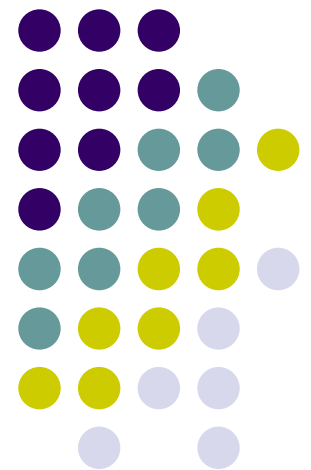


BUILDING THE CASE for Communication

Heidi Larson
10 November 2004
Bellagio



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

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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)

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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

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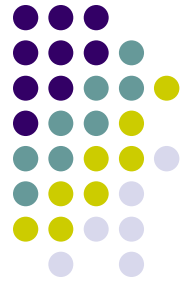
“Trust” should not be assumed—it must be earned:

- Need to identify communities of trust (eg. 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

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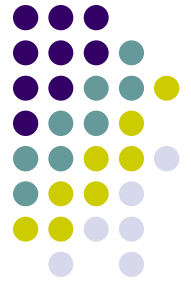
There are new demands for risk communication

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

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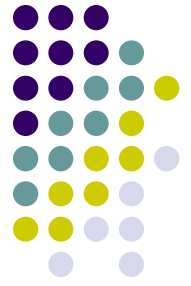
We need to build our case for the important role of communication in a language that others (technical, policy-makers, etc.) UNDERSTAND (we are communication specialists, after all..) and VALUE

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

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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!)