CHAPTER - 1

DEVELOPMENT, COMMUNITY AND COMMUNICATION
1. INTRODUCTION

Development communication comprises those praxis, which utilize communication as an implicit or explicit strategy for development i.e. the process for improving human living in socio-cultural, economic and environmental setting of a specific community, zone, country or the globe as a whole. Though primarily grass root people need improving their condition of living the most, such improvement should create such praxis which ensures continuation through generations without harm to components of environment. The study has explored few community driven initiatives in India to find out workable communication strategy to develop communities by using their own resources and initiatives and to make that process sustainable in the long run.

1.1 Communication, Development and the Community:

In a general sense, ‘communication’ is the activity of conveying information. It is minimally a two way process of sending information and receiving feedback or reply in return. Communication is a process and chain of events of interaction and negotiation where message is the significant link (Gerbnerian reality)\(^1\). However the place of communication in IKS and the multi-way process of communication through web media are challenging this limit of defining communication and media. Communication is an act of expression ‘for bringing human beings at same level of understanding about various phenomena , i.e., reaching sadharanikaran utilizing mood, emotion and experiences into foreplay’ (LohoChoudhury 2015)\(^2\). Communication embeds information which the mass can use to achieve progress. Information is a viable source without cessation. Utilization of this powerful element can bring down expenses of development: It enables ‘utilizing communication as soft power in the hand of the folk.’ (LohoChoudhury 2011)\(^3\).
Communication as a process denotes a circular communicative flow, in which the specific outcomes and the results are not necessarily predetermined. According to Pasquali (2006), “Authentic communication, then, is only that which is based on a symmetrical relational scheme, with parity of conditions between sender and receiver, and the possibility of one hearing or giving ear to the other, as a mutual will to understand one another.” (Mefalopulos 2008)

Progress of industrial Revolution and post-industrial globalisation have seen enormous changes in development in aspects of social organization, smart amenities, cultural homogenization, mediatization economic order and information-communication utilization. However this immense development has been accompanied by decline in humanity, break-down in relationship, rise of economic man governed by profit and loss, and capture of face to face conversation by technical device’s control and destruction of nature at its fullest. Now the conscientious minds are craving for ways to bring down such negatives so that the human beings advance maintaining sustainability of local and global ecosystem. So finding out a way for developing communities and people by ushering their own creativity towards sustainable use of resources is the present need. Communication, in its persuasive, awareness building, behaviour changing, organizational, cultural, economic, political and spiritual functionality has resourcefulness for solving many of the ills. This is because in every human activity of any nature, communication occupies substantial space, time and thinking.

‘Development is not merely growth. It assumes a human dimension when it encompasses the enhancement of material well-being in low-income countries, be it food, health, education or the duration and dignity of life; in other words, components not inherent in development. It also assumes a human dimension when, through vigorous human activity, it seeks to establish for men and women the world over the conditions essential to the maintenance and blossoming of
life. It is pluridimensional when it is a ‘project’ (François Perroux), ‘an historical progression’ (Ignacy Sachs); far from being restricted to countries which “diplomacy by terminology” (Gunnar Myrdal) defines as ‘backward’, ‘least developed’, ‘underdeveloped’ or ‘developing’, it affects all peoples and all nations.’ (Bertoli 1999)

The basic purpose of development is to enlarge people’s choices. The objective of development is to create an enabling environment for people to enjoy long, healthy and creative lives. Development is also the effort to reach mature state (LohoChoudhury 2011). Myrdal recommended that economists in countries “lagging behind in development” should construct a completely new “science” specially designed for the solving of their problems and should mistrust all imported “sciences” which, to a considerable degree, are “only rationalizations of the dominant interests of the industrialized countries promoting them” (LohoChoudhury 2011).

Development has been perceived as a higher stage to achieve, but it is not so only. It is a continuous limitless process; otherwise to say, its limit depends on the necessity of the people. The point of necessity is varied according to the variation of human need. As a cluster, the people have to identify their necessities and according to that they have to set their developmental goals. It is utmost to take care of surrounding factors and elements while reaching those developmental goals. Development is not harnessing some outside aid by conforming to aid agency conditions, strategy and rules. Such an intervention in communities give rise to dependency and loss of confidence in own capacity. They may turn skilled but not self-motivated. Rather, development efforts for setting standard on the basis of available potential resources with minimum outside prop is an option.
'Community’ is a group of people who interact with each other and live in a proximity of space, time and relationship, sharing common values and has social cohesion. The word ‘community’ has been derived from the old French ‘communite’ which is derived from the Latin ‘communitas’. Community may be trans-generational or a living system of shorter duration. Community has been looked as a cluster of inhabitants living in a geographically same area and demography and possesing equal ethnic qualities, but unique in their own potentialities and inner attributes. Cohesion of all those different elements together to form a common platform for developing every segment is the concern.

Communities have unique identities which differentiate them from other groups. The inhabitants of any community are the prime resources available within that whole, who can bring about positive changes and development within that. Then the classification of available qualities within the community, according to the use of the same is the first function of the initiators of development activities. Then working on the employment of those attributes to maximise the growth is the second function. Regular intervention is effective to catch hold of the course of development. If anything going wrong is easily identified then.

Community can be urban, rural; social, professional. Community is all about the people who are the residents of that common entity. And they should be drivers are the pilots of their own developmental activities. Enough of funding without knowing the real need of community has taken place so far resulting into wastage of resource and unsustainability of development outcome. Now its better to communicate with them directly and letting them come forward to advance the process. Community sentiment is one major feature. It refers to a strong sense of togetherness imbibed in common living, and those shared happiness and sorrow. Thus development is only a mere achievement unless
and until a community is having a sense of participation and substantial integration of outcome.

1.1.1. Communication for Development with Sustainability

Community Development (CD) seeks to empower individuals and groups of people by providing them with the skills and instruments to effect change in their own communities. Community Development Foundation, Community Development Exchange and the Federation of Community Development Learning define community development as “A set of values and practices which plays a special role in overcoming poverty and disadvantage, knitting society together at the grassroots and deepening democracy.”

Another recent approach of CD is the CDD i.e. Community Driven Development which has been necessitated due to many failures following earlier approaches. The World Bank defines CDD as “an approach that gives control over planning decisions and investment resources to community groups and local governments.” It is an approach that provides communities and local governments control over decisions and resources that affect their development. It engages and empowers people through a participatory process of local development. The underlying assumption is that people are the best judges of how their lives and livelihoods can be improved. If they are given adequate support, resources, and access to information, they can organize themselves to provide for their immediate needs and long–term goals of sustaining with progress.

The idea of social capital is important for this research because the study deals with programs and experiments for development of a community from its own self and predominantly by the resources of its own. Social capital refers to the value of social relations and the role of cooperation and confidence to get
collective or economic results. It is represented through myriad societal expressions in the process and events of communication. It is manifest in social bonding and expressed in participatory activities for development.

The concept of Human capital has relatively more importance in labour-surplus countries. These countries are naturally endowed with more of labour due to high birth rate under the given climatic conditions. The surplus labour in these countries is the human resource available in more abundance than the tangible capital resource. This human resource can be transformed into Human capital with effective inputs of education, health and moral values. The transformation of raw human resource into highly productive human resource with these inputs is the process of human capital formation. The problem of scarcity of tangible capital in the labour surplus countries can be resolved to a great extent by accelerating the rate of human capital formation.

Human capital, when viewed from a time perspective consumes time in one of key activities:

1. Knowledge (activities involving one employee),
2. Collaboration (activities involving more than 1 employee),
3. Processes (activities specifically focused on the knowledge and collaborative activities generated by organizational structure – such as silo impacts, internal politics, etc.) and
4. Absence (annual leave, sick leave, holidays, etc.).

Brundtland Commission defined Sustainable Development (SD) as the development that “meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” But Sustainable Development has many criticisms on the issues such as its consequences, vagueness of the term, basis, de-growth and measurability.
An experiment of developing communities from within during 1998-2000 in India, and two rounds of sustainability study reports on the experiment (2003-04 and 2011) have given rise to a different concept of development. “Ecologically Sustainable Trans-generational Progress (ESTGP) is the concept of progress as the nature-human –culture interface with continuity and becoming of human being taking the centre stage. It excludes the notion of earlier development concepts that development is the result of industrial age thinking and governance. It advises non-destruction of the root of good tradition and its utilization as the starting point of next phase of development. It offers the scope of creative planning for developing societies from within with stabilization of good result through generations. This concept has the proposal of utilizing the sixth element i.e. Information along with the other five land, water, energy, air and sky in a bid to ensure ecological sustainability. ESTGP considers this aspect as an integral component to ensure bringing down expenses on development and utilizing communication as soft power in the hand of the people.

**Developing Communities from Within**

The concept ‘Developing Communities from Within’ (DCFW) is the outcome of Assam University Rural Communication Project (Action Phase 1998 to 2000). This approach is based on the principle of utilization of own resources for development of one’s own and the community he/she lives. Instead of depending on the funds, resources, trainings, expertise, skills and labour from outside in form of assistance, sponsorship or aid, utilization of own information strength is the need of the hour. And this reality has been grounded through the concept of DCFW.

Repeated failures of projects like community development, Community Driven Development, fund driven projects, etc to a greater extent, created a vacuum in the area of developmental ideologies. And from here only the concept of DCFW
has taken its origin. It was successfully harnessed in two communities of same ethnicity during the action phase and left for testing sustainability of development gains through next decade.

1.2. Purpose of Literature Review
The literature review helps the researcher in justifying the research by providing a context to it. It identifies the gaps and flaws of the study. It also illustrate how the subject has been studied previously.

1.2.1. Review of literature on Community Driven Development and Communication
This literature review adopted the meta analytical approach to explore various items such as participation, resource mobilisation and utilization of communication and its various types. The review is sort of a meta review of CDD project. Five project performance reports covering various parts of the world were taken.

This critical review by Ghazala Mansuri and Vijayendra Rao examines the impact of community participation projects on the basis of few parameters-

- Whether it improves targeting, public service delivery and project sustainability?
- Whether it can reduce the risk of capture by elites?
- What is the role of external agents and the state?

They credited CDD projects in India with high score. The experiences of the Self-Employed Women’s Association (SEWA) and Amul movement were
mentioned as two of the best ever result of CDD. The gaps they found in the concept of CDD projects are also discussed. If any CDD project would like to reproduce the success of an immensely powerful work of highly motivated group by hiring salaried professionals who are driven by wages and promotions then result will change. The mechanical applications of corporate guidelines without attention to local context and adequate monitoring can result in poor CDD implication. To reduce social and cultural inequalities among the poor it is suggested to build the ‘capacity to aspire’ something collectively which they can’t do alone. The vast majority of community-based interventions, including those funded by the World Bank, have not had reliable evaluations, based on representative samples with treatment and controlled groups and baseline and follow up data, they observed in their critical review.

B. From clients to citizens: Asset-based Community Development as a strategy for community-driven development (2003)  

Alison Mathie and Gord Cunningham showed that asset based community development (ABCD) scores advantageous point over the need based community development initiatives (NBCD). They concluded that the need-based approach as the only way of development for the poor communities leads to ‘devastating consequences’. In this approach one of the main effects is of fostering leadership that denigrates the community. Leaders always were after the way to attract institutional resources by playing up the severity of problems. Local leadership was evaluated on how much resources are attracted to the community, not on how self-reliant the community has become. Another problem is that the people in the communities start believing what their leaders pronounce. They begin to see themselves as deficient and incapable of taking charge of their lives and of the community. Not surprisingly, community
members no longer act like citizens; instead they begin to act like ‘clients’ or consumers of services with no initiative to be producers. In fact, the key to ABCD is the power of local associations to drive the community development process and to pull additional support and entitlements. These associations are the vehicles through which all the community’s assets can be identified and then connected to one another in ways that multiply their power and effectiveness. It is important to identify that ABCD approach is different from World Bank’s CDD approach on the ground of community mobilization, linking community development to the macro environment and promoting a policy environment.

C. Community Driven Development, Collective Action and Elite Capture in Indonesia (2007)

Aniruddha Dasgupta and Victoria A. Beard presented case studies representing varying degrees of elite control, elite capture and democratic self-governance in CDD. The case studies drew attention to a complex picture. In the first community, Kelor, the project was controlled by the elite, yet resources were targeted to deserving beneficiaries. Whereas in Tirta Kencana, the second community, there is broader community participation, but leadership is controlled by elites. In Sekar Kamulyan, it is trying to break out of a pattern of elite capture. In Kisma Wasana, power was the most evenly distributed; yet, the community decided to limit resource distribution to its poorest member.

Vijeyandra Rao and Ana Maria Ibanez studied impact of Social Fund provision to a community on the capacity for collective action. In sample communities the trust has increased, and people from JSIF communities were more likely to be able to work with strangers in making community-based decisions. But the democratic picture of the JSIF process is not clear as it is again dominated by community leaders. The data suggest that JSIF may have strengthened the hand of community leaders. Respondents are happy with the project and JSIF. JSIF has built good feelings with the community. It seem to have improved the capacity for collective action, but whether these improvements would sustain for long period or not can’t be predicted. It has been found that more affluent, better networked entities seem to dictate the pertaking process and receive their preferred projects.


Julien Labonne and Robert S. Chase reported that after one cycle of CDD subproject implementation, the percentage of households participating in village assemblies increased by about 20% in the area. They recorded that the rate of the village elected leader meeting residents also increased. The increase in participation in village assemblies is larger in villages which were successful in receiving funding from the project. Trust towards local officials increased by 10.7% in those villages. It is also evident that in such villages, households request fewer services from the local government. The village council appears to meet more often in villages which were successful in receiving fund from the project. For each KALAHI-CIDSS financed investment in a village one less project is implemented. Surprisingly at the village level going through one cycle of subproject implementation reduces participation in group and in collective
action activities. It is thus possible that in project areas village assemblies provide better opportunities to do so and thus households have less need to join groups. Similarly if households join groups for their specific objectives, as a result of which the participation increases. Then village assemblies are more responsive to community needs and villagers would need to rely less on services provided by groups. Unfortunately it is not possible to test those hypothesis with the data in hand. At the village level, going through one cycle of subproject implementation has a positive effect on participation in village assemblies but negatively impacts the likelihood of joining collective action activities, such as construction and community infrastructure. In project areas individuals have structured opportunities to interact with outsiders that might change their perceptions of others and thus lead them to be more trusting. (Das 2014)

1.3. Rationale

From the literature survey, the researcher has found the following gaps in the Community Driven Development projects:

1. CDD is controlled by Elite including its persuasive communication.
2. CDD is funded by outside investment and its awareness generation is highly biased in favour of technological group (Video) and mass media.
3. There is no proper participation of the community members at all levels of activities despite application of much hyped PRA, PAR etc.
4. People don’t have any mental attachment with those developmental projects and schemes of the government or NGOs. So, infrastructure created are not taken care by them; even routine repair needs pumping fund from outside. They fail to understand its value. Communication strategies adopted in such development programmes do not fulfill the
need of emotional bonding and creation of earnestness in common man.

5. Communities are, due to non-embeddening of development initiatives in their IKS driven livelihood strategies, getting detached from their own age–old practices of livelihood. This phenomenon is causing rootlessness and has dehumanizing effect.

6. Project management follows such norms that the cost is always blown up to crisis proportions, thereby increasing helplessness and disbelief in own capacities of the community.

7. Preaching and thrusting of universal living ambitions through forceful implementation of such programmes is changing work and leisure pattern in which indigenous culture is based. Thus the cultural diversity and richness is getting lost.

8. Own communication resources and grids of communities are hardly utilized in their true spirit.

9. Imitation of the elite has become the soul motto of the common man.

These gaps need to be minimized for ushering into development which may make tran-generational transformation possible in a progressive manner. Underutilization of people’s own communication resources and failure to transform technological media’s development perspective are two areas of concern. These necessitates a look into communication options so that communities become drivers of their own development and progress, and are able to integrate themselves in broader stream of humanity but not subjugated.