



Fifty years of development communication: What works

Silvio Waisbord, PhD
Senior Program Officer
The CHANGE Project
Academy for Educational Development

IDB Forum on the Americas, July 1, 2003



Alphabet soup of approaches in development communication

- Communication for development
- Communication for social change
- Information, education and communication
- Behavior change communication

- Social mobilization
- Media advocacy
- Strategic communication
- Participatory communication
- Strategic participatory communication



Development communication, definitions

- Instrument in development projects.
 - Methodologies and tools to spread information and contribute to behavior change.
- The end of development.
 - Improve opportunities for community dialogue and access to information.
 - Communication as citizenship, participation in political communities.



Development communication, definitions

- o Process of identifying, segmenting and targeting specific groups and audiences with particular strategies, messages and training programs through various mass media and interpersonal channels, traditional and non-traditional (McKee 1992).



Development communication, definitions

- o A process of dialogue, information sharing, mutual understanding and agreement, and collective action (Rockefeller Foundation 2000).



Common misconceptions about communication in development

o **ROLE**

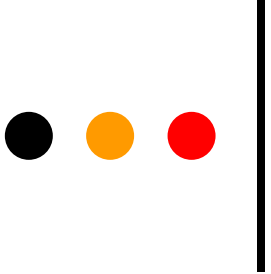
- Communication is only necessary for a short period of time.
- Communication as add-on to general planning and funding.

o **IMPACT**

- Information is enough to change behavior.
- Unrealistic expectations about time of effects.

o **STRATEGY**

- Media training is sufficient to address communication problems.
- New communication technologies solve information and behavior problems.



Changes in practice of development communication

- Shift to strategic approaches.
 - Use data to set goals and strategies.
 - Define target audiences.
 - Research barriers, benefits and perceptions.



Vaccination Coverage of Children from 12 to 23 months

Project Site (Time period of activities)	Before Level (n)	After Level (n)
Peru (1 month)	25% (1,600)	37% (251)
Ecuador (18 months)	28% (510)	52% (369)
Philippines (6 months)	54% (446)	64% (461)
Zaire (3 months)	77% (418)	82% (427)

Source: HealthCom/AED



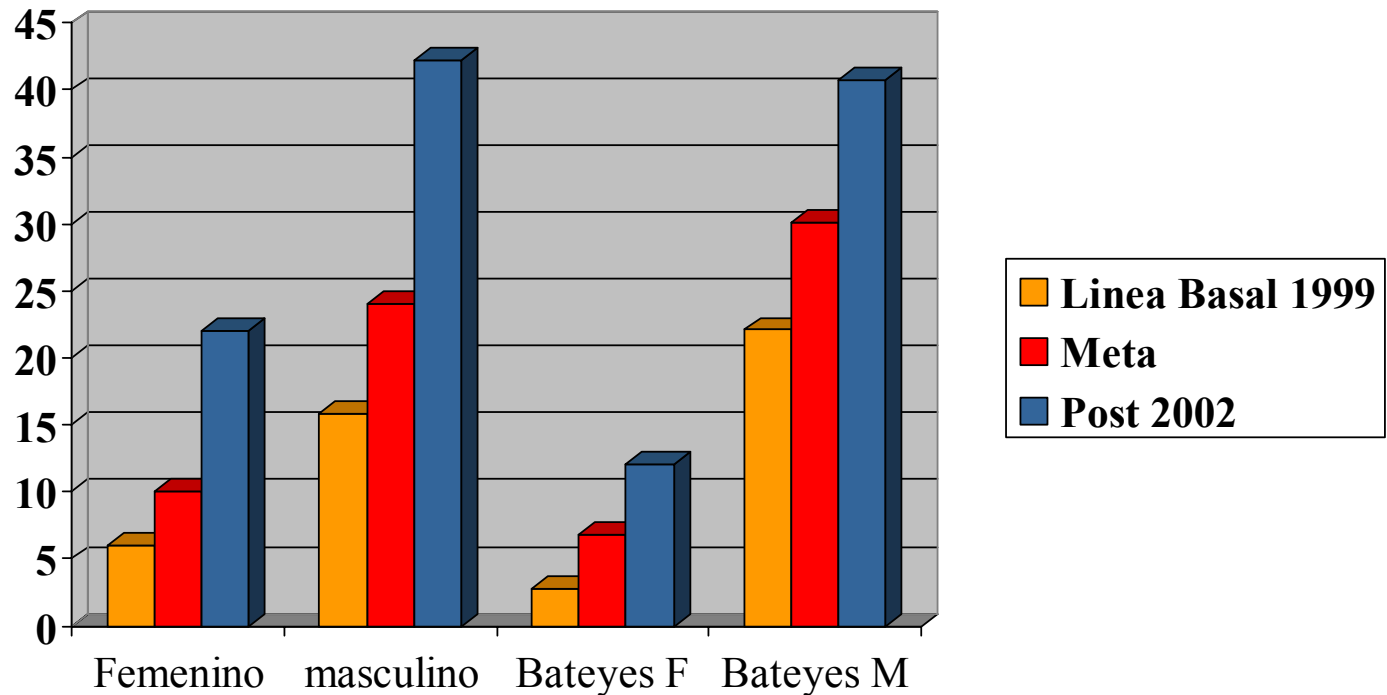
Cochabamba Reproductive Health Project

	Before	After
Access		
Women who had heard or seen a message relating to prenatal care	42%	71%
Knowledge Shifts		
Women who remembered that edema was a danger sign during pregnancy	2%	64%
Practice		
Women who recognize danger signs during pregnancy	26%	43%
Source: The Manoff Group		

Condom use in the last three months among youth

Dominican Republic 1999-2002

Source: AcciónSida/AED





What works: Five key ideas

1. Focus on individual and contextual factors in behavior change
2. Integrate top-down and bottom-up approaches
3. Have a tool-kit approach
4. Combine media and interpersonal communication
5. Community empowerment should be the goal



1. Focus on individual and contextual factors

- Comprehensive approach to address factors that affect behavior.
- Focus on individual, family, community, and policy levels.



2. Integrate top-down and bottom-up approaches

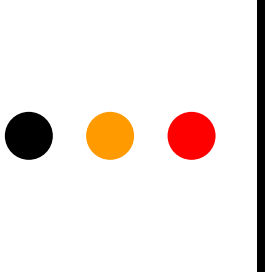
- Combination of actions by governments, donors, and civil society.
- Use of communication strategies at multiple levels.

Integrated communication strategies

Experiences in HIV/AIDS, Polio prevention

- Combination of actions by governments, donors, and civil society.
- Use of multiple communication tools.





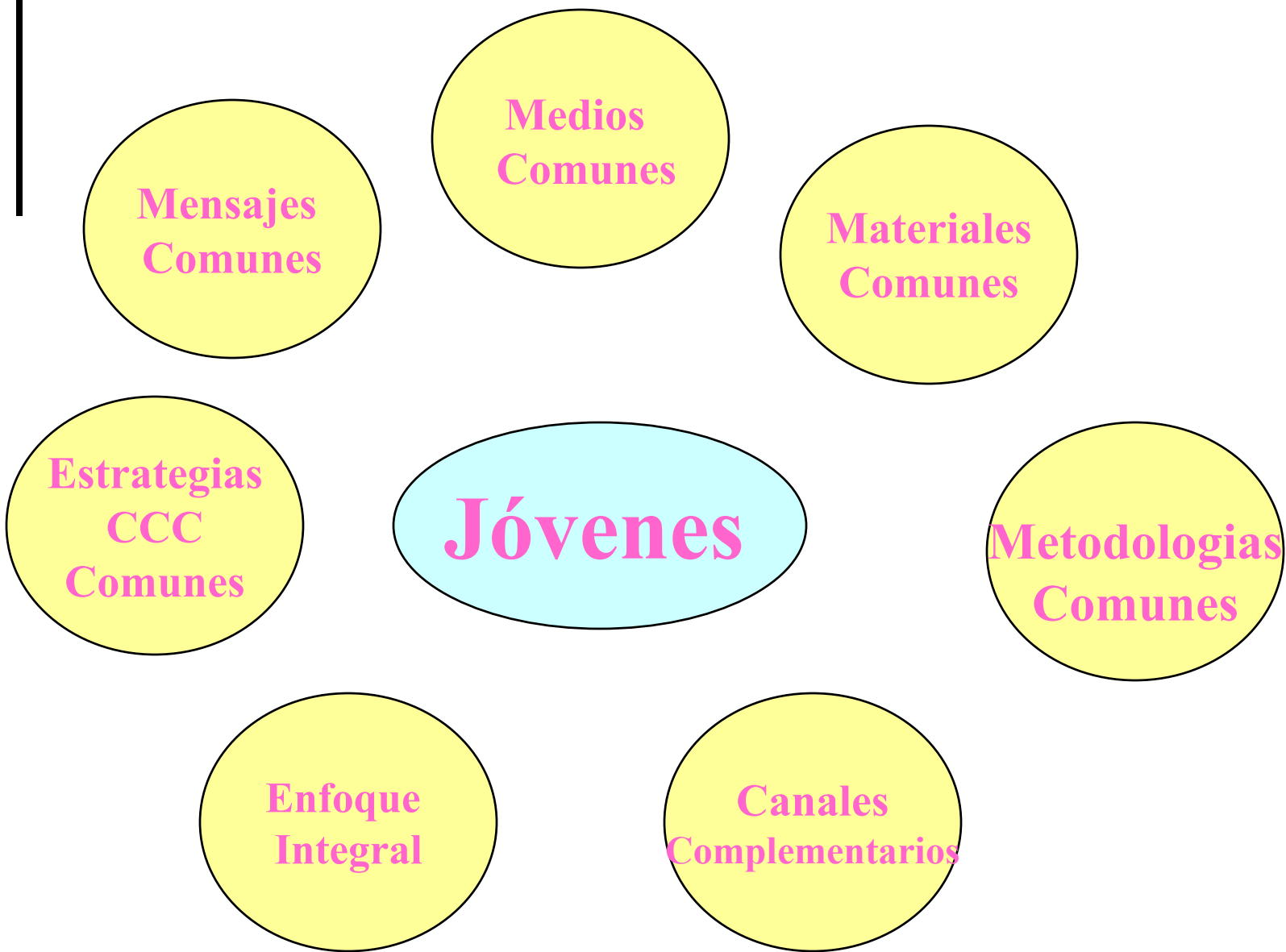
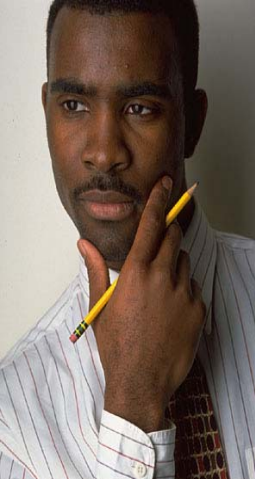
3. Have a tool-kit approach

- o Use different techniques in different contexts according to problems, priorities, and target groups.

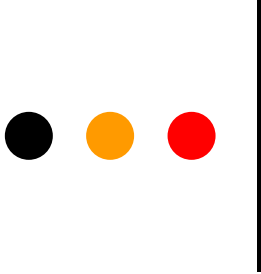


3. Tool-kit approach (*Cont.*)

- Conventional mass media to reach large populations, particularly during emergencies (e.g. outbreaks).
 - Social marketing for audience segmentation, identify perceived benefits, build program brand and create demand.
 - Social mobilization to bolster participation from a variety of organizations and support outreach efforts.
- Media advocacy to gain support from governments and donors, validate the relevance of a subject, and put issues in the public agenda.
 - Popular/folk media to generate dialogue and activate information networks.



Source: AcciónSida, Dominican Republic, 1999-2002.



4. Combine media and interpersonal communication

o Media

Important to raise awareness and knowledge.

Massive reach.

Stimulate social networks and peer conversation.

Mobilize those predisposed to engage in desired behaviors

o Interpersonal communication

Decisive for behavior change.



5. Community empowerment

- Community empowerment should be the goal of interventions.
 - “Ciudadania en salud” – community ownership of health projects in Peru.
- How is empowerment measured?
 - Need to develop and refine indicators.



Next challenges

- Measure long-term impact of communication programs.
- Measure different effects
 - “Delayed effects”
 - “Indirect effects” – “social diffusion” model
 - “Unexpected effects”
 - Changes in social norms
- Replicate results and scale up.
- How to reach the “hard to reach” and convince the “hard to convince”?