ministries of Information/Communication are important partners in this regard, since they often determine and manage communication policy.
- Communication has costs: time, expertise, appropriate structures and technologies, including planning and organisation. Therefore, communication requires resources: material, human, financial, technical. Many Ministries of Education do not seem to be making investments commensurate with the costs of communication for education, including providing sustainable special units to ensure effective communication with stakeholders and partners.[28]

[27] The lack of a credible institutional framework for communication, poor and unspecified funding, indicating lukewarm support by high officials in many education ministries, was cited as cause for frustration and lack of sustained and successful communication effort by Communication Officers attending COMED training workshops.

[28] See A. Opubor, op. cit. 2000

67. In its work with information officers of ministries of education, the COMED Program is attempting to institutionalize a systemic and strategic approach to communication, and to encourage the creation of communication policies to support education and development in government departments and ministries[29]. More and more, communication professionals feel that such a strategic approach to communication should be seen as a support system for the national development effort globally.[30]

68. It may be that in many countries, a national communication strategy for education will facilitate the creation of a national communication policy in support of development activities. It may also be that a national communication policy, where it exists, will provide the impetus for an education sector communication strategy. Whatever the inspiration or direction, the recognition of communication as a policy and strategic issue is crucial for the development of education in Africa in the decades ahead.

[29] COMED Curriculum, Module 5: 'How to define a national communication strategy and create networks for education and development', (in preparation 2001)
[30] A. Opubor , 'Communication for national development', in **Mass Communication in Nigeria: A Book of Readings,** Fourth Dimension, 1984. ; Hugues Kone and Jacques Habib Sy, **La communication pour le developpement durable en Afrique,** PUCI, 1995.

ANNEXES

Annex 1.
Media strategy for education

Objectives	Activities	Duration	Resources	Expected results	Action by
To promote continuous and systematic coverage of education issues by the media	a. Policy decision to make education sector a priority area of coverage; b. Training in education journalism; c. Creation of education desks; d. Regular pages, columns, programmes on education; e. Provision of resources for coverage; f. Establishment of mechanisms for easier access to information	Immediately Continuous 6 months 6 months Continuous 3 months	Trainers, training material; Editor, reporters, computers, etc Editors, reporters, programme producers, computers, etc.	Continuous and systematic coverage of education issues by the media	Media executives
To promote in-depth treatment of education issues	a. In-depth reporting of developments in education sector; b. Writing of features and in-depth stories; c. Interviews with experts; d. Production of documentaries; e. Production of discussion programmes; f. Creation of a databank on education information.			In-depth treatment of education issues	Reporters, programme producers. Ministry. of education and media management

Strengthen collaboration between the media and education sector.	a. Establish national committee on communication for education; b. Regular press briefings; c. Press conferences			Collaboration between the media and education sector strengthened	Ministry of education and media management
To establish a network on communication for education	a. Organise workshop to plan the establishment of the network on communication for education. b. Launch the network.			Network on communication for education established	Ministry of Education.

Annex 2. Mali
Communication Support for the New Basic School

Level: Ministry of Basic Education	Operational objectives	Media
1.1 All publics	Sensitization on the nature and objectives of the New School	Television and Radio (drama sketches, discussion programs, talks, demonstrations) in national languages
1.2 National Institutions (National Assembly, Government, Economic, Social and Cultural Council)	Sensitization on the nature and objectives of the New School, and seeking approval and support	Presentations by the Minister and senior officials
1.3 Institutional partners(trade unions, Parents	Sensitization on the nature and objectives of the New School, with special reference to their particular interests	Trade union publications, press kits and other feature articles
1.4 Technical and financial partners	Information, building credibility, advocacy for cooperation	Technical documents, informal meetings, field visits
1.5 Staff of the Ministry of Basic Education and associated Directorates and offices	Information, acceptance and participation; nature and objectives of the New School, and request to serve as information relays	Information meetings, workshops for senior officials

Level: Regional Directorates of Education	Objectives	Media
2.1 Influentials, local political personalities, opinion leaders	Information, seeking support, acceptance of project, and serving as information relay	Contacts, public relations
2.2 Teachers	Information, training on the New School	Lectures, training materials and documents
2.3 Communities and local associations	Sensitization, information	Lectures based on concrete examples and cases; local press and radio
2.4 Parents and future parents of school children	Sensitization, information	Local radio(drama sketches, interviews, radio plays, regional recording sessions

Level: Public enlightenment centers	**Operational objectives**	**Media**
3.1 Teachers	Information, approval, training	Lectures, seminars, group work, training, internships
3.2 Parents and future parents of school children	Information, working methods, approval	Meetings, including video, illustrated brochures, local posters
3.3 Local partners or NGOs	Information, approval, cooperation	Direct contact, information meetings
3.4 Communities	Information, approval, contracts	Information meetings, videos, brochures, contacts
3.5 Influentials, religious and cultural leaders	Sensitization, information, building credibility, seeking support	Information meetings, direct contacts

Annex 3.
Lessons Learned, COMED, 1998–2000

69. 'Communication' is a useful handle both conceptually and practically for approaching what the media and ministries do about education-and-development. We need to expand understanding of communication and its role in social development, especially in promoting collaboration among partners in education. This includes looking beyond mass media to interpersonal, group and traditional African channels of communication.

70. Communication can help build mutual trust and respect, by promoting dialogue, negotiation and building consensus for education policies and programs; but the context or environment of communication is key in determining these outcomes. Issues of access to information, freedom of expression, the general national policy on information and communication, and specific education sector guidelines on information and communication, influence communication for education. Ministries of Information/Communication are important partners in this regard, since they often determine and manage policy.

71. Communication has costs: time, expertise, appropriate structures and technologies, including planning and organisation. Therefore, communication requires resources material, human, financial, technical. Many Ministries of Education do not seem to be making investment commensurate with the costs of communication for education, including sustainable special units to ensure effective communication with stakeholders and partners.

72. Communication Officers in Ministries of Education have a variety of job descriptions and responsibilities, some of which may conflict with their communication assignment. Largely untrained in communication, and fairly low in the organizational hierarchy, they often feel inadequate to their tasks as institutional image-makers and spokespersons. Specialized training and encouragement to join professional organizations (e.g. Public Relations Association), may enhance their job performance and career development.

73. Journalists are becoming more conscious of ethical considerations and professional standards in their reporting of education. While this might remove some of the criticism of sensational reporting about education, it may not necessarily eliminate the irritation of education managers, sensitive to close investigative scrutiny or sharp editorial comments. The collaboration of Journalists' Unions and other professional associations of communicators would be useful in addressing ethical and professional issues, especially at the national level.

74. Mass media, though effective channels for public communication for development, are not always well organized to deal with communication for education. There is not much room for specialization in education reporting or programming. There are however some excellent examples of media focus on education, from Kenya, Nigeria, Senegal, Uganda, South Africa, Zimbabwe: weekly education columns, pages and pullouts, created by assignment editorial staff.

75. Countries where education reporters and correspondents are organized in a professional group or network tend also to have more structured and less conflictual relationships with communication officers and education news sources, leading to seemingly more continuous, diversified and better-informed coverage of education issues, (e.g. Senegal, Kenya and Nigeria).

76. The COMED regional workshops, by providing opportunities for journalists and communication officers from the same country to function as a team in preparing certain exercises and reports, and to acquire information about other country situations, seem to have helped to build better mutual appreciation, more collegial and less threatening relationships among them, which hopefully will translate into increased collaboration in communication for education back in their home environment. Participation in the preparation of the workshop publication, Educom News, also seems to have had the same effect on the participants as a whole.

77. Models from the business sector, (advertising, public relations and communication agencies), can contribute to communication for education by emphasizing strategic and results-oriented institutional communication by Ministries of Education. They can also demonstrate to media managers the vast potential of education as a source of revenue through creating special products which appeal to the education sector and its widespread constituencies, including parents, students, publishers, equipment producers and booksellers. Professional communications organizations need to be included in communication for education efforts.

78. Many sources of education information are largely untapped because unknown. What is known is generally regarded as inaccessible or uninteresting. Research institutions, their activities and data-bases in education need to become better promoted among journalists and other communicators. Training in the use of educational statistics and other data-related experiences for reporters and correspondents would be necessary, as is the creation of user-friendly Education Management Information Systems (EMIS).

79. Exposure, through the COMED regional workshops, to information and communication technologies, especially access to the Internet, and its use as a research tool, provides much-appreciated opportunities for professional enhancement for both communication officers and journalists This should be reinforced and sustained. It will also strengthen the proposed regional network of communication officers and journalists in support of education.

80. In preparing national workshops, the participation of broadcasters, from national and community radio, should be specifically planned, in view of their acknowledged influence on the public's information level and attitudes, especially in rural and semi-urban communities.