



Communication for Development and Social Change Through Creativity

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Abstract

As we celebrate the 80th year of the successful Marshall plan, it is unfortunate that practitioners and scholars have struggled, since: to achieve the same level of success in development and social change efforts. This indicates a need to seriously assess the field and even introduce new and unique approaches to boost the efficacy of such efforts. But there is a general neglect of creativity in the field of communication for development and social change. Creativity is a powerful force with tremendous potential to enhance efficacy of development and social change efforts. A gardening analogy is apt to elaborate on the value and role of creativity in communication for development and social change. Imagine

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you have a piece of fertile soil where you are trying to grow a garden. You have good seeds, you sow them at the right depth, you water them, and you ensure that they receive appropriate balance between shade and sunlight. Despite everything, only half the seeds germinate leaving the idea of a flourishing garden biting the dust. This is the state of communication for development and social change. However, the one thing missing here was tilling. Tilling allows movement (upward and downward) and breathing, enabling and empowering a seed to transform into an independent plant. The element of tilling in gardening is what creativity is to communication for development and social change. Before the initiation of communication for development effort, planners and executioners should ensure the tilling of the soil, which translates to increasing creativity index of the target community or individuals because a creative individual or a creative community is relatively more open to the existence and acceptance of alternate or new ideas and behaviors. Creativity can substantially aid development and social change efforts because of its organic fit with the values of dialogue, participation, empowerment, social justice, and equality.

Creativity is a beautiful enigma.

A quick look at the history of communication for development and social change reveals that communication for development and social change efforts have been a mixed bag of successes and failures. After the success of Marshall Plan as the development efforts moved towards Africa, Asia, and Latin America practitioners and scholars have struggled with discovering solutions for the intractable problems faced by the underdeveloped communities. Fortunately, under the enlightened guidance of stellar communication for development and social change scholars (Melkote, Rogers, Mefalopulos, Servaes, Jacobson, and Sen to name a few), the field has cruised past beyond the top-down, outsider, methodological, nonparticipatory, and etic or emic cultural biases.

Despite the advances in the body of knowledge, meager success of millennium development goals and lack of substantial progress in sustainable development goals is not a matter of pride. Even today, allotment of resources by transnational agencies are done to fulfill fundamental life necessities. This indicates a need to assess and introduce universal elements in the communication for development and social change efforts with potential to increase efficacy and thereby success of development efforts.

Creativity is a universal element, which is an integral value that is appreciated and accepted in every cohort, culture, and community. Capitalizing on this universal element of creativity, and adding it to the equation of communication for development and social change to argue in favor of the limitless possibilities in “Communication for development and social change through creativity” is the goal of this chapter.

The conceptualization of the strategic role and value of creativity and creativity enhancement in communication for development and social change is best explained using a gardening analogy. Imagine that you have a piece of fertile soil where you are

trying to grow a garden. You have good seeds, you sow them at the right depth, you water them, and you ensure that they receive appropriate balance between shade and sunlight. Despite doing everything as specified with the right intention, only half the seeds germinate leaving your idea of a flourishing garden biting the dust. This is the state of communication for development and social change. Despite good intention, expending millions of dollars on acquiring the best intellect, and implementing plans according to the specifications, the hope of development and social change ends up biting the dust.

Gardening is a heuristic activity. It is a great teacher, if you are willing to learn and change. So based on what you read in the previous paragraph, here is a question for you: Was there something missing in the gardening analogy? Was there something that could have made a difference in the final outcome, if it were included in the overall gardening activity? Let us see if you can get the right answer before it is revealed. . .

Tilling

If you got it right before reading it, then pat your back!

The one thing missing in the gardening analogy was tilling. Tilling of the soil enables the seed to generate movement (upward and downward). It allows for more space to navigate and grow. It also facilitates breathing. Keeping other variables such as sunlight, shade, water, and depth same, tilling the soil enables a seed to transform into a blooming plant. The element of tilling in gardening is what creativity is to communication for development and social change.

Theoretically, before the initiation of communication campaign, planners must ensure tilling of the soil. In other words, efforts in enhancing creativity levels of the target community or individuals should be taken before the initiation of a communication campaign. A creative individual is more likely to be open to the existence and acceptance of alternate or new ideas and behaviors. This will increase the probability of success of the communication campaign for development and social change.

A shift in the framework and models of communication for development and social change are proposed here. The contribution of this chapter is at a theoretical and conceptual level. It proposes communication for development and social change through creativity. This chapter suggests a new theoretical approach to communication for development and social change. It proposes a new flow of activities, which will theoretically increase the effectiveness of communication campaigns. Creativity enhancement of the communities can substantially aid development and social change efforts because of its organic fit with the values of dialogue, participation, empowerment, social justice, and equality. The development and subsequent publication of this approach also invites scholars and practitioners to examine it in the lab and the field, and evaluate it for its value.

Creativity

Creativity is a beautiful enigma. Scholars and practitioners have been working tirelessly for decades to unravel creativity and develop a definition of creativity. Runco (2014) provides an in-depth understanding of what creativity is and what it is not. He explains how different elements such as intelligence, imagination, originality, invention, discovery, innovation, logic, serendipity, and flexibility come together in various proportions to constitute creativity but not all the time. Scholars have made great advances in clarifying what creativity is not. But the one definition that everyone can unanimously agree upon as the definition of creativity is still a goal that is further away. Most definitions are incomplete and do not encompass the true vastness of creativity. They are myopic and suffer from one or the other bias such as the product bias or the art bias. Along with the ongoing disagreement about the definition and scope of creativity, interestingly there is a striking undercurrent of agreement among scholars and practitioners regarding the merit, value and utility of creativity.

Among the definitions of creativity out there, the one definition that encompasses the essence of creativity is the one provided in the FAQ section of the MacArthur Foundation website.

Creativity comprises the drive and ability to make something new or to connect the seemingly unconnected in significant ways so as to enrich our understanding of ourselves, our communities, the world, and the universe that we inhabit. Creativity can take many forms: asking questions that open onto fields of enquiry as yet unexplored; developing innovative solutions to perplexing problems; inventing novel methods, tools, or art forms; fusing ideas from different disciplines into wholly new constructions; producing works that broaden horizons of the imagination. (MacArthur Foundation Webpage)

The real strength of creativity is in being a force that produces works that broaden the horizons of imagination. To begin with, it is difficult to believe that imagination has a horizon. Imagination in itself is a seamless and limitless notion. Now come to think of it that creativity is a force that has the ability to broaden the horizons of something that is already seamless. This force has got to be tremendously powerful.

Thus, being inspired by creativity, and to exemplify how creativity produces thoughts and works that have the ability to broaden the horizons of imagination, creativity will be introduced to communication for development and social change to make it more effective. The work in this chapter is not a claim equivalent to inventing an engine. It is more as the one that introduces a new catalyst (diesel instead of coal) to optimize the performance of the engine and making it ore effective so that carriages of development and social change may move faster and smoother.

Neglect of Creativity

Creativity has aided humanity in progressing from hunter-gatherers to modern civilizations. At every major crossroads of the 10,000 years old history of mankind, creativity, through its manifestations and avatars, has unfailingly stood by mankind and aided it in successfully navigating the crises of the times to emerge alive and well. Despite repeatedly withstanding the tests in the fires of time and crises, creativity is categorically and systematically neglected.

This neglect stems from its abundant and unceasing supply. Due to its abundant supply, its demand has gone down considerably. What has increased in return is this odd and unnatural significance of specificity. This demand has been fueled by the geometric progression of reliance on machines. Machines rely on specificity. Machines cannot handle ambiguity and therefore we traded estimation for precision. Machines require specific commands to perform optimally. One thing that makes us human, in my humble opinion, is the ability to create and apply context to ambiguous situations. Machines are not yet entirely capable of doing this. They are baffled by it and the ambiguity is then further referred to as a bug that needs to be exterminated or fixed. In favoring specificity and machines, we may have sacrificed creativity to the extent that individuals risk being referred to as deviants at the slightest expression or demonstration of creative tendencies. Travel and time-keeping were some of the early contenders of specificity and precision. As the technology moved from analog to digital, we too moved from fluidity to rigidity.

The neglect towards creativity, unfortunately, starts in schools. There is enough evidence about this and the most watched TED Talk by Sir Ken Robinson and his books discuss in detail the role of schools in killing creativity. As students move from one school year to another, their natural creative instincts are repressed. Every kid who has gone through the standardized funnel of education has had his/her creativity diminished. The reason behind this is simple. It is easier to teach a standard curriculum to many than to teach multiple curriculums to different students.

Another example of neglect of creativity is a quick search of all the courses offered in The Pennsylvania State University. The Pennsylvania State University is listed among the top 100 universities in the world. It is one of the few great public universities. The university charter promotes creativity and the faculties are evaluated based on their creative accomplishments. However, upon doing a quick search of the course catalog, only four courses were found that listed creativity in its course title or description. There are many other universities that share similar neglect. There are a few concentrated pockets such as San Francisco area where there is lesser neglect towards creativity. But such communities are rare. The creative class is concentrated in the developed nations and communities leaving the developing and underdeveloped communities and nations practically devoid of the creative class (refer to Fig. 1).

Creativity, in general, despite its utility is neglected. The negligence of creativity in communication for development and social change efforts sadly too comes as no surprise. This negligence is demonstrated in the limited number of approaches that practitioners and scholars have discovered and relied on in over half a century.

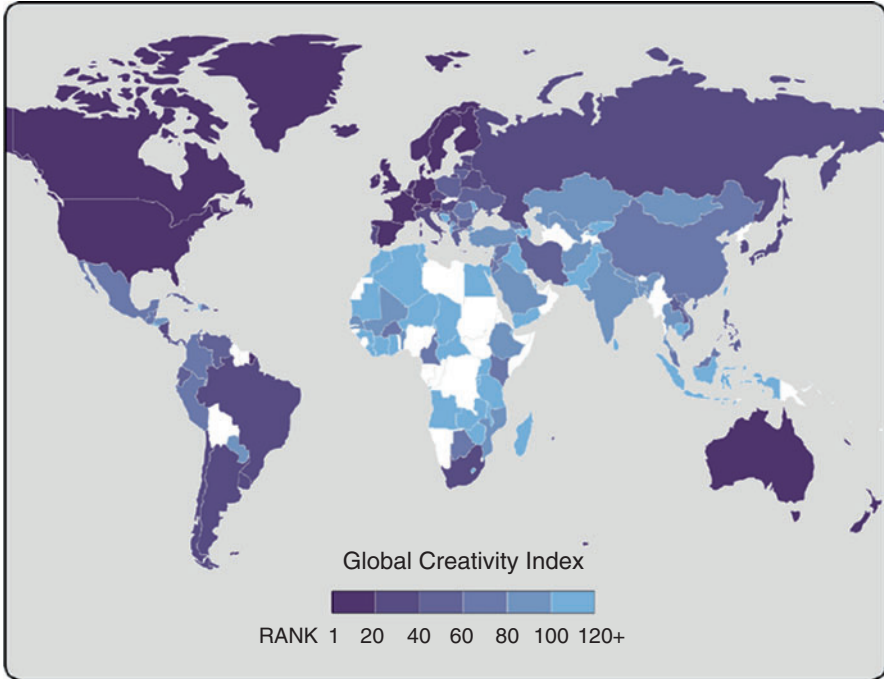


Fig. 1 Global creativity index. (Source: Florida et al. (2015). The global creativity index 2015. Martin Prosperity Institute, University of Toronto)

Apart from a genuine need, it is mainly training, traditions, and tribalism that have afforded the field of communication for development and social change its relevance and applicability. However, these very trainings, traditions, and tribalism have also acted as concealed impediments to the true manifestation of the efficacy and results of communication for developments and social change efforts. New or unique approaches, ideas, individuals, or organizations face obstinate resistance rendering them toothless. This chapter will highlight creativity and argue in favor of its value and utility in increasing the success of communication for development and social change efforts.

My major argument in favor of negligence of creativity in communication for development and social change comes also from the lack of efforts to address or increase the creativity index in Africa, South Asia, and parts of Central and Southern America. This disparity is evident from their low ranking on the global creativity index (refer Fig. 1). “The Global Creativity Index is a broad-based measure for advanced economic growth and sustainable prosperity based on the 3Ts of economic development – talent, technology, and tolerance.” (Florida et al. 2015, p. 6). Western Europe, Scandinavian countries, North America, and Australia are leading in the global creativity index with Australia at number one. This report brings to light a possible relation between higher creativity index and more development. These

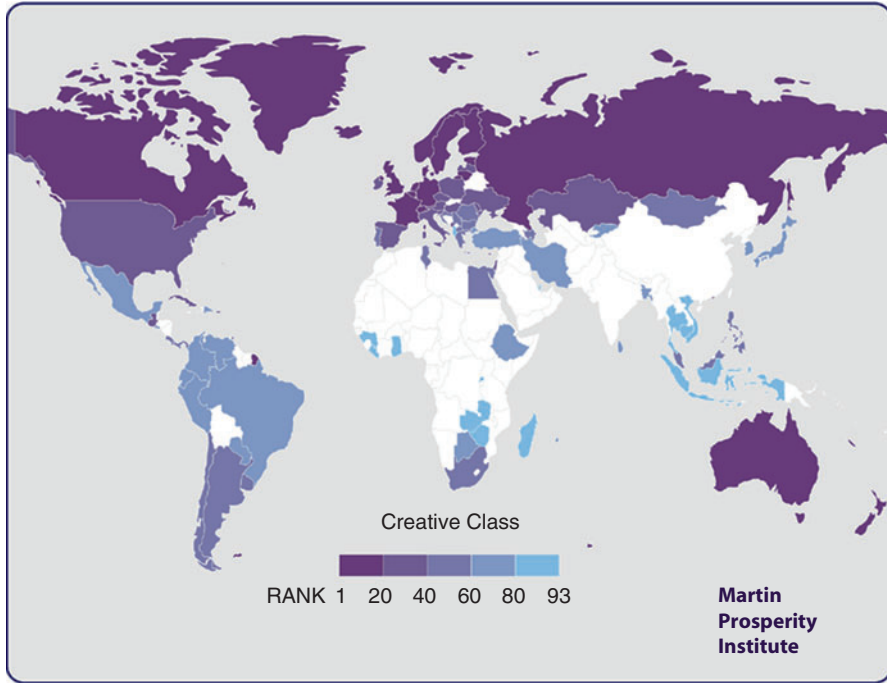


Fig. 2 The global creative class map. (Source: Florida et al. (2015). The global creativity index 2015. Martin Prosperity Institute, University of Toronto)

essentially become the variables worth testing with creativity index as an independent variable and development/well-being/prosperity as dependent variable. In my review of literature, this relationship has not been thoroughly examined within the context of communication for development and social change.

The second argument stems from the skewed spread of creative class (See Fig. 2). The proliferation of creative class is again restricted to first world nations or the developed nations or the Global North. “The creative class includes workers in science and technology and engineering; arts, culture, entertainment, and the media; business and management; and education, healthcare, and law.” (Florida et al. 2015, p. 14). Based on the global creativity index-2015, it is clear that developing and underdeveloped nations have terribly low or nonpresent percentage of creative class (refer Fig. 2).

Majority of Africa, South Asia, and parts of Central and Southern America are devoid of the creative class and low in creativity index. Not surprisingly, these also happen to be the regions where the communication for development and social change efforts are focused. It might be theoretically plausible that if creativity index in these regions could be increased it would most likely lead to betterment of well-being in these regions. If the betterment of well-being does not come about on its

own, even then the effectiveness of communication for development and social change campaigns would substantially increase if the creativity index were higher.

A creative individual, a creative citizen, a creative professional, or a creative leader is immensely sought after by our society at large. The evidence of the above statement is given below:

- An individual with creative abilities expresses more confidence and is seen as a possessor of a unique trait (Bungay and Vella-Burrows 2013; Garcia-Ros et al. 2012; Kienitz et al. 2014).
- Individuals with creative abilities are more desirable to potential employers (Jin Nam et al. 2009; Pace and Brannick 2010).
- Contemporary American culture emphasizes on creativity and an individual's creative abilities (Kern 2010). Several reasons for this emphasize come up in the research.
- In daily life, creative thinking is related to flexibility and adaptation (Csikszentmihalyi 1996; Reiter-Palmon et al. 1998).
- Creative thinking is also a crucial element discovered among successful entrepreneurs (Amabile 1997; Kern 2010).
- Additionally, research conducted by several scholars (Coholic et al. 2012; Greene et al. 2012; Lynch et al. 2013; Metzl 2009) reflected that individuals with higher creative capacity show greater resilience to trauma and tragedy (e.g., Hurricane Katarina and holocaust survivors) indicating enhanced psychological well-being among creative folks.

A creative individual can be a major force and cheerleader of positive change. However, this has not been thought about deeply. Scholars have continually strived to come up with new and creative ways to deliver the message, produce the message, involving the participant, solving local problems locally, etc. But they have not entirely focused on the tilling of the minds or enhancing creativity.

Ideas are the new currency. Creativity is at the heart of every idea. Thankfully, creativity is not limited like other factors of production that diminish or deplete. On the contrary, it is "infinitely renewable and continually replenished and deepened" (Florida et al. 2015; Romer 1986). This basic difference between creativity and other factors of production has worked both in favor and not when it comes to comprehending the utility of creativity.

A creative individual is resourceful and is open to new ideas and suggestions. And this is the important quality needed in individuals and communities spread across the spectrum of development and social change. Openness to listening, comprehending, and actually considering others perspective or others idea requires an open and empathic attitude.

It is safe to argue that creative individuals have this ability and if the creativity quotient could be increased prior to launching a communication for development and social change campaign then the likelihood of success of a campaign increases many fold. Outright rejection of development and social change ideas and approaches by the impacted community is a major obstruction. An individual or a

community with higher creativity index will at the least consider it and see it as one more approach to the common well-being, irrespective of whether it is from inside or outside, and not reject it outright.

Communication for Development and Social Change Through Creativity

Currently, the communication campaign is launched after conducting a needs assessment and the effect is evaluated. This can be expressed in a formulaic fashion as below.

$$CM - i - - - - - I - > D \& SC$$

where,

CM = Communication Campaign

D = Development

SC = Social Change

-i—I-> = Impact/change on the Individual/Community

In the new approach, the only substantial change is the addition of creativity enhancement training in the mix. Creativity enhancement training is included along with the communication campaign. This, however, does not clarify whether the training has to happen before or after. That elaboration on the strategic positioning of the creativity enhancement training is provided in the next section.

$$CM + C - i - - - - I - > D \& SC$$

where,

CM = Communication Campaign

D = Development

SC = Social Change

-i—I-> = Impact/change on the Individual/Community

C = Creativity

Positioning of Creativity Enhancement

Communication for development and social change is a process that utilizes communication, as a harbinger for impacting the change. Since it is a process, it is systematic and therefore it can be explicated in a step-by-step format. The positioning of creativity enhancement as one of the steps has to be strategic. Before

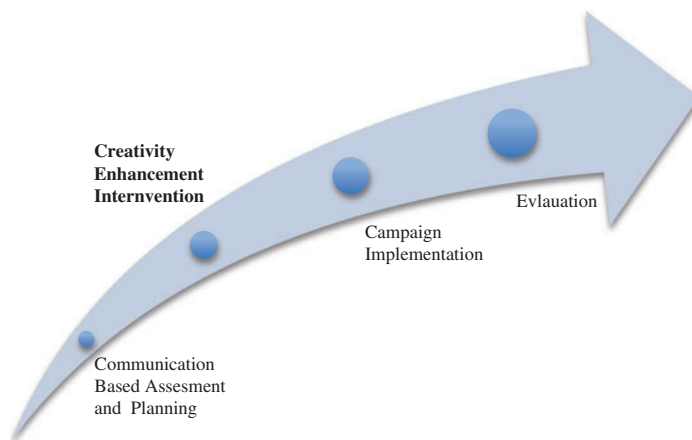


Fig. 3 Creativity enhancement intervention positioning

elaborating on the positioning of creativity enhancement, let me briefly share with you the steps in the communication for development and social change process.

1. An assessment is conducted to fully comprehend the need.
2. Based on the findings, a strategy is determined, and a plan is designed.
3. Next is the implementation of the plan according to the predetermined timeline.
4. The execution is evaluated and the change is monitored.

Based on the explanation above, communication for development and social change systematically follows steps more or less in an order. To fit in the order and for it to have an impact, creativity enhancement has to be positioned strategically. For that, it is pertinent to go back to the original gardening analogy. You till the ground before you plant the seed, which means that creativity enhancement sessions or workshops ought to happen before the actual communication campaign is implemented. While the results of the need assessment are being analyzed and a strategy is being determined, creativity enhancement should be rolled out. Figure 3 illustrates the positioning of creativity enhancement intervention.

The creativity enhancement intervention has to be positioned precisely so that when the communication campaign is rolled out, the campaign benefits from the enhanced creativity.

Assumptions

- This concept assumes that the initiation of a campaign or the idea of social change required in a community is etc. In other words, an external observer instead of an internal player or a local resident initiates the development campaigns and efforts.

This is not to say that creativity and creativity enhancement does not have a role to play in the case when an internal player initiates a campaign. Explication of what role creativity and creativity enhancement can play in those circumstances will be dealt at another time. As of now, it is outside the scope of this work.

- This concept assumes that creativity and creativity enhancement discussed here are used as tools, before the actual campaign starts, to prepare the community members for the incoming change. The creativity that is used in designing the campaign is not where this concept is trying to make a contribution. That creativity has always existed, to what extent might be a matter of debate.
- This concept also assumes that the author does not have a preference or a bias for one communication for development and social change approach over another. The author looks at all approaches and models equally.

Creativity Enhancement Intervention

Creativity is a skill. Just like every other skill, creativity can also be taught and can be enhanced with practice.

The million-dollar question, now, is how to enhance creativity. There are numerous strategies to enhance or generate creativity. Psychologists have studied creativity now for over many decades and the area of creativity, which is not restricted by product bias or art bias has been studied extensively. As a result of the practice and research, many creativity enhancement strategies have been developed such as Brainstorming, Design thinking, Seven Hats, Creative Aerobics, and others.

Creativity enhancement intervention is to be conducted by introducing people to a creativity enhancement strategy. Based on the evaluation of the advantages and disadvantages of the different creativity enhancement strategies, the creativity enhancement strategy that is optimal for this intervention is creative aerobics.

Creative Aerobics is a set of four specific, interrelated word-driven exercises that alternate left- and right-brained thinking (George and Yagnik 2017). Creative Aerobics is a process-driven system instead of a solution driven system. Using it, one can generate lots of rich information quickly. The four exercises are:

1. Finding facts
2. Naming names
3. Finding similarities between dissimilars
4. New meaning for existing phrases

Creative Aerobics is a relaxing process that rids an individual of any anxiety or panic. Creative Aerobics has delivered results in boardroom and classroom for over two decades. Creative Aerobics also aligns well with the notions of participation, empowerment, social justice, and equity. Creative Aerobics does not require any special qualification or training to master. It is strongly rooted in one's own daily life and experiences.

Typically, due to the standardized schooling and parenting, we are trained to utilize our left-brain more and therefore our ability to use the right side of the brain is diminished. Creative Aerobics allows one to access solutions and ideas that were previously available but not accessible. Creative Aerobics allows you to explore your what it isn't fearlessly and be tolerant of ambiguity. The four exercises are explained in detail below.

Finding Facts

Finding Facts is Creative Aerobics 1 (CA1). This is the simplest of all the four exercises. In CA1, all you are required to do is to find facts about a product or an object and list them. List as many facts as you can. The only caveat here is to try and list as many lesser-known facts as possible. The lesser-known the facts, the better it is. To make this easy task easier, you can apply one of the three tactics to come up with facts:

- **Research:** A participant can perform secondary research, wherein s/he can do a quick Google search and list facts from there. A participant can also use the more traditional route of going to a library to find relevant information.
- **Observation:** A participant can use her/his observation and other senses to come up with facts that are seen or felt.
- **Experience:** The participant can list facts from her/his own past experiences with that object. This is accomplished by asking ordinary and out of ordinary questions to oneself.

Naming Names

Naming names is your Creative Aerobics 2 (CA2). "CA2 asks for new what it isn't names for existing object" (George and Yagnik 2017). Here, the learner is tasked to come up with new what it isn't (WII) names. This is the first step towards actively involving the right side of your brain, while being introduced to the key concepts of "what it is" and "what it isn't." What it is and what it isn't are layered concepts. This characteristic makes their comprehension impactful. What it is serves as an explanation of the current state of existence. WII is the imagination or elaboration of what one's state of existence could be. The only caveat here is that the new WII names or scenarios cannot be synonymous or antonyms and in the case of a product have to be a noun.

CA2 requires you to come up with new WII names. A trainer, in the development and social change context, after teaching the technique and strategies to come up with new names can ask the participants to come up with new WII state of existence. These new WII states of existence can be helpful in realizing and understanding the following:

- What state does the individual and his/her community live?
- What state does the individual and his/her community not live in?
- What state could the individual and his/her community live in?

These distinctions through creativity enhancement and imagination may enable individual to work towards while being accepting of the communication campaigns, development, and social change. There are five strategies to come up with new WII names. The first strategy will be especially a good fit for the development and social change context.

Finding Similarities Between Dissimilars

One of the major things that our brain is very good at, due to the training it receives, is the ability to distinguish between objects. It is relatively normal to figure out differences as opposed to similarities. Neither is difficult, it is just that one of it is seldom applied and therefore feels more unnatural.

Creative Aerobic 3, otherwise known as finding similarity between dissimilars, makes us utilize our right side of the brain actively. You can take any two dissimilar objects and still find similarities between them. For example, take orange and clock, they are both round, they both have partitions, they both get eaten up, they both can be opened, and more. Keep in mind, no matter how dissimilar the objects are, you will always be able to find similarities between them when you allow the right side of the brain to inspire your thoughts. Let us take another example, sugar and shoe. They both start with letter “S,” they are both used to cover things, they can both be bought, and using them both is comforting. In my class, I have an open challenge for my students. If they are able to come up with any two objects that do not have any similarity between them, then they can get a \$100. I have never had to give my \$100 away.

This can be utilized in the communication for development and social change context where they can find similarities between being scenarios of being underdeveloped and being developed. It is guaranteed that they will be able to find similarities between the two. These similarities can be built upon as foundation to mitigate the issue and accentuate the well-being.

Creating New Meanings for Existing Phrases

CA-4 is creating new meanings for existing phrases. This CA exercise teaches you to utilize the right and left brain in tandem. Let me start by giving an example of CA-4.

I woke up today and finished all my cereal. Who am I?

A cereal killer.

You see how the phrase serial killer has been given a new meaning by capitalizing on the inherent ambiguity that is made available to us. In CA-4, we discover colloquially popular phrases and give them new meaning. For example, venetian

blind: a blind person from Venice; Fishing pole: a Polish person who is fishing or a voting poll among fishes.

CA-4 can be used in the development and social change context to give new meanings to existing situations and scenarios. These new meanings can help people in realizing whether a situation is good or bad, positive or negative, right or wrong, happy or unhappy. Creativity here has no limits, so you never know what realizations may emerge from this.

From a training perspective, this is the exercise that usually leads to the “Aha!” moment. This powerful realization makes it easy for the communication campaign to succeed because by then an individual is cognitively involved with the issue.

Adaptation of Creative Aerobics in Development and Social Change

Creative Aerobics, due to its ease and effectiveness, can be used for creativity enhancement of an individual or a large number of individuals constituting a community. Once a participant is trained in creative aerobics, then s/he can be asked to utilize CA in a particular context. Let us take the issue of higher female illiteracy due to menstruation. Millions of girls drop out of school when they hit menarche. This is due to several reasons but a few are lack of toilets, ridicule and shaming, marriageable because they can now reproduce, and negligence of the importance of education for women independence and empowerment.

If the Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) section in UNICEF were to launch a communication campaign for development and social change targeted at retaining more female students after menarche, then a few actions will need to be taken. Individuals and a community will need to go through knowledge, attitude, and behavior changes regarding menstruation. They will also need to be made cognizant of the long-term implications of female illiteracy. To prepare an individual and a community for comprehending the communication that is going to be directed at them or for realizing the problem and coming up with a solution, healthy and high levels of creativity and imagination are required. Without one’s ability to imagine the consequences that are far away in the future her/his ability to receive and understand the communication efforts are limited. This is where creativity enhancement training comes in. It will be a two-step process:

1. Engage members of the community in the creativity enhancement training.
 - (a) When they join, a creativity test should be administered to determine the level of creativity. This will serve as a pretest.
 - (b) Then the individuals should be introduced to CA, as an ideation system aimed at aiding them in enhancing their creativity.
 - (c) This introduction should not be in the context of menstruation and female illiteracy.
 - (d) The duration of the sessions can vary from 2 to 4 h. This can be done in one day or can be spread depending on the circumstances.

- (e) Once they are done with the training, another creativity test should be administered. This will serve as a posttest.
- (f) The results will present with two options:
 - (i) No significant change: Repeat the CA training.
 - (ii) Significant change: Move onto the next step.

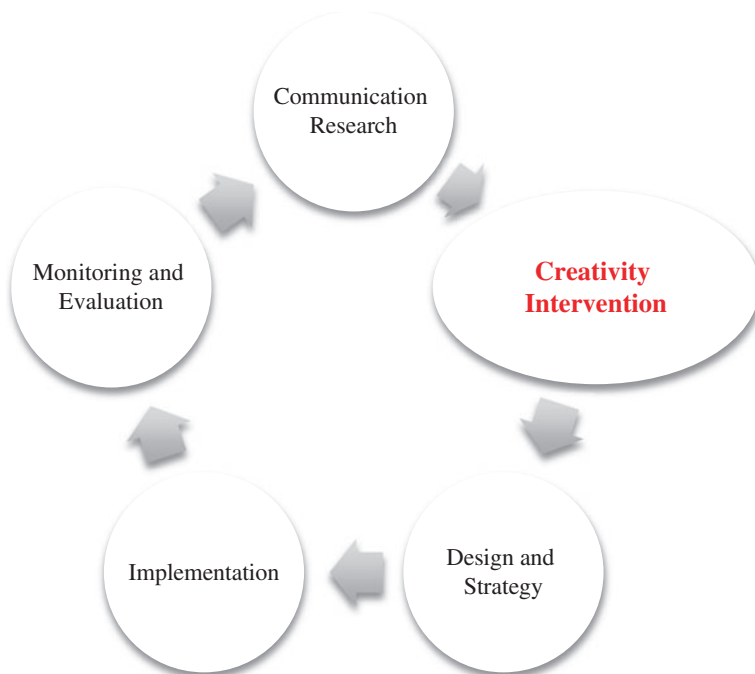
Based on my professional experience, I can say with almost certain confidence that by now participants will be thrilled at the discovery of this new potential and power.

2. Invite them for an advanced CA session for community development.
 - (a) When they join, inform them about the issue.
 - (b) Task them with performing CA exercises about a given issue.
 - (c) Document the knowledge, perception and solutions that emerge from it.
 - (d) Based on the nature of the communication campaign and the level of participation utilize the knowledge emerged from the CA sessions.

Benefits of Creativity Enhancement Intervention

The benefits of a creativity enhancement intervention are multipronged.

- The important benefit is most likely to be seen in the reduced resistance towards the communication campaign. This can also be looked at increased acceptance or speedy acceptance of the communication campaign.
- The second aspect is that creative aerobics is a great motivator. It motivates people by giving them confidence in themselves and their ability. This is very important for a participatory approach because when you involve the people in a dialogue or an exchange you want them to participate, you want them to contribute, you want them to act like a stakeholder, you want them to come up with local and more sustainable solutions or ideas to increase sustainability. CA enables them to connect the seemingly disconnected and to give new meanings to existing situations. This is empowerment at an individual level, which can easily transpire into empowerment at a local or a community level.
- It fits in well with the existing frameworks and models of communication for development and social change. Given below is the modified version of the multitrack approach (Mefalopulos 2008) including creativity enhancement intervention.



- This advancement in theory may propel testing of this approach through research or practice and lead to further refinement of this approach or development of new directions for the field of communication for development and social change.
- By exploring and examining this, there is nothing to lose. Creativity enhancement will help individuals and communities in dealing other issues in their life not related to development and social change. It may give them a new life perspective, a new career, confidence, joy, and maybe even a way to cope with stress and calamity.

Summary

Communication for development and social change through creativity is an attempt at broadening the horizons of imagination in regards with approaching development and social change. This approach has not been tested yet but the hope is that considerable amount of time will be spent in testing this by scholars and practitioners. One of the immediate next steps is to create a creativity enhancement training manual that can be utilized by trainers to train individuals in Creative Aerobics.

Enhanced creativity index of people also has other advantages such as boosting self-confidence, increasing flexibility, and ability to deal with calamity. The creativity enhancement intervention can also be a great fun way to connect with individuals and communities and build a rapport with them. This will also help them open up and share candidly during participatory or dialogic meetings. If nothing else, it will surely bring these communities and nations higher up in the creativity index ranking.

As mentioned earlier, if ideas are the new currency then clearly creativity is the mint where these ideas are generated. As much as it is important that the neglect of this universal force comes to an end, it is also important for creativity to be actively included and utilized in development and social change. Incorporating creativity into the equation is bound to have an effect. Remembering the gardening analogy, the effect of creativity enhancement training is likely to be positive social change and individual empowerment.

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