The World Congress on Communication for Development
Rome, Italy
October 17-19, 2006

The first World Congress on Communication for Development will focus on demonstrating that communication for development is an essential ingredient for meeting today's most pressing development challenges and, as such, should be more fully integrated in development policy and practice.

This 3-day Congress will bring together communication professionals engaged in development initiatives, policymakers, development practitioners, donor and civil society organization representatives, community representatives, and academics from around the world to share experiences and best practices in this growing field for a common understanding of what works, what doesn't, and how best to measure impact.

The Congress is designed to showcase the wealth of innovative and creative work underway from around the world. Presentations and sessions will use innovative and creative ways of present information and share knowledge using different approaches and techniques that encourage dialogue and exchange, consistent with the spirit of the discipline.

The main audience we want to reach during this Congress is the broader development community and policymakers in order to help realize the overall goal of the Congress. Therefore, the Congress will be structured around four of the most pressing development challenges that confront us today. The precise topics to be covered will be determined by a survey of key policymakers in July.

These four main development challenges will be divided into eight subtopics that delve into various aspects or dimensions of these challenges. These sessions will be developed and organized by different agencies, institutions, NGOs, etc. from around the world, based on a call for invited sessions.

Presentations and discussions will seek to demonstrate the **value-added** of Communication for Development; provide **data and evidence of the impact** of communication in development projects and programs; and consider the **theoretical foundations** and **methodological approaches** of Communication for Development.

Each day of the Congress will open with a keynote address by recognized speakers who have made significant contributions to the field of development and development policy and thinking who will address the broad issue of development and the role of communications.

The Congress will also include a **series of special events** on particular areas of communication for development practice such as edutainment, documentary films and videos, music, radio programs, etc., and on key topics that are both within and beyond the scope of the four main development challenges addressed during the Congress.

Congress participants will collectively build a **series of key recommendations** on ways to incorporate communication into policy and development. These recommendations will be refined during the three days of the Congress and discussed in a forum with policymakers on the final day. Recommendations from previous meetings and roundtables on Communication for Development will be discussed in advance through e-discussions and other forums to bring in a diversity of perspectives and prepare for deliberation and further refinement at the Congress.

Through the vehicle of a policymaker's forum, policymakers will reflect on the recommendations of Congress participants and reflect on potential opportunities, options and obstacles for mainstreaming Communication for Development in development policy and practice. This will help define a plan of action for mainstreaming communication for development in the short- to medium-term.