



**CENTRE FOR POPULATION & ENVIRONMENTAL DEVELOPMENT
(CPED), BENIN CITY**

CPED

COMMUNICATION and DISSEMINATION PLAN, 2012-2016



The production and publication of this communication and Dissemination Plan is supported by the Think Tank Initiative Programme initiated and managed by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC)



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Preface

The changing patterns of the socio-economic challenges facing Nigeria during in the last three decades have generated an increased level of demand for policy and action research. The degree to which research is translated into policy action depends on the success of communicating research outputs between researchers and policymakers as well as practitioners. Consequently, the successful dissemination of research outputs to policymakers is now regarded as a key component of any research programme, not only as a means of translating research results into policy action, but also to provide reward for the investment in research. Effective communication between researchers and policymakers, however, provides a continual challenge, especially in Nigeria where policy maker still little attention to research outputs. For CPED to be able to translate its research outputs into policy, increased attention must be paid to communication and dissemination to stakeholders concerned with issues of socio-economic development in Nigeria. The underlying reason to disseminate research-based information is to assure it is appropriately considered for use in reaching decisions, making changes, or taking other specific actions designed to improve outcomes. That is, the goal of dissemination is utilization.

It is against this background that the Board of Trustees of CPED decided to set up a Technical Committee to prepare a Communication and Dissemination Plan for the Centre. The action of the Board was stimulated by the encouragement provided by the Think Tank Initiative which encourages organizations benefitting from the Think Tank Initiative to improve their communication and dissemination strategies. This Communication and Dissemination Plan of CPED provides the framework for the communication activities of CPED during the period, 2012-2016. The plan is designed to formalise all dissemination actions planned for CPED research outputs during the period and to provide guidelines on the approach. The overall purpose of the communication and dissemination plan is to ensure that information is shared with appropriate audiences on a timely basis and by the most effective means. More specifically, the objectives of the communication and dissemination and plan are: to establish and maintain mechanisms for effective and timely communication; to inform stakeholders of the progress of the development and encourage interactions between stakeholders; and to coordinate all levels and types of communication in relation to CPED research and intervention outputs.

We are particularly grateful to the *Think Tank Initiative* for the support provided to CPED which has enabled the Centre to prepare this communication and Dissemination plan.

Professor Emeritus Andrew G. Onokerhoraye
Executive Director

CONTENTS

	PAGE
Introduction.....	4
CPED’s Past Experience and Performance in Resource Mobilisation	9
Challenges Facing Research Communication and Dissemination to Influence Policy in Nigeria	11
Swot Analysis of CPED With Respect to Communication and Dissemination of Research Outputs.....	14
Goal and Objectives of CPED Communication and Dissemination Plan	15
Identification and Mapping of the Target Audience for Policy Influence in Nigeria	16
Strategic Approaches to Communication and Dissemination	22
Monitoring and Evaluation	27

INTRODUCTION

Interest in evidence-based policy and practice has grown in development circles during the last three decades. The growing trend towards evidence-based policy formation has increased the demand for research outputs that can provide clear, concise policy-relevant findings. The growth of large donor-funded research programmes in developing countries has increased the need to provide evidence of policy impact, which in turn has placed greater importance on ensuring that research outputs are communicated effectively to policymakers. Indeed, it has been argued that the success of a country's development efforts now depend upon the degree to which its policy makers, planners and program managers use and apply research for decision-making. The degree to which research is translated into policy action depends on the success of communicating research outputs between researchers and policymakers as well as practitioners. Consequently, the successful dissemination of research outputs to policymakers is now regarded as a key component of any research programme, not only as a means of translating research results into policy action, but also to provide reward for the investment in research. Effective communication between researchers and policymakers, however, provides a continual challenge, especially in developing countries. Although considerable improvements have been made in the dissemination of research, a gap still persists between the development of useful research findings and their utilization by those whose duty it is apply to the research outputs.

Every year considerable research is conducted in research institutions in Nigeria and findings from the researches are disseminated through various academic publications. Often these findings only end up in libraries, drawers and the pages of academic journals without being effectively used by policy makers and practitioners in the country. There is a tendency for research results in Nigeria, as in many other developing countries, to be presented at international conferences to which government ministries and policy makers in the south may not have access. Consequently, the purpose of the research activity in terms of contributing to development strategies is defeated. There is widespread agreement that socio-economic research should be more accessible and useful to policy makers and other key stakeholders at the national, state, and local level in Nigeria.

Governments in Nigeria do not have a cohesive research policy and rarely acknowledge the potential of academicians in providing research results that could be used in policy development. This is particularly the case with respect to the social sciences as governments tend to see more immediate value in the technical solutions emerging from research, but less in the outcomes of social science research. Policy makers in Nigeria often turn primarily to international organizations or their own technical experts to obtain information and analysis as policy inputs. Local universities and research institutes may have the capacity but are often not able to engage in cooperation with policy makers. Outsourcing of research to internationally known institutions may provide credible references that could give weight to recommendations or be used by the government to raise funds to support the implementation of specific policies. In order to guarantee adequate future funding for research, and ensure that national and institutional research cultures were developed, governments at the federal and state levels in Nigeria need to appreciate the value of research. There is the need for raising the consciousness of the Nigerian public and policy makers, both with respect to the value that the disciplines of social sciences and humanities bring to the Nigerian society and the facilities required to underpin their roles in poverty reduction and socio-economic development. It is in this context that the Centre for Population and Environmental

Development (CPED) has developed this communication and dissemination plan for its research output activities during the period 2012 to 2016.

Perspectives on CPED

The *Centre for Population and Environmental Development (CPED)* is an independent, non-partisan, non-profit and non-governmental organization dedicated to promoting sustainable development and reducing poverty and inequality through policy oriented research and active engagement on development issues. CPED started as an action research group based in the University of Benin, Benin City, Nigeria in 1985. The action research group was concerned with applied research on sustainable development and poverty reduction challenges facing Nigeria. The research group also believed that communication, outreach and intervention programs, which can demonstrate the relevance and effectiveness of research findings and recommendations for policy and poverty reduction, especially at the grassroots level, must be key components of its action research. The emphasis was also on the participation of key stakeholders in the research and sustainable development programs in their locality. In order to translate its activities more widely, the Benin Social Science Research Group was transformed into an independent research and action Centre in 1998. It was formally registered in Nigeria as such by the National Corporate Affairs Commission in 1999. The establishment of CPED is influenced by three major developments. In the first place, the economic crisis of the 1980s that affected African countries including Nigeria led to poor funding of higher education, the emigration of academics to advanced countries which affected, negatively, the quality of research on national development issues emanating from the universities which are the main institutions with the structures and capacity to carry out research and promote discourse on socio-economic development. Secondly, the critical linkage between an independent research or think tank organisation and an outreach program that translates the findings into policy and at the same time test the applicability and effectiveness of the recommendations emanating from research findings has been lacking. Finally, an independent institution that is focusing on a holistic approach to sustainable development and poverty reduction in terms of research, communications and outreach activities is needed in Nigeria. CPED recognises that the core functions of new knowledge creation (research) and the application of knowledge for development (communication and outreach) are key challenges facing sustainable development and poverty reduction in Nigeria where little attention has been paid to the use of knowledge generated in academic institutions. Thus, CPED was created as a way of widening national and regional policy and development debate, provide learning and research opportunities and give visibility to action programs relating to sustainable development and poverty reduction in different parts of Nigeria and beyond.

CPED's Long Range Strategic Plan

CPED, right from its inception, was committed to organisational improvement and growth. This commitment influenced, within one year of its establishment, the preparation of its long range fifteen-year strategic plan, 2001-2015. The Board of Trustees of CPED specifically directed in 2001 that the *Centre's Strategic Plan* should be conceived within the framework of the then newly proclaimed *Millennium Development Goals (MDG)* of the United Nations of which Nigeria is a signatory. It was argued that considering the broad aim of the establishment of CPED which is to carry out policy-oriented research, communication and intervention activities in Nigeria, the MDG should provide the broad framework for the articulation of the key components of CPED's strategic plan. Recognising that the magnitude

and quality of socio- economic growth and overall development will have an important bearing on achieving the *Millennium Development Goals*, CPED's research agenda is focusing on selected topical and methodological policy-oriented research areas. These are expected to have a strong leverage as regards sustainable development and poverty reduction and/or to provide a significant contribution towards evaluating and monitoring progress in poverty reduction, with the overriding objective of identifying pathways out of slow socio-economic development and the prevalence of extreme poverty in Nigeria.

CPED's Five Year Strategic Plan, 2010-2014

Following the observations of the assessment team from the *Think Tank Initiative* under the leadership of the *International Development Research Centre (IDRC)* with respect to the need for a shorter and more concise strategic plan, the Board of Trustees of CPED decided to revise the original strategic plan so as to reflect the realities of policy research and communication in the next five years (2010-2014). The Board noted that the revised five-year strategic plan will almost coincide with the end of the *Millennium Development Goals* (MDG). The Board of Trustees appointed a Consultant to pilot the preparation of the new five-year strategic plan in September 2009. The Board also directed that the preparation must adopt a participatory process so that all the key stakeholders in CPED, its local partners and policy makers, especially at the grassroots level which are the major target of CPED policy research activities take part in the preparation of the new five-year strategic plan. CPED's Five Year Strategic Plan seeks to consolidate and build on its modest achievements of the past ten years to make the organisation one of the most unique independent policy research institutions in Nigeria which combines policy research with communication, outreach and intervention programmes.

Building on the experience and achievements of the last ten years, CPED will pursue, in the next five years, a programme of work driven by five inter-related objectives as follows:

- To carry out high quality of policy and action-oriented research on socio-economic development in Nigeria in particular and other parts of West Africa in general;
- To promote the utilization of independent policy research findings by various levels of government through effective communications of research results;
- To carry out some intervention programmes on socio-economic development and poverty reduction arising from the findings of the research conducted by CPED;
- To strengthen the institutional capacity of CPED as a key public policy research and advocacy think tank in Nigeria in particular and Africa in general so as to be able to pursue the various objectives outlined above; and
- To empower CPED's partners and stakeholders, especially at the grassroots level, to participate in the promotion of good governance and socio-economic development.

CPED's Core Programme Areas: Under the five-year programme of work, CPED activities will focus on four broad areas reflecting the objectives set for the five-year period as follows:

- (i) Research;
- (ii) Communications and outreach;
- (iii) Intervention programmes; and
- (iv) Capacity Building of CPED and partners.

Research: CPED recognises that the core functions of new knowledge creation (research) and the application of knowledge for development is a key challenge facing development planning in Nigeria where little attention has been paid to the use of knowledge generated in

academic institutions over the years. The key challenge of CPED during the five year strategic plan period is the generation of knowledge. As a knowledge-based development institution, CPED has a unique and prominent role in serving both the current needs and future aspirations of society in Nigeria. Four research thematic areas will be targeted by CPED during the five-year period as follows:

1. Growth with equity in Nigeria;
2. Conflict and Development in Nigeria's Niger Delta region;
3. Education and Development in Nigeria; and
4. Health including HIV/AIDS and development in Nigeria.

Communications and Outreach: Partnership development with public and private sector/civil society organisations:

- CPED identifies all key local government, state government, and federal government agencies involved in poverty alleviation or grassroots development in Nigeria.
- CPED identifies private sector organisations particularly oil companies that have programmes or interested in poverty alleviation in the communities in Nigeria.
- CPED identifies local, national and international governmental and civil society organisations interested in poverty alleviation activities in Nigeria.
- Partnership network is facilitated by CPED to link empowered local stakeholders with the identified public, private and civil society organisations.
- Disseminate our research and analysis through multiple channels and formats including reports, policy briefs for policy makers, a revamped website, an improved biannually newsletter largely for policy makers.
- Getting our research published in respected sources and used in policy which will also reveal the quality of our research based on it's acceptance for publication in reviewed and respected sources.
- Convene and host workshops and dialogues on socio-economic development issues, especially in the context of grassroots development and Niger Delta development challenges.

Intervention Programmes on Socio-economic Development: Beyond action and policy oriented research and its communication/outreach activities, our mandate entails implementing intervention activities in our identified areas of policy research during the five-year strategic plan period. In this context intervention programmes that benefit largely deprived rural communities and other disadvantaged people will be carried out including:

- Intervention projects on local participation in development planning;
- Intervention projects on poverty reduction at the local level particularly in rural communities;
- Intervention projects on promoting good governance at the grassroots level to hold elected representatives accountable to the people that elect them;
- Intervention projects on promoting poverty reduction in the Niger Delta region with specific reference to environment, services delivery and good governance;
- Intervention projects on conflict resolution and peace building in the Niger Delta region;
- Intervention projects on promoting participation in education at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels by grassroots population, especially on women enrolment;
- Intervention projects on promoting improved health care delivery to disadvantaged groups, especially in the rural communities across Nigeria; and

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- Intervention projects on control of the spread of HIV/AIDS as well as the care and support of those affected.

Capacity Building of CPED: One common factor, which is essential for the success of CPED, is the importance of capacity building and sustainability of key institutions involved in program implementation. Experiences over the years in Africa and in Nigeria in particular have shown that one of the major problems that have militated against the successful implementation of development programs has been poor institutional and capacity base of implementing agencies. This problem which has hitherto been characteristic of the public sector and which has led to the reliance of many international aid agencies to channel their assistance through non-governmental organisations is also becoming a problem in civil society sector. This is due to the fact that capacity building in most African countries has focused largely on the public sector. Little or no attention has been given to strengthening and empowering non-state actors, especially at the local level. Moreover, most donor assistance tends to focus on physical results, such as health improvement; credit availability etc. while less attention is paid to capacity building of key civil society organisations. In some cases the NGOs have disappeared with the founding leadership of the organisations. It is against this background that CPED believes that the process of strengthening partner organisations including community based organisations must be a key mechanism for the achievement of its mandate during the next five years. This includes the strengthening of CPED to be able to fulfil its mandate during the strategic plan period. The capacity building of CPED and its partners will entail the following:

- Improve the equipment and facilities in CPED offices;
- Improve the governance and management structure of CPED;
- Put in place clear systems for managing and appointing staff performance and dealing with promotion, progression and remuneration;
- Revamp CPED's website with the aim of making it a key instrument in communications and outreach activities;
- Recruit Senior research staff to enhance the research capacity of CPED;
- Recruit senior programme staff for intervention and communications activities;
- Continue to implement the training plan for CPED staff so as to enhance their effectiveness;
- Establish CPED branch offices in specific parts of the country;

Capacity Building of Partners: The capacity building of partners will entail the following:

- Identify and build the capacity of local partners in intervention project areas in different parts of the country;
- Support for the founding/establishment of new community-based groups where the existing ones are not effective;
- Continue to build network links with the empowered local partners and other stakeholders;
- Build a contact base that allows CPED to manage its relationships with local partners efficiently and effectively;
- Source for funds from key donors for the core activities of CPED;
- Deliver on our existing commitments and take steps to persuade our existing funders to continue their support;
- Continue to seek and take on commissioned work where it fits with our broader research, communications and intervention agenda; and

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- Work with a consultant to create a strategy for delivering additional external capacity-building support.

CPED's Earlier Experience and Performance on Communications and Dissemination

During the first ten years, CPED was involved in different communication, outreach and intervention activities that have contributed to policy development in various aspects of sustainable development and poverty reduction at the local, state and national levels in Nigeria including the following:

- In collaboration with the *Shell Petroleum Development Company (SPDC)*, CPED has organised over ten policy development workshops relating to sustainable development and poverty reduction in Nigeria, especially at the grassroots level in the oil producing communities of the Niger Delta region.
- In collaboration with local and community-based civil society organizations, CPED has organised over 200 local and community based workshops designed to promote sustainable development and poverty reduction awareness, strategies and policies.
- In collaboration with the Niger Delta Development Commission, CPED has organized five workshops on sustainable development planning strategies in the Niger Delta region.
- In collaboration with about twenty state governments out of the thirty six in the country, CPED has organized over 50 workshops on policy development with respect to sustainable development, poverty reduction and strategies to attain the *Millennium Development Goals (MDG)*
- In collaboration with International Agencies such as the *World Health Organisation (WHO)*, *MacArthur Foundation*, *Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO)*, the *Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC)*, *European Commission*, and *United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)*, CPED has organized over fifteen policy workshops on policy development and associated strategies on different aspects of sustainable development and poverty reduction in Nigeria.
- CPED has implemented over 35 outreach and intervention projects some of which arose from the action research activities. These outreach and intervention projects focused on different aspects of sustainable development and poverty reduction such as primary health care, reproductive health, HIV/AIDS, forest management, local and community development plan preparation, peace building, agricultural production, education, human rights, empowerment of women, etc.

The different communication and intervention activities of CPED during the first ten years of its existence have resulted in the communication of action research results to policy makers while some of the communication activities have led to the development of specific policies being implemented at the state and local government levels in Nigeria. The intervention programmes have brought considerable benefits to the target population, groups and beneficiaries in terms of poverty reduction. An estimated 35 million people comprising government officials, leaders of public and civil society organizations, leaders of communities, women, youths, and children have benefited directly and indirectly from the outreach and intervention activities of CPED across Nigeria. Thus many of CPED's outputs appear to have contributed to the achievement of considerable results, at the outcome level. CPED has had a demonstrable effect in improving the lives of the poor in different parts of Nigeria.

CPED carried out a major organizational assessment and evaluation covering the first ten years i.e. 2001 to 2009. The conclusions of the evaluation with respect to communication and Dissemination are as follows:

“CPED identifies a wide set of constituencies that it targets for communication and dissemination of its work. This includes federal, state and local governments and their agencies, national and local NGOs, international agencies, private sector organizations, the academic community, the media and the general public.

CPED has made efforts to upgrade its communication strategy since 2001. It aims to become more strategic in its dissemination, reducing the number of hard-copy publications and promoting more downloading of publications from its web site. It has pruned its distribution lists and the number of printed copies it is producing of any publication. It is giving more emphasis to generating visibility through more public launches of its publications and identifying strategic events for the launch occasions. It has been successful in recent years with this approach.

A major evolution in the period 2001-2009 among applied research and policy institutes has been a dramatic increase in developing knowledge and research networks. Advocacy networks have also grown rapidly and some involve thousands of organizations and individuals. The internet and electronic communication has made it easy to create linkages among institutions and individuals on a global basis. These networks are perceived as bringing benefits in sharing experience, expertise, resources and credibility. Applied research institutes have been active in participating in such networks. Some organizations have taken on a role as a knowledge broker for these networks.

CPED is striving to be both a knowledge generator in that it conducts its own research, collecting and analyzing data as well as having a limited type of knowledge brokering where it collects and summarizes existing knowledge from a variety of sources. CPED management estimated that more than half of its action research work has been devoted to generating new knowledge although it is shifting and it intends to keep shifting more attention to brokering knowledge. CPED will have to continue to maintain its own research in some cases where, there are no other institutions that can do this research or do it as effectively as CPED. It also needs to maintain this in house research analysis to maintain its own *staff* expertise, knowledge and credibility in interactions with other partners. These are complementary functions and the issue for CPED is the balance it should maintain between these two functions.

One of CPED's objectives stated for the present strategic planning period is to enhance its partnerships with research and policy institutions, and development agencies. CPED has played a role in helping create networks, particularly at the grassroots level in the last six years. CPED was involved in working with over 500 organisations in different parts of Nigeria and preparing a shared database. Thus CPED has made progress in helping to create or to link to more policy or advocacy networks in the last few years although most of these can be classified at the lower level of systematic consultation and collaboration.”

It is in the context of the lessons of the past experiences at research communication and dissemination, as noted by the Evaluator of CPED over its first ten years (2001-2009) and within the framework of the current five year strategic plan (2010-2014), that the present Communication and dissemination Plan has been approved by CPED's Board of Trustees.

CHALLENGES FACING RESEARCH COMMUNICATION AND DISSEMINATION TO INFLUENCE POLICY IN NIGERIA

CPED's dissemination and communications plan was prepared against the background of the extensive review and analysis of the challenges facing the dissemination and communication of research output in Nigeria which the plan must attempt to address from CPED perspective. Some of these challenges and constraints are outline below:

Policy-maker's perceptions of research

The policy environment in Nigeria is still not effectively focused towards the incorporation of research in policy formation and programme development. This is a major barrier to the dissemination of research output to policy-makers in Nigeria. Basically research in Nigeria is given low priority by policy-makers and as a result research findings are not valued in policy formation. Thus academic research is often seen to have little contribution to the policy development process, and policy-makers are not fully appreciating the potential contribution of research in enhancing policy formation. Policy-makers in Nigeria don't see the role that research plays in everyday situations. Most senior government officials don't appreciate the role of research in programmes. Part of the explanation for this situation in Nigeria as in other countries relates to the fact that policy-makers might not fully understand how to use research to support policy formation. Policy-makers might not have the ability to evaluate the quality of a research study or to interpret research findings, thus experiencing difficulties in translating research findings into policy action. This may lead to the failure to incorporate research into policy or to extraneous conclusions drawn from research results.

Policy-maker's emphasis on statistics

Policy-makers in Nigeria tend to place a strong emphasis on the use of statistics from research outputs. While one notes the importance of measurement indicators, and the increasing pressure on policy-makers to justify programmes or quantify changes, the focus on statistics under-utilised research results. There is no doubt that substantive issues arising from the research could also impact on policy.

Lack of dissemination skills and access to policy-makers

A common challenge to successful research communication and dissemination relates to lack of skills in dissemination of research to policy audiences. There is generally lack of training in communication of research findings outside academic circles. Often researchers are also uncertain about whom to disseminate research findings to, and expressed difficulties in identifying and accessing policy-makers. The frequent changes in government portfolios in Nigeria meant that developing and maintaining links with policy-makers was problematic.

Lack of dissemination resources

Another fundamental barrier to effective dissemination of research outputs is the lack of resources for dissemination activities beyond the distribution of a research report. Although resource issues are less apparent for donor-funded research, for government sponsored or independent research, resource constraints often negatively impact on dissemination activities. The lack of resources also restricts the professional presentation of information for

policy audiences. The extent of the effectiveness of dissemination and communication surely depends on the amount of resources provided in each research activity for dissemination.

Limitations of donor influences

A significant proportion of the socio-economic research in Nigeria as in many developing countries is initiated and funded by international agencies. The prominence of donor-driven research raised a number of issues related to dissemination and communication. First, there are disparities between the socio-economic issues investigated by international donor agencies and the priority areas of national policy-makers hence policy-makers often disregard research outputs that are not focused on national areas of priority. Second, researchers are typically involved in donor-initiated research as consultants and are not obliged to become involved in dissemination activities. Thus, a protocol has developed whereby researchers pass research findings only to the donor agency and then move on to the next consultancy. In this situation, the onus is on the donor agency to disseminate research outputs more widely. There is no doubt that involving researchers in the dissemination process would be beneficial as they are usually more aware of the context of the issues brought out in the research. Third, research conducted by international agencies often has limited time to consult national policy-makers and identify priority research issues. This situation leads to a limited understanding of the cultural and contextual issues surrounding the research, and there are particular limitations with policy recommendations that fail to reflect 'on the ground' realities. The research outputs are almost likely to be presented at international conferences or published in international journals, and hence not easily accessible to local policy-makers and government ministries.

Limited access to research outputs by policy makers

Accessing research outputs is one of the greatest difficulties faced by policy-makers in utilising research findings in Nigeria. Policy-makers often point out that research outputs generally do not reach ministries or government officials as they are disseminated in academic circles or passed only to donor agencies. Policy-makers seldom access these channels of dissemination, so scientific information with the potential to support policy formation has limited accessibility to all the relevant stakeholders. Researchers carry out research for dissemination in publications or technical papers where policy-makers don't get the chance to read. There is still a gap in utilising the available research into programming or policymaking. There is a need for wider nation-wide dissemination of research outputs in Nigeria.

Quality of research output

The quality of research in Nigeria in recent years is also an issue that discourages some policy-makers from using local research outputs and prompts them to seek research findings from international agencies. Policy-makers often feel that the lack of government investment in the research sector meant that local researchers have not had the advantage of expert training afforded to those in international agencies, and so the technical competence to undertake research of an international standard are not fully developed. International NGOs have worked hard and better at developing ways to approach policy-makers compared with local researchers.

Lack of formal communication channels

The lack of formal channels of communication is a major barrier to effective dissemination of research outputs in Nigeria. Policy-makers often face difficulties in identifying researchers beyond informal contacts, and researchers on their part face problems in identifying policy-makers to whom to disseminate research outputs. A communication forum would enable effective dialogue between researchers and policymakers. To foster more effective communication between researchers and policymakers, there is need for researchers to be included on government decision making bodies on socio-economic development programmes so as to identify priority research areas and define appropriate research agendas to allow research activities to respond to programmatic needs.

Lack of collaborative research

Policy-makers often point out that when they are involved in the research process, had commissioned the research, or the research was in direct response to a policy need, it was more likely to be utilised for policy development. Researchers in Nigeria also believe that the involvement of policy-makers in the research process can lead to a more effective consideration of policy issues, political limitations and practical realities in implementing the research findings. Thus in situations where most research in Nigeria are conducted without collaboration between researchers and policy-makers has posed a significant barrier to dissemination. Collaboration between researchers and policy-makers can take place at various stages in the research process such as in defining research proposals, designing research questions, and particularly in shaping policy recommendations that are realistic and relevant to the resource constraints of the ministries. Ensuring that policy-makers gain a sense of ownership of the research is crucial to the uptake of findings, illustrating the importance of developing a relationship of trust between researchers and the policymakers.

Format of research outputs

Many policy-makers find difficulties with the format and style in which research outputs are presented, noting that research reports are often written in an academic style using technical language and including complex statistics that are difficult to understand. Policy-makers often state that research outputs are too lengthy and that concise, well-structured reports with an executive summary of the key findings and policy implications are more appropriate. One of the critical issues for policy-makers in using research outputs is the frequent absence of policy implications or recommended interventions from the research. Furthermore, policy implications that are presented are often too general or unrealistic in terms of resources. Some policy-makers feel that a range of policy recommendations should be provided such as short, medium and long-term strategies and that options should be given for various resource scenarios. Researchers also observe that policy-makers often judge the policy recommendations simply on practicality and affordability of implementation rather than on the importance of the issue.

SWOT ANALYSIS OF CPED WITH RESPECT TO COMMUNICATION AND DISSEMINATION OF RESEARCH OUTPUTS

Although CPED has carried out a SWOT analysis during the preparation of its current five year strategic plan, the purpose of this SWOT analysis is not to duplicate what CPED has done in the strategic plan, but to think of CPED's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats *from the specific angle of communication and dissemination of research outputs*. While strengths and weaknesses are internal to CPED and can be managed and controlled internally, threats and opportunities are external factors. The results of a SWOT analysis conducted on the communication and dissemination capabilities of CPED are as follows:

Strengths

- An Effective Board of Trustees committed to research communication
- An Effective Management committed to research communication
- Existence of a five year Strategic plan
- Existence of strong partnership with public and private organizations
- Strong policy research and outreach capability
- Local and national credibility
- Networking and partnering with key stakeholders
- Solid reputation

Weaknesses

- Absence of a communications strategy and an *ad hoc* approach to research communication and dissemination,
- Lack of separate funds earmarked to research communication and dissemination
- Lack of staff dedicated to undertaking communications,
- Lack of reliable infrastructure (e.g. electricity supply),

Opportunities

- Recognition of CPED by policy makers as a key research and outreach centre
- A good track record and reputation for delivering research outputs
- Involvement in regular in policy dialogue
- CPED capability in networking with key partners
- Networking opportunities with other organizations
- Increased demand for the research services provided by CPED
- Increasing demand for evidence based knowledge by government and international actors

Threats

- Government attitudes in Nigeria (Governments view NGOs as a threat/competitors)
- Too much dependence on foreign donors in times of global financial challenges
- Apathy amongst staff on communications and dissemination activities

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- The current global economic downturn may also be having a negative effect on available resources for socio-economic research and dissemination

GOAL AND OBJECTIVES OF CPED COMMUNICATION AND DISSEMINATION PLAN

CPED's communications and dissemination plan is derived from its mission and current strategic plan's goals and objectives. Without reflecting the strategic plan, the communication and dissemination plan will not have any solid foundation. CPED's Communication and Dissemination Plan is guided by greater long-term perspective with the main purpose of influencing policy in Nigeria. Thus, the communications and dissemination plan entails articulating strategies that will enhance the role of CPED in influencing policy on socio-economic development in the country. Traditionally research projects are long and complex, but, as far as possible, the communication objectives should be simple and measurable. It should be noted that communication objectives and activities will probably change over time, as the project evolves and intermediate results are made progressively available. In the early stages, for example, the priority is set on presenting specific projects in order to build awareness rather than seeking for influence. At a later stage, when the pilot applications start to offer results, it will be time to make proposals to policy-makers, or to promote the adoption of certain solutions, standards, etc. to relevant organisations/companies. For this reason, the objectives should be flexible enough to accommodate each situation.

Goal and Objectives of CPED's Communication and Dissemination Plan

The overall goal of CPED's communication and dissemination plan is to carry out communication to policy makers and other stakeholders in Nigeria and also promote the use of the outputs of the research carried out by CPED and its partners.

The specific objectives include the following:

- To promote the utilization of CPED's policy research outputs by various levels of government through effective communication and dissemination of the research results;
- To strengthen the capacity of CPED as an advocacy think tank in Nigeria in particular and Africa in general;
- To empower CPED's partners and stakeholders, especially at the grassroots level, to participate in the communication and dissemination of research outputs on socio-economic development in Nigeria;
- To provide a feedback from the communication and dissemination activities into the orientation of policy and action-oriented research on socio-economic development in Nigeria

Some key questions:

The overall goal and specific objectives mentioned above place CPED in the appropriate stage to ask the following key questions that guide this plan document:

- Why is CPED communicating?
- What is CPED hoping to achieve?

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- How does CPED want the audience to react as a result of its communication activities?
 - How will CPED know if it has made any difference?

Some key principles:

Besides, there are some general principles that should be born in mind in CPED's communication and dissemination activities:

- Disseminate research outputs as widely as possible;
- Be clear on the principles underpinning the strategy, producing honest, succinct, credible and cost-effective communications;
- Develop simple messages and model how these might work in different contexts: press releases, reports, newspaper articles, website page, etc.
- Be clear about the target audiences and user groups and prioritise them according to importance and influence relative to CPED's research programmes.
- Think about both the actual and preferred channels that CPED's target audiences might use and examine whether CPED is planning to use the right ones for reaching the maximum impact.
- Keep it manageable and do not underestimate the time involved in communication.
- Estimate the involved time and money, prioritising the audiences and channels and focusing on high impact/low cost activity.
- Build awareness of CPED's research and intervention activities among a wide but defined group of audiences and user groups.
- Influence specific policies or policy-makers around key aspects.

IDENTIFICATION AND MAPPING OF THE TARGET AUDIENCE FOR POLICY INFLUENCE IN NIGERIA

It was essential to identify those that will be interested or affected by CPED's research activities in the next five years as these that will constitute the target audience of the communication and dissemination activities. It is crucial to know who CPED is communicating with. CPED has already a clear idea of its key audiences and user groups and it is necessary to rank them according to the importance and influence relative to CPED's communications objectives and priorities. So the first task should be to identify and prioritise these audiences. CPED's Communication and Dissemination Plan spent some time to first scan the situation in Nigeria so as to construct a *target audience's map* that will constitute the focus of attention within the context of the research being carried out by CPED. CPED recognizes the need to convince different stakeholders to support its communication and dissemination activities. The following target audiences were identified in the communications and dissemination plan:

Centre for Population and Environmental Development (CPED)

CPED as an organization is the first target audience in communication and dissemination of research outputs because CPED stakeholders must believe and be empowered to play important roles in communication and dissemination of research outputs to other identified audiences in Nigeria and beyond. In this context, the following stakeholders within CPED

must be committed to communications and dissemination of research outputs during the plan period and possibly beyond.

- Board of Trustee (BOT)
- Management and all other decision making Staff
- Fellows and Part-Time Staff

International (Bilateral & Multilateral) Organisations/Donors

International organizations have pioneered the funding of the communication and dissemination of research outputs in developing countries including Nigeria during the last fifty years. In fact most of the major research projects funded by international NGOs do make specific provision for communication and dissemination of research outputs to policy makers and other stakeholders. This indicates that CPED must during the period of the implementation of the present communication and dissemination plan continue to interact with international organizations in terms of collaboration and financial support for CPED's research programmes as well as communication and dissemination. CPED must therefore strive to work with a large range of international organizations including the following international organizations in its communication and dissemination programme.

- UNDP
- WHO
- FAO
- UNEP
- CORAID
- European Commission (EC)
- USAID
- United State Institute For Peace (USIP)
- DFID
- CIDA
- IDRC
- MacArthur Foundation
- Shell Foundation UK
- Ford Foundation

Federal Government Ministries and Agencies

The Federal Government of Nigeria plays a major role in the articulation and implementation of various socio-economic development policies and programmes in Nigeria. In fact the Federal Government of Nigeria utilizes over 55 per cent of the public sector revenue generated in Nigeria for various socio-economic and political programmes of the government. The programmes and activities of the Federal Government of Nigeria are carried out through various government ministries, departments and agencies. In order to influence policies on various aspects of socio-economic development in Nigeria CPED must interact and collaborate with a wide range of Federal Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies including the following:

- National Planning Commission
- Federal Ministry of Education
- Federal Ministry of Health

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- Federal Ministry of Petroleum Resources
 - Federal Ministry of Works and Housing
 - The National Assembly and its committees
 - National Youth Service Corp
 - Niger Delta Development Commission
 - Federal Ministry of Niger Delta
 - Federal Ministry of Internal Affairs
 - The Nigerian Police Service Commission
 - The Independent Electoral Commission
 - The National Orientation Agency
 - The National Television Authority
 - The Radio Corporation of Nigeria
 - Political Party Offices

State Government Agencies and Ministries

The 36 State Governments in Nigeria also play major roles in the articulation and implementation of various socio-economic development policies and programmes within the different states in the country. The 36 State Governments in Nigeria utilizes about 35 per cent of the public sector revenue generated in Nigeria for various socio-economic and political programmes of the state governments. The programmes and activities of the State Governments in Nigeria are also carried out through various government ministries, departments and agencies. In order to influence policies on various aspects of socio-economic development at the state level in Nigeria, CPED must interact and collaborate with a wide range of State Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies including the following:

- Ministries of Education, Health, Finance, Economic Development, Works and Housing, Women Affairs, Environment Local Government Affairs in the nine Niger Delta States (Abia, AkwaIbom, Bayelsa, Cross River, Delta, Edo, Imo, Ondo and Rivers States,);
- Ministries of Education, Health, Finance, Economic Development, Works and Housing, Justice, Women Affairs, Environment Local Government Affairs in the nine Niger Delta States in Other States (Adamawa, Bauchi, Kaduna, Gombe, Kogi, Ogun and Sokoto);
- The remaining states in Nigeria, specifically Ministries of Education, Health, Planning, Social Welfare Justice Environment and Local Government;
- State owned media organizations;
- The State Assemblies and their committees;
- Edo State Oil Producing Areas Development Commission;
- Delta State Oil Producing Areas Development Commission;
- Ondo State Oil Producing Areas Development Commission.
- Political Party Offices

Local Government Authorities LGA

There are 774 Local Governments in Nigeria and these also play significant roles in the articulation and implementation of local development programmes within their respective local government areas. The Local Governments in Nigeria utilizes about 20 per cent of the

public sector revenue generated in Nigeria for various local development programmes. The programmes and activities of Local Governments in Nigeria are also carried out through various local government departments. In order to influence policies on various aspects of local development in Nigeria, CPED must interact and collaborate with various Local Government Departments in the following States where CPED is at present very active in terms of research and intervention activities:

- Niger Delta State LGAs specifically Departments of; Community Mobilisation, Primary Health Care (PHC), Primary Education Board and Environment (Abia, Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross River, Delta, Edo, Imo, Ondo and Rivers States LGAs);
- Other State LGAs specifically Departments of; Community Mobilisation, Primary Health Care (PHC), Primary Education Board and Environment (Adamawa, Bauchi, Gombe, Kogi, Ogun, Sokoto States LGAs);
- The remaining LGAs in Nigeria specifically Departments of; Community Mobilisation, Primary Health Care (PHC), Primary Education Board and Environment.
- The Local Government Legislative Committees
- Political Party Offices

Communities

Community stakeholders in different parts of Nigeria have historically played important roles in the development of their localities by engaging in various self help programmes. The active involvement of communities in the socio-economic development of their localities declined during the early years of independence when politicians struggling for independence from colonial powers promised that government will provide every development needs of the people. The failure of politicians to achieve their promises led to the people to return to self help programmes in the last fifty years. At the same time community stakeholders have become conscious of their rights and do put pressure on the various levels of government to meet their needs. It is this context that CPED has to collaborate and partner with community stakeholders to promote communication and dissemination of research outputs for policy makers to implement in the development of their communities. Stakeholders in the communities in the following States where CPED is at present very active in terms of research and intervention activities should receive priority attention in communication and dissemination activities.

- Communities in the Niger Delta States (Abia, Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross River, Delta, Edo, Imo, Ondo and Rivers States,)
- Other State Communities (Abia, Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross River, Delta, Edo, Imo, Ondo and Rivers States)
- Traditional Institutions and Community Leaders

National and Local NGOs

Following the emergence of democracy in Nigeria in 1999 the civil society sector has developed remarkably as many NGOs at the national, local and community level have emerged in different parts of the country. Civil society organizations are playing important roles through advocacy in influencing policy makers at the national, state and local levels. CPED needs to partner with these civil society organizations in advocacy activities to

influence policy through the communication and dissemination of relevant research outputs to them for use in advocacy activities. Basically the categories of civil society organizations to collaborate and partner with CPED include:

- National Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs)
- Local Non Governmental Organisation (NGOs)
- Community Based Organisations (CBOs)

Corporate organizations, particularly oil producing companies

Corporate responsibility is now regarded as an essential component of the development programme at the local level in Nigeria. Following the protests and conflict between corporate organizations and communities where such organizations operate, it has become mandatory for them to play significant roles in the promotion of development in the localities where they operate. This is particularly important in the Niger Delta region where conflict between oil prospecting companies and the local inhabitants have become endemic. It is in this context that CPED must work with oil companies to articulate community development policies. Some of these companies with which CPED should collaborate through communication and dissemination of relevant research outputs include:

- SPDC
- Ex-Mobil
- Other Indigenous and foreign Oil Companies
- Industrial and commercial business owners
- Officials of merchants' associations
- Employment agency management
- Contractors and construction company officials
- Union Leaders

Independent Radio, Television and Newspaper Houses in Nigeria

Apart from government controlled media organizations, there are a large number of independent media outlets which can provide the means for communicating and disseminating research outputs relevant to influencing policy on socio-economic development in Nigeria. Some of these media outlets include:

- National Newspapers
- Radio Houses
- Television Houses
- Newspaper editors and publishers, key reporters
- Radio and TV station managers, news directors, key reporters/announcers

Local Foundations

In recent years wealthy Nigerians and successful corporate organizations have established Foundations through which they contribute to the promotion of socio-economic development across the country. Apart from providing funding, the type of activities they choose to support with their funds should reflect the results of research so that their activities can be meaningful. CPED has a role to play in communicating and disseminating to these

foundations results of research so as to influence their policies with respect to the type of activities they will support.

- Dangote Foundation
- Danjuma Foundation
- Elumelu Foundation
- Other Nigerian and Corporate Foundations

Civic Leaders

The role of community stakeholders in the development of communities is well known in Nigeria as pointed out earlier. CPED need to continue to partner with the key civic leaders of communities and other organizations through communication and dissemination of research outputs so that with their corporation they can collectively influence policy at the federal, state and local levels in Nigeria.

- Community service organizations
- Officers of service clubs
- Veterans' associations
- Community action groups
- Minority group leaders
- Youth group leaders
- Officials of chambers of commerce or boards of trade

Professional People

Professionals in all spheres of local and national life have major roles to play in local and national development. They generally influence policy through their interaction with government especially when it relates to the practice of their profession or their followers. Communicating and disseminating the output of research relevant to the practice of their professions to them is essential to influencing policy. Some of the professional people that CPED should deal with in this respect include the following:

- Clergy
- Doctors
- Dentists
- Pharmacists
- Veterinarians
- Lawyers
- Bankers
- Professional engineers
- Members of school boards
- School superintendents
- Principals
- Teachers

Other Individual policy makers and stakeholders in Nigeria

Many other Nigerians including politicians have considerable influence on government policy and so they should be informed of the results of relevant research that should influence policy in Nigeria. These individuals need to be identified and compiled for this purpose.

- Identification and compilation of at least 400 influential Nigerians

Scientific Community

The final category of audience that must be informed of CPED's research outputs is the scientific community who traditionally must have access to the results of research through communication and dissemination in referred scientific journals and academic books.

The target audiences would be examined regularly and improved upon depending on the nature of the research output to be disseminated.

STRATEGIC APPROACHES TO COMMUNICATION AND DISSEMINATION

The various methods that can be used to promote communication and dissemination, as discussed below include participation of beneficiaries and other stakeholders, research summaries and feedback to target groups and beneficiaries, CPED newsletter, flyers, posters, redesigning CPED website, brochures, policy briefs and letters of thanks to study participants, specific project newsletters, local and international conferences, and seminars. These are further outlined below:

Constitution of Communication and Disseminations Committee

Constitution of CPED's Communication and Dissemination Committee is an essential mechanism of the implementation of the plan. The committee will report through CPED's Management Committee to the Board of Trustees. The committee will develop the policy making relating to specific project communication and dissemination activities of CPED while also formulating detailed working plan and disseminating the success stories internally and externally.

Enhancement of internal capacity of CPED on communications and dissemination

Internal capacity building is one important mechanism of research output dissemination. As research communication is a continuous process, it would not be appropriate for any organization to always depend on others for such combination of its research outputs. In this context, essential capacity for communication and dissemination of research outputs should be developed internally.

Communications and Dissemination Unit and Staff

An essential task of CPED research communication and dissemination strategy should be to build a team or appoint a staff member to proactively monitor dissemination of CPED research and intervention programmes, regularly refer the target audience database, and respond to stakeholder communications.

Compilation and regular updating of database on target audience

A communication and dissemination database is a compilation of comprehensive information about stakeholders to be targeted with the results of CPED research. The database can act as a reference for CPED's tracking team in communicating and disseminating research outputs.

Specification of communication and dissemination strategy in each CPED programme

In order to influence policy every CPED programme or project must specify the communications and dissemination strategies which must be integrated into its planning and implementation. This approach will constantly remind CPED about the importance of ensuring that the dissemination of the research outputs and intervention programme experiences are mandatory activities in the implementation of every project. In each case the specification of the target audience for the communication and dissemination must be provided to guide the communications unit of CPED.

Participation of key stakeholders

Stakeholder participation is an instrument that provides stakeholders the opportunity to participate in the implementation of a research or intervention programme and potentially influence the articulation and adoption of recommended policies. Stakeholder participation is more than just involvement in any program development or implementation activity. It implies a certain level of joint responsibility and/or empowerment of the stakeholders in programme implementation. Stakeholder participation can best be defined as the act of empowering stakeholders in decision-making on issues they have a stake in. One of CPED's approach to promoting the dissemination and utilisation of the results of its action research is to ensure the participation of key stakeholders including the end users of the output of the research. This entails promoting the participation of the end users of the research output during the preparation of the research proposal so that they can make their input into the final proposal to be implemented. For example if a programme on health is being implemented it will be valuable if some decision makers in the Ministry of Health participates in the implementation of the programme. It could also entail collaborating with other organizations such as NGOs and private sector companies that can play important roles in the adoption of the policy recommendations emanating from the research project. The overall effect of the participation of the different stakeholders is that they became key players in the dissemination and utilisation of the results of the research.

Choosing communication and dissemination channels

After having derived a list of target audiences, it is important to think about the most appropriate channels to reach them. When thinking about appropriate channels, it is necessary to consider the specific characteristics of the target audience. Some audiences, such as the media, are both a channel to other audiences and an audience in their own right. But we must remember that just because an audience is important to us, we should not assume that they will initially show the same interest towards our dissemination activities and therefore it is essential to demonstrate our relevance in a first stage (the raising awareness). CPED will have to reframe what it says and how it says it depending on the target audience and the channel chosen.

Preparation and presentation of the summary baseline research findings to stakeholders

One key element of CPED's dissemination strategy of its research outputs should entail the preparation of the summaries of the findings in the way in which they can be easily understood and interpreted by the stakeholders, particularly policy makers. The summaries of the findings may be presented in seminars in which the key stakeholders in relevant government ministries and other non-governmental organisations, the media and academics are present. These summaries can provide the basis for the discussion of the policy issues emanating from the project.

Networking with other relevant programmes

CPED can enhance the effectiveness of the communication and dissemination activities of its projects if it collaborates with other organisations implementing similar programmes so that the policy implications can be collectively disseminated to policy makers and other stakeholders. This can also entail empowering other NGOs to partner with CPED in advocacy activities on the results of research projects to relevant policy makers.

CPED Policy briefs

The outputs of research projects by CPED should be used to advocate for policy change on specific challenges at the local, state, and national levels in Nigeria using policy briefs that are widely distributed to relevant decision makers. The common audience for a policy brief is not interested in the research/analysis procedures conducted to produce the evidence, but are interested in potential solutions based on the new evidence. These advocacy activities should be presented in the form of CPED policy briefs which outline the rationale for choosing a particular policy alternative or course of action in a current policy debate. The policy briefs should be concise and focus on how new evidence arising from the results of the different socio-economic projects implemented by CPED have implications for policy in Nigeria.

CPED Newsletter

CPED must intensify the production and distribution of its newsletter summarizing study findings and related activities is an ideal way to update decision makers and other stakeholders. While the regular production of CPED newsletter can involve a fair amount of work, the dissemination benefits are well worth the effort. In some cases a specific project newsletter can be established to translate results from the research. Whether it is the regular CPED Newsletter or a special one dedicated to a particular project, the newsletters should be widely circulated to policy makers in relevant government ministries and agencies.

Publication of scientific articles

Scientific articles constitute an excellent dissemination action to reach a wider scientific audience and to make them aware of the CPED mission, activities and research outputs in a detailed and extensive manner. Published papers are the expected outputs of most academic research; they are the means by which new knowledge and developments in research are communicated within and beyond the academic community. Many Nigerian scholars have problems publishing their work in reputable international journals. One of the publication criteria for advancement by researchers in Nigeria is through such international publications. A number of strategies should be put in place to deal with the challenges of publishing in

international journals. One of this is collaboration with researchers in the advanced countries in the execution of research projects. The collaboration between CPED and the University of Windsor in the implementation of a research project on reproductive health led to increased access to international publication facilities. In order to compensate for the insufficiencies of local libraries and in access to the international, scientific literature, a massive literature review and annotation project was undertaken in Canada. Four graduate students located, reviewed and annotated over 1400 scientific articles related to the project. These were organized by topic and made available to CPED staff in the research project so as to facilitate their own review of the literature relevant to the publications and presentations they were preparing.

Leaflets and pocket guides

Printed media, small enough to fit in a pocket, can give effective reminders of technical detail, particularly regarding quantitative information (spacing, rates of application) which are poorly remembered from audio-visual media, and visual or verbal descriptions essential to identification of phenomena and organisms in the field.

Television

Television still reaches mainly urban audiences in Nigeria, some of whom may be managers and key decision-makers within intermediate user agencies, and individuals with influence over farming decisions by relatives on family holdings in rural areas. However, in many parts of the country accessibility is increasing and audiences are growing in rural areas. Satellite channels and networks offer potentially very large international audiences. With multiple channels available to viewers, however, academic broadcasts must compete for attention with entertainment, sport and current affairs programmes.

Radio

Radio is the most cost-effective mass medium for 'reaching' rural audiences in a form and language they can understand. Its main disadvantage is the lack of visual presentation; this can be turned to advantage, however, as it reduces the chance of audience rejection if the particular scenes show practices that are unlike what they are used to. Usually, expert scientists or personnel explain research outputs in an interview with a professional broadcaster. Audiences are more likely to learn and be interested in the interview than a lecture. More imaginative formats and strategies for radio use can create opportunities for feedback and dialogue, local adaptation of content through local and vernacular radio. Radio is most effective when content and treatment are based on audience research and the format is interactive.

Posters

Posters are a low-cost method of exposing large audiences to single ideas and to information that can be expressed simply and interpreted quickly. However, they can fail to communicate effectively unless they are designed on the basis of careful analysis of: the audience(s) for which they are intended; the context in which they will be seen — a poster on a wall in a training centre will hold attention for longer than a poster displayed at a retail outlet where it will be in competition with a lot of other visual material and where people are not actively

seeking research-based information; and the objectives which the poster is intended to achieve.

Workshops

Workshops can be a very effective means of encouraging uptake of research outputs by intermediate users, particularly where target institutions have been involved in earlier discussions to identify research needs and objectives and/or have collaborated in the research itself. However, with careful planning, workshops can also be an effective means for bringing together representatives of the final users of research and engaging them in the research and dissemination process. Workshops to promote interaction between donor research bodies, their collaborators, and the final users of research outputs, may be particularly useful. Workshops are most effective when:

- participants should be carefully selected and can contribute to meeting the workshop objectives, and influence others in their own and other organizations workshop objectives go beyond simple dissemination to ones which call on the expertise and commitment of all participants, for example, validation and adaptation of output, or planning of further dissemination and research;
- all participants should be treated as equal partners;
- the workshop process should be managed to allow adequate time for discussion and participant ownership of the objectives and outcome; and
- proceedings should be made available to all participants and to other potential users.

The website

The aim of the CPED website is two-fold: to function as a source of information for all interested parties outside CPED and as a source of information and support for those within it. CPED website should:

- Present the aims and objectives of all projects being executed, their participants, and their organizational structure;
- Present the results of the projects, CPED conferences/meetings; and
- List of project publications, newsletters, press releases as well as updates of new findings in CPED's area of research.

These tasks will be carried out by making sure that the website presents CPED projects in a professional manner with the highest standards while remaining viewer friendly. For this purpose, the website will carry specially designed project logos as well as all documentation from the projects.

The second aim of CPED website which is to serve as support for project partners means that website will include a "partners only" link where our partners may log works in progress for internal use only, access templates for power point presentations, letterhead etc as well as other internal documentation.

Strategic mailing list of stakeholders

Establish a mailing list with specific strategic stakeholders where results, open seminars or other events, abstracts, publications etc can be distributed or announced.

Communication with/trough social communication media through press releases

Media attention can raise the public profile of CPED programmes and increase public discussion of research, making it easier to gather data, research participants and case studies for further research, etc. This is called knowledge transfer, enhancing the public's understanding of CPED activities and communicating those activities to people who can make use of the research outputs. One of the most effective ways of reaching target audiences, influencing policy and practice and changing public opinion is to make use of the media in a planned way. Press conferences can also be organised by CPED on a specific project. As the project evolves and results are obtained, new press releases can be issued accordingly and proactively distributed to the media.

Key communication messages

Key messages can be expressed in a single statement or in a series of statements. They are important because they help to focus on what is being disseminated thereby they reduce the possibility of mixed messages. When developing key messages, it is important to keep in mind:

- The audience's current awareness, knowledge and attitudes towards the issue.
- The response expected from the target audience/s (e.g. are you educating or informing, seeking to change attitudes or behaviours?).
- The benefits offered, and their significance.

It is also important to recognize that there is a limit to the amount of messages which can be communicated, and often a trade-off between the number and complexity of key messages and the level of uptake achieved. The message is the extreme synthesis of what a project wants to communicate, or rather the essential core of the contents or line of reasoning that should, in any case, be learned and remembered by the receiver: everything, in the communication, must contribute to getting it through to the public. Messages should be based on what that audience wants to know, rather than on what they should hear. The style and content should be tailored for each audience. In order to be effective, the message must take into account the objectives but, above all, the public's needs. The messages have to be short, but at the same time capture the essential themes of a promotion or an intervention

Preparation of Annual communication and dissemination action plan

CPED communication and dissemination activities for specific periods will be determined by the nature of research projects and intervention activities in which it is engaged. Thus, on the basis of on-going CPED programmes and expected outputs, an annual action plan for communication and dissemination activities would be prepared for the year. The funds for the annual action on communication and dissemination should be provided in CPED's annual budget.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation of the impact of CPED's communication and dissemination plan is of paramount importance. The single most important measure of success will be CPED's ability to influence policy development and implementation in Nigeria as a result of its research and intervention programmes during the 2012-2016 and beyond. CPED's Monitoring and Evaluation Unit already monitors and evaluates and reports regularly on the

implementation of various programmes executed by CPED and its partners. The Monitoring and Evaluation Unit (M&E Unit) will refine its evaluation tool to include monitoring of progress in the implementation of this communication and dissemination plan. Additional milestone and indicators will be introduced. Basically at some point in CPED's communication and dissemination activities, the M&E Unit will ask questions such as: How is CPED doing? Has CPED reached its target audiences? What can CPED do better to reach its targets? The key elements of the CPED's Evaluation Framework for the communications and dissemination plan are as follows:

Determine what is to be monitored: Link performance indicators to the communication and dissemination goal and objectives, so that it can be measured if progress is being made towards reaching the stated goals/objectives.

Determine when monitoring will be carried out: This will depend on the timing set for the indicator and the duration set to achieve the goal or complete the process.

Determine how monitoring will be carried out and who will do it: Make sure CPED M&E Unit is assigned the responsibility early in the process to carry out the monitoring and evaluation reporting so that they can start their observation and monitoring from the beginning of the process, not at the end of it. Also consider the sources of information and how to get them (for example through surveys, interviews, financial reports).

Make sure monitoring is carried out and the results communicated: Although it is challenging to carry out both implementation and monitoring at the same time, being able to use the results of the monitoring to improve future operations will make it worthwhile. It is also important to share the monitoring results with all CPED staff and stakeholders so they will understand and participate in the process.