From Dr. Usha Harris, Macquarie University, Sydney, Australia

Posted 18 January 2016

Dear members,

I am Dr. Usha Harris, an academic teaching and researching in the area of Environmental Communication and Communication for Development at Macquarie University, Sydney. I am writing a book to be published with Routledge on the use of participatory media in Environmental Communication.

Participatory media can be defined as media where the audience, who were once only consumers or receivers of information, are no longer just passively observing but they have a more active role of producing content. They are involved in collecting, reporting, analyzing and disseminating media content. They have more control in designing their message, embedding local knowledge and promoting dialogue.

Social media such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Vimeo, Blogs and more are giving communities the power to tell their own stories with the help of smart phones or handy camcorders and audio recorders. Other examples include a more traditional form of participatory media that is, storytelling, folk theatre, art, music and dance. I invite you to share

1. How successful has been the use of participatory media in creating awareness of and finding solutions to environmental challenges for you/your organisation/the Pacific?
2. How effective is it compared to mainstream forms of media?
3. What are some of the challenges you may have encountered arising from the use of participatory media?
4. Share case studies (examples) of participatory media use in the Pacific local communities.

I will use relevant responses from this query in my book which aims to provide you and readers a comprehensive understanding of participatory media practice and its potential within the field of environmental communication, and demonstrate how local communities and vulnerable groups
(rural poor, women, people with disabilities) have used participatory media as a dialogic tool to achieve better outcomes in diverse contexts such as extreme weather events, climate change adaptation, mitigation and sustainable farming etc.

The book also aims to provide a how-to guide of participatory media to anyone who is interested in using an alternative method of communication for community development work and grant, and discuss how citizen journalism and citizen science are contributing to our knowledge and understanding of environmental issues by accessing participatory technologies.

I look forward to your responses.

Responses were received, with thanks, from

1. Giacomo Rambaldi, Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation ACP-EU (CTA), Wageningen, The Netherlands
2. Alice Leney, New Zealand
3. Thomas Dick, Further Arts, Vanuatu
4. Margaret Brownjohn, Process Engineer and Development Economist, Brisbane, Australia
5. Dr. Paul Van Mele, Access Agriculture, Nairobi, Kenya
6. Talita Tu'ipulotu, Pacific Media Assistance Scheme, Tonga
7. Patricia Santos, Climate Change Research Group - Centre for Ecology, Evolution and Environmental Changes, Lisbon, Portugal
8. Fenton Lutunatabua, 350.org, Suva, Fiji
10. Sharon Bhagwan Rolls, FemLINKPACIFIC, Suva, Fiji
11. Usha Harris, Macquarie University, Sydney, Australia

Further contributions are welcome!

Summary of Responses

Comparative Experiences

Related Resources

Responses in Full

Summary of Responses

Participatory media is media where the audience can play an active role in the process of collecting, reporting, analyzing and disseminating content. Many in the Pacific find this form of media more effective in creating awareness and finding solutions to environmental challenges as compared to the traditional forms of media.

Dr. Usha Harris from Macquarie University, Australia asked members to share their experience in using participatory media and the challenges they each encountered. The discussion not only received stories from the Pacific, it also brought in stories from as far as Kenya and the Netherlands.

In the Netherlands, a member from the agriculture sector shared case studies of their rural communities using web 2.0 and social media. Farmers using Facebook find it as an excellent marketing channel to promote their products, extension agents find it highly effective in
communicating with the people they serve, and agricultural organisations mount their advocacy campaigns via social media as it reaches their influential policy makers.

Women in Business Development in Samoa, also through social media, have their local and international audience growing and they are witnessing an increase in trade through these channels. They have received enquiries about their products via Facebook and have kept in touch with their partners such as Oxfam, the British High Commission, and the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation through Twitter. Not only can their followers see their work, they can see their followers’ work and support their activities. This success has led to the organisation setting up a social media team to continue the support.

Researchers are using online collaboration tools to work on joint publications and a growing number of young people use new information and communication technology skills to blog about important rural development issues – such as 350.org’s on-the-ground report on the aftermath of Cyclone Pam in Vanuatu.

Others are seizing opportunities to develop innovative online services and launch their own companies such as Hit Record as shared by one of the members. Hit Record is a new form of participatory developed media where people anywhere in the world, may have a concept submitted and others contribute to its development. It may be effective in the development of content for sustainable development challenges.

Access Agriculture in Nairobi developed Agtube for agriculture related videos from all over the world who are sharing their short video clips in local languages; from their experience the platform has been truly social media for rural people. This is similar to Ethiopia where the local population felt they got a better understanding of the soil productivity through participatory media than any other; to this effect, local organisations were empowered to apply for funding and address these environmental concerns.

From 350.org, participatory media allows their teams working on the ground across the Pacific the opportunity to share their own perspectives on all things climate related. This has become an important element of their work, as it ensures stories coming out of the islands about climate impacts are shaped and told by Pacific islanders living with climate impacts and not by someone else. They are given the space to share their stories in an authentic way that truly elevates the voices of those at the frontlines of climate change.

The Pacific Media Assistance Scheme or PACMAS find the use of this form of media instrumental in creating further awareness of environmental challenges. With the range of stakeholders PACMAS engages with, social media sites have become a driving force for certain projects especially small scale media development activities that may not necessarily resort to using mainstream media. For example, teenager Brianna Fruean from Samoa began advocating for her school and community to take care of the environment after she learned about the effects of climate change. Through the creation of Small Voices via YouTube and Facebook, she has become a young ambassador in her home for combating climate change. The success of her small project has been attributed to the use of participatory media where she engaged with her local, regional and global community.

Aside from social media, another form of participatory media is through arts and culture. Further Arts based in Vanuatu shared their experience from running a range of programs through arts, media and culture. This has empowered ni-Vanuatu to develop long term social and commercial enterprises in the industries of creative arts and communications that are culturally, socially, environmentally and financially sustainable.
Based on these experiences, while mainstream forms of media are far reaching, participatory media is much more effective. It allows for more engagement through stimulating dialogue that calls people to action and also a platform to launch discussions for sustainable development.

Given that participatory forms of media like Facebook, Twitter and Instagram are free and available as long as one has internet, this means it is accessible anywhere at any time. This is not to say that mainstream media is not as equally effective but participatory media is not as heavily regulated and messages can be delivered and received instantly. Social media sites allows for interactive commentary which gives way also to networking and shared understanding for a common sense.

Therefore, PACMAS encourages all stakeholders to provide blogs and multimedia materials that can be shared online which is then shared time and time again.

A member shared that there is an intense rapport from being the media maker and consumer, and watching relatable people with related environmental problems. Mainstream forms of media will never be able to touch people’s emotions and values the same way as increasing skills help spread the messages, and iterative processes between communities have proven efficient too.

However, challenges in using participatory media do exist if not managed properly. From members’ experience, administration privileges are important to monitor social media sites. While individuals and communities are encouraged to express their views, precautions must be taken to avoid defamation and fraudulent activities.

Members expressed the importance of protecting created content so that they are not easily altered and passed off as someone else’s work. Initial checks in place help ensure this before materials are shared. Negative encounters can easily be avoided if measurements are in place but it is always a challenge with managing projects remotely where there’s little or no control over editorial.

Other challenges shared include the lack of interest from some of the funding agencies, the lack of monitoring and evaluation, and the project mindset that hinders long term interactions and follow up.

But with these challenges identified and addressed, participatory media can achieve much more than what we see now. It is a dialogue type of tool that can effectively and efficiently contribute to our knowledge and understanding of environmental issues.

**Comparative Experiences**

**Samoa**

**Small Voices Samoa** (from Talita Tu’ipulotu, Pacific Media Assistance Scheme, Tonga)

Small Voices Samoa is an initiative led by Brianna Fruean after learning in school about the effects of climate change. She began advocating for her school and community to take better care of their natural surroundings. Through the use of YouTube and Facebook, she became a young ambassador in Samoa for combating climate change. The success of her initiative has been attributed to the use of participatory media where she engaged with her local and international community.

**#1pt4peace Campaign** (from Faumuina Felolini Tafunai, Women in Business Development Inc., Apia, Samoa)
In 2015, the initiative was fronted by the Samoan Head of State during the COP21 Climate Change Negotiations. It was a Facebook and traditional media campaign which got picked up by international support for example, the National Geographic's Science and Exploration Program on narratives of climate change in climate-threatened communities.

**Vanuatu / Samoa**

**Action Against Climate Change** *(from Talita Tu’ipulotu, Pacific Media Assistance Scheme, Tonga)*

Managed by Apidae, the initiative engaged several Vanuatu secondary schools where they each paired up with local journalists and produced mini radio and television documentaries on the environmental problems identified in their communities. The productions were shared via social media which resulted in a ripple effect of schools empowered to join the initiative. The themes included gender and climate change, water sanitation and disaster preparedness.

**Vanuatu**

**The Undiluted Truth of Cyclone Pam** *(from Fenton Lutunatabua, 350.org, Suva, Fiji)*

350.org used participatory media during Tropical Cyclone Pam to directly connect with their Vanuatu Country Coordinator who shared first-hand accounts to the world of the devastation caused. Stories of the aftermath of Pam were told in an authentic way that elevated the voices of those that suffered.

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**Related Resources**

**Recommended Documentation**

**Embracing Web 2.0 and Social Media: A life-changing pathway for agricultural development actors** *(from Giacomo Rambaldi, Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation ACP-EU, Wageningen, the Netherlands)*

Book; by Clare Pedrick, United Kingdom; Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation ACP-EU, Netherlands; 2015;

Available at:

A new publication from CTA documenting the transformative power of these innovative technologies based on 18 case studies drawn from across African, Caribbean and Pacific countries.

**Improved Waste Management in Kiribati: A Case Study, Kiribati** *(from Alice Leney, New Zealand)*

E-Article; Kiribati;

Available at:

The case study outlined the promotion of recycling and better waste management and behaviour, FSPK used street theatre and local made radio spots to very good effect.

*From Thomas Dick, Further Arts, Vanuatu*

**Vanuatu Women’s Water Music**

Video; Further Arts, Hilltop, Anambru, P. O. Box 2021, Port Vila, Vanuatu; T: +678 22745

Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JstxgWfku5g;
One of the two award winning documentary films by Further Arts in close collaboration with communities in Vanuatu.

**Lon Marum: People of the Volcano**
Video; Further Arts, Hilltop, Anambru, P. O. Box 2021, Port Vila, Vanuatu; T: +678 22745
Available at: [https://vimeo.com/59713802](https://vimeo.com/59713802);

From Patricia Santos, Climate Change Research Group – Centre for Ecology, Evolution and Environmental Changes, Lisbon, Portugal.

**Participatory video from Bajo Women's Group**
Video; Participatory Media for Development; Web: [http://pm4d.blogspot.com/](http://pm4d.blogspot.com/);
Available at: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p_vFkXED_eo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p_vFkXED_eo);
This video is the result of a PM4D four-day workshop made by the local Bajo Women's Group from the village of Mola in Wangi-wangi Island, Wakatobi.

**Participatory Video on a Participatory 3D Modelling process in Telecho, Ethiopia**
Video; Participatory Media for Development; Web: [http://pm4d.blogspot.com/](http://pm4d.blogspot.com/);
Available at: [https://vimeo.com/21448485](https://vimeo.com/21448485);
This is an example of participatory media use in the local communities; a film by Segni Club Members of Telecho School in December 2010.

**10 Steps Making-of Participatory Video, Telecho, Ethiopia**
Video; Participatory Media for Development; Web: [http://pm4d.blogspot.com/](http://pm4d.blogspot.com/);
Available at: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w1dqarFh_9Q](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w1dqarFh_9Q);
This video was shot during the making of a participatory video in Telecho village, Highlands Ethiopia showing 10 easy steps for a participatory video training.

**Participatory Photography**
Video; Patricia Santos, Climate Change Research Group – Centre for Ecology, Evolution and Environmental Changes, Lisbon, Portugal;
Available at: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NuKcPGxmFJo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NuKcPGxmFJo);
The Participatory Photography is intended to capacitate participants to later engage in filmmaking; using a bottom up approach.

From Fenton Lutunatabua, 350.org, Suva, Fiji

**Vanuatu + Cyclone Pam: An on-the-ground report from the 350.org Vanuatu Team**
Through participatory media, 350.org worked with their Vanuatu coordinator to get first-hand accounts of the devastation caused by Cyclone Pam.

**Frontline Truths**
Available at: [http://350.org/frontline-truths/](http://350.org/frontline-truths/);
Through participatory media, 350.org shared stories of climate impacts across the islands during the build up to COP21 in a series of stories called Frontline Truths.

**Recommended Organizations and Programmes**
The Pacific Community  (from Giacomo Rambaldi, Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation ACP-EU, Wageningen, the Netherlands)
SPC Suva Regional Office, Private Mail Bag, Suva, Fiji; E: eileenw@spc.int; T: +679 337 0733; Fax: +679 337 0021;
The Pacific Community (SPC) is the principal scientific and technical organisation in the Pacific region, owned and governed by our 26 country and territory members.

Foundation for the Peoples of the South Pacific Kiribati, Tarawa, Kiribati  (from Alice Leney, New Zealand)
FSPK Officer: Tarawa Kumon; E: kumon.tarawa@gmail.com;
FSPK promotes sustainable community development in active partnership with the Government of Kiribati, local nongovernment organisations and church groups, regional and international partners.

Further Arts  (from Thomas Dick, Further Arts, Vanuatu)
Web: http://www.furtherarts.org/; Hilltop, Anambru, P. O. Box 2021, Port Vila, Vanuatu; T: +678 22745;
Further Arts have carried out participatory media programs led by their Critical Ecosystems Partnership Fund, the Traditional Entertainment and Kastom Support Unit, the Nesar Studio, and the creation of the Erromango Rebuilds Documentary Film.

From Talita Tu’ipulotu, Pacific Media Assistance Scheme, Tonga
Pacific Media Assistance Scheme
Web: http://www.pacmas.org/; PACMAS, Lini Highway, PMB 2076, Port Vila, Vanuatu; T: +678 24263; E: info@pacmas.org;
PACMAS supports better governance in the Pacific region by contributing to the development of a diverse, independent and professional Pacific media system.

Action Against Climate Change (A2C2) Project
Web: http://www.apidae.com.au/work/action-against-climate-change; Apidae, 66 King Street Melbourne VIC 3000, Australia; E: info@apidae.com.au;
A2C2 is an initiative engaged with Pacific Island youth in a mentorship network to create TV, radio, print and online media about climate change solutions within their communities.

Participatory Media for Development  (from Patricia Santos, Climate Change Research Group – Centre for Ecology, Evolution and Environmental Changes, Lisbon, Portugal)
Web: http://pm4d.blogspot.com/;
This portal is about Participatory Media for Development as a method for co-creation of positive change.

From Faumuina Felolini Tafunai, Women in Business Development Inc., Apia, Samoa
Women in Business Development Inc.
2nd Floor, Nia Mall, Fugalei, Apia, Samoa; P O Box 6591, Apia, Samoa; T: +685 21959; E: flyinggeesepro@gmail.com; W: http://www.womeninbusiness.ws;
Women in Business Development is harnessing the power of social media coupled with the reach of traditional media to better communicate to its farmers, supporters and its markets.

FemLINKPACIFIC, Suva, Fiji
Our work is to promote human rights campaigns as prioritised through our network and partners; they are all connected through the community radio through multiple dedicated broadcast campaigns.

**Recommended Communities and Networks**

From **Giacomo Rambaldi**, Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation ACP-EU, Wageningen, the Netherlands

**Web2ForDev Discussion Group**  
Website: [https://dgroups.org/groups/web2fordev](https://dgroups.org/groups/web2fordev); Wageningen, the Netherlands;  
This discussion group focuses on Web 2.0 and Social Media used in the context of development cooperation.

**Web2ForDev Twitter**  
Twitter handle: [@web2fordev](https://twitter.com/web2fordev); Wageningen, the Netherlands;  
News and updates on #Web2.0 and #socialmedia in development cooperation. And is the 2013 winner of the @WSISprocess prize in e-agriculture.

**Web2ForDev Facebook**  
Facebook: [https://www.facebook.com/web2fordev](https://www.facebook.com/web2fordev); Agro business Park 2, 6700AJ Wageningen;  
T: +31 317 467 100; E: cta@cta.int; W: [http://www.web2fordev.net](http://www.web2fordev.net);  
The page features the latest news on Web 2.0 for Development. It organises and supports the implementation of activities that lead to a wider adoption of Web 2.0 and Social Media in developing countries.

**Hit Record** (from **Margaret Brownjohn**, Process Engineer and Development Economist, Brisbane, Australia)  
Website: [https://www.hitrecord.org](https://www.hitrecord.org); hitRECord.org LLC, c/o Jackoway Tyerman Wertheimer, Austen, Mandelbaum Morris & Klein, 1925 Century Park East, 22nd Floor, Los Angeles, CA 90067;  
Hitrecord is an open, community-sourced production company where anyone can contribute text, images, audio and video.

**Agtube** (from **Dr. Paul Van Mele**, Access Agriculture, Nairobi, Kenya)  
Website: [http://www.agtube.org/en](http://www.agtube.org/en); Contact person: Ruth Muchaba; E: ruth@accessagriculture.org;  
Agtube is a new social media platform for rural people in developing countries, where one can upload and share video clips in any language.

**Responses in Full**

**Giacomo Rambaldi, Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation ACP-EU (CTA), Wageningen, the Netherlands**

Hello Usha and community members,

In collaboration with the Secretariat of the Pacific Community and national organizations we have been running face-to-face Web 2.0 and Social Media capacity building activities in the Pacific. We also supported selected individuals in attending distance learning courses on the same topic. We
recently published a collection of success stories covering Africa, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries.

The publication is available as a free download: [http://bit.ly/1PwAoqU](http://bit.ly/1PwAoqU)

"The advent of social media has revolutionised the way people communicate worldwide. But in a growing number of developing countries, these tools are being put to increasingly good effect to drive agricultural and rural development, often with dramatic results. A new publication from the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA) documents the transformative power of these innovative technologies. Based on 18 case studies drawn from across African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries, “Embracing Web 2.0 and Social Media: A life-changing pathway for agricultural development“ actors provides testimonies on how Web 2.0 and social media are contributing to better engagement of stakeholders in policy dialogue and advocacy, marketing and the provision of information services.

The booklet documents a wide range of practical applications for Web 2.0 and social media in ACP settings. Some farmers have found that Facebook can be an excellent marketing channel to promote their products. Extension agents are discovering that social media is a highly effective way of communicating with the people they serve. Agricultural organisations are using a range of social media tools to mount advocacy campaigns aimed at influencing policy-makers. Researchers are using online collaboration tools to work on joint publications, while more and more young people are using new ICT skills to blog about important rural development issues. Others are seizing opportunities to develop innovative online services and launch their own companies as agripreneurs.

"Social media has become part of everyday life for most people in the developed world. But it has created a life-changing experience for many people in rural areas who have come to use it,“ said CTA Director Michael Hailu. All the stories featured in the booklet revolve around people who have benefited from a CTA-led campaign to make Web 2.0 and social media tools more accessible to agriculture and rural development actors in ACP countries.”

So far we have trained approx. 4500 people in 44 ACP countries. We also conducted impact assessments and one has just started. If you are interested in the details, we can continue the exchange off the list.

- Dedicated discussion list: [https://dgroups.org/groups/web2fordev](https://dgroups.org/groups/web2fordev)
- Twitter account: [www.twitter.com/web2fordev](http://www.twitter.com/web2fordev)
- Facebook account: [www.facebook.com/web2fordev](http://www.facebook.com/web2fordev)

**Alice Leney, New Zealand**

Hi Usha and colleagues,

I worked with Foundation for the Peoples of the South Pacific Kiribati (FSPK) a non-government organisation in Kiribati to promote recycling and better waste management and behaviour, and we used street theatre and local made radio spots to very good effect.

Here is the link to the case study which outlines what happened: [http://www.solutionexchange-un.net/repository/pc/ccd/query50response_aliceleney.pdf](http://www.solutionexchange-un.net/repository/pc/ccd/query50response_aliceleney.pdf) (230KB)

This gives some outline of the overall thrust of the work.
Further Arts is a charitable association based in Port Vila, Vanuatu. We run a range of programs in rural and urban Vanuatu (and increasingly across Melanesia) supporting social transformation through arts, media, and culture. One of our main objectives is to empower ni-Vanuatu to develop long-term social and commercial enterprises in the industries of creative arts and communications that are culturally, socially, environmentally and financially sustainable. Here is a brief summary of some of the participatory media projects that Further Arts has been involved in in 2015.

With funding from the International Union on the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Critical Ecosystems Partnership Fund (CEPF), we provided directional and administrative support to Canal Studio for the Songs & Stories of Biodiversity project. The project documented songs and stories that exist in the community to raise awareness on the threatened species, their significance and current conservation efforts. Members of the village were unaware of the critical need to protect these threatened species. Kastom songs and stories were shared by the elders and Chief of the village telling the story of the first yam that came to Pesena village in Vanuatu. They demonstrated their knowledge and experience of traditional resource management in their village, they shared some traditional songs they have maintained over the years about growing taro on water-taro patches.

Under Further Arts is the Traditional Entertainment and Kastom Support (TEKS) Unit in Luganville, Santo who have undertaken an array of activities. TEKS instigated a new project on traditional musical instrument research in Northern Vanuatu, which involves travel to outer islands and a workshop bringing traditional musicians together to re-create traditional musical instruments. TEKS founder and leader, Delly Roy participated in a Practical Workshop on Intellectual Property, Traditional Knowledge, Traditional Cultural Expressions and Genetic Resources hosted by the World Intellectual Property Organisation in Samoa. This is a great asset as TEKS continues to engage with local communities.

We also have our community-access Neser Studio. Young producers from Nesar Studio have undertaken activities to document stories from grassroots communities. The studio also provides an avenue for communities to present contemporary and traditional art. Some of these activities include: the Tanna Girls Filmmaking Project; Leweton Video at Balance/Unbalance Conference; Hear Our Voices: Post-Cyclone Children’s Voices Films; Two factual TV Series – Storian Blong Yumi & Lokol Mix; Tanna Post-Cyclone Women’s Voices DVD; Regional Young Women’s Media Exchange & Radio Programmes; MSG/West Papua Film Production & Attendance at MSG meeting in Honiara; Post-Cyclone Creative Recovery Programme; Cal-Poly Digital Storytelling; Groupe a Culturelle – Horizon Lointains; Fest’Napuan Production; GIZ Music Videos; Aelan Girl; and many more.

This year we are working with the Erromango Cultural Association and the community of Erromange on the "Erromango Rebuilds Documentary Film" documenting the stories of survival and traditional wisdom related to surviving disasters (esp. related to Cyclone Pam).

In the past we have produced two award-winning documentary films in close collaboration with communities in Vanuatu. Here are links to the trailers:

- Vanuatu Women’s Water Music: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JstxgWfku5g
- Lon Marum: People of the Volcano: https://vimeo.com/59713802
Our challenges and needs include:
1. Crew production capacity (skills and knowledge)
2. Studio space/facility (our facility was destroyed by Cyclone Pam)
3. Digital file management and back-up and other advanced workflow management
4. Equipment capacity, storage and maintenance
5. Management, administration and finance - funding is limited and prioritising commercial work limits the time available for training and development and also for work on creative projects.

Let us know if you have any specific questions. You can find more details of each of the points shared here: [http://www.solutionexchange-un.net/repository/pc/ccd/query50response_thomasdick.pdf](http://www.solutionexchange-un.net/repository/pc/ccd/query50response_thomasdick.pdf) (272KB)

Margaret Brownjohn, Process Engineer and Development Economist, Brisbane, Australia

Dear colleagues,
Perhaps this is a trend that the development community should be aware of and potentially harness.

For your information [www.hitRECord.org](http://www.hitRECord.org) is a new form of participatory developed media. People anywhere in the world, may have a concept submitted and people anywhere in the world contribute to its development. It may be effective in the development of content for sustainable development challenges.


Dr. Paul Van Mele, Access Agriculture, Nairobi, Kenya

Dear colleagues,

Thanks [Giacomo](#) for linking.

We operate two open-source, video-sharing platforms that are devoted to agriculture and natural resource management and that aim to support South-South learning.

- The Access Agriculture website for quality, scripted farmer training videos ([www.accessagriculture.org](http://www.accessagriculture.org)), translated into over 65 languages (based on demand and at modest fee) by mobilising a network of local collaborators.
- Agtube for any other agric-related videos (participatory video, short clips showing local innovations, videos for policy makers) ([www.agtube.org](http://www.agtube.org)). With Agtube many people from all parts of the world are sharing their short video clips in local languages. This platform is truly social media for rural people.

In terms of reaching out to farmers, Access Agriculture never pays agencies to distribute or show videos. Rather it operates in an open-system mindset, making videos freely available and assuming anybody can show quality videos on their own initiative

- specialised agencies
- extension staff
- local entrepreneurs
- rural information centers
- cable TV operators
Access Agriculture also developed a smart projector, which allows people to screen videos to large audiences in remote communities that are off-grid, off-internet and off mobile coverage.

The small projector comes with powerful (small) speakers, foldable solar panels and batteries allowing anyone to screen videos for days without power. All “farmer to farmer” videos hosted on the Access Agriculture website are available offline in an easy-to-search way through an app built-in in the projector.

If anyone is interested to learn more about these initiatives and tools, feel free to get back to me anytime.

**Talita Tu’ipulotu, Pacific Media Assistance Scheme, Tonga**

Dear members,

The Pacific Media Assistance Scheme (PACMAS) is a 10-year project (2008-2018) that supports better governance in the Pacific region by contributing to the development of a diverse, independent and professional Pacific media system that informs all the people of the Pacific and gives them a voice in public life at local, national and regional levels.

The program takes a ‘system-wide approach’ to media strengthening that addresses the broader role of communication, information and media in governance strengthening and development. The project is funded by the Australian Government under its development assistance program.

The use of participatory media has been instrumental in creating further awareness of environmental challenges like climate change in our region. With the range of stakeholders PACMAS engages with, social media sites have become a driving force for certain projects especially small scale media development activities that may not necessarily resort to using mainstream media. An example would be ‘Small Voices’ Samoa lead by teenager Brianna Fruean with the assistance of her mother who works for the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP). After learning in school about the effects of climate change, Brianna at the age of 11 started advocating for her school and community to take better care of their natural surroundings. Through the use of YouTube and Facebook, she has become a young ambassador in Samoa for combating the effects of climate change. The success of her small project has been attributed to the use of participatory media whereby she has been able to engage not only with her local community but with others around the region and the world who share her passion.

While mainstream forms of media are far reaching, it has been proven that participatory media is very much effective. It allows for more engagement through stimulating dialogue that calls people to action and also a platform to launch discussions for sustainable development. Given that participatory forms of media like Facebook, Twitter and Instagram are free and available as long as you have an Internet connection, this means it’s accessible anywhere at any time. This is not to say that mainstream media is not as equally effective but participatory media is not as heavily regulated and messages can be delivered and received instantly. Social media sites allow for interactive commentary which gives way also to networking and shared understanding for a common cause. PACMAS encourages all stakeholders to provide blogs and also multimedia material that can be shared online which is then shared time and time again.

It does come with its own challenges however, if not managed properly. This is where administration privileges are important to monitor these social media sites. While individuals and
communities are encouraged to express their views, precautions must be taken to avoid defamation and fraudulent activities. It is therefore important that created content is protected so that they are not easily altered and passed off as someone else’s work. Initial checks in place help to ensure this early on before material is shared. Negative encounters can easily be avoided if measurements are in place but it’s always a challenge with managing projects remotely and there’s little or no control over editorial.

SPREP has partnered up with PACMAS on several occasions for capacity development activities. This includes training media practitioners and offering mentorship for journalism students on environmental reporting. This resulted in the write up and sharing of blogs from regional environmental meetings that kept everyone informed of the discussions and outcomes. An example from a Pacific local community would be Vanuatu and Samoa on the Action Against Climate Change (A2C2) project. This was managed by an Australian based company, Apidae that engaged several Vanuatu secondary schools. Each group of students was paired up with a local journalist where they were encouraged to identify an environmental problem in their community and either produce a mini radio or TV documentary about it. The themes ranged from gender and climate change, water sanitation and disaster management preparedness. The school productions were shared on YouTube and Facebook which encouraged other schools to carry out their own activities to raise awareness on environmental challenges. The key here was giving editorial control to the students and using participatory media to engage discussions on the topics. This meant that although the documentaries were only produced in Samoa and Vanuatu, the sharing of content meant other Pacific communities could get involved as well through lessons learned and shared experiences.

**Patricia Santos, Climate Change Research Group - Centre for Ecology, Evolution and Environmental Changes, Lisbon, Portugal**

Dear members,

Please see my response as follows,

*How successful has been the use of participatory media in creating awareness of and finding solutions to environmental challenges for you/your organisation/the Pacific?*

I have worked in Ethiopia with Participatory Media For Development (PM4D), where not only the local population felt they understood what was happening to the soil and productivity but also the local organisation felt empowered to apply to funding to tackle the environmental challenges.

*How effective is it compared to mainstream forms of media?*

There is intense rapport from being the media maker and consumer, and watching relatable people dealing with related environmental problems. Mainstream will never be able to touch people’s emotions and values the same way. Increased skills will help in spreading the messages. Iterative processes between communities have proven efficient too (refer to participatory video: Images that Transform and Empower by Shirley A White)

*What are some of the challenges you may have encountered arising from the use of participatory media?*

The lack of interest from funding agencies, the lack of monitoring and evaluation, the project mindset that hinders long term interactions and follow up.

*Share case studies (examples) of participatory media use in the Pacific local communities.*

I’ve worked in these two projects: Wakatobi Indonesia with PM4D for e.g. the Minority Group of Women and Children: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p_vFkXED_eo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p_vFkXED_eo), and a Participatory Video on a Participatory 3D Modelling process in Telecho, Ethiopia with
I also facilitated a training of trainers in Wageningen, the Netherlands. Later, I worked with Participatory Photography, intended to capacitate participants to later engage in filmmaking. More recently I worked with video and bottom-up initiatives: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NuKcPGxmFJo

I would like now to explore collaborative filmmaking, where storytelling, film, photography, audio and other arts are used to address climate change and sustainable development. I’m currently a PhD student in Lisbon University, Portugal.

Fenton Lutunatabua, 350.org, Suva, Fiji

Bula colleagues,

We have found that participatory media allows our teams working on the ground across the Pacific the opportunity to share their own perspectives on all things climate related. This is an important element of our work, ensuring that stories coming out of the islands about climate impacts are shaped and told by Pacific Islanders living with climate impacts and not someone else. They are able to share their truths in an authentic way that truly elevates the voices of those at the frontlines of climate change.

*Its effectiveness compared to mainstream forms of media:* We have found that this type of media allows for more sincere storytelling from frontline communities.

*Case studies (examples) of participatory media use in the Pacific local communities:* We used participatory media during Cyclone Pam. We were able to directly connect our 350 Vanuatu Coordinator and share firsthand accounts of the devastation caused with the world. You can see a report on this [here](#). More recently, we used participatory media to share stories of climate impacts across the islands during the build up to COP21 in a series of stories we called Frontline Truths. You can see that [here](#).

Happy to provide further information or talk about this more upon request. Vinaka.

Faumuina Felolini Tafunai, Women in Business Development Inc., Apia, Samoa

Dear colleagues,

Women in Business Development Inc. (WIBDI) believes that for our organization to better communicate to its farmers, its supporters and its markets, we need to harness the power of social media coupled with the reach of traditional media. Over the past three years, we have been actively using tools such as Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, and YouTube to create windows to our work.

Our local Samoan audience is small but growing as the internet becomes more accessible through smart phones and data costs decrease. Our audience abroad is also growing and we are seeing an increase in trade via our social media channels. Often we get enquiries through Facebook about people wanting to buy fine mats, handicrafts and virgin coconut oil. We also stay in touch through Twitter with important connections such as Oxfam, the British High Commission, and CTA – The Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Co-operation. Not only can our followers see our work, we can see theirs and support their activities too.
Aside from these ventures, WIBDI worked with the Action Against Climate Change (A2C2) project funded by the Pacific Media Assistance Scheme. Our team was paired with Maluafou College students. We focused on organic agriculture and climate change, and our medium was social media using YouTube, blogs, a flash mob, t-shirt, design and spoken word.

During the United Nations Small Islands Developing States (SIDS) meeting in September, Women in Business Development set up a social media team, which was also funded by CTA. For a month prior to the meeting we started a Facebook page called Offset Islands 2014 to encourage people to mulch, compost and plant trees to offset the carbon generated by the SIDS meeting. During the meeting, we uploaded more than 50 news stories including more than 20 videos and hundreds of live Tweets and photos. There we saw the power of social media at play with people from more than 75 countries click onto our SIDSlive.com site. To make the most of the connections we made online and in person during SIDS, we keep in touch through Twitter and Linked In.

In 2015, we conducted another campaign that was fronted by Samoan Head of State, His Highness Tui Atua Tupua Tamasese Ta’isi Tupuola Tufuga Efi. This was the #1pt4peace campaign at the time of COP21 Climate Change Negotiations. This was another Facebook and traditional media campaign. The campaign picked up international support and has been highlighted by the National Geographic’s Science and Exploration Program on narratives of climate change in climate-threatened communities.

**Case study: SIDSLIVE Social media site to cover the UN SIDS Meeting in Samoa**

**SERVICE CONTRACT:** Fostering and supporting exchanges and learning between the Caribbean and the Pacific

**THE GOAL:**
Through the efforts of the social media team, that WIBDI and its partners’ (CTA - The Technical Centre for Rural and Agricultural Co-operation/ Africa-Caribbean-Pacific Pacific Agricultural Policy Project) visibility will be increased, that key relationships will be strengthened, and that ultimately these efforts, alongside the presentations and discussions that WIBDI and its partners take part in, result in more investment in their programs.

**PERSONNEL:**
The team, named SIDSlive.com, consisted of:
- Women in Business Development Inc. media specialist and team coordinator Faumuina Felolini Tafunai
- Web developer Simon Leslie (NZ)
- Cameraman/editor Martin Anae (Aus.)
- Analyst and Journalist Ulafala Aiavao (NZ)
- TV reporter Laufaaina Lesa
- Youth reporters Seloa Lale and Seminario Vili (both 16 years)

**HIGHLIGHTS:**
- The SIDSlive.com site was live from 28 August.
  - In that time we had 655 unique users who visited 3 pages per session and returned for multiple sessions, resulting in 3270 page views.
- More than 200 live tweets were sent (internet connectivity was only confined to certain meeting rooms limiting the amount of live tweeting).
  - Retweets included the International Trade Centre, OECD, and Helen Clark
  - 4,863 total views, 32 new followers, 50 favorites
• More than 55 news products were uploaded, 22 of these were video news products
• Exclusive interviews including Gyan Acharya, Helen Clark, Dr Michael Hailu
• Exclusive footage and interview with Wu Hongbo at WIBDI farm.
• Exclusive footage of Ban Ki Moon’s address to the Private Sector Meeting
• Exclusive video of Richard Branson’s message to the Private Sector Meeting
• Exclusive interview between youth reporters and Al Jazeera.
• More than 30 one-on-one interviews
• Media pick-ups – SIDSlive.com stories appeared in
  - ACP Agriportal – Facebook
  - Palemene o Samoa – Facebook (4500 members)
  - PNGloop.com
  - Cta.int
  - Scoop.co.nz
  - Pacific.scoop.co.nz
  - Forumsec.org
• Pictures and quotes from video was also used (and credited)
• UN DESA approach to share the content to their main UN SIDS site.

MEDIA NETWORKS
• Samoa Observer
• WIBDI media list (includes more than 60 media outlets)
• CTA

GAPS
• The team did not produce content specifically for radio and considering the reach of radio in SIDS, this was an opportunity missed.
• More Caribbean content needed. The SIDSlive team found it difficult to identify and connect with Caribbean delegates. There was an arranged time for interviews to be done on the Wednesday morning but no delegates showed up. Perhaps there needed to be more communication in the lead up to SIDS about the media opportunity that SIDSlive presented in connecting with the Caribbean delegates.
• Picking up news releases from other agencies to fill content gaps e.g. SPREP or SPC

IMPROVEMENTS
• Although the general outcome and process of SIDSlive was considered successful, the team suggested the following improvements:
  1. Longer lead-in time to establish the site (for SIDSlive this was achieved with the Carbon Offset news campaign that started on August 11).
  2. Having a news director set the schedule and co-ordinate daily tasks
  3. Need for all the reporters to have multi-media skills
  4. Need for two-day workshop to define and teach news products and process
  5. Separate editor and cameraman to address the bottleneck in processing videos.
  6. Full-time chaperone for youth reporters
  7. Microphone for tablet to improve quality of sounds
  8. More stories from the periphery
  9. More summary stories/videos to analyse events
  10. More focus on the “live” aspect
  11. Pre-conference video cutaways were not used and therefore not needed.

CO-ORDINATOR’S ASSESSMENT
There were many successes and lessons in the running of SIDSlive.com. As a pioneering and cooperative process for covering such a large conference, SIDSlive delivered a large number of stories both in video and text format. It also achieved many exclusive and “first” interviews.
In term of the economic efficiency of the project, next time I would source the reporters locally, with the exception of the web developer because that skill is difficult to source in the islands. However, as part of the training I would have a local counterpart shadow that position. I feel that, in a short time, the reporters and cameraman gained a lot of capacity for live, social media reporting but unfortunately in the case of SIDSlive, two of the team came from overseas. For SIDSlive also brought in an analyst/reporter and a cameraman/editor but it would be possible to get the same quality of production with increased training and media direction. In addition to that efficiency, due to the late approval of the proposal, the airfares were expensive. Contractors were still paid at their promised rate but the expenses incurred by WIBDI put undue pressure on the budget.

Skills and training wise, a two-day workshop is recommended to train participants in the various processes and products. One of the key learnings of SIDSlive was that all team members needed to have multi—media skills – TV interviewing, photography, writing, tweeting, Facebook, uploading and categorizing content. For the video team, the more that can be in-camera and less in the editing suite decreased the time needed to process content. I would also have a two-day post-conference clean-up and debrief. Even two-weeks after the project, we are still uploading some video content at my request to make sure that we post all the content that was filmed or photographed during SIDS.

In regards to our goal, CTA and the Pacific were well represented in the stories but, on balance, there needed to be more voices from the Caribbean and also more media dissemination points in the Caribbean.

Faafetai lava.

- www.womeninbusiness.ws
- www.facebook.com/wibdi
- www.twitter.com/wibdi_samoa
- www.youtube.com/wibdi

**Sharon Bhagwan Rolls, FemLINKPACIFIC, Suva, Fiji**

Dear colleagues,

This has been an interesting discussion and great to see the range of media forms being discussed.

FemLINKPACIFIC has taken an innovative multimedia media approach to community media forms – aside from the radio stations we operate and the associated production of radio programmes from within the communities including the focused Women’s Weather Watch campaign, we are also continuing to use television/video with a mix of social media as well.

Kind regards.

Web: www.femlinkpacific.org.fj
Twitter: @femlinkpacific
Facebook: http://www.facebook.com/pages/femLINKPACIFIC/256180025092
Radio: http://www.mixcloud.com/femlinkpacific
YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/user/femlinkpac

**Usha Harris, Macquarie University, Sydney, Australia**
Dear colleagues,

I would like to express my appreciation to the PSE members for generously sharing their experiences of participatory media use in their work. It was great to learn about these activities. As communities gain greater access to a range of ICTs there is no doubt that this form of community participation will continue to grow.

It would be useful to begin to think about how we can link theory with practice. One way would be to encourage greater networking of participatory media practitioners. If members are interested, I would like to suggest a panel presentation on the theme of participatory media use in the Pacific at the upcoming ANZCA (Australia & New Zealand Communication Association) Conference which will be held in early July at Newcastle University, which is 2 hours from Sydney. The theme of the conference is "Creating Space in the Fifth Estate".

Those interested can email me at usha.harris@mq.edu.au

Regards

Many thanks to all who contributed to this query!

If you have further information to share on this topic, please send it to Solution Exchange for the Climate Change and Development Community in the Pacific at ccd-pc@solutionexchange-un.net with the subject heading "Re: [ccd-pc-se] QUERY: Use of Participatory Media in Environmental Communication in the Pacific. Additional Reply."

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