

# ABSOLUTELY NO QUICK FIXES

Effective Communication in Community-based Conservation and Management

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## THE NEED FOR CONSERVATION

- Wide variety of natural flora and fauna
- High biodiversity BUT also a good number of threatened species
- Great, but often damaging, reliance on natural resources
- Diverse cultures with close ties to the land and sea



## THE INITIAL (MIS)CONCEPTIONS

- Knowing about biodiversity = motivation to protect it
- Knowing the science = immediate action
- A lot of information, education, and communication materials = immediate action
- “simple language” = acceptance of science = action

### HOWEVER

None of these assumptions are supported by GOOD empirical research

## OUR CHALLENGES

- Knowledge does not always lead to action
  - People can KNOW that something is wrong but they will still do it
    - If they are in a hurry
    - If they can get away with it
  - CONVERSELY: People can do the right thing but not know why
    - EX: evacuating during floods because barangay captain says so
- We have at least 200 living languages and diverse cultures
  - Every language group will have different worldviews and knowledge
- Effective Action can be defined in different ways depending on success indicators



## AIM: INFORM PEOPLE

### WORLDVIEW

#### Post-Positivist:

Scientist is the expert  
Scientists have the knowledge  
because of their tools and  
formal education

### COMM METHOD

Information, education, and  
communication materials  
Lectures by scientists for non-  
experts  
Imparts: knowledge  
APPROPRIATE TEST: An exam  
INAPPROPRIATE TEST: Action

+/-

Inexpensive  
Largely one-way (no need for  
consultation)  
BUT: feedback is limited  
AND: Community is not always  
engaged

## AIM: GRASSROOTS PARTICIPATION

### WORLDVIEW

#### Critical:

People who are affected by the  
phenomenon are the experts  
Knowledge comes from actual  
experience of the phenomenon,  
not education on it alone

### COMM METHOD

Community engagement:  
People identify their problem  
People cooperate AND solve their  
problem on their own  
People choose how to solve their  
problem  
APPROPRIATE TEST: Community  
action

+/-

Incorporates feedback and complete  
participation of community  
BUT: will not work if people want to  
simply be "fed" info  
AND: Can take a lot of time

## AIM: SCIENTIST/STAKEHOLDER PARTNERSHIP

### WORLDVIEW

**Constructivist:**  
 We all contribute to the knowledge through our education AND experience  
 We are all EQUAL  
 We contribute expertise EQUALLY

### COMM METHOD

Iterative consultation:  
 Scientists and Community members cooperate  
 All information and knowledge is held in equal regard  
 Everyone works together toward a solution

+/-

Involves community  
 BUT: not those who want to work on their own  
 AND: Takes a lot of time

## WHAT DO THE APPROACHES HAVE IN COMMON?

- All of them need careful planning
- All of them need very good communication research as backup

## **EXAMPLES**

### **INTEGRATED COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECT IN DISASTER RISK AREAS IN THE CITIES OF CEBU, TAGBILARAN AND ILO-ILO**

- Local partner: Pagtambayayong- A Foundation for Mutual Aid, Inc. (PFI)
- Promoted development and livelihood activities, including composting and gardening
- Carried out capability building programs
- Coordinated with different government agencies (including bench scientists, social scientists, etc) plus international agencies

## **IMPROVING NATURAL PRODUCTIVITY AND ENHANCING CAPACITIES OF RURAL FARMING HOUSEHOLDS WITHIN TAGUIBO WATERSHED**

- Local Partner: Luntaw Mindanao, Inc
- Aim: reduce local upland farmers' vulnerabilities, as well as pressure on natural resources
- Passing on the Gift: practice of sharing local resources among communities, community cooperation

## **INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF FOREST MANAGEMENT AND COMMUNITY EDUCATION IN REGION 8 (LEYTE, SAMAR & BILIRAN ISLANDS)**

- Tsunami "groundworking":
  - three level consultation-meeting prior to any major activity: surface concerns, agree on how to manage conflicts in succeeding meetings
  - Processing of inputs and outputs after
  - Can encourage people to actively participate in collective actions on common issues/needs and in searching for beneficial positions on the issues

## MARIKINA STUDY (2015-2016)

- FGDs in Barangay Malanday
- Interviews with LGU and DRR personnel
- Discussions on:
  - Understanding of extreme flooding events
  - Warning messages, including color vs. signals
  - Scientific concepts related to extreme flooding
  - Trusted messages and persons



## MARIKINA STUDY (2015-2016)

- LGU and DRR want people to be “capacitated” and “know the science” so that they listen to warnings
- HOWEVER: people evacuate because they are used to doing so
- People confuse signal warnings with color warnings
- People do not want to know more science – they just want to be told exactly what to do
- BUT: People do not like evacuating because of badly designed evacuation centers



## SO WHAT?

- We need to understand our many different audiences better
- We need to define our boundaries and success indicators
- There is no shortcut to effective communication for community-based work

