MAKING COMMUNITY FOREST RIGHTS *REAL*

A Manual for Community Outreach and Awareness Raising

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PREFACE

Participatory social and behavior change communication (SBCC) is the application of evidence-based communication interventions designed in collaboration with project stakeholders in pursuit of a development goal. SBCC can be applied to any development program that relies upon the behaviors, attitudes, choices, and actions of people to succeed[1]. Donors, academics, and program implementers working in a variety of settings and across development themes, have long turned to SBCC to identify solutions to development challenges, build stakeholder support for policy reform, stimulate project buy-in, and shift knowledge, attitude and behaviors of target populations in support of program objectives. For the purposes of this guide, we will be exploring the way SBCC activities can support a program's objectives in natural resource management and environmental conservation.

The goal of this guide is to define the characteristics of SBCC interventions, illustrate the practical step-by-step process that should be used when developing an SBCC strategy, and provide perspectives and experiences gleaned from the United States Agency for International Development/Liberia (USAID/Liberia) People, Rules and Organizations Supporting the Protection of Ecosystem Resources (PROSPER) Project, which conducted SBCC activities to encourage community forest management in target regions of Liberia. This guide can be used as a resource by development practitioners, civil society organizations, and government and non-governmental organizations working to conduct SBCC activities in the fields of natural resource management and environmental conservation.

The guide is based on and draws heavily from the USAID C-Change Project's C-Modules: A Learning Package for Social and Behavior Change Communication[2], which was developed and implemented by FHI360. The USAID PROSPER project follow's this methodology in the implementation of its social and behavior change communication interventions. This guide distills the process outlined across the five C-Change modules into a simplified practical guide for implementers.

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1 Anyaegbunam, C., Mefalopulos, P., & Moetsabi, T. (2004). Participatory Rural Communication Appraisal: A handbook for rural development practitioners. 2nd edition. FAO Rome, Italy. e-Book http://www.fao.org/docrep/008/y5793e/y5793e00.htm

2 The USAID C-Change Project seeks to improve the effectiveness and sustainability of social and behavior change communication (SBCC) across development sectors. C-Change (Communication for Change). 2011. C-Modules: A Learning Package for Social and Behavior Change Communication. Washington, DC: FHI 360/C-Change

INTRODUCTION

SBCC interventions are critical to a community's ability to access its community resource rights, natural resource management and conservation programs in Liberia. Public education, awareness, and engagement with key stakeholders—including government counterparts, the private sector, and communities—must complement policy and procedural reform efforts to successfully foster the commitment and behaviors needed to fully protect and maximize the value of a community's natural resource assets.

In recent years, Liberia's environmental sector has been plagued by a series of high- profile scandals, including those related to private-use-permits (PUP), fraudulent community forest applications, and other instances of non-compliance with major forest policies and laws. These incidents have contributed to the devastating loss of community forest in Liberia, with total forest coverage dropping rapidly over the last decade. Lack of public education on effective natural resource management and alternative livelihood practices, combined with a lack of public knowledge of Liberia's forest laws, policies, and procedures has allowed for forest loss on a massive scale.

Contributing to this is the limited capacity of Liberian actors to conduct the outreach needed to inform communities about their rights and change behaviors. For example, in 2009, the Government of Liberia passed the Community Rights Law (CRL), which formally protects a community's rights to forest resources. Lack of the ability to educate the public on the law and its implications for communities, however, has prevented communities from accessing their rights in practice. Many communities are unaware of the policies that have been put in place to protect them, and do not understand the legitimate role they play in the management of Liberia's forest resources. This lack of knowledge and know-how increases community vulnerability to illegal logging and poaching, concession agriculture, and mining schemes that are approved by local actors without the free prior informed consent of communities.

The People, Rules and Organizations Supporting the Protection of Ecosystem Resources (PROSPER) Project supports the Forest Development Authority (FDA) and other government actors and civil society groups to help communities understand their forest conservation and commercialization options, enabling them to make informed decisions about what to do with their community forests without being coerced or otherwise influenced by outside actors. The communications goal of the project is to arm communities with the information they need to be empowered to use their forest resources in the best way they see fit, foster an attitude of ownership and empowerment, and encourage sustainable forest use behaviors.

PROSPER utilized an SBCC approach to the design the "Make Community Forestry Rights Real" campaign, which increases public education and awareness of community forestry issues. Using this approach, the project collaborated closely with key stakeholders and target audiences to design, create, and implement effective outreach and awareness activities, while building the capacity of government and civil society organizations to design and conduct successful and sustainable campaigns in the future.

Working with these stakeholders, PROSPER built capacity to research, design, create, and implement communication strategies that will increase community and government understanding of community forest rights issues, and change the way citizens think and make decisions about their natural resources.

This manual illustrates the best practices and steps the project used to design an effective social and behavior change communication campaign that encourages natural resource management and environmental conservation in Liberia.

SBCC: FIVE STEPS FOR SUCCESS

The project followed a phased approach that represents best practice[3] in the design and implementation of behavior change communication campaigns. The five phases of this approach include:

1. **Understanding the Situation:** During this phase, PROSPER worked closely with the Community Forest Working Group (CFWG) to develop a "situation analysis" that served as the starting point for the design of outreach and awareness activities. Project stakeholders met to discuss the development problem; conduct a people analysis; examine the environmental, social, and cultural context; review existing and plan for additional research; and identify partners, allies, and gatekeepers who can assist with campaign implementation.
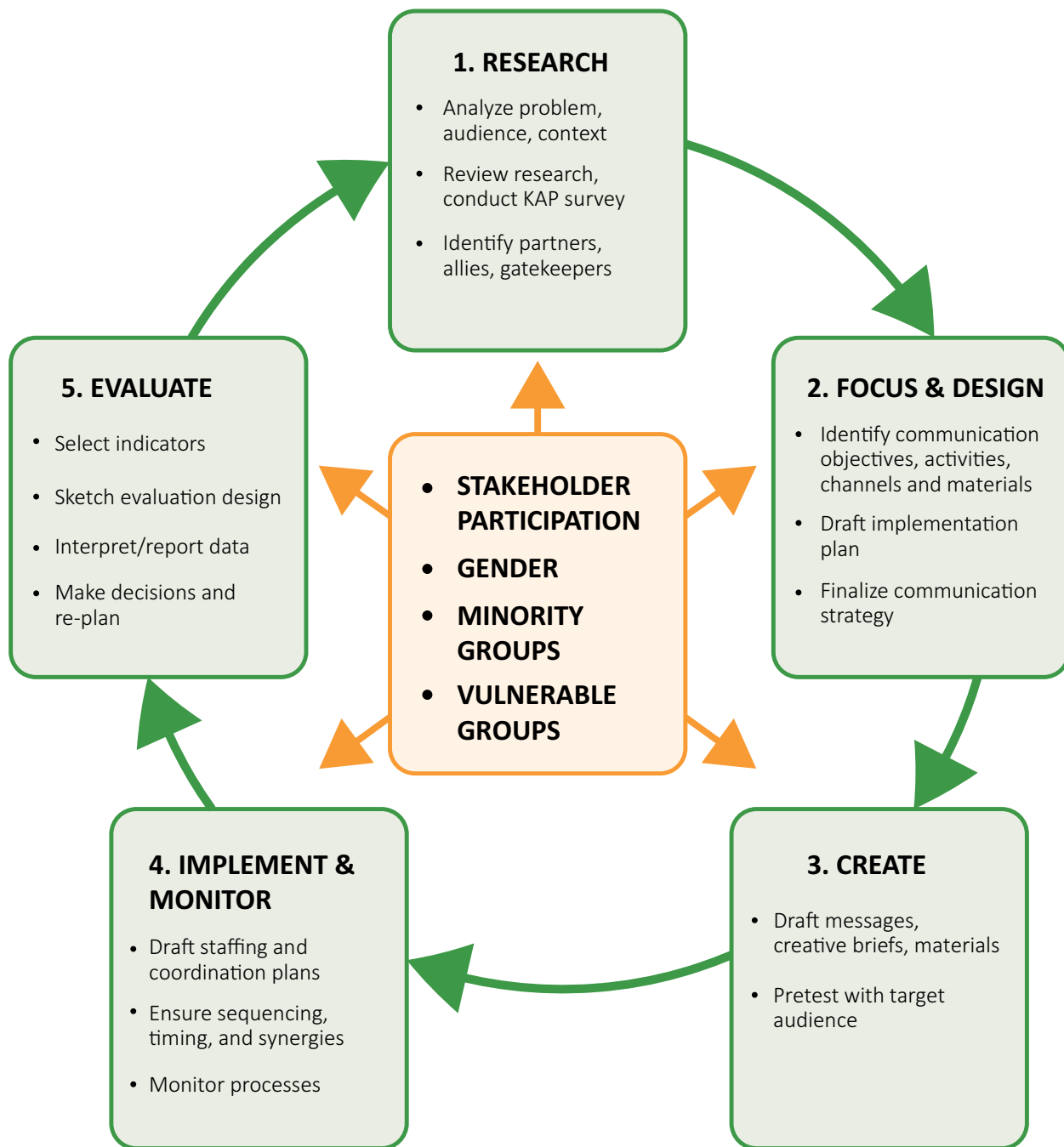
2. **Focusing and Designing:** PROSPER collaborated with stakeholders to identify, segment, and prioritize audiences, create a "matrix for change" in which needed changes in knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors were identified, draft communications objectives targeting these needed changes, and discussed appropriate methods and channels for disseminating information, messages, and materials. The communications strategy was solidified during this stage.

3. **Creating:** Drawing upon previous design phases, PROSPER worked with the CFWG to brainstorm, design, and create messages and materials aimed at changing knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors of target audiences. Project stakeholders played an integral role in the development of campaign materials, suggesting tone, content, graphics, and messages to be used in various materials.

4. **Implementing and Monitoring:** Messages, materials, and activities were rolled out in PROSPER target areas, with the PROSPER communications team tracking activities and monitoring processes. Project stakeholders actively participated in the roll out of communication activities.

5. **Evaluating and Re-Planning:** During this final phase of the Year-1 Campaign, PROSPER conducted "Lessons Learned Consultations" with project stakeholders, including communities, the CFWG, civil society organizations (CSOs), and communications subcontractors to gain feedback and evaluated impact of outreach and awareness activities. The project used this information to re-plan the campaign objectives for Year 2.

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3 This model and approach is taken from the C-Change Project, a USAID-funded project that seeks to improve the effectiveness and sustainability of social and behavior change communication (SBCC) across development sectors. The C-Change Project developed six behavior change modules for facilitators and practitioners, which were used in the development of the make Community Forestry Rights Real campaign. C-Change (Communication for Change). 2011. C-Modules: A Learning Package for Social and Behavior Change Communication. Washington, DC: FHI 360/C-Change.

1. RESEARCH

- Analyze problem, audience, context
- Review research, conduct KAP survey
- Identify partners, allies, gatekeepers

2. FOCUS & DESIGN

- Identify communication objectives, activities, channels and materials
- Draft implementation plan
- Finalize communication strategy

3. CREATE

- Draft messages, creative briefs, materials
- Pretest with target audience

4. IMPLEMENT & MONITOR

- Draft staffing and coordination plans
- Ensure sequencing, timing, and synergies
- Monitor processes

5. EVALUATE

- Select indicators
- Sketch evaluation design
- Interpret/report data
- Make decisions and re-plan

- **STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION**
- **GENDER**
- **MINORITY GROUPS**
- **VULNERABLE GROUPS**

DESIGNING SBCC STRATEGIES: PRACTICAL STEPS FOR IMPLEMENTERS

STEP 1: Understand the Situation[4]

The most important first step programmers should take when developing a SBCC strategy is to formulate an understanding of the situation. During this phase, you will be collecting information and conducting the research needed to be able to develop a strong communication approach, materials, and messages that resonate with your audience, helping you achieve your development goals. This phase should be conducted at the very beginning of your project so that, if needed, essential information can be included in any planned baseline research your project is planning to conduct.

✓ **Form a Communications Working Group.**
Review and compile a list of existing programs, CSOs, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), or institutions currently working on your focal issues. Reach out to these entities and invite them to participate in a communications working group that focuses on how to create and disseminate effective and meaningful communications to your target audiences. This working group will become a platform through which participants can share the communication objectives of their respective programs, discuss approaches that are working (or not working), and take inventory of existing materials that are being disseminated about your focal issues.

PROSPER worked with the Community Forest Working group (CFWG) to implement the Make Community Forestry Rights Real campaign. PROSPER built CFWG capacity to research, design, create, and implement communication strategies that will increase community and government understanding of community forest rights issues.

✓ **Hold a Stakeholder Consultation Workshop.**
Identify key project stakeholders—including government officials, community members, and civil society actors—that have a vested interest in your program and invite them to attend a "Communications Stakeholder Consultation Workshop." The purpose of the workshop is to 1) build and solidify strategic relationships with key project stakeholders, and 2) engage participants in a dialogue that will result in a robust "Situation Analysis," an articulation of your combined understanding of the landscape in which your program will be operating.

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4 C-Change (Communication for Change). 2011. Module 1 of C-Modules: A Learning Package for Social and Behavior Change Communication. Washington, DC: FHI 360/C-Change.

✓ **Conduct a Situation Analysis.** As part of your SBCC strategy, your program should develop a situation analysis through which you develop and articulate your understanding of the situation. The situation analysis should include the following components:

Problem Statement. What is the core problem your communications program is trying to address? Your problem statement is the starting point of your communication strategy. As you develop materials, activities, and messages, continue to go back to your problem statement to ensure that the materials you are creating lead your audience towards solution(s) to your core problem. The problem statement should include a description of your understanding of the root causes or drivers of the problem (such as those relating to knowledge, attitude, or behavior) as well as the consequences of the problem.

People Analysis. Who is being most impacted by the core problem, and who is influencing the problem? Your people analysis helps you consider and segment your perspective audiences, which will allow you to create materials that are appropriate for the people you are targeting. This could include individuals, communities, or government officials.

Context Analysis. What information does your audience have currently about the issue? What is their motivation to act? What is their ability to act? What cultural, gender, or social norms constrain their ability to act? Where do they get their information from? Taking the time to consider these environmental characteristics will ensure that the design of your program is on track.

Research Analysis. What don't you know about the situation? As you go through the lacking information and discuss the method you will use to obtain it. Take inventory of existing research that has been conducted by other projects or institutions, and plan any additional research that you will need to conduct, such as a Knowledge, Attitude and Practices (KAP) survey.

Using a participatory process, PROSPER worked with stakeholders to reach consensus around the objectives of the communications campaign, the desired changes in knowledge, attitude, and practices of different audiences, and the overall strategic communications approach.

Working together, the CFWG identified lack of community knowledge as the key barrier to a community's ability to negotiate effectively with third-party investors who were leasing and otherwise exploiting large areas of community forest land, displacing communities and destroying community forests.

Education around these key issues, as well as issues relating to sustainable forest use practices, would become the cornerstone of the Make Community Forestry Rights real campaign.

Identify Partners, Allies, and Gatekeepers. Who will you partner with to implement your program? Who is working on similar issues or with similar audiences, and can serve as your ally? Who are the "gatekeepers" that have the power to make your program sink or swim? Identify these individuals or groups and note how you will plan to work with them.

Taking these steps will help your team solidify the vision for your communications program, and begin to design your communication strategy: the roadmap for you SBCC program

Possible Challenges with the Research Step:

• Identifying dedicated Working Group participants who are committed to provide in-depth analysis on a voluntary basis.

• Community Forestry research topics and community members' interests may be political in nature and come into conflict with government and/or donor policy.

• When forming the Working Group, previous relationships between different stakeholders and interests need to be taken into account. Initially, there was a significant amount of distrust between the FDA and the CSOs.

• Due to a history of centralized decision-making by the government on forestry and land tenure, it may take time to develop trust with local communities.

STEP 2: Focus and Design Communication Interventions[5]

During this phase, your project will create your communications strategy (See Annex A for template). The communications strategy is where you will articulate the types of communication activities you will conduct the materials you will create, and the channels you will use. The strategy illustrates what you will do, including how you will implement your activities, on what timeframe, and with what budget. Key components of your communication strategy include:

✓ **Develop Communication Objectives.**
Communication objectives support and contribute to your program objectives and/ or indicators. To develop Communication Objectives, review your Performance Monitoring Plan (PMP), or discuss the way your team will measure success of your project. Once you have concretely identified these goals, you will think through the communications support needed to get there and write your communications objectives. For example:

"By the end of the program, an X increase in the number of communities who have formed a Community Forest Management Body (CFMB)."

With this goal in hand, your team will easily be able to articulate the communications, training, and educational activities that will teach and encourage communities how to form a CFMB.

✓ **Conduct an Audience Segmentation Exercise.**
Which audiences will you address, and which audiences are the priority. Why?

✓ **Identify Desired Changes in Knowledge, Attitude and Behavior by Audience.** What do you want your audiences to know, believe, or do? Be as specific as possible and articulate what you would like each group to do.

✓ **Identify Audience Barriers to Change.**
Why isn't your audience currently performing the desired behavior? Do they lack information, motivation, or the desired attitude? Are they constrained by socio- cultural norms? Articulate the challenges facing your audience, then articulate your programmatic and communications solutions to these challenges

✓ **Articulate Your "Strategic Approach."**
Here you will articulate how you will bring all of the components of your SBCC program together into one cohesive approach. How will you link your materials and activities together to ensure that they complement each other and contribute to a repetitive, consistent, and persistent campaign?

✓ **Positioning Exercise.** What creative elements will you use to tie all of your materials together? This could include an image that triggers a certain thought or feeling in your particular culture/context, a tagline, logo, color, music, etc. The goal is that the creative elements make your materials or activity stand out in what is often a crowded media space. Use creative elements to tie your different materials together, ensure that the whole of your campaign is bigger than the sum of its parts.

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5 C-Change (Communication for Change). 2011. Module 2 of C-Modules: A Learning Package for Social and Behavior Change Communication. Washington, DC: FHI 360/C-Change.

✓ **Identify Key Content.** What images, graphics, messages, drawings, etc. will you use to move your audiences to action?

✓ **Identify Communication Channels, Activities and Materials.** Successful SBCC strategies use a combination of materials, activities, and interventions to create a wide reaching campaign with a high likelihood for a positive impact. Think through the types of activities you plan to conduct, and the materials that will be required to conduct these activities. For example, perhaps you are planning to conduct a peer-to-peer education activity. To be effective in this activity, you will need a training guide and materials that peer educators can hand out to their participants. Create a chart that details the following information for each communications intervention you are planning: 1) the audience you are targeting, 2) the activity you are planning, 3) the channels you will use, 4) the material you will need to produce, and 5) the content that will be included in your materials.

Example:

Audience
Activity
Channels
Materials Needed
Key Content

✓ **Create an Implementation Plan.** In order to stay on track, it is vital that your program outline how and when you will implement your communications activities. Your communications implementation plan is different from your project work plan; it is entirely focused on your communications activities. What is the overall budget for communications? How will you prioritize and allocate resources to your various activities? This type of information should be included in your communications implementation plan. Create a table that outlines this information in an easy to follow fashion.

Example:

Communications Objective
Activity
Implementers (including partners or specific program staff)
Budget
Timeline

✓ **Create a Monitoring and Evaluation Plan.** It is critical to understand how you will evaluate your communications program before you begin implementation. How will you keep track of the communication activities you are conducting? How will you know if your interventions are leading you to the desired result? What process will you use to evaluate your programming over time? Your program must track and articulate which activities you have conducted, and later, evaluate the combined impact of these activities. Did your audiences learn something new, change the way they feel, or adopt a new practice or behavior? If not, why not? How will you collect this information, and who is responsible for doing the data collection? Understanding these nuances will help you articulate the results of your program.

The best approach for monitoring audience changes over time is to gather baseline data before you begin conducting any communication activities. Your baseline data will tell you what your audience knows, how they feel, or what they are doing in relation to your issues before your program starts. This information can be collected with a survey. Your program should then repeat the survey at defined intervals, allowing you to assess audience change over time.

The CFWG agreed that the key communication message should inspire community members to learn, become empowered, and make good decisions about their resources. These include:

• Community resources are protected by law; learn about the law so your community understands its rights and can make informed decisions about what to do with forest land.

• Community members play a key role in Liberia's forest management.

• Managing forests well is vital to the long term sustainability of the resources that support your livelihoods.

• Local communities are able to manage forests well.

• You have rights: Your forest. Your decision. Your benefits.

• Community forests are not for sale.

Possible Challenges with the Focus and Design Step:

• Working Group members may need training in SBCC in order to participate in this step effectively.

• As a Working Group cycles through the 5 Steps multiple times, it is tempting to skip this step in the name of expediency; however, messages and products need to be refined continuously to meet the shifting needs of community stakeholders. Government policy changes can require updated messages since the previous regulations may no longer apply.

STEP 3: Creating[6]

This is the fun phase! This is when the creative juices start flowing. At this point, you should be confident about your communication strategy: who you're planning to target, what you want them to do, and what your desired results are. During this phase, you will draft and, most importantly, *test* your communication materials, products, and messages with your audiences. Testing your materials lets you know if your content is effective before it is mass-produced and disseminated, saving you time and money. Whether you are creating a training guide, counseling cards, websites, radio, television spots, or other media, testing provides you the opportunity to try your material out with your audiences, solicit their feedback, and tweak your content as necessary. Allowing your audience to participate in the development of your materials is a best practice in the field of SBCC. Do not skip this step! Follow these key steps when creating your materials.

✓ **Take Inventory of Existing Materials.** Before you begin creating new materials, it is helpful to take an inventory of materials that are already publically available. Chances are, your program is not the first to be working on natural resource management issues. Ask yourself: What do you like about these materials? What do you not like? How can your materials build upon or complement those that already exist? Having these conversations will help you to define where your materials fit in the communications landscape.

✓ **Develop Creative Briefs.** One of the most useful tools you can use when developing your communication materials is the creative brief. Using creative briefs, you and your team will describe the goals, messages, content and desired effect of the materials you create. This will ensure your team has a strategic vision for your material before you start production. A creative brief template and example is provided in Annex B.

✓ **Test Concept with Target Audiences.** Once you have determined the type of material you will produce, or the activity you will conduct, and have developed a creative brief, it is time to test your concept with members of your intended audience. Concept testing allows you to understand how your audiences understand and speak about the problem at hand, the words,

phraseology, and language they use, as well as the colors, pictures, or graphics that mean something to them, etc. This does not need to be a lengthy or expensive process; the goal is simply to have a conversation with select members of your audience to collect their impressions of the communication products.

✓ **Develop Effective Messages.** Writing effective messages requires strategic thinking and insights about your audiences. The best way to develop project messages is to sit with members of your target audience, present your communication goals, and ask them to advise you through the message creation process. This can be done in tandem with the concept testing activity you will conduct with your audience. Your messages must recommend new solutions or behaviors to your audience, and address their concerns and constraints at the same time. Messages should appeal to your audiences' desires and motivation. They should be simple and contain only one or two key points. If messages are too long, your audience will not remember them. Strong messages command attention, are clear and consistent, communicate a benefit, appeal to the heart and head, build trust, present a doable solution, and call the audience to action.

6 C-Change (Communication for Change). 2011. Module 3 of C-Modules: A Learning Package for Social and Behavior Change Communication. Washington, DC: FHI 360/C-Change.

✓ **Draft Your Material or Product.** Once you are confident about your material concept and have worked with your audiences to develop messages and content, it is time to develop your product. Perhaps you have the skills and expertise needed to develop these materials in-house, or perhaps you will need to subcontract with a designer, production or music group, etc. Draft your material and, when you feel it is ready to go, move into the next phase of testing: stakeholder review.

✓ **Conduct Stakeholder Review.** During the stakeholder review, you show your materials to partners or gatekeepers, including government officials, funders, etc., to ensure that your messages and materials are accurate and in line with existing policies, and that your materials assume a tone that aligns with your stakeholders' recommendations. If your key stakeholders are comfortable with your materials, you may move into the next phase of testing: pretesting.

✓ **Pretest Materials with Target Audiences.** During this phase you will pretest the materials or products you have drafted with your target audiences to see 1) if they like them, 2) if they understand them, 3) if they accept them, and 4) if they are motivated and moved to action.

Determine the method you will use to pretest, which can be conducted using either focus groups or interviews (interviews are better for low-literacy audiences). Pretesting should be used to determine comprehension, attractiveness, acceptance, relevance, and advice for improvement. Refine your materials based on audience feedback. Remember: opinions about the aesthetics of your design are subjective; be selective in accepting this type of feedback. Comprehension feedback, however, should be taken seriously, particularly if several audience members are struggling to understand the message or concept. Refine your material and represent to your target audiences to ensure any confusing elements have been clarified. gatekeepers, including government officials,

funders, etc, to ensure that your messages and materials are accurate, in line with existing policies, and that your materials assume a tone that your stakeholders are comfortable with. If your key stakeholders are comfortable with your materials, you may move into the next phase of testing: pretesting.

✓ **Finalize and Disseminate Materials.** When you have completed the testing phase you are ready to finalize and disseminate your materials. Refer to your implementation plan as a resource; it will guide and remind you of the timing of your dissemination.

> PROSPER used community-based communication channels, including cultural performances such as music, theatre and dramas, jingles, community film, and print materials to disseminate campaign information. These materials were developed in collaboration with the CFWG, and pretested with community members in Buchanan, Saniquellie, and Tappita, as well as members of CSOs and project implementing partners. Participants of the pretesting exercises provided feedback on the phraseology used in communication materials, as well as the aesthetics, the types of people included in videos, the relevancy of the issues for the community, and the understandability of messages. This feedback was used to refine and improve campaign materials.
>
> Audiences also ranked the communication channels they felt were the most effective in reaching communities, which were then prioritized by the project.

Possible Challenges with the Creation Step:

• Agreeing on effective messaging can take a significant amount of time and requires strong facilitation skills during discussions.

• Working with a subcontractor to create prototypes can be challenging; particularly if the subcontractor does not have previous experience working within the natural resources sector.

• Pre-testing in every target community is essential but can be expensive and take a significant amount of time. However, the argument can be made that pre-testing will save time in the long run.

• The Working Group members need to focus on the community members as the end users and not allow their biases to influence the design of the product.

• In Liberia, this step must be completed swiftly in order to begin the next phase before rainy season.

• The importance of gender roles need to be taken into account when designing different materials.

STEP 4: Implementing and Monitoring Communications Activities[7]

During this phase your communications activities are getting underway, your materials are being disseminated, and you are tracking your activities and implementation. The following exercises will help you during this phase.

✓ **Take Inventory of Existing Materials.** Before you begin creating new materials, it is helpful to first survey the landscape and take an inventory of materials that are already publically available. Chances are your program is not the first to be working on natural resource management issues. Ask yourself: What do you like about these existing materials? What don't you like about them? How can your materials build upon or complement materials that already exist? Having these conversations as a team will help you define where your materials fit in to the communications landscape.

✓ **Develop Creative Briefs.** If your program has an individual dedicated to monitoring and evaluation, it is critical that they be involved in this phase. Monitoring helps identify areas of the program that are working (or not working), and where there is room for improvement.

How will you track your activities? How will you allow your audiences to provide feedback on your materials and activities? Will you use an evaluation form? Strong programs are able to adjust to audience feedback, and facilitating this two-way flow of information is critical to your programs success. Tracking and monitoring your activities will also allow you to include updated information in program reports to donors, who are always interested in seeing their return on investment.

PROSPER evaluated the efficacy of campaign design by measuring the impact of materials, messages, and activities. The project supported the CFWG and FDA to design and conduct a baseline survey, including development of a survey tool. The survey was used to generate a baseline understanding of audience knowledge, and was repeated after Year 1 of the campaign to assess changes in knowledge, attitude, and behavior.

In mature campaign sites, such as in Northern Nimba, survey results showed that community leaders and governance bodies remained weak in their knowledge of the Community Rights Law and its regulations. The project realized that these individuals and groups required more specialized attention beyond the general awareness raising activities being conducted, and rigorous trainings that included campaign messaging were designed to address the problem.

Community forests leaders were asked to lead discussions about the law, and participants were later retested. Test results showed a higher level of comprehension. From this, the project inferred that the process of explaining the law to their peers, fielding questions, and generating responses furthered the leader's ability to speak accurately about the law and articulate provisions in their local languages.

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7 C-Change (Communication for Change). 2011. Module 4 of C-Modules: A Learning Package for Social and Behavior Change Communication. Washington, DC: FHI 360/C-Change.

Possible Challenges with the Implementation and Monitoring Step:

• It takes time, but the most cost effective way to implement a successful campaign is to build the capacity of the local community members to undertake significant roles in the planning and implementation of a communication strategy.

• Poor road conditions, particularly during the rainy season, can hamper campaign activities.

• Community calendars related to agricultural and other observances can conflict with events and activity schedules.

• Gender roles and traditional leadership structures need to be addressed to achieve an effective campaign.

STEP 5: Evaluating and Re-Planning[8]

✓ **Finalize the Evaluation Plan and Collect Data.** At the beginning of this process, your team developed a plan for evaluating your communication efforts. During this phase, you will flesh out your approach to evaluation, which should include answers to the following questions:

> 1. What methodology will you use to collect data about the effectiveness of your SBCC program? For example, will you use a survey, focus groups, interviews, or a combination of these?
>
> 2. How frequently will data be collected?
>
> 3. Who is responsible for designing the survey and collecting, analyzing, and reporting the data?
>
> 4. How will this data be used to improve programming?

Whatever method you decide to use, remember to stick with it and repeat the same process and ask the same questions each time you collect data to ensure you have comparable results. For example, if you used a KAP survey to collect your baseline data, this same survey should be repeated at predefined intervals throughout your program.

The frequency with which you collect data depends on many factors. What is the expected pace of change of your program? Do you expect the change to take two years or five years? How burdensome is the survey on the community or audience being targeted (for example, will audience members lose a day of work if they participate in your program)? You don't want to stack your data collection activities too close together. You also don't want to wait too long to conduct a follow-up survey in the chance that your interventions are off-track. A typical program will collect data at three points: the baseline, midline, and endline of the program. Programs that have the resources may collect data more frequently, while those with minimal resources may conduct only a baseline and endline. The risk with collecting data only at the beginning and end of your program is that you do not have time to course-correct if your intervention diverts from your initial plan. Your endline data will tell you if your intervention failed, but it will be too late to learn from these results in ways that could improve your activities.

✓ **Re-Plan Communication Activities as Needed.** At this point, you are actively implementing your communication program and have collected data that tells you whether or not your audiences are gaining knowledge or changing attitudes and behaviors. What does the data tell you about the success of your program? What's working? What's not working? Use the data to improve your communications program as much as possible. Perhaps your interventions are working in one community and not another because of socio-cultural differences. Perhaps this indicates that you need to revise your messages and materials. Be flexible and open to the idea of changing your approach. The most successful SBCC programs are those that can pivot and try a new direction when planned activities are not producing the desired results. Be innovative; try something new!

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8 C-Change (Communication for Change). 2011. Module 5 of C-Modules: A Learning Package for Social and Behavior Change Communication. Washington, DC: FHI 360/C-Change.

Possible Challenges with the Evaluation Step:

• The creation of effective evaluation tools and data analysis takes a significant amount of technical expertise. Retaining effective Monitoring and Evaluation staff members can be a difficulty.

• Evaluation questions need to be translated into local dialects which can be difficult with certain terms and concepts. Pre-testing the questions is essential.

• Interviewers need to understand how their body language and tone as well as those observing the interview (e.g. Husband listening to his wife's answers) can impact responses while interviewing community members.

• Scheduling and ensuring that community members are available for survey interviews can conflict with community members' activities and responsibilities. Creating a flexible interview schedule with the possibility of switching between available relevant respondents is one way to address this issue.

GENERAL TIPS FOR SBCC SUCCESS

✓ **Build relationships.** Relationship building is critical to the success of your SBCC efforts. Positive, open and collaborative relationships with your audiences, partners, allies, gatekeepers, donors and funders will contribute to the effectiveness of your program. Take a human-centered approach; compassion, understanding, and sensitivity are critical when communicating with individuals about the complex and personal challenges that affect their lives.

✓ **Stay organized.** In going through this process you have expended time and resources to produce a wealth of information that can guide you through the implementation process. Don't keep it on a shelf; use it! Keep this information in an organized binder and refer to it often as you design your materials and activities.
If you feel your program getting off course, remind yourself and your team of the goals you set forth when you started designing your strategy. Ask yourself these three questions often:

> 1. What problem are we trying to solve?
>
> 2. Who are our priority audiences?
>
> 3. What do we want our audiences to do?
>
> 4. How can we persuade them to adopt the desired behavior?

✓ **If you don't know, ask!** Basing your communications program on untested assumptions can result in a waste of time, energy, money and other resources. If you are unsure what your audience knows, how they are feeling, what they are doing, or the types of messages and materials that would be effective— ask them! Working with and/or doing research

with your target audiences does not have to be a complicated, lengthy, or expensive endeavor. Inviting audience participation in the development of your program is the single best thing your team can do to ensure your interventions will be successful.

✓ **Don't be afraid to change course.** Sometimes survey results show that your communications interventions are not as effective as you hoped they would be. Perhaps feedback from your audience shows that they do not understand the issue, or maybe they interpreted messaging in ways that you did not intend. That's okay! Use this as an opportunity to course- correct and improve your campaign. Do not blame your audience for not understanding your intended message. Instead, collaborate with them to learn how you can improve your materials and try new messages and activities.

ANNEX A: Communications Strategy Template

Situation Analysis	Campaign Problem Statement:
	Behavioral Changes Problem Calls For:
	Research Needs:

	Final Audience Segmentation:	Desired Changes by Audience:	Barriers to Change by Audience:	Communication Objectives by Audience: (*"by the end of the project, an X increase in the # of Y who do Z"*)
Communications Strategy	Audience #1	Audience #1	Audience #1	Audience #1
	Audience #2	Audience #2	Audience #2	Audience #2
	Audience #3	Audience #3	Audience #3	Audience #3

	Strategic Approach:
	Project Positioning (brand marketing):
	Key Campaign Content:
	Key Messages:
	Communication Channels:
	Partners:
	Allies:
	Gatekeepers:

Draft Implementation Plan	Audience #1	Activity 1. 2. 3.	Required Materials 1. 2. 3.	Date/Time	Responsible Lead:
	Audience #2	Activity 1. 2. 3.	Required Materials 1. 2. 3.	Date/Time	Responsible Lead:
	Audience #3	Activity 1. 2. 3.	Required Materials 1. 2. 3.	Date/Time	Responsible Lead:

Draft Evaluation Plan	Plan for Evaluating Impact (incl. changes in knowledge, attitudes, behaviors):
	Indicators:
	Evaluation Methods:

ANNEX B: Creative Brief Template

CATEGORY	WHAT TO FILL IN	YOUR CONTENT
1. Material Type	If this is a handout, training guide, radio spot, television ad, etc.	
2. Goal	Overall aim of material/activity	To raise awareness of the nine steps it takes to establish an "Authorized Forest Community", and encourage communities to take the steps necessary to achieve this.
3. Audience	Selected audience	Forest dependent communities in Liberia
4. Communication Objectives	Link your material back to your programs predefined communication objectives.	By the end of the program, an X increase in the number of communities that sign a CFMA and become an "Authorized Forest Community".
5. Message Brief	Message brief includes: • A key promise • A supporting statement • A call to action • A lasting impression • Perception of someone who changes	• Your community has the right to manage your forest and forest resources as you see fit. Becoming an Authorized Forest Community solidifies, guards, protects and allows you to exercise your rights • Achieving this status is easy and will put the destiny of your forest in your hands. You decide how you want to use it based on what is best for your community. You will put these decisions in your Community Forest Management Plan (CFMP). Your assets will be protected and you use them as you wish. • Apply for Authorized Forest Community Status with the FDA and formally document and protect your rights. The 9 steps for doing this are (1-9). • Thriving happy communities. Productivity. Healthy forest areas. • Communities who have achieved this status and formed community forest management bodies are thriving. They are using their forests in productive ways, agreeing together and reaching consensus on how to use their precious forest resources.
6. Tone	Tone of the material or activity	The tone of this material is empowering, yet cautionary.
7. Key Content		Images of communities that went down the path of community forest management against communities that have not. The communities that have become Authorized Forest Communities are thriving and productive. Communities that have not may be struggling.
8. Creative Considerations		

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