Building the case for Communication

There is no question we need to make a case for communication:

- Recognition and visibility of communication in development is inadequate
- Communication budgets are inadequate
- Human resources are inadequate
Building the case for Communication

There is no question we need to make a case for communication (cont.):

- The need is clear (to us!)
- MDGs—given the current trends—will NOT be met by 2015
- Some goals are even going backwards! (Goal4)
Building the case for Communication

New environment is demanding new strategies more than ever

- More complex political, epidemiological, social and economic factors
- More access to information —sometimes challenging the information development organizations and governments are pushing
- Populations are questioning commodities and intentions of international organizations
- Negative media spreads more quickly and more widely
Building the case for Communication

“Trust” should not be assumed—it must be earned:

- Need to identify communities of trust (e.g., religious, ethnic, gender, sexuality, etc.)
- Acknowledge and work with existing “community” networks (beyond local geographic communities)

Knowledge does not necessarily lead to:

- Acceptance (for a start), or
- Compliance
Building the case for Communication

There are new demands for risk communication
There are new demands for crisis communication
We need flexibility to be opportunistic and responsive to be effective

A challenge to measure,
but there is evidence
Building the case for Communication

We need to build our case for the important role of communication in a language that others (technical, policy-makers, etc.) UNDERSTAND (we are communication specialists, after all..) and VALUE

Example:
There is a trend away from looking at global/national averages to planning based on district-level data which reveals the left out, the disenfranchised
This is an opportunity to build a case that we have an approach to respond
Building the case for Communication

Issues:

- What we want to measure (now) is not necessarily what has been measured to date.
- Need to measure “impact” of communication (ie. Increased immunization coverage)
- Need to also document quality and innovation
- Need to do a much better job of pulling together what we know (this is an endorsement of DFID’s impact initiative!)