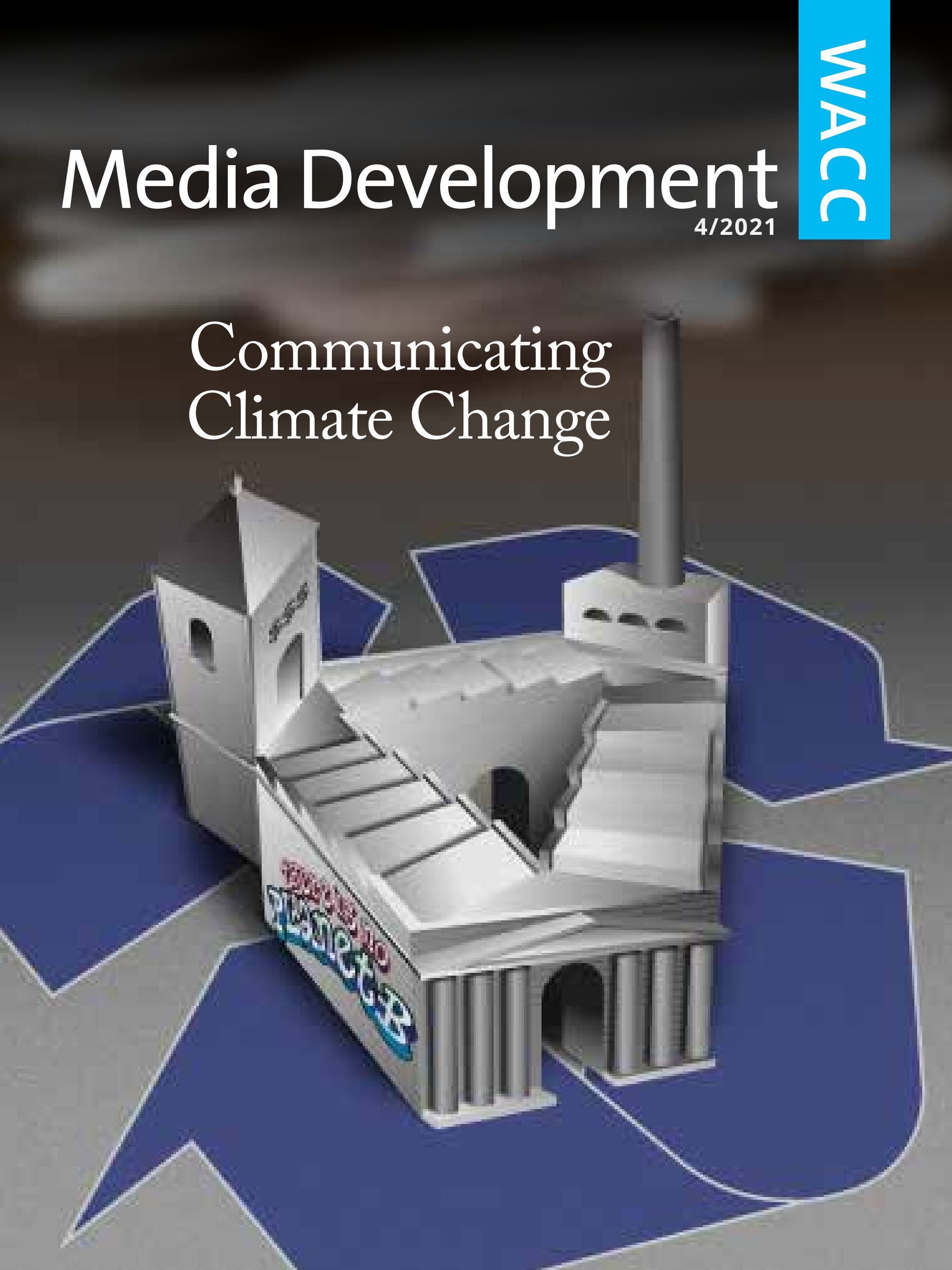
Media Development

4/2021

WACC

Communicating Climate Change



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In the next issue

The 1/2022 issue of *Media Development* will include presentations from the symposium on "Communication for Social Justice in a Digital Age", which took place September 13-15, 2021.

EDITORIAL

Towards the end of 2020, Katharine Viner, editor-in-chief of *The Guardian* newspaper, made a commitment to its readers and supporters:

> "The global climate crisis is the emergency of our times. Amid all the fear and sadness of 2020, it remains the overwhelming long-term threat to our planet and to everyone's health and security. That is why we promise to keep reporting on it, raising the alarm and investigating the crisis and possible solutions, until we begin to see genuine systemic change."[1]

The underlying premise of public interest journalism is that people should be informed in a fair and balanced way about crucial matters that affect their understanding of the world they live in and that could affect their lives. As climate change becomes more and more evident, newspaper and magazine articles, television and radio programmes, films and documentaries are exploring and highlighting its causes, effects, and remedies.

Much of this information relates to the science of climate change, its impact on the environment and biodiversity, and how different technologies are being deployed to stave off disaster. In this context, what resonates most keenly with viewers and listeners seems to be stories about real people and real-life situations. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change agrees:

> "Stories – that is presenting information in a narrative format – offer a way of building more sustainable and meaningful engagement with science because people are more used to communicating information through stories than graphs and numbers… Not only does the use of narratives help public audiences understand complex and abstract science issues, but it also makes the science easier to remember and to process relative to traditional forms of scientific communication (such as lists of facts or the use of graphs and figures). Communicating science in a narrative form is more effective when those narratives use language that reflects the concerns of the audience."[2]

In other words, the best viewpoint is local rather than global, e.g. how farmers in Zambia have been finding ways to adapt and survive in the face of severe water and electricity shortages after a lengthy drought. The global narrative of "heat domes" and "ice loss", while important, remains rather abstract without the vividness of lives and livelihoods.

One of the stories often "missing" from the narrative is the gender dimensions of climate justice. In what ways are women and gender diverse people doubly disadvantaged by climate change?

> "In comparison to men, women and gender diverse people often have limited access to resources, less access to justice, limited mobility, and limited voice in shaping decisions and influencing policy. Oppressive gender norms and their intersection with colonialism, racism, capitalism and ableism, compound to limit access to power and resources for those who are made most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change."[3]

However, telling stories will not in itself be enough to bring about the scale of change needed. In his contribution to the *Routledge Handbook of Climate Justice*, Brian Tokar identifies key questions that need to be explored in depth:

* How can a [social] movement mainly rooted in local initiatives help catalyse a social and economic transformation capable of address-

ing the vast magnitude of global climate threats?

* How can a thoroughgoing energy transition be sustained in a period where the political influence of fossil fuel interests is on the rise in key countries, along with interests that are fundamentally hostile to the public sector of the economy?
* Can we envision an improved quality of life for people in the world in a future freed from fossil fuel dependence?
* And what manner of transitions are feasible in the Global South, where the daily effects of climate disruptions are most apparent, yet the imperatives of poverty-reduction are perennially co-opted by elites who remain focused on economic growth?[4]

One of today's buzzwords is "transformative change". It means doing things differently – not just doing more or less of something we are already doing. It means subordinating long-established objectives of economic growth and profit maximization to those of genuine social and environmental justice.

In an article published by the Woodwell Climate Research Center, Massachusetts, USA, researchers underlined calls for transformative change in the context of the current climate emergency.[5] They listed three main actions in the immediate term: Phasing out and banning the use of fossil fuels; Implementing "a significant carbon price"; Restoring ecosystems such as carbon sinks and biodiversity throughout the world. They also proposed that climate change should be included in core curricula in schools worldwide to raise awareness and to empower learners to take action.

Where are the stories behind these actions? It is urgent for public interest journalism and public service media worldwide to continue tackling the climate breakdown from as many perspectives as possible. In the words of Nick Meynen, "It is only by understanding the depth of a problem that we can change it. But change also requires telling stories. No revolution ever came about without stories that moved people into action."[6]

Without a concerted approach, climate justice will remain a mirage towards which we shall ever journey – until we run out of time. ■

Notes

1. "The Guardian's climate promise: we will keep raising the alarm", by Katharine Viner. In *The Guardian* (5 October 2020).
2. *Principles for effective communication and public engagement on climate change. A Handbook for IPCC authors*. Climate Outreach (January 2018).
3. *Pocket Guide to Gender Equality.* Oxford Climate Policy 2020. First published October 2017. Updated January 2018, October 2020.
4. "On the evolution and continuing dependence of the climate justice movement", by Brian Tokar. In *Routledge Handbook of Climate Justice* (2019).
5. "World Scientists' Warning of a Climate Emergency 2021." BioScience. 28 July 2021.
6. *Frontlines: Stories of Global Environmental Justice,* by Nick Meynen. Zero Books, UK (2019).

Supporting communities in sharing stories of climate change

Bridget Backhaus, Anne Leitch and Kerrie Foxwell-Norton

"Warming Up" is an Australian research project to help adaptation to climate change by supporting community radio stations to amplify local stories of climate change and build capacity to engage in meaningful community conversations.

There were strong flows of water across the Wilcannia weir in April 2021 for the first time in three years following a prolonged and devastating drought. The people of Wilcannia, having run out of drinkable water months before, were there to witness the trickles that could help restore their community to some sort of new normal. The rains offer renewed options for the Wilcannia community, relief from years of dry and drought, and hope for some recovery of the Darling-Baarka River system that is the "Mother" to their community.

Wilcannia, a small remote town of about 800 mostly Indigenous residents in outback Australia, has been badly affected by long years of drought that wreaked its "slow violence" across north-west New South Wales and exacerbated the damaging water politics of Australia's longest river system.

For the people of Wilcannia, the impacts of climate change are very familiar: their more pressing issue is to get the rest of the country, including the decision-makers in far-off capital cities, to pay attention. "We need our basic human rights. Our human rights to have this water that everyone else is stealing from us," says Brendan Adams, manager of community radio station, Wilcannia River Radio.

The research project *Warming Up* is working with the community broadcast sector to build capacity to engage in meaningful community conversations and to amplify local stories of climate change within and beyond the community. Wilcannia River Radio is one of the research participants in this project.

Community radio tells local stories

In the Australian media landscape, community radio is vital as the third tier of broadcasting alongside commercial and government-run services. The community radio sector is the largest independent sector of the media, with more than 450 broadcasting services and its listener base is almost six million people, or roughly one in four Australians (CBAA, 2021). Formally legislated in 1978, the Australian community broadcasting sector is one of the longest running in the world.

Community broadcasting services in Australia are legislated to be not-for-profit, used for community purposes and freely available to the general public (Broadcasting Services Act 1992). Most of the sector's funding comes from government sources – though support for the sector waxes and wanes based on the politicking of the day – and so the sector experiences fluctuations in funding and a chronic lack of funds and resources (Forde et al., 2002; Price-Davies & Tacchi, 2001).

Station income is severely restricted by limits on advertising (ACMA, 2008), therefore the stations rely on other sources of funding including selling airtime, sponsorships and subscriptions (Order, 2016). In general, the sector has proved remarkably resilient to these challenges, and through its "grassroots community engagement", continues to act as an invaluable source of information and social connection for their communities (Anderson & Rodríguez, 2019, p. 236).

The Australian community broadcast sector services some communities of geography (from rural and remote areas through to cities), but also a range of communities of interest, including First Nations people, youth, senior citizens, reli-

gious and ethnic communities, specialty interests (music and fine arts), LGBTIQ communities as well as those providing services for people with print disabilities (CBAA, 2020). These interest groups are also communities that tend to be ignored by the mainstream media (Anderson et al., 2020).

Community radio, being deeply embedded within communities, is well-positioned to guide and support local responses to climate change. As a hyperlocal medium, they tell the stories of their communities, which means they are uniquely positioned to frame constructive dialogue around the local impacts of and responses to climate change. They also have an intimate knowledge of the prevailing attitudes, values and beliefs, as well as the local political, economic and socio-cultural context (Anderson et al., 2020).

Telling community stories plays an important role in community-building and information sharing at the local level, but also acts as a way of documenting how climate change is understood, experienced, and actioned at the local level. This is particularly important given the geographic spread of Australia: most community radio stations are located in regional, rural, and remote communities, while decision-makers and those in positions of power like politicians and funding institutions are located in capital cities on the coast. Community radio has significant potential to be a powerful ally for local, contextualized climate change discussions.

Community radio in Australia has a long history of pioneering initiatives that support marginalized and vulnerable communities. Often, it is these communities that are most at risk from the effects of climate change. For instance, globally, First Nations people have been identified as being particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change (Davis, 2013; Forde, 2012; Turner, et al., 2003). The land now known as Australia is home to the world's oldest living culture. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have deep cultural and spiritual connections to land and sea. The Wilcannia region is a good example of such a community.

For the Wilcannia region, the impacts of climate change are being experienced through the recent droughts and the drying of the culturally significant Baarka River. The Baarka has been a reliable source of water, food, livelihood, and culture for the Barkindji people for thousands of years. In more recent memory, the Barka was even showcased in popular culture. In 2001 Indigenous kids – the Wilcannia Mob – captured the nation with a rap song "Down River" and images of cultural significance swimming and fishing in the nearby Darling-Baarka River that is the "Mother" to their community. Twenty years later, the kids of Wilcannia were unable to fish or swim: the Baarka was dry with major and widespread cultural, social and economic consequences for the community.

Wilcannia River Radio provides more than just chat

Wilcannia, located in rangelands 945km northwest of Sydney, was once a thriving port town, a link between the outback and the major rivers that lead to the coast. The Traditional Owners of Wilcannia are the Barkindji People whose lands extend along the Darling-Baarka River.

Wilcannia is typical of many remote and rural towns in Australia in that it is plagued by serious droughts, high temperatures, and low rainfall patterns. The region also suffers from the effects of water conflict and mismanagement (Mesikämmen et al. 2021), with thirsty cotton farms upstream disrupting the flow of water. Climate change has significantly worsened the seasonal fluctuations and weather patterns in Wilcannia and projections of future climate are that these conditions are likely to continue.

The baseline number of hot days (above 35°C) annually is expected to increase by 10 to 20 in the near future. There is also likely to be a decrease in spring and autumn rainfall in an area already prone to drought. Projections also suggest that severe fire weather will increase in the near future. With the memory of the 2019-20 Black Summer bushfires fresh in Australians' minds, the threat of worsening fires looms large.

For Wilcannia, the community radio station plays a central role in community life in the town: for example, it organized boxed drinking water to be trucked into the town in 2019 when the town's water supply dwindled. Established in 2009, Wilcannia River Radio was known originally by its frequency, 103.1 FM, until the community and broadcasters worked together to choose the station's name (FNMA, 2021). The station takes an activist role, particularly around issues concerning youth, culture and the health of the Baarka-Darling River. The station's slogan is "Keepin' it alive" and the logo represents both "community of all ages" and the River through different colored dots (REDI.E, 2021). Wilcannia River Radio has also attracted national attention and received the Community Broadcasting Association of Australia's top honour for excellence in community broadcasting in 2019 (Gooch, 2019).

Given the significance of the Baarka to the community, and the station's role in activism, the impacts of climate change have been firmly on their radar. The community has experienced the impacts of a changing climate in their most extreme form through the drying of water supplies. The conversations about climate change are "ongoing daily". In an interview, Brendan Adams called out the institutional arrangements, politics, and distant decision-making processes that are further exacerbating the existing climate-related risks:

> "It is the humans' and the governments' decisions that shaped the Baarka, which is an entity that belonged to the people, that looked after the people. It is the government's choice that turned this (river/water) into a commodity. There are even people…that don't even own land but they own water rights."

Unlike some other communities that are more resistant to conversations about a changing climate, Wilcannia River Radio has no need for discussions about handling climate sceptics or even about how to adapt to climate change. The station is calling for a broader, national discussion of water, climate and culture that sees their river returned to a new normal as an ecosystem that sustains life, livelihoods and culture. Wilcannia River Radio wants their community's story of climate impacts shared with other parts of Australia and the world to help effect this change:

> "Our community is already doing the talking… community leaders, young people, elders, families have already spoken to everyone they can possibly think of to keep the awareness (of) the devastation and the impact. But it has got to be from voice to action… We need people not just only to listen but to act and help us make the change… This nation, this country, needs to act on it. That's what we need people to help us in making the government to see differently."

The *Warming Up* project aims to amplify local stories of change

Warming Up is a research project supporting community radio stations by amplifying local stories of climate change and building capacity to engage in meaningful community conversations. By mapping the work already underway in the sector, then co-designing resources and training materials, Warming Up aims to both solidify the role of community radio in building community resilience and amplify local experiences of climate change. The project offers creative alternatives to the traditional channels and approaches to mediated climate change communication.

The first phase of *Warming Up* mapped the existing efforts across the sector according to three categories: disaster preparedness/recovery, disaster broadcasting, and climate change programming. The second phase of the research involved several pilot interviews with a sample of community radio stations across New South Wales, representing a mix of geographic locations and communities served. This phase aimed to explore the key barriers to communicating about climate change for particular stations and identify opportunities for building capacity within the stations and the sector.

It was through this second phase of the research that we were introduced to the people at Wilcannia River Radio and learned more about their experiences of living with the impacts of climate change on the local environment and their community. Through these discussions, it is clear that Wilcannia River Radio needs little support with their capacity to articulate the impacts of climate changes. What they want is to share their stories further.

Drawing on what we have learned so far, the third phase of Warming Up takes a storytelling approach, based on principles of practice-led research, knowledge co-creation, and participatory audio production. Participants will have access to training on climate change communication and community journalism to help them identify climate change stories within their local communities and will be supported to produce a 30-minute podcast episode about the impacts of climate change on their community.

Thanks to the support of the *2021 IAMCR New Directions in Climate Communication Research Fellowship*, community producers will be compensated for their time and labour, as a way of recognizing and reinvesting in the local community. Wilcannia River Radio was instrumental in developing this idea and will be the producers of the first episode in what, we hope, will become a series of community radio climate action podcasts.

Wilcannia is just one community and one story of climate change impacts. There are many such stories to be told from across Australia and the world about the devastating local impacts of climate change, but also of communities' resilience and adaptation: we hope to share those stories through this project.

A postscript on Wilcannia

At the time of writing [August 2021], the state of New South Wales is undergoing the worst outbreak of the Covid-19 virus that it has experienced in the 18 months of the global pandemic. Rolling lockdowns and closed borders are stymying not only the project but people's lives and livelihoods. First Nations communities in Australia, until the current surge of the Delta variant, had been incredibly effective in keeping Covid-19 out of their communities through their strong leadership and effective partnerships with government agencies (Eades et al. 2020; Crooks et al. 2020).

As cases surge in Wilcannia, Wilcannia River Radio is once again taking a leadership role delivering locally relevant public health messages and encouraging the community to come together through these difficult times. This further highlights the importance of community radio to remote communities, especially in times of crisis. Like the Baarka, Wilcannia is resilient and will emerge from lockdowns to share their important stories with Australia and the world. ▪

The International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR) and the International Environmental Communication Association (IECA) awarded the 2021 New Directions for Climate Communication Research Fellowship *to Anne Leitch and Bridget Backhaus of Griffith University, Queensland, Australia for their project "Warming Up: Exploring creative audio production for climate change communication on community radio."*

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Associate Professor Kerrie Foxwell-Norton
Kerrie Foxwell-Norton's research focus is environmental communication, media and journalism in Australia and the Pacific region. She was a co-author on early national studies of the Australian community radio sector (2003, 2007). Her work pursues local participation in environmental issues and climate change responses and action where she has specific expertise in community-based research and engagement.

Anne Leitch is an adjunct in the School of Humanities, Languages and Social Sciences at Griffith University. She has more than two decades experience in working in strategic science communication in CSIRO and more recently, the National Climate Change Adaptation Research Facility (NCCARF) based at Griffith University. She has a strong background in the science of climate change and adaptation science of developing and implementing communication programs and products about climate change impacts and response strategies.

Bridget Backhaus is a lecturer in the School of Humanities, Languages and Social Sciences at Griffith University. Her research explores the role of community media in social change with a particular focus on issues of voice, listening, and participation. A former community radio practitioner, Bridget has over six years of experience facilitating and conducting research into community media. In 2019, Bridget completed a PhD in Media and Communications, with her research exploring the intersections of participation, voice, listening, and social change in community radio through ethnographic fieldwork conducted across two sites in South India.

Local climate voices create a rising sea of noise

Lorenzo Vargas

Unless the people leading the fight against the climate crisis on the ground, such as Indigenous people and other vulnerable communities, are able to have their stories heard and seen by the broader public, and unless they have the necessary communication tools and skills to organize, it will be very difficult to generate the political will at the national and international level that will result in swift action to tackle this crisis.

The right to freedom of expression, enshrined in Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, is the starting point for taking a rights-based approach to communication and information: "Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers." (United Nations, 1948). This right "is regarded as a central pillar of democracy, protecting the right to call our rulers to account, vital to preventing censorship, an indispensable condition of effective and free media" (CRIS Campaign, p. 22).

However, in any given society communication the unequal distribution of power both enables and limits access to information and communication, which in some cases may undermine freedom of expression. This means that "a poor person seeking to highlight injustice in their lives and a powerful media mogul each have, before the law, precisely the same protection for their

right to freely express their views. In practice, however, the former lacks a means to have her/his voice heard, while the latter can powerfully amplify her/his message and ensure it is widely heard." (CRIS Campaign, p. 22).

As a result, the right to freedom of expression is best guaranteed when promoted *alongside* a number of other rights – communication rights. This is particularly important today as communication ecosystems are becoming increasingly complex due to rapid technological change, different levels of access to platforms, multi-layered and often transnational media governance processes, growing dependence on digital technology, and the emergence of digital media as key spaces with the potential to advance inclusion and social change (Couldry and Rodriguez, 2015).

Other rights that help "construct the environment in which freedom of expression may be fully consummated" include "a right to participate in one's own culture and language, to enjoy the benefits of science, to information, to education, to participation in governance, to privacy, to peaceful assembly, to the protection of one's reputation" (CRIS Campaign, p. 23) all of which are part of the International Bill of Rights (United Nations) . Further crucial elements include diversity of media content and ownership, press freedom, diverse and independent media, and democratic access to media (ibid. p. 24) More recently, documents such as the Charter of Digital Rights promoted by the civil society network European Digital Rights (EDRi) have put the spotlight on new important dimensions of this equation such as data protection, transparent governance, and freedom from surveillance (European Digital Rights, 2015).

Starting from the assumption that communication and information are "essential conditions for development and affect every aspect of life, and that, therefore, communication and information poverty, despite being only one dimension of poverty, affects all other dimensions" (Barja Daza et al., 2007), I argue that "communication poverty" needs to be addressed. It has several manifestations, including:

* lack of access to platforms meaningfully to raise concerns about issues that affect one's life.
* under/misrepresentation in media content;
* low levels of media literacy;
* limited access to relevant information, including public information;
* exclusion from decision-making processes;
* restrictions on freedom of expression, association, and assembly;
* absence of a free, independent, inclusive, and pluralistic media sector;
* prevalence of negative stereotypes about marginalized groups;
* social and cultural factors preventing genuine participation (e.g., discrimination because of gender, race, ethnicity, social class, etc.);
* media concentration in the hands of the powerful;
* inaccessibility of information and communication (e.g., linguistic barriers);
* breaches of privacy, especially in relation to digital communication; and
* limited opportunities to participate in decision-making processes related to the regulation and governance of communication ecosystems. (Lee and Vargas, 2020 p. 45).

Environmental citizen journalists in Burkina Faso. Photo credit: Réseau Africa Volontaire (RAV).

Addressing these issues requires a taking a rights-based approach that understands each of these manifestations of information and communication poverty not only as violations of people's communication rights, but also as issues that undermine people's ability to exercise their broader human rights, as communication rights

can be considered "gateway rights" that enable people exercise other human rights (Lee and Vargas, 2020).

Climate change and its effects

The 1987 "Brundtland Report" produced by the UN's World Commission on Environment and Development was among the first international reports to put the spotlight on major environmental and development issues that need to be addressed over the coming the decades, such as unfettered population growth, food security, biodiversity, energy policies, the need for less resource-intensive industrial production, and unstainable urban development (World Commission on Environment and Development, pp. 18-23).

The report highlights the links between poverty and environmental degradation by stating that "poverty itself pollutes the environment, creating environmental stress in a different way. Those who are poor and hungry will often destroy their immediate environment in order to survive: They will cut down forests; their livestock will overgraze grasslands; they will overuse marginal land; and in growing numbers they will crowd into congested cities" (ibid. p. 26).

It also points in the direction of climate justice by stating that "environmental stress has often been seen as the result of the growing demand on scarce resources and the pollution generated by the rising living standards of the relatively affluent" (ibid. p. 26) and states that "globally, wealthier nations are better placed financially and technologically to cope with the effects of possible climatic change" (ibid. p. 45).

And yet, most decision makers have done next to nothing to halt the rising carbon emissions that are leading the world to climate catastrophe, as pointed out by the latest UN projections (IPCC, 2021). As Wallace-Wells points out, "many perceive global warming as a sort of moral and economic debt, accumulated since the beginning of the Industrial Revolution and now come due after several centuries. In fact, more than half of the carbon exhaled into the atmosphere by the burning of fossil fuels has been emitted in just the past three decades. The majority of the burning has come since the premiere of *Seinfeld*. Since World War II, the figure is about 85 percent" (Wallace-Wells, p. 4).

This points to a criminal level of irresponsibility of the most powerful countries in the world, which, despite knowing about the consequences of climate change, especially for the world's most vulnerable, decided not to act. According to Wallace-Wells, given the current trajectory of emissions and lack of meaningful action on the part of most countries, we are on our way to 4°C of warming by 2100, which would mean that whole regions of Africa, Australia, the United States, South America and Asia would be "rendered uninhabitable by direct heat, desertification, and flooding". (Wallace-Wells, p. 6). Robinson echoes this position by stating that "there is universal agreement that global warming should be kept below 2° Celsius or as close as possible to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels…This has traditionally been considered the threshold beyond which the effects of climate change move from treacherous to catastrophic, but most experts believe we are already on track to exceed that" (Robinson, p. 6).

Wallace Wells points out that "the poorest countries will suffer more in our hot new world… that is not withstanding the fact that most of the global South has not, to this point, defiled the atmosphere of the planet all that much… This is what is often called the problem of environmental justice; a sharper, less gauzy phrase would be "climate caste system" (Wallace-Wells p. 24). For example, "the average Western citizen produces many times more emissions that almost anyone in Asia, just out of habit" (ibid. pp. 33-34).

Wallace Wells also introduces the concept of climate cascades, in which one event triggered by climate change contributes to other disasters, like the idea that "higher temperatures means more forest fires means fewer trees means less carbon absorption, means more carbon in the atmosphere, means a hotter climate planet still", which really emphasizes the idea that hu-

man-cased climate change will unleash natural cycles we simply not be able to control, predict, or even fully comprehend.

This level of climate change is not only catastrophic from an environmental point of view, but also extremely risky from a social and political perspective. Inspired on the work of Mann and Wainwright, Wallace Wells also muses about whether an increasingly climate will result on the rise of authoritarianism, as citizens "trade liberties for security and stability and some insurance against climate deprivation" and about whether a new kind of supra-national power structure might emerge as planetary power would be "the only power that could plausibly answer a planetary threat" (Wallace-Wells, p. 192). He also points to the relationship between climate change and armed conflict, citing several recent or ongoing conflicts as having links to climate issues (ibid. p. 126).

This degree of warming would also have unthinkable economic consequences. Citing the work of Hsiang, Burke, and Miguel, Wallace Wells argues that "in a country that is relatively warm, every degree Celsius of warming reduced growth, on average, by about one percentage point… compared to the trajectory of economic growth with no climate change, their average projection is for a 23 percent loss in per capita earning globally by the end of the century… there is a 51 per cent chance that climate change will reduce global [economic] output by 20 percent by 2100 (Wallace-Wells, p. 117).

All in all, these views are in line with those of other authors, such as Schlosberg, who points out that "climate change can be seen as an element or instigator of corrosive disadvantage because it will make those already most vulnerable even more so… climate change will create unique patterns of vulnerability and disadvantage, as it will initially be felt in different ways in different places". (Schlosberg, p. 458).

Climate change and human rights

Brian Tokar, one of the leading academic voices of the climate justice movement, argues that "climate change threatens various widely acknowledged human rights, including the right to life, health, housing, food, water, self-determination, freedom of movement, culture, and property" (Tokar, p. 15). Humphreys an international human rights expert, adds that "the worst effects of climate change will be felt by those individuals and groups whose rights are already precarious – the most dramatic impacts of climate change are expected to occur in the world's poorest countries, where rights protections are often too weak for a variety of reasons" (Humphreys, p. 1). He also points to the fact that it's not only climate change itself that has human rights implications- mitigation efforts also have human rights dimensions as they might affect access to public services as well as food, water, health, security, cultures, and livelihoods of particular persons in particular places (ibid. p. 2).

Despite the obvious human rights implications of climate change, there is a very clear disconnect between climate change discourse and policy and human rights. There are several reasons for this, including the notion that human rights are often difficult to enforce, that establishing direct responsibility for climate change-related human rights violations is difficult, complications on the ground to establish local accountability, the fact that some rights might conflict with each other in the context of climate change, and that rights are difficult to apply in emergency situations.

There is also the issue of the "right to development", which has non-binding international legal status but is still considered an important right, as it has often been used by emerging economies to justify the continuation of emissions and turned into a "right to emit greenhouse gases", thus avoiding taking greater responsibility in the fight for climate change and passing on the blame to industrialized countries (ibid. p. 14).

Furthermore, the concept of equity, which underpins climate change/climate justice policy, is hard to reconcile with the concept of equality on which human rights are based, especially as

human rights theory relies on the notion states that are in equal, at least in theory (ibid. p. 50). Lastly, in a context in which private sector actors such as transnational oil companies play a central role in the climate crisis, the application of human rights, which are primarily based on the relationship between the state and individuals, becomes even more challenging (ibid. p. 11).

Human rights frameworks are essential to dealing with the climate crisis. In particular, promoting human rights such the right to freedom of expression and the right to access to information – which are also communication rights – is critical to advancing policy and practical solutions to meet the communication and information needs of some of the people and communities most affected by the effects of climate change. This is because the human rights framework is already established within existing legal and policy frameworks, as well as within the political imaginary in most modern societies.

While the human rights framework can be challenging to apply to climate change-related issues for the reasons listed above, human rights theorists and advocates have to find ways to apply the framework in these situations, otherwise "it risks becoming less relevant in much of the world, especially in those places where the effects of climate change will be increasingly suffered" (Humphreys, p. 45).

Climate justice

The disproportionate effect of climate change on vulnerable populations, the human rights implications of such effects, and the moral imperative of addressing climate change have contributed to the emergence of the concept of climate justice. In the climate justice literature, climate change as a phenomenon is defined as having largely been caused by historically wealthy industrialized nations but largely affecting mostly marginalized communities, both in developed and developing countries.

Mary Robinson, former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, argues that while industrial nations continued to build their economies on the back of fossil fuels, the most disadvantaged across the world are suffering the effects of climate change. Though these communities have been the least responsible for the emissions causing climate change, they have been, are being, and will be disproportionately affected because of their already vulnerable geographic locations and their lack of climate resilience" (Robinson, p. 4).

Furthermore, "climate change can be seen as an element or instigator of corrosive disadvantage because it will make those already most vulnerable even more so… climate change will create unique patterns of vulnerability and disadvantage, as it will initially be felt in different ways in different places". (Schlosberg, p. 458).

Schlosberg identifies three dominant approaches to climate justice. The first is a historical justice approach that argues that "there are specific states, acting within particular practices of industrial development, that have brought us to our current climate change crisis, and that those parties should now pay the current costs of their past transgressions… Approaches based on this idea adopt a basic polluter pays principle that puts the burden squarely on long-industrialized nations" (ibid. p. 448).

The concept of "climate debt", which entails "defining and counting the debt that industrialized and high-emissions society owe to non-industrialized societies for using too much greenhouse emissions space and for contributing to climate destruction", as well as mechanisms to "ensure victims of climate change are compensated and that appropriate mitigation strategies and technology transfer efforts can be financed" (Bond, p. 112), is a good example of this approach.

The second one is per capita equity approach. "Proposals based on the equity principle would require scientific agreement on the total amount of greenhouse gas emissions to be allowed; that amount would be divided by the total world population, and the result would be an equal emissions allowance for each person on the planet". Under this system, "countries with

higher emissions could buy allowances from those with lower emissions, resulting in both lower emissions overall and compensation to nations that use less than their per capita share." (Schlosberg, p. 448).

A third one is a rights-based approach. This approach sees climate change as "a new threat to these already established rights" and rearticulates human rights, the right to development, and environmental framework in a way that emphasizes a right to have the basic environment in which human flourishing is possible, including a stable climate system (Schlosberg, p. 449).

All in all, Schlosberg is critical of these approaches because they tend to focus on abstract or ideal notions of justice as opposed to the real "environmental and developmental conditions that individuals, communities, and states [the ground] need to survive, develop, and function" (ibid. p.,449) and because they tend to focus primarily on prevention and mitigation of climate change, as opposed to adaptation.

According to him, we need an approach that sheds light on "how justice can be applied to the ways we actually adapt to the very real and growing effects of climate change on the ground" (ibid. p. 447). He is also critical of these approaches as "climate justice theory is articulated almost exclusively within a liberal individualist conception of justice" (ibid. p. 454), paying little attention to collective rights and community-level climate impacts.

In response, Schlosberg proposes an alternative approach he calls the "recognition and capabilities" approach that would help communities and policy makers to "to identify and physically map vulnerabilities caused by climate change… to more clearly understand how and where very specific changes to the physical environment will affect the ability of those environments to sustain specific human capabilities."

For him the first element of this approach is what he calls "recognition". He argues that, historically, there are people and communities who have been systematically ignored, misrecognized, and unrecognized by more powerful groups, and that this injustice has led to political, cultural, and economic exclusion, subordination, and vulnerability. Inevitably, the invisibilization of these communities and their concerns has translated, and continues to translate, into environmental policies that disproportionately affects them.

Examples of such communities include Indigenous people or communities of colour. Given that these people and communities are the ones most likely to be affected by the effects of climate change, this situation needs to be remedied in order to develop policy responses that address their needs. This can only be achieved by creating mechanisms for the meaningful and genuine political participation of these communities (Schlosberg, pp. 449-452).

Johnny Antesano, a 4-year old Guarani Indigenous boy in Choroquepiao, a small village in Bolivia, helps his mother, Yela Vilera, tend their family garden. Photo credit: Paul Jeffrey/ACT Alliance.

The second element is the idea of capabilities, inspired by Amartya Sen and Martha Nussbaum, argues that "justice should not focus solely on distributive ideals, but instead on the range of capacities necessary for people to develop free and productive lives they design for themselves." (quoted in Schlosberg, p. 453).

This approach, which also includes key elements such as social recognition, public and political participation, is useful when applied to climate adaptation policy because it allows communities and policy makers to develop policies in response to tangible local conditions and vulnerabilities. "It can help us understand and catalog the very specific ways that climate change creates injustice", both on individuals and on communities (Schlosberg, p. 456). Examples of climate capabilities could include people and commun-

ities' ability to, for example, exercise control over their livelihoods, to access to basic services in order to be in good health, or exercise mobility rights.

The climate justice movement

Over the years, the ideas underpinning the concept of climate justice have translated into an active yet complex social movement. "The concept of climate justice has come to prominence as a research agenda, an ethical and legal framework, and most significantly as the basis for an engaged grassroots response to the unfolding global climate crisis… Advocates for climate justice have emerged as a unique critical voice in climate diplomacy, raised a comprehensive challenge to various technological and market-oriented approaches to the climate crisis that are viewed as 'false solutions' and challenged political interests linked to the fossil fuel industry" (Tokar, p. 13).

In the West, the movement has its origins in the environmental justice movement, which emerged primarily as a response to environmental racism (Sze, p. 10) and can be understood as having set the foundations for the modern climate justice movement by focusing on the intersectionality between environmental and social justice issues (ibid. p. 10). That being said, the climate justice movement has also benefited from the theory and work of other movements, such as the Indigenous rights movement.

Tokar argues that the climate justice movement is worthy of attention because it has succeeded in articulating an alternative climate agenda that highlights the disproportionate impact of the effects of climate change on already vulnerable communities, sheds light on the link between economic policies responsible for climate change and those perpetuating poverty and inequality and puts an emphasis on intersectionality between environmental and social justice issues.

For example, it has succeeded in advancing ideas such as the notion that "to solve the worsening climate crisis requires that we must accept both that the vast majority of fossil fuels now be left underground, and that through democratic planning, we must collectively reboot our energy, transport, agricultural, production, consumption, and disposal systems" (Bond, p. xvii) – an idea that up until recently was considered almost sacrilegious in mainstream climate policy. In this regard, the movement has mounted a major challenged to "elite policy-making, where corporate interests often shape political agendas behind the scenes" (Tokar, p. 21).

Tokar also argues that the climate justice movement is remarkable in the sense that it has managed to bring together various and vary diverse constituencies from across the world that are facing similar climate-related threats. These include Indigenous peoples, land rights movements, rainforest dwellers, communities opposing extraction and dams, and island communities affected by sea level rise, among others. It has also integrated large environmental organizations in the North that have traditionally more focused on conservation efforts instead of social justice issues. In this sense, the movement can be understood as a continuation or a new iteration of the anti-globalization movement of the late 90s and early 2000s that opposed the free trade agenda (ibid. ppr.17-18).

For Sze, the current moment in which the climate and environmental justice movement is operating is marked by a series of interwoven crises. In the United States and other western democracies, these crises include growing anti-immigrant sentiments, the rise of national populism, extremely high levels of economic inequality, eroding trust in modern institutions such as the media and science, and the climate crisis. To her, "unjust environments are rooted in racism, capitalism, militarism, colonialism, land theft from Native peoples, and gender violence… it is not aberration, but part and parcel of a political and economic system based on the racialized extraction of land and labour". (Sze, pp. 3-7). In this sense, she argues that these crises are inter-connected, and addressing them requires a comprehensive approach, and real change cannot be expected within existing liberal and capital-

ist institutions, and they cannot rely on market based on technology-dependent solutions (ibid. p. 8).

For Sze, environmental justice struggles are struggles for freedom. Not only freedom from harmful environments and oppressive social structures, but also freedom to break hegemonic discourses in order to "create and reimagine worlds different from those that are 'common sense'" (ibid. p. 9). "The vision for environmental justice is for making work, care, food, energy, and lives matter, not rendering them cheap, disposable, and dead (ibid. p. 23). It also entails highlighting "agency, voice, and recognition of history as core precepts for a more just future (ibid. p. 31). The core concepts of the movement are "we speak for ourselves" and "the environment is where we live, work, play, and pray" (ibid. p. 38).

Despite its relative lack of success in changing or significantly influencing climate policy at a global level, the climate justice movement has played an important role on the ground and in local communities, especially in relation to direct action efforts seeking to halt extractive and fossil fuel projects that would have had negative environmental and climate consequences, as well as in building alliances with labour movements advocating for a fair transition for fossil fuel workers (Tokar, p. 20).

One of the settings in which the climate justice has gained visibility are the international climate negotiations such as the Conference of the Parties (COP) meetings, the preeminent climate negotiation platform. The movement began to take form as a result of the perception that these have been spaces where wealthy countries would routinely work against the interests of developing ones by undermining their negotiating positions, avoiding binding commitments, and underfunding climate finance mechanisms, and in which market-based solutions with limited chances of success, such as carbon trading, were seen as the main solution to the climate crisis (Bond, pp. 1-28). To Bond, this reflects the dominant "mainstream ideological orientation to solving every market-related problem with a market- solution", which is nothing but an attempt by ruling elites to keep the capitalist system afloat by shifting environmental issues to the South, stalling progress towards real solutions to the climate crisis, and continue the cycle dispossession of resources from the South by promoting the continued commodification and privatization of land and labour (Bond, pp. 52-65).

In this context, Bond concludes that the mainstream climate negotiations, such as the UNFCCC, are failing because their leaders, most of whom are from elite backgrounds in the North and South, are far too loyal to "systemic power and are unable to conceptualize or locate political alliances that break out of the box in which they are confined, and are working in a paradigm defined by "national self-interest and the power of the fossil fuel lobby" (ibid. pp. 76-77).

In this context, marked by the global elite's inability or unwillingness to tackle the climate crisis, the climate justice movement, led from the grassroots, has emerged as an alternative space to advance solutions to the crisis. According to Bond, the movement has evolved from a group of people with overly ambitious goals that would "politely ask UNFCCC delegates to save the planet" to several networks of activists around the world engaging in direct action to halt extractivist activities such as new oil and gas installations, with varying levels of success (ibid. pp. 185-197).

Klein echoes these ideas and highlights direct action movements as one the sources of hope in our joint struggle against the climate crisis. For Klein, real hope for a transformative environmental movement lies in what she calls "blockadia" – citizen movements all over the world like Standing Rock that emerge in opposition to new extractive projects such as open pit mines, fracking exploration, or oil drilling. These are movements that are defending essential water and land resources and are "turning the tables, insisting that it is up to industry to its methods are safe" rather going along with the empty promises of environmentally sustainable extraction (Klein, pp. 303, 335).

They are also movements that are fighting

for "a culture, an identity, a beloved place that people are determined to pass on to their grandchildren, and that their ancestors may have paid for with great sacrifice" – in other words, things that extractive industries cannot replace (ibid. p. 342). A critical element here is Indigenous rights, as many of these movements against extraction have been led by Indigenous people who have used legislation to protect their rights, such as legislation meant to protect the Right to Free, Prior, and Informed Consent, to halt new extractive activities. In this sense, identity and culture become essential in the emergence of cohesive and successful anti-extractive social movements (ibid. p. 370).

In this sense, Klein argues that the main task for activists is to help create the "social and political contexts in which these shifts stand a chance of displacing the all too profitable status quo" (ibid. p. 24). She argues that because "culture is fluid", the climate movement needs to be able to create a cultural shift that emphasizes the interconnectedness of humans and nature and that highlights the connections between multiple social struggles, from economic poverty to racial injustice to migration, in order to build multi-issue coalitions that are able to craft and advance a progressive narrative that challenges neoliberalism and allows for the collective transformation of society in favour of greater social and climate justice.

This new narrative needs to take into account that "our growth-based economic logic is now in fundamental conflict with atmospheric limits (ibid. p. 87) and that we should be opting for "selective de-growth" by moving away from wasteful consumption and investing in low-carbon sector of the economy (ibid. p. 93).

Sze echoes Klein when she argues that one of the key achievements and challenges of the environmental justice movement is linked to the idea of stories, cultures, and narratives. She proposes that in order to succeed, a movement needs to be able to generate new narratives that bring people together and generate a culture of solidarity. In this sense, "stories and how they are told matter. Storytelling is a deeply political act that brings a radical democratic vision to an issue often seen as largely scientific" (Sze, p. 68). For example, "rebellion and resistance stories are part and parcel of restorative environmental justice in the sense that they promote a sense of abundance, life, and affirmation that counter fear, deprivation, and chaos" (ibid. p. 80).

Of course, creating new narratives to advance climate justice and to challenge the current economic model is not easy, in part because of the philosophical underpinnings of the modern world. "Post- Enlightenment western culture does not offer a road map for how to live that is not based on an extractivist, non-reciprocal relationship with nature" (Klein, p. 178). This was most evident in the first two decades of the 21st century, when even the most progressive governments of Latin America's "pink tide" ended up financing their anti-poverty measures with the revenues of the same extractive industries that have crippled true and meaningful development in region over the past five centuries (ibid. p. 180).

However, the movement is somewhat fragmented, with some factions calling for the emergence of an eco-socialist philosophy, others still attached to the idea of extraction and development in favour of developing countries, and others more willing to integrate with elite-oriented institutions (Bond, pp. 185-197). In this light, Mendez argues that these fragmentations can be overcome by focusing on tangible issues affecting local communities in order to ground these discussions and prevent them from becoming "carbon reductionist" approaches that, by taking an approach that is too global and high level, might end up "obscuring environmental inequities in communities of color" and ignoring change happening at the street level (Mendez, p. 25). Indeed, Mendez's experiences in Oakland's climate movement showed that the movement became successful because it was able to tie climate issues to people's everyday concerns, such as their health and well-being, as well as because it legitimized vulnerable people's expertise (ibid. pp. 91-114).

Despite these contradictions, the climate justice movement has moved in new directions

in recent years that will ultimately strengthen its ability to effect change. One is its growing alliance with the labour movement, which has helped to articulate the vision of today's Green New Deal in the United States, which emphasizes the enormous opportunity that exists in transition towards clean energy in terms of new jobs for the working class (Bond, pp. 206-207).

Climate justice and racial justice

Climate change is having and is expected to have a major impact on people and communities already facing marginalization. Many of those are racialized communities, which means that climate change has the potential to greatly exacerbate some of the issues that contribute to their marginalization. For example, to Sze the phrase "I can't breathe", which gained notoriety in relation to police violence against Black people in the US in recent years can easily be applied to the ways in which communities of colour have been denied "breath and healthy breathing spaces" as a result of environmental racism (Sze, p. 16).

Past experience shows that in many countries, such as the United States, racialized communities have often been more negatively been affected by environmental degradation than white communities. In his work about the bio politics of waste, Zimring describes waste and dirt as "matter that is out of place and threatens the social order" and has contributed to the formation of cultural and social values (Zimring, p. 1). Notions of dirt and waste have historically been conflated with racial constructs in the United States, which has resulted in racialized communities being disproportionally affected by pollution because of policies that externalized the management of waste and hazardous materials to these communities.

In the United States, Washington argues that many of the chemicals found in industrial and waste pollution "are far more likely to their way into African American, Hispanic, and Native American communities- affecting their water, land, and even schools- than into white communities" (Washington, p. 10). This has major health consequences, including in terms of loss of intelligence and reduced cognitive ability for people living in those communities, which she quantifies as a loss of 23 million IQ points each year across the country. (ibid. p. 9) and which have major social economic consequences, often contributing to cycles of poverty.

This situation has been described by various movements and authors as "environmental racism", which can be defined as "racial discrimination in environmental policy-making and the enforcement of regulations and laws, the deliberate targeting of people of colour communities for toxic waste facilities, the official sanctioning of the life-threatening presence of poisons and pollutants in our communities, and the history of excluding people of colour from leadership in the environmental movement" (Chavis 1992, quoted in Zimring, p. 1). To Zimring, the racist attitudes in United States culture that shaped environmental policy are also evident in things like "the marketing of cleaning products, the organization of labour markets handling waste, the spatial organization of waste management, and residential segregation" (Zimring, 3).

This is an issue that affects both "people of colour" and Indigenous communities. Fortunately, such communities are beginning to build stronger bonds of solidarity, at least in the United States, perhaps best exemplified by Black Lives Matters' statement that "there is no Black liberation without Indigenous solidarity" (Sze, p. 43) and by the emergence of new common identities of solidarity among activists at Standing Rock and other major struggles, most of which are expressed through art and storytelling (ibid. p. 44).

Climate justice and Indigenous rights

From changing flooding patterns, fluctuations in fish populations, more frequent tropical storms, and rising food insecurity, Indigenous people across the world are already suffering the effects of climate change. This is problematic because, "if developing countries have little responsibility for climate change, the Indigenous people have the least" (Muller and Walk, 2013 quoted in Jarand-

illa Nuñez, p. 422), and yet are "systematically excluded form decision making processes of climate processes at the national and international level and in the implementation of mitigation and adaptation strategies in their countries and territories" (ibid. p. 422) despite possessing unique knowledge as result of their relationship with different systems of life.

For Gilio-Whitaker, European colonization of the Americas, which transferred enormous amounts of wealth to Europe through centuries of displacement, genocide (the Indigenous population of North America went from roughly 18 million in 1492 to 188,000 in 1890) , plunder, and land theft, laid the groundwork of environmental racism as colonialism took the form of the physical and political erasure of Indigenous people in order to gain access to and assert control over new territory (Gilio-Whitaker, pp. 24, 49).

This not only disrupted the land-based systems of belonging and responsibility in which many Indigenous cultures are rooted, but also defined development policies that continuously displaced Indigenous peoples from their lands for years to come in order to establish new forms of dispossession. In Indigenous worldviews, Gilio-Whitaker adds, "there is no separation between people and land, between people and other life forms, or between people and their ancient ancestors whose bones are infused in the land they inhabit. All things in nature contain spirit, thus the world is seen and experienced in spiritual terms."

Furthermore, Indigenous people "recognize themselves as having been placed on their land by spiritual forces to which they are responsible (Gilio-Whitaker, pp. 138, 139). These worldviews are in direct opposition to Western or European-based understandings of the relationships between human and nature, which emphasize the idea of separation us and nature, as well the idea of nature as a source of wealth (Jarandilla Nuñez, p. 423).

These issues raise to the need to take a climate justice approach that is more inclusive of Indigenous perspectives, or to "indigenize" climate justice. As Jarandilla Nuñez explains, the dominant paradigm in climate justice discourse tends to be Eurocentric in the sense that "it considers human beings to be at the centre of climate justice efforts and demands". Gilio-Whitaker adds that the "underlying assumptions of the dominant environmental justice discourse are grounded in racial and economic terms and are defined by norms of distributive justice within a capitalist framework".

Indigenous elder in Colombia. Photo credit: Association of Indigenous Councils of Northern Cauca, Colombia.

Indigenous people in many parts of the world are already moving in this direction and have "deconstructed, resignified, and appropriated the concept [of climate justice] with new connotations to raise their voices and visions for climate change action" (Jarandilla Nuñez, p. 421). In essence, Indigenous visions of climate justice are centered around a "cosmocentric" – as opposed to an "anthropocentric" – perspective that is "rooted in the protection of life, not only human life but all systems of life that coexist and are interrelated in our world" (ibid. p. 423). This has led some Indigenous climate activists to call for the recognition of the rights of Mother Earth which conceptualizes the planet as a living entity with rights that need to be guaranteed.

Therefore, pursuing environmental justice from an indigenous perspective requires the use of a different lens that acknowledges the history of settler colonialism, "embraces the ways Indigenous peoples view land and nature" based on understandings of reciprocity and responsib-

ility, including the issue of sacred sites, and that is based on the political recognition of Indigenous people and their right to self-determination" (Gilio-Whitaker , pp.12-13). It entails thinking about a model that actively encourages decolonization and that is able to see beyond "a homogenizing, assimilationist, and capitalist state (ibid. p. 25).

Media and climate justice

For the majority of people, information about climate change and how to deal with it comes from media and news sources (Roosvall and Tegelberg, p. 1). In relation to climate justice, one of the main roles that media are expected to play is that of monitoring the extent to which actors that have been deemed responsible for addressing climate change, such as governments and energy sector corporations, are meeting the obligations they have committed themselves to. In this regard, media institutions "hold great potential to contribute or even to lead efforts to make injustices visible" (ibid. p. 45). This is because "communication as not only reflecting but also constructing, producing, and naturalizing particular human relations with the environment" (Tema, p. 345). As a result, "societal responses to ecological degradation are filtered through dominant systems of environmental representation." (Tibid. p. 346).

As the concept of climate justice becomes more prominent, "the voices we hear calling for climate justice are increasingly the voices of Indigenous people" and those of other people and communities disproportionately affected by climate change, especially at international climate summits. (Roosvall and Tegelberg, p. 1).

However, Indigenous communities and grassroots leaders are "struggling to have their voices heard in political and media spheres" For example, Indigenous people might get media attention "for their clothes, culture or spirituality" but rarely for their political actions and ideological critiques, which increasingly take the form of demands for climate justice (ibid. pp. 4-5).

This is problematic as the effects of climate change will be most felt by communities living in geographical areas like the Artic, the Amazon, the Andes, the South Pacific, the Himalayas, or the Australian flatlands, that are geopolitically "remote" from the centres of power in media and politics where major decisions around climate issues are being made (ibid. p. 8).

This problem is particularly salient for Indigenous or other ethnic minority communities who in some countries may be mis- or under-represented in media coverage and may be portrayed as not being full members of society. For example, during major anti-government protests that involved a clash between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in Colombia in April 2021, mainstream media portrayed the situation as "fights between Indigenous people and local citizens" and characterized Indigenous protests as a "siege" of a capital city (Schaefer, 2021). Examples of the mis- or under-representation of Indigenous people like the one described above are rampant in corporate media – which are often intimately connected to economic and political power – in countries across the world, where these communities are often represented as "living in the past and enjoying underserved special right" (Klein 2014 quoted in Roosvall and Tegelberg, p. 54).

Roosvall and Tegelberg argue that this can have the effect of undermining Indigenous claims to climate justice because those "constituted as 'not members' cannot claim redistribution, recognition, or ordinary political representation" in the same way that other members of society can (ibid. p. 44).

For Indigenous and other vulnerable communities, there is a sense that international climate events like the COP, which are designed to bring together the governments of UN members states, do not represent a space where transnational or intra-national communities like themselves can fully participate and exert meaningful influence (ibid. p. 9). This is also reflected in media coverage, as Indigenous-led events at climate conferences about Indigenous knowledge and experiences are seldom featured in global head-

lines (ibid. p. 111).

Given the general invisibility of Indigenous and vulnerable communities in coverage of climate change, many of these groups have "taken media into their own hands in order to develop their own narratives and challenge dominant stereotypes" (ibid. p.105) through community media, and regularly employ social media for political organizing and disseminating information (ibid. pp. 108, 117).

Why communication rights are essential to climate justice

Upholding the communication rights of people and communities most affected by the effects of climate change greatly strengthens climate justice efforts. In order for climate change to be addressed according to ideas advanced by the climate justice movement, vulnerable people and affected communities, especially in the South, need to be at the centre of the conversation and be able to put forward their own solutions to the crisis as well as to turn public opinion in their favour.

This can only happen if those communities, whether they be fossil fuel workers, Indigenous peoples, racialized people, climate migrants, vulnerable women and girls, communities fighting extractivist projects, subsistence farmers, and the urban poor, among others, are organized well enough to be able to act locally as well as to generate political will in support of their struggles. Clearly, these are social processes that need media and communication. They require vulnerable people and communities to be media literate, have access to media platforms, be fairly represented in media content, and be able to exercise key communication rights such as freedom of opinion and expression, assembly, association, and information.

As Roosvall and Tegelberg point out, one of the central notions of climate justice is that of "parity of participation", which requires "social arrangements that permit all to participate as peers in social life". There are multiple obstacles that impede this type of participation. They include economic, institutional, and political barriers (Fraser ,2008 quoted in Roosvall and Tegelberg, p. 37). Schlosberg echoes this notion in his "recognition and capabilities" approach to climate justice, which entails, first and foremost, "recognition" of "people and communities who have been systematically ignored, misrecognized, and unrecognized by more powerful groups" which he argues can only be achieved by creating mechanisms for the meaningful and genuine political participation of these communities. (Schlosberg, pp. 449-452).

In practice, this will entail the following:

* Efforts to enable grassroots climate activists and media houses to build connections and trust;
* Promoting greater access to media, the Internet, and ICTs among Indigenous and marginalized communities;
* Calling for the allocation of broadcasting licenses to community-based groups affected by climate change;
* Building the capacity of Indigenous and other grassroots communities to engage with media;
* Supporting grassroots communities to systematize and share traditional ecological knowledge that help theirs and other communities to adapt to climate change. ■

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Voces y susurros de los Páramos: Narrativas comunitarias sobre el cambio climático

Carolina Martínez Molina

Los páramos representan para la humanidad, la opción de vida y supervivencia en esta Casa Común. Al ser fábrica y depósito de agua dulce, este delicado ecosistema tiene un alto grado de responsabilidad en nutrir los ríos, lagos, lagunas y demás vertederos de agua, además de jugar un papel decisivo en la existencia misma de la Amazonía.

El agua viaja a través de los vientos andinos de la alta montaña del páramo hacia el gran bioma amazónico; las constantes lluvias de la Amazonía se deben en gran medida a la capacidad de mantener y generar humedad, propia de los ecosistemas de páramo que confluye en una relación perfecta gracias a la movilidad de las especies de fauna migratorias, los fuertes vientos, los ríos, etc.

Los páramos son definidos como ecosistemas de alta montaña, que suelen superar los 2,800 m.s.n.m., y que, a pesar de la altura y los fuertes vientos que soplan sus suelos, la humedad es el secreto de la vida que crece y sobrevive a este inclemente frío paramuno (las temperaturas oscilan entre los 10°C hasta 0°C dependiendo la altura).

La zona intertropical parece ser la responsable de viabilizar la existencia del páramo en el planeta tierra. Se ubican principalmente en Suramérica, en gran parte de la Cordillera de los

Foto: Autoría Propia. Parque Nacional Natural El Cocuy, Güicán y Chita, Boyacá – Colombia.

Andes, aunque en África Oriental y Nueva Guinea también se encuentran ecosistemas similares al del páramo andino y países centroamericanos como Costa Rica y Panamá.

Los Páramos de los Andes se despliegan desde Venezuela, pasando por Ecuador, Perú y Colombia, este último con más del 50% de las zonas de páramo en el mundo. De ese 2,5% de agua dulce que existe en el mundo, un gran porcentaje se debe a la existencia del páramo, y si Colombia posee la mayor cantidad de territorio de páramo, el país tiene una responsabilidad enorme con la humanidad.

Fue precisamente esa responsabilidad social la que motivó la creación de una Red de Reporteros Comunitarios capaz de concientizar sobre el papel de los páramos en el cambio climático y la necesidad de implementar medidas que permitan preservar, conservar y rescatar el agua.

Voces y Susurros de los Páramos es una red guardiana que, a través de la radio comunitaria hace un aporte pedagógico a la lucha por la naturaleza y la vida. Colombia a pesar del enorme desarrollo tecnológico y de conectividad, sigue siendo un país que prefiere y vive la radio. En el mundo rural, la radio es el compañero ideal para las largas jornadas de trabajo, y precisamente los páramos, conviven con campesinas y campesinos que asientan sus vidas en las laderas de estos imponentes ecosistemas.

Es así que, desde 10 municipios de Colombia, en los departamentos de Boyacá, Cundinamarca, Tolima y Norte de Santander, las y los reporteros a través de una radio-revista que lleva su mismo nombre, y que se trasmite una vez a la semana, comparten las historias, las luchas, los sueños de la gente que vive en las alturas andinas, además de reconocer el espacio que habitan y aprender sobre el páramo y su mágico bioma.

Este laboratorio sonoro, que lleva dos años en sintonía con los páramos, se ha convertido en un encuentro de saberes, un viaje

Foto: Propia autoría. Antena del Estado colombiano – Complejo de Páramos del Cocuy, Boyacá – Colombia.

por la historia y la geografía de un país que aún no terminamos de conocer.

Uno de los principios claves a tener en cuenta, es que el conflicto armado y el narcotráfico han impedido que haya un reconocimiento minucioso y detallado del territorio nacional y su riqueza ambiental. Fue apenas con el Acuerdo de Paz, que la agenda por delimitar las zonas más sensibles de los ecosistemas en Colombia e implementar medidas para su protección, empezaron a emerger, y fue a partir de esa apertura en la agenda nacional que los páramos y la necesidad por conocerlos empezó a moverse por diferentes escenarios de discusión (medios de comunicación, academia, construcción de políticas públicas, etc.).

Voces y Susurros es pionera en retratar la radiografía de los páramos de Colombia a través del lenguaje popular y la edu-comunicación comunitaria. Desde la esfera biológica y científica, hasta los mitos y leyendas que se tejen en las alturas, han sido protagonistas de uno de los procesos más importantes para la radio con sentido social y ambiental en Colombia.

Se ha visto como después de que se puso en marcha esta iniciativa de comunicación, muchos otros medios de comunicación tanto privados como públicos y comunitarios, han implementado dentro de sus parrillas de contenido, temáticas que giran en torno al cuidado de los páramos, a la concientización de los efectos del cambio climático, y las posibles acciones que como ciudadanía podemos implementar para mitigar esta situación.

Los mismos integrantes de la Red, han experimentado transformaciones en su cotidianidad a raíz del proceso: se ha gestado un sentido de conciencia por la cantidad de basura que generamos en casa o en el trabajo; llaman al cuidado de los visitantes que van a estas zonas promoviendo el turismo ecológico, comunitario y ambiental; resaltan la labor que vienen haciendo lideresas y líderes ambientales, sociales y campesinos en sus municipios y alrededores, además de buscar

Foto: Grupo Comunicarte. Producción pieza radial para Radiorevista Voces y Susurros de los Páramos – Emisora Cacica Stereo en Santo Domingo de Silos, Norte de Santander – Colombia.

llegar cada vez más a la audiencia, pues con el trabajo en red ha quedado claro que el entretejido de luchas, la unión de fuerzas pueden generar transformaciones radicales y duraderas.

Pero no sólo al interior de la red se empiezan a ver estos cambios, la comunidad en general ha comenzado a tomar un papel más activo para buscar ser parte de la toma de decisiones frente a su municipio y entorno. Actualmente se viene promoviendo un proyecto de ley para delimitar las zonas de páramos. En Colombia la Constitución y varias normativas protegen las zonas ambientales sensibles, otorgando un título de protección absoluta para que no sean alterados estos ecosistemas por la actividad humana.

Por desplazamiento, por ancestralidad, por herencia, y por muchas más razones, la población campesina colombiana se ha movido por los diferentes ecosistemas buscando el mejor lugar para su vida. Los páramos no han escapado a ello, y es en parte por esta penetración cada vez más numerosa de actividad humana, que se ha visto alterada la cotidianidad del páramo.

Es por ello que se hace necesaria la delimitación de estos ecosistemas, eso sí, fomentado alternativas de subsistencia para las familias que viven en zonas de páramos, y que obligadas a dejar de cultivar o intervenir los suelos, tengan otras alternativas que por el contrario, contribuyan al cuidado de los páramos y la naturaleza en general. Mientras esto se define, la gente necesita informarse más, acercarse a una problemática que nos afecta como país y como humanidad, con-

ocer el cómo, el por qué y el para qué de esa ley, teniendo en cuenta las diferentes formas de ver y entender lo que es el páramo y su importancia para la vida misma: la herramienta sin duda es la radio comunitaria.

La música, el folclor, la gastronomía, la identidad y las costumbres, las historias libertadoras, los mitos y las leyendas han sido relatos que retumban en más de 10 municipios de páramo que se identifican y crean sentido común entorno a los páramos y su determinante papel en la mitigación del cambio climático. Aunque el confinamiento de la pandemia y la crisis de sostenibilidad que presenta la radio comunitaria en Colombia, la radio-revista y todo el trabajo alrededor de la creación de piezas comunicativas para el blog del proyecto no ha parado, ha sido constante y por supuesto ha atravesado muchos obstáculos.

Sin embargo, las y los reporteros y las mismas comunidades donde están situadas las emisoras que hacen parte de este proyecto, han mantenido firme su compromiso con los páramos y la pedagogía que se debe compartir con la comunidad para incrementar los aliados en esta labor. Cabe resaltar que fue gracias al apoyo y el entretejido que PWRDF[1] y WACC[2] han brindado, lo que habilitó la oportunidad de que Grupo COMUNICARTE y las diferentes emisoras que hacen parte del proyecto, tuvieran las condiciones para iniciar este camino sonoro por el cuidado de los páramos.

El fortalecimiento de la red también ha requerido del apoyo de los talleres de capacitación en radio comunitaria y medio ambiente, los cuales, abren el espacio para integrar cada vez más personas interesadas en aprender más sobre cómo informar sobre el cambio climático y los diferentes ecosistemas del país, sin olvidar todo el componente humano y social que habita en estos territorios. En los talleres de capacitación se discute el formato, el tiempo, y todas las estrategias que permitan emitir un mensaje claro e inclusivo del cuidado de los páramos.

Por supuesto, además de la producción de las piezas comunicativas a partir de los talleres de capacitación prácticos, el proceso ha generado alianzas con otras organizaciones que vigorizan el proceso de creación y difusión. Recientemente BftW[3] hizo una donación con equipos para fortalecer la infraestructura de las emisoras que hacen parte de la red, garantizando las condiciones mínimas para continuar esta importante labor.

Si bien el trabajo aún debe seguir y cada vez más con mayor fuerza, el sueño es poder crecer y entrelazar todas las radios comunitarias ubicadas en zonas de páramos para incrementar el eco por el cuidado de los páramos, del agua y de la naturaleza misma, y fortalecer a su vez las radios comunitarias de Colombia, reivindicarlas como escenarios de participación democrática, donde las diferentes voces y posiciones tienen un espacio, con el fin de encontrar las salidas que se adecuen a las necesidades de todos los habitantes de estas delicadas zonas.

Finalmente, la alianza con redes digitales y multimedia es uno de los objetivos de la red. Pero el proceso va peldaño por peldaño, y mientras se saca provecho al acceso a la comunicación e información a través de nuestras radios comunitarias, la red sigue avanzando hacía nuevas conquistas que permitan contarle al mundo sobre los páramos y su importancia en la vida de todo el planeta, *¡porque el páramo es vida!*[4] ■

Notas

1. PWRDF: Primate's World Relief Development Fund of the Anglican Church of Canada.
2. Asociación Mundial para la Comunicación Cristiana en sus siglas en inglés.
3. Brot für die Welt: Pan para el mundo, dignidad para las personas - Agencia de cooperación alemana.
4. Blog proyecto Voces y Susurros de los Páramos. https://comunicaparamos.wixsite.com/comunicarte

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Communicating climate change solutions in Nepal

Dev Kumar Sunuwar

The knowledge, innovations and practices of Indigenous Peoples in Nepal, as in many parts of the world, are often taken for granted and brushed aside as insignificant. Yet, the evidence shows that they hold solutions to addressing the current climate crisis.

The short documentary series produced by Indigenous Television with financial support from WACC in 2020 shows that Indigenous Peoples do not create the climate crisis, rather they have the solutions to fix them.

Indigenous Television in partnership with WACC produced as many as eight short-documentary series to showcase the use of Indigenous Knowledge on climate change adaptation and sustainable living. The series formed part of project titled "*Strengthening Nepalese Indigenous Peoples Voices on climate change through community media*."

Indigenous Television for the first time produced a special program focusing on Indigenous Knowledge about climate change adaptation and mitigation. The documentaries focused on Indigenous agricultural system of three sister crops (the companion planting or mixed-farming); Pahari Indigenous Peoples' spiritual and livelihood connections to bamboo; Indigenous food systems for ensuring food security and sovereignty; Bonbo-shamanism practices of Tamang Indigenous Peoples in connection with conservation of forests and plant species; and traditional practices of weaving clothing to keep rituals and traditional alive and also generate employment.

A number of studies have confirmed that the culture, traditions and farming system of Indigenous Peoples have been climate-friendly. Thus, Indigenous Peoples are contributing to mitigating the effects of climate change. Indigenous Peoples have their own values and knowledge systems. Such a knowledge system is either expressed in tangible form or in an intangible form through inheritance from one generation to the next. As the search for ways to mitigate the effect of climate continues around the world, it is important to focus on documenting and promoting such knowledge.

This article mainly deals with Indigenous Knowledge, recognized recently in the climate sciences as that knowledge of particular Indigenous Peoples sustained or accumulated for generations for years in traditional ways, practices, rituals and by interacting with the land, the water, and the environment. Such knowledge includes, for example, which seeds to plant during which seasons of the year, and on which part of the field, knowledge to cope with the harsh climatic conditions including food scarcity, drought or massive rainfall and so on.

Pahari Indigenous Peoples and their relation with Bamboo

Pahari is one of the least studied, the most marginalized and excluded Indigenous nationalities in Nepal with a population of merely 13,615. They make a living by practicing a traditional bamboo weaving craft and selling their bamboo items such as kitchenware, furniture, plates, baskets, dustbins, racks and other handicrafts. This craft accounts for up to 70% of the community's total income for livelihood.

Pahari Indigenous Peoples have a spiritual belief that cutting a very young bamboo shoot and eating it is a capital sin that will bring bad luck to the whole village and the community. Therefore, though many communities in Nepal consume bamboo shoots as vegetables and pickles, Pahari Indigenous communities do not share this tradition to consume. Such spiritual and traditional beliefs have contributed to the healthy growth

and conservation of Bamboo groves.

"It is sin to cut the baby bamboo sprouts and consume them," says Badri Pahari, a local from Godhawari, Lalitpur, adding, "Even the old and dried bamboo is not cut down haphazardly, whenever one wishes. We have special occasions and days to cut it down. If we cut it down haphazardly, the insects would infect the whole bamboo bushes. It is cut down only when the moon is invisible."

This testimony shows that Pahari Indigenous Peoples have deep respect towards nature, the bamboo forest and plants.

The bamboo forests are at the back of their houses and their livelihood still is completely dependent on the income generated by sales of bamboo items. This is why they have been protecting bamboo for generations. Such indigenous practices, spiritual connections and traditional belief systems have made it possible to ensure the well-being of human beings, animals, and other living beings, depending on nature for breath. More importantly, their Indigenous Knowledge about growing bamboo has helped to address the environment and climate crisis globally.

"When we use a plastic basket or iron product in a factory or made in a mine, a lot of carbon dioxide is released into the atmosphere by the time it is produced. When it is taken out of the mine, made in a factory and then transported from one place to another, it emits a lot of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere," says climate change activist Tunga Bhadra Rai. "But the goods produced by Pahari Indigenous Peoples from bamboo or willow, even if they rot, go back to the environment. In the meantime, the production of such goods does not emit any carbon dioxide. From this perspective, bamboo products are climate change or environment friendly."

Bamboo is used not only by Pahari Indigenous communities but massively throughout Nepali society for various purposes. Bamboo is also used in various religious and cultural activities. In any case, the Indigenous Peoples have a tradition of using and knowledge of conserving bamboo. Such Indigenous Knowledge and traditions need to be recognized by society and the nation.

Bonbo, nature-centred spiritual practices of Tamang Indigenous Peoples

Clad in a distinctive costume, Bonbo perform dances in their own rhythms and tunes playing

the drums, body trembling, chanting the Mantras, which are passed down through oral tradition. Their dances are not for entertainment, but to connect with nature and the spiritual world. The art of performance is often used to summon the protector deities connecting nature and the human soul.

The shamans are known as Bonbo, Bonpo or Laptawa and others in the Tamang Indigenous community. Tamang is one of the major Indigenous Peoples among 59 Indigenous Nationalities legally recognized in Nepal. They have their own customary institutions with particular customary laws such as Tamba (language initiator), Ganba (social evaluator), Bonbo (shamans), Labonbo (genealogists) Lama (religious leaders) and Choho (community managers) regulating, promoting, and developing society.

Not just among the Tamang, shamanic spiritual practices have guided all Indigenous Peoples throughout the world. Shamanic philosophy holds that all beings – human, animal or plant –are equivalent, all are natural phenomena, including lightning and stars. Every Indigenous People has terms to refer to them. Terms such as Dhami, Jhakri, Poinb, Gyami, Oja, Bijuwa, Lama and others exist among Indigenous Peoples of Nepal.

Bonbo play a crucial role not only in performing the rituals of Tamang Indigenous Peoples from birth to death, but also in healing, and fulfilling responsibilities with regard to possible impacts on the community's livelihood and health. Bonbo not only perform the trance or ecstatic religious activities, Tantra and Mantras, but also use diverse plants based on Indigenous knowledge in healing. They play an important role in conservation of forests and vegetation, demonstrating an innate relation with land and forest.

"This is broom grass. This is one of the holy/sacred plants for Bonpo (shamans)," says a Tamang Bonbo, speaking in his mother tongue, as he points to a lush plant with large, narrow green leaves that taper to a point. "You can see the sign of God here. We've been protecting this plant for generations, as this is also used as medicine."

The broom grass plant is not just important for ceremonies; it is usually planted on rice terrace walls and hillsides to prevent landslides and flooding. The roots of the plant help retain ground moisture and reduce soil erosion. The plant, which is used to make brooms, is also a source of income for many.

Knowledge of wild edible food items for food security

For generations Indigenous Peoples in Nepal have relied on Indigenous Knowledge to ensure food security. They know how to identify different types of edible wild fruits, vegetables, roots and food items and know when and how to plant which types of food and how to harvest and preserve them. One example is the stinging nettle. This is a kind of fern found in the forests and small bushes in Nepal, used by many Indigenous Peoples for both cooking and medicine.

"Indigenous Peoples believe that there are powerful gods in the stones, caves, trees and even in the river. They also believe that they may get angry if litter is thrown there," says Khojraj Gole, Indigenous Knowledge expert from Tamang community. "Even when they go hunting, they beg the pardon of the animals which become their prey. They believe that the living and non-living, visible and invisible, all have power and existence. The absence or termination of one is fatal for the other. In this way, Indigenous Peoples have played a significant role in preventing the environment from deteriorating."

Indigenous Peoples worship rivers, streams, wells, because without water our bodies and the world have no meaning. If there is no element of water in the body, then it cannot be a body. Similarly, there can be no trees and the world cannot be imagined. In this logic, water sources and the

cycles that sustain them are valued in Indigenous knowledge.

In order to minimize the potential risk of a food crisis, conservation of food items based on the knowledge of particular Indigenous communities is an important issue. The air, water, soil, climate and nature are essential elements for human beings. Indigenous Peoples have safeguarded a knowledge system to protect these elements, but archiving and preserving such knowledge has been a challenge for all of us at the moment.

Conclusion

The examples above show that Indigenous Knowledge is an integral part of Indigenous Peoples' culture, rituals, everyday practices, use and management of natural resources and spirituality. Undoubtedly, the changes to the ecosystem brought about by climate variability such as rainfall patterns result in food insecurity. In addition, a significant decline in the practice of agricultural rituals has affected Indigenous Peoples' way of life. Yet they have developed and used their knowledge system in addressing the adverse impacts of climate change.

If their knowledge systems, which are closely linked to their day-to-day relations with their landscapes, are undermined, their vulnerability to climate change increases. Thus, there is a need to document Indigenous knowledge and practices in order to protect the broader community. To this end, Indigenous Television also produced a book containing various case studies titled *Indigenous Knowledge: Customs, Traditions and Practices*, documenting Indigenous knowledge of biodiversity and environmental protection measures. ■

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The challenge of communicating unwelcome messages

Asher Minns

Mitigate more. Adapt now. Be afraid. Feel guilty. Pay up. Change everything.

Few people want to hear these messages, yet they have been at the heart of the most successful communication campaign ever. Over the span of a couple of decades, the world has become aware of the risk of climate change. A multitude of channels, scientists, politicians, journalists, civil servants and campaigners – even some celebrities – have helped make it a global concern. Opinion polls the world over show unequivocally that people have heard of and are worried about it. Then, in December 2015, heads of state signed the UN Paris Agreement with the goal of keeping temperature rise well below 2 °C.

This awareness-raising is a huge success story, but what comes next? Deeper engagement, motivation and agency to respond? A few years before the Paris Agreement, I was writing the communication plan for a multi-partner EU-funded project called HELIX, which used new and complex mathematical simulations to show scientists, policymakers and public the impacts of 2 °C, 4 °C and 6 °C of warming.

The results of HELIX confirmed that a temperature rise greater than 2 °C brings risk of severe drought, heatwaves and major floods in many regions, along with serious declines of biodiversity. In many cases, these are considered beyond preparation.

As an evidence-based communicator with unwelcome climate messages to relay, what did I do? How did I react to the prospect of becoming a narrator of doom? Having the luxury of EU funding, I ran a workshop to ask other experts.

Part of massive global demonstrations in 2019 for urgent action on climate change, inspired by young climate activist Greta Thunberg in Sweden. In Brighton, United Kingdom, thousands of school students skipped school and demonstrated. 250.org calculated that around 1.4 million students took part globally. Photo ©Sean Hawkey All Rights Reserved sean[at]hawkey.co.uk

They were leading researchers, psychologists, public sector and private agency communicators, artists. I thank them for their insights.

Working together, we found that people:

* Use denial strategies to suppress anxiety. By denying facts, no emotion needs to be felt. This is relevant to all of us: we all prioritise what to worry about, all of the time. If I were to accept risk data, I would not ride a bike to work every day.
* Have maladaptive coping mechanisms. They accept unwelcome messages about climate change but blunt aspects of the science, or our emotions, to reduce the cognitive impact. This, too, is something that applies to all of us, all of the time, and we may use several different strategies to cope. For example, we may use distancing – set our own timeline to remove a compulsion to act. Perhaps this is part of the reason why future dates are highlighted in various scenarios and a newer approach is to instead assess the impact of specific levels of warming levels.
* Employ diversionary strategies. These are minor changes to behaviour, or single actions or decisions people use to reassure themselves that a response has been made. (Has anyone spoken to you about plastic straws recently?) It is a childlike hope that a super-hero in the form of a responsible adult, the government, or some techno-fix such as biomass carbon capture and storage will fix it all for us.

However, we need to work towards adaptive coping. This involves acceptance of change and loss rather than resistance. It is recognition of climate science, its meaning, and the emotional response it provokes. It might even be compared to mourning. People and cultures have to pass through various stages in a sequence that is not at all smooth or linear; we go back and forth and around denial, grief, anger, engagement and acceptance in the roundabout journey to adaptive coping.

We therefore also assessed how we can use knowledge of natural denial mechanisms to im-

prove science communication, and came up with the following:

* Be honest about the worst-case scenario. This is accurate communication of risk-based decision-making, not attempted prediction of the central tendency. Present the full extent of climate risk. You might be surprised to learn that, despite media headlines, the impacts of high levels of climate change are relatively unstudied and uncommunicated.
* Mitigate to 2 °C but adapt for at least 4 °C. Policymakers in particular are nervous about considering scenarios beyond 2 °C lest it induce fatalism that would lead to a lack of effort and ambition. But, in doing this, they are employing one of the coping strategies outlined above. And, since 2015, the threshold has been moved down with many people now failing to talk about warming beyond 1.5 °C. This is a communication mistake.
* Use your audience's language. This is obvious but worth flagging – jargon is exclusive. Preparedness and resilience engage sustainability professionals better than the abstract concept of adaptation. Risk works well when talking to business professionals who are already experts at making successful decisions based on uncertainties. Terms such as operational performance, asset management, commodities, security of supply, workforce health and wellbeing, have far more impact in the relevant sectors than the phrases scientists use.
* More dialogue, less debate and no campus lecturing. Be a friendly communicator who recognises emotions, loss and the need for active hope. This helps people come together to learn, to deliberate and to respond both individually and collectively. And, never, ever, host what you are calling public engagement on a university campus. Or present as if you are. You need different venues – public safe-spaces that enable trust and processing – whether you are talking to citizens or policy people. Where exactly did the panel discussion come from? Have you ever felt enlightened by one of those?

In summary, communicating the science of climate change calls for us to be more than narrators of doom, to promote a more active hope, realistic goals, imaginable paths and a meaningful role for the individual in the collective response. We need new, more dialogical, forms in our toolbox – along with different venues.

Of course, ideally, this level of engagement would be facilitated by skilled teams. And so the next stage of HELIX was to work with Climate Outreach to devise and offer training in the science of climate communication for early-career researchers.

You can read the paper that came from the workshop, The Challenge of Communicating Unwelcome Messages of Climate Change. ▪

Source: The Climate Communication Project.

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"First, we need unambiguous commitment and credible actions by all countries to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius to avert the most catastrophic impacts of climate change.

Second, to deal with the already dire impacts of climate disruption on the lives and livelihoods of people all over the world, we need a breakthrough on adaptation and resilience.

Third, climate adaptation and peacebuilding can and should reinforce each other.

Women and girls face severe risks from both climate change and conflict, and their meaningful participation and leadership brings more sustainable results that benefit more people."

UN Secretary-General's remarks to the Security Council High-level Open Debate on the Maintenance of International Peace and Security: Climate and Security, 23 September 2021.

Forests, fish, and the future: Living with mangroves in Zamboanga Sibugay

Lora Batino

In the Southern Philippines, a small town by Sibugey bay is home to both a community and the mangrove forests that they look after. The town of Kabasalan in the province of Zamboanga Sibugay shelters hectares of mangrove forests that have been present since the 1970s, which have provided food, shelter, and livelihood to the residents of barangay[1] Concepcion.

Over the years, the coastal community has continued to reap the benefits of mangroves, which function as shelter for fish and crustaceans that they catch for food, serve as structure for their houses and as charcoal for their cooking, and act as natural buffers from storms and strong waves.

Despite the benefits endowed by mangroves, the town eventually saw a decline in marine resources in the mid to late 1980s. Massive mangrove cutting for charcoal and construction use, conversion to fishponds, and coastal pollution became widespread. In the mid-1990s, fisheries declined and fishing communities struggled. Eventually, catch and income derived from fishing were not enough to support fishermen and their families, and some resorted to illegal activities like cyanide and dynamite fishing just to increase their catch. Others abandoned fishing and migrated to urban areas to look for work. Environmental degradation was evident.

Apart from these observations is the noted change in their immediate surroundings. Climate change, a major threat to the mangrove ecosystem and its livelihoods, manifested itself in the frequent occurrence of typhoons and rains. Zamboanga Sibugay is not located in the typhoon belt in the Philippines, so strong typhoons and storm surges are unexpected. Coastal erosion brought about by these weather conditions changed the natural landscape of the municipalities near the bay. Coastal flooding forced families to retreat farther from the coast and harsher weather conditions necessitate the building and maintenance of higher and sturdier houses.

Global heating has also caused increases in water temperatures and the death of mangrove propagules in the replanting area. Zamboanga Sibugay is also a flood-prone province. Rivers that traverse populated areas flow to the sea, and upstream cause damage to crops and flooding in coastal towns during the rainy season from July to October.

The seemingly irreversible and depleted state of the coastal areas, especially the mangroves, triggered the need for conservation. Residents of barangay Concepcion revisited their experiences and practices that may have led to these effects.

Regrowth and hope

The history of Zamboanga Sibugay's mangrove rehabilitation efforts is closely intertwined with that of the establishment of a proactive people's organization (PO) dedicated to the protection and conservation of mangroves in Sibuguey bay. Then a youth leader, Roberto Ballon or "Ta Dodoy" and his friends and family were deeply involved in local activities, which included a Basic Ecology Seminar and a series of training and seminars that followed which deepened their understanding of the importance of protecting, conserving, and managing natural resources, especially the different ecosystems that support life.

Through raising their awareness and developing their critical thinking, they found out the need to group themselves into an organization to address the problems of their community. This motivated the fisherfolk in barangay Concepcion

to form the Kapunongan sa Gagmay'ng Mangingisda sa Concepcion[2] (KGMC) in 1986. At that time, mangrove forests were almost denuded, the income of the families was already low, and illegal activities were prevalent. They had witnessed and experienced the effects of the activities around them and realized that as a group, they could do something to improve their situation.

KGMC spearheaded various environmental protection and management activities that were known to other POs in the entire province. One of its first activities was planting 50 hectares of mangrove trees. Members initially used their own money and resources for food and gasoline during these planting activities. KGMC started with 36 members, which decreased over the years due to the lack of financial support, the time and energy the activity demanded, and the uncertainty of the replanting effort's future.

Better days came for the remaining members when financial and technical support from the government and the academe came. Membership once again rose and mangrove rehabilitation activities continued. While ongoing, the PO's partners assisted in providing options for diversified livelihood to fisherfolk to augment income lost from destructive fishing activities.

To date, around 12,000 hectares are under the conservation and protection of the federation, and efforts continue to reach a target of 16,000 hectares – the original expanse of the mangrove forests before mangrove clearing and conversion to fishponds became rampant in the area.

Best practices

Despite the apparent destruction of the mangrove area in the past and the challenges the community faced, rehabilitation efforts by family farmers and organizations proved successful and are now considered one of the best practices in the conservation of natural resources in the Philippines. The establishment of a community-based organization, consultation and support with various stakeholders in the government and the academe, use of their local knowledge about mangroves, and communication within the organization and with their partners resulted in a successful and recognized conservation effort.

A shared vision

The first PO established to support their cause, KGMC, was looked upon as a model organization due to its strong advocacy for environmental protection and management. To streamline efforts of various POs from adjacent towns, meetings and consultations became a venue where leaders and members shared their problems and concerns on rampant illegal fishing and degraded coastal habitats. KGMC eventually initiated the consolidation of different people's organizations in the barangays and municipalities into one federation.

Thus, the Coalition of Municipal Fisherfolk Associations of Sibugay (COMFAS) was created, comprising of small fisherfolk associations from the coastal municipalities of Zamboanga Sibugay, sharing one vision of "family food forever". The establishment of a formal federation was drawn from the successes of KGMC's initiatives, which paved the way for accessing support from LGUs, government agencies, and donor institutions. COMFAS is composed of 56 barangay-based organizations, with indigenous people (IP) member organizations from the Subanen and Samal people.

COMFAS employs a collective approach in addressing environmental concerns. Leaders and members are fisher-farmers themselves, and therefore understand one another and share the same values and aspirations for the sector. It has practised democratic, consultative, and participatory decision-making management, where members, both individuals, and families, can share their knowledge and observations on their surroundings. Having lived along the same coast, their experiences of the effects of climate change are no different, nor their goals in mitigating it.

COMFAS believes that they are successful in rehabilitating the mangrove areas within their municipalities and in the entire province because previously denuded forests are now thriving again. Previously abandoned fishponds and

vacant mangrove areas are now abundant with mangrove trees.

The seas as schools

COMFAS also developed their own techniques in planting mangroves. Their current practices are informed by their observations and experiences in mangrove planting over the years. Capacity-building activities provided by academic institutions and government agencies complemented and improved their practices. COMFAS planted mangroves along the dikes of fishponds, riverbanks, and coastal areas to prevent eroded soil from further reaching other mangrove areas. Sharing and exchange of knowledge, both local and gained from training, have been present within COMFAS since its establishment.

Their understanding of the value of mangroves also comes from direct experiences and knowledge-sharing with partners. Mangroves protect the communities against strong winds, storms, typhoons, waves, and floods. They minimize soil erosion, filter sediments, and maintain water quality and clarity. They also help maintain the biodiversity of the coastal ecosystems, thereby increasing food supply and income for families.

After participating in training activities and IEC campaigns, COMFAS members were able to enhance techniques in planting mangroves and identify mangrove species and other plants and animals in the coastal area. Further, their relationship with the environment and with other stakeholders has deepened their knowledge and skills on how to protect, rehabilitate and manage it, and how local knowledge and scientific information can be harmonized for this purpose.

Communication within the community

In the past, low environmental knowledge, and awareness of environment and fishery laws partly contributed to the proliferation of environmental problems.

COMFAS has initiated various efforts in environmental education to strengthen its mangrove conservation and rehabilitation. Constant information dissemination and training to previous violators transformed them and they have now become deputized fish wardens who assist the LGU in law enforcement. Information, education, and communication activities were also conducted for fisherfolk and upland communities. Issues that were identified to be caused by eroded soil from upland farms were addressed through environmental education for farmers and upland residents. This included assistance in accessing information on livelihood options, knowledge on organic farming, and use of organic pesticides and fertilizers as an alternative to environmentally detrimental chemical fertilizers.

The federation and its partners recognize the role and importance of modern technology and the Internet in communicating their efforts and best practices for the protection and conservation of mangroves. This is especially true for younger COMFAS members, who are receptive to new information found in digital and social media sites and online news channels. For government offices and senior members of POs, personal interaction, discussions, mentoring, and seminars still serve as excellent venues for the exchange of information and ideas. Traditional communication forms like print media, TV, and radio still also serve as sources of information for the residents.

Still, full rehabilitation of deforested areas and abandoned fishponds is not possible unless COMFAS is legally recognized as having rights over the area concerned. To have full rights and control over the mangrove conservation area, COMFAS has applied for a Community-based Forest Management (CBFM) tenurial agreement[3] with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.[4]

Future directions

To COMFAS members, the environment is part of their lives. It is where they eat, live, and survive. Keeping it healthy is akin to keeping their own families healthy. Planting is equivalent to saving, and what you get from the sea is the result of years of hard work and commitment. Mangroves

are also compared to natural treasures that members can bequeath to their children. It is a give and take relationship: maintaining its abundance and biodiversity so that the next generation will inherit a healthy coastal environment and live a prosperous life.

While scientific knowledge has contributed to the understanding of the value of mangroves, local knowledge and moral values have all played a role in the success of mangrove rehabilitation. Protecting the environment is not only a responsibility of being a COMFAS member and a resident of Zamboanga Sibugay but a moral obligation. Members strive for a healthy and economically stable family life in a healthy and abundant coastal environment. They envision a future where coastal and marine resources can support the needs of their families, where poverty is reduced among fisherfolk families, and where there is food security. This translates to their vision of "family food forever".

Leadership, partnership and communication

Effective leadership and a common vision have propelled the federation to continue and improve its efforts. Continued partnerships are necessary to strengthen the attitudes of the younger and future generations towards the environment, and to adapt to the changing times. Partnership with government agencies, NGOs, LGUs, academic institutions, private/professional groups, and other POs is a contributing factor to the success of the initiative and has opened doors for knowledge sharing within and outside the federation, opportunities for training and seminars, and financial and policy support.

Communication is a key strategy in sharing knowledge within the federation, between family members, and among partner organizations. In addressing the impacts of climate change, individuals and communities must be aware of their role as stewards of the environment. For fisherfolk in Zamboanga Sibugay, organizing themselves and communicating their observations and experiences with each other allows them to conserve forests and fish for their future. ■

This article is adapted from a research paper produced by the National Federation of Peasant Organisations or Pambansang Kilusan Ng Mga Samahang Magsasaka (PAKISAMA), under the project "Building Capacities of Fisherfolk Families to Use Local & Traditional Knowledge in Promoting Climate-Resilient Fisheries Resources Management" funded by the World Association for Christian Communication (WACC).

Notes

1. Barangay is the smallest political unit in the Philippines. It is a native term used to describe a village or a ward.
2. *Kapunongan sa Gagmay'ng Mangingisda sa Concepcion* is the name of the first PO in barangay Concepcion, Kabasalan. It is a Cebuano (Visayan) name which roughly translates to *Organization of Small Fisher folk of Concepcion*
3. A Community Based Forest Management Agreement (CBFMA) is a shared agreement between the DENR and people's organizations that grants the latter tenurial security to develop and use a forest area and its resources for 25 years.
4. The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) is the primary agency in the Philippines responsible for "the conservation, management, development, and proper use of the country's environment and natural resources".

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Smallholder farmers trying to survive in a changing world

Edwin Kamau

The following article describes how previously voiceless people in a small region of Kenya were given a chance to communicate to decision makers, the young generation, their peers and the general public. The topic? What climate change means to them and how everyone can contribute to making the world a better place.

"As a young girl, I accompanied my mother to the forest to collect firewood. We always carried blunt machetes as a rule. The reason was to ensure we only collected dead or dried wood." says Zipporah Matumbi. This was during an interview conducted by Kelvin Thuranira, a young citizen journalist working on a story about traditional ecological knowledge and climate change mitigation and adaptation.

Zipporah is a 76-year-old woman living in Meru County, Kenya and who is a smallholder farmer living adjacent to the Mt Kenya Forest. Kelvin is one of 20 youth trained on Environment and climate change and on basic communication and journalism skills by The Farm Forestry Smallholder Producers Association of Kenya (FF-SPAK). The training was part of a larger project that sought to use communication as a means of promoting new thinking and action on climate change. The 1-year project was implemented by FF-SPAK. It had three targeted outcomes which were:

Widespread adoption of indigenous methods of combating climate change.

Increased awareness about the role of smallholder farm forestry including women and youth inclusion in addressing climate change.

Influence of policy on support to smallholder producers to address climate Change among governments, donors and other stakeholders.

The Earth, the only place we humans and other living things call home is faced with many threats. In recent times, one particular threat has proven to be most critical. Climate change is becoming more and more real every day. It is affecting nations, communities and people in many different ways.

For instance, smallholder farmers in Kenya are struggling with changing weather. Prolonged and harsher dry seasons alternating with periods of too much rain are literally ruining their livelihoods. They can no longer plant their crops and be assured of a decent harvest to take care of their families. This situation and that faced by others the world over calls for concerted action.

While there are commendable efforts to check climate change by the United Nations, nation states, multinational, regional and national organizations as well as communities, there is a need to include all voices and hands not only in the discourse but also in actions in ways that people understand best.

In a recent interesting experience, the use of traditional ecological knowledge and communication demonstrated that a community of smallholder farmers can not only take charge of their destiny as far as climate change is concerned but also influence many others to follow suit.

Value of traditional knowledge

FF-SPAK was privileged to implement the "Promoting Traditional Climate Change Mitigation Methods through the Media" project in one of the areas feeling the effects of climate change in Kenya. The project, which ran from January 2020 to January 2021 adopted a unique approach of addressing climate change issues through communication. It helped give hitherto voiceless people a chance to communicate what the climate crisis means to them and how each party

can contribute to positive change even if it is only in a small way.

The project started by conducting a study on the use of traditional ecological knowledge to combat climate change among the Ameru people. It was quickly confirmed that climate science and traditional knowledge are both critically significant when designing climate adaptation strategies which enhance the resilience of rural communities to deal with climate change impacts.

Indigenous local communities are richly endowed with traditional knowledge which they have utilized over hundreds or even thousands of years to endure and adapt to numerous climate related disasters. The knowledge is complexly linked to conservation and biodiversity utilization. If this knowledge were to be incorporated and mainstreamed directly into the existing climate change adaptation and mitigation processes, it would provide an exceptional platform to combat and mitigate the adverse impacts of climate change.

However, the problem with both knowledge systems (scientific and traditional) is the manner in which they should be utilized in the decision-making process and how to use them in synergy to guarantee a robust, shared adaptation approach.

Citizen climate journalists

The second step was to identify and train citizen journalists that can collect and publish stories about everyday people and their struggle with the changing climate. Twenty people mostly youth drawn from the community were selected for this. They came from the local FF-SPAK chapter and understood the region and spoke the local language as well.

The 20 were trained on climate change and basic journalism. They became citizen journalists that would go out into the community and conduct interviews with selected senior citizens that had lived in the area and experienced the trends and effects of climate change firsthand. The citizen journalists then developed stories in the form of video clips, radio clips or written stories. These were then shared on different platforms including social media sites like Facebook, twitter, WhatsApp.

Some of the journalists managed to get their articles/clips published on mainstream media platforms including local and national television and radio stations. This created a lot of interest from diverse groups including local government officials, different development programmes, organizations, government agencies and the general public.

More than 80 videos, articles, and audio clips were published or posted in mainstream media and social media respectively. The effect of this was profound. The project worked with four radio stations, three television stations, five print media and a wide range of social media channels/accounts.

These local and national media stations helped reach more than 100,000 people throughout Kenya with thought-provoking stories about climate change and the role that traditional ecological knowledge can play. Community and public attention was provoked partly by the fact that these were real stories from peers and people they could relate to and further by the fact that they themselves were affected by climate change. Indeed, these stories generated significant discourse on various platforms.

Lessons learnt and challenges

One lesson learnt from the project was there is a need to integrate traditional with modern knowledge and approaches to ensure we get the most out of our efforts to address climate change. As the FAO notes:

> "Documented experiences and lessons in the field indicate that community-based adaptation (CBA) yields far more encouraging results than any other approaches. CBA to climate change involves multistakeholder action, innovation and social learning. Usually, it involves small-scale, low-cost and simple technologies made possible by whatever resources lo-

cal communities have. People empowerment, both as a means and as an end, is at the heart of CBA. It emphasizes the need to build local capacity and begins with the identification of adaptation practices by the affected communities themselves. This is done through the use of participatory learning methodologies that link sound local knowledge with scientific knowledge, as well as with rural services."[1]

Indigenous sayings/beliefs and adaptation strategies

Among the Ameru people there were various sayings and beliefs that helped protect forests and the environment. Furthermore, there were strategies employed particularly to ensure survival during bouts of prolonged dry seasons; Some of those listed during the project were:

* Specific areas of the forest were revered and people discouraged to pass through because legend had it that they swallowed people alive.
* Blunt pangas were used so as not to harm trees because trees when cut down will cry. When they cry their father will cry and get angry. Their father was God. Therefore, the trees were never harmed and were left to grow and prosper.
* Njuri Ncheke the council governing the community and clan elders had set stringent rules in regard to tree conservation leading to their protection.
* There were trees that were never cut e.g., Mugumo, and if you did you got a bad omen. These trees were left untouched even if they fell down and were considered as shrines.
* There were areas in wetlands in the interior of the forest where trees were never cut and people revered them. This was because it was believed that God used to pass through those areas.
* Specific tree types were known to grow where there were water sources and there were rules to ensure no one could cut them down.
* Rain was detected through flowering of "miroti" and "miringa" trees. During the month of September, they planted black beans, and sorghum. Whoever did not plant during that time was considered lazy.
* The Ameru studied the moon whereby a crescent moon indicated drought and hunger while three-quarter moons indicated the coming of a season of plenty.
* Food storage was perfected and stored in "muuru". During drought times food was taken from "muuru". Muuru was never opened until severe drought set in. Areas like Mugae and Isiolo still practice the same method and the residents in the area may have beans stored for about two years. That food is never used until other rains came.
* January (the driest month of the year) was referred to as "Mukenda" and "Muuru" was opened during that time. Ameru could never leave a woman or anyone unable to sleep in hunger. People donated food to each other.

During project implementation, the team was confident that the stories coming from the community were interesting and important enough to warrant free or low-cost coverage from mainstream media houses. However, this proved a bit difficult because most mainstream media were essentially profit-making companies and had standard fees for running feature stories or documentaries. Luckily, social media proved very powerful for getting these stories out.

In fact, it was after noticing the interest from the public generated by the social media sites that many of the mainstream media houses decided to cover the project activities as news stories. Another challenge experienced during the life of the project was the restrictions and protocols occasioned by the Covid-19 pandemic.

The pandemic spread across the world just at the time when implementation was due to start. However, using a variety of approaches like having online meetings/trainings, use of local experts and working closely with local authorities while strictly following set protocols allowed the project to continue.

To wrap up the project, a stakeholder work-

shop was organized that brought together players from different interest groups. It included representation from the community, government agencies, non-governmental organizations and the youth who had been trained and worked as citizen journalists for the project.

Communicating to promote adaptation

Many of the stakeholders in the workshop were either currently involved or had in the past been involved in some form of climate change programme. They all agreed that the communication angle could bring out better results if deployed effectively.

Participants agreed that the population most vulnerable to climate change is those with limited adaptive capacity. The conclusion, therefore, was that their stories and voices needed to be heard. This would allow for better planning and acceptance of climate change interventions whether they are to do with mitigation or adaptation.

Also, communication can result in greater impact as conventionally interventions often ended with practitioners and target populations. Disseminating information and sharing stories and lessons with wider audiences can trigger similar interventions elsewhere. ■

Note

1. FAO (2010). *Advancing Adaptation through Communication for Development*. Retrieved August 29, 2021 from http://www.fao.org/3/i1553e/i1553e00.pdf

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Communicating climate change adaptation

Alice Wojcik

This practical "how-to" guide introduces the concept of values-based climate change communication for adaptation. It provides clear, concise summaries of the principles of engagement, combined with practical examples of how public bodies in Scotland can use and tailor these principles in their work.

The guide is primarily aimed at staff within public bodies who want to communicate more effectively on climate change adaptation within their workplace, to external stakeholders and to members of the public. However, it will also be of use to those in the private sector, third sector and other communities who need to communicate the challenge of climate change adaptation.

The text below is a summary of the principles in the guide.

* *Pay close attention to your audience's values:* Values are the bedrock on which attitudes to climate change are built. Use a values map to help identify the values of your audience that you want to engage with.
* *Frame your messages in the right way:* Look for the overlap between the values that are important to your target audience and values such as "protecting the environment" and "helping others" that are crucial for building longer-term support for tackling climate change. Frame your messages so that they build a bridge between the values of the audience and the values of a more sustainable society.
* *Overcome the "psychological distance" of climate change:* Who are you trying to engage with?

In May 2020, communities around Uganda's western Rwenzori mountains "found themselves facing a twin humanitarian emergency of Covid-19 and large-scale destruction caused by flash floods when the banks of the Nyamwamba and Mubuk rivers burst," according to Climate Centre, which took this photo.

What are the things they are passionate about? How can you make climate change adaptation relevant to their lives? Identify the interests of your audience and think about how climate change affects them.

* *Don't focus on "doom and gloom":* Emphasising the benefits of climate adaptation policies is much more effective than pointing to the risks of not adapting.
* *Extreme weather can be a powerful opportunity to engage on climate change:* Use sever weather as an opportunity to discuss preparing for future events and emphasise the benefits of adaptation using the powerful narratives of resilience, community pride and mutual caring that often emerge during the experience of severe weather events.
* *Promote the health benefits of adapting to climate risks:* Connecting climate change with health problems which are already familiar and seen as important – such as heat-stroke, hypothermia or asthma – can make the issue seem more personally relevant.
* *Try to engage across the political spectrum:* Scepticism about climate change is more common among political conservatives. But it doesn't have to be this way. Use language and "narratives" that have been designed to appeal to the "right", as well as the "left" of politics – for example by focusing on conserving the beauty of the countryside or improving the health and wellbeing of communities.
* *Harness the power of social norms and social networks:* Representatives of diverse social communities can communicate with their own groups better than any politician or public figure. People respond well when they see that "people like them" are also taking climate adaptation seriously. Promote social norms on climate change wherever possible.

Source: weADAPT.

Reference

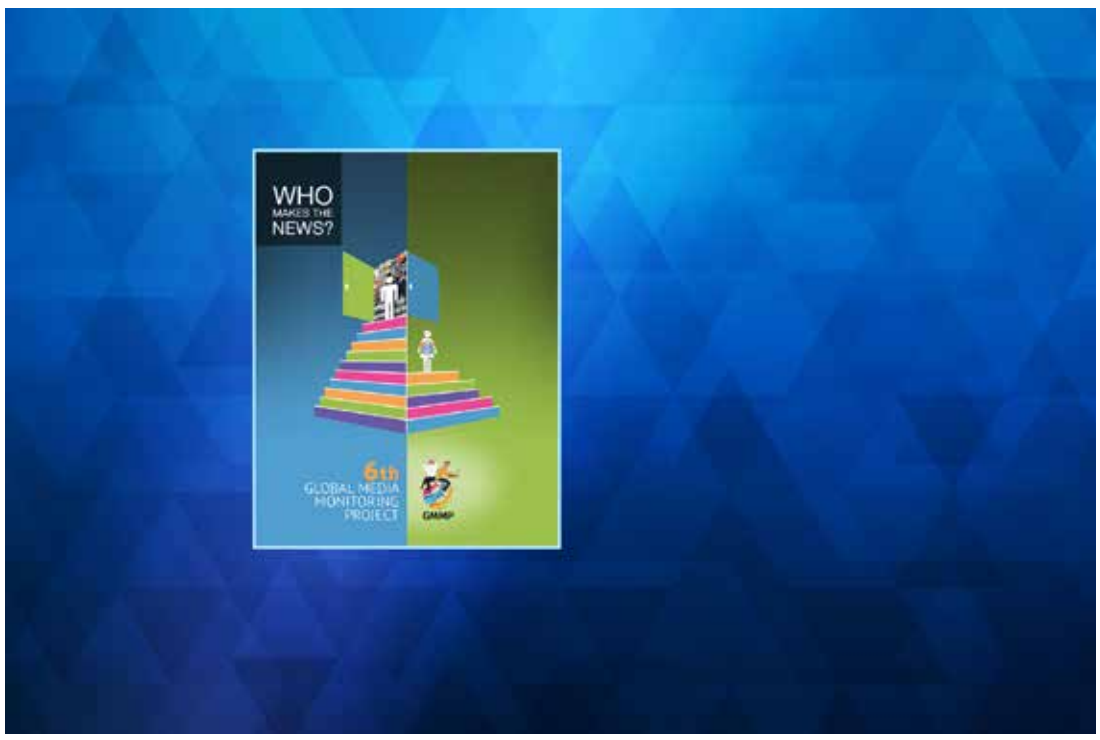
Clarke, J. and Corner, A. (2014). *Communicating climate change adaptation*. Adaptation Scotland and Climate Outreach.

GMMP 2020: Highlights of the findings

Sarah Macharia

The emergence and rapid proliferation of Covid-19 made the implementation of the 6th Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP) the most extraordinary since the initiative's inception in 1995. Yet, despite the pandemic, the media sample was the highest ever. The research was implemented by 116 teams and covered 30,172 stories published in newspapers, broadcast on radio and television, and disseminated on news websites and via news media tweets.

Twenty-five per cent of stories in the sample carried a coronavirus sub- or principal theme. A tweak in the methodology still made it possible to analyse the stories along the classic GMMP major topic categories of politics & government, economy, science & health, social & legal, crime & violence and celebrity/media/arts & sports. The GMMP 2020 topics' structure carved out a seventh major topic "gender & related", in which to cluster stories specific to sexual harassment, rape, #MeToo and similar gender-specific news.



All things remaining equal, it will take at least a further 67 years to close the average gender equality gap in traditional news media.

In 2015, the period remaining to full gender equality based on the GEM Index[1] was 72 years, thus the 2020 result signals consistency in the slow cumulative pace of change over time.

Full gender equality on numerical counts, however, is insufficient without improvement in the quality of journalism from a gender perspective.

At the global average level, mainstream news media are currently at the midway point to gender parity in subjects and sources.

Between 2015 and 2020, the needle edged one point forward to 25% in the proportion of subjects and sources who are women. The single point improvement is the first since 2010 and is most visible in broadcast news media.

Despite their three-point decline in the proportion of women subjects and sources since 2015, North American news media remain the best performers worldwide. European news media have made the most significant progress on this indicator since 1995 and Pacific region media in the past five years. Only Africa's media have stagnated as the rest of the regions have improved by three to 12 points across the quarter century.

The proportion of women as subjects and sources in digital news stories also increased one point overall from 2015 to 2020, with a three-point improvement on news websites and a three-point decline in news media tweets.

The overwhelming majority of science/health news was related to Covid-19, the limelight story of 2020. The meteoric climb in this major topic's

news value due to the pandemic was accompanied by a fall in women's voice and visibility in the stories. While the news share of science/health stories was significantly higher in 2020 compared to earlier periods (from 10% in 2005 to 17% currently), women's presence in this topic declined by five points after a steady rise between 2000 and 2015.

Women's overall presence in the news in North America and the Pacific has surpassed the critical 30% threshold in both digital and legacy media. Africa falls below the global averages across all media types monitored, as do Asia and the Middle East in print and broadcast news.

The only region and topic in which gender parity in subjects and sources has been attained is in North American digital social & legal news.

Transnational media perform poorly with regard to inclusion of women as subjects and sources.

Women were only 13% of subjects and sources in the television newscast monitored and 21% in the digital news stories and tweets coded from transnational media. While the results have improved, women's invisibility remains even more marked in influential international media that serve formidable audiences.

#MeToo: The pattern of underrepresentation of women even in stories that concern them more spills over in news content on gender-based violence

Stories on gender-based violence (GBV) hardly make the major news of the day and when they do, women and girls are severely underrepresented as subjects and sources. Just 1% of the stories in the total sample were coded under the "gender and related" major topic that includes news on various forms of gender violence against women and girls.

Furthermore, that girls and women are underrepresented in stories about sexual harassment, rape and sexual assault particularly now, during Covid-19 times when such acts have reached epidemic proportions, signals a serious deficit in news media accountability to women. The most severe underrepresentation in GBV stories takes place in newspapers, in which women are just 35% of subjects and sources.

Multiple jeopardy in visibility and voice for minority and historically marginalized women

Teams in 81% of the participating countries took the opportunity provided by GMMP 2020 to collect data on indicators of interest in the national context. A number of these indicators made it possible to unpack the results using intersectional lenses, to understand news media treatment of subjects and sources on the basis of their other identities such as race, religion, class/caste, immigration and disability status.

Comparison of the GMMP findings against physical world statistics indicates that women are underrepresented across all the identity groups. In Latin America for example, only 3% of the people in the news are from Indigenous or tribal groups and of these only one in five is a woman. In the physical world, however, Indigenous peoples are estimated to be at least 8% of the region's population, and women at least one half of the Indigenous population. The results demonstrate women's multiple marginalization based on their subordinate identities in the respective contexts.

The failure to extend the opportunity for more citizens to tell their own stories in their own words, to tell the stories which are important to them and also to a broad range of people, compromises the value of the news to its multiple and diverse publics. The failure to represent the diversity of people and opinion present in society not only has implications for public discourse and decision-making, but it also plays a role in eroding trust in news journalism.

Appreciable gains in women's presence as authoritative sources

Women's voices as spokespersons have increased by eight points since 2005, and as experts by

seven points in the same period. In recent years, numerous initiatives to source women for expert opinion have sprouted around the globe and media organisations are visibly making efforts to diversify their experts' pools, responding to external pressure as well as internal industry efforts to do better. Currently, 24% of expert voices in the news are women, a dramatic rise from 19% five years ago.

In keeping with the historical patterns, women are still more likely to appear in unexceptional roles as personal experience providers (42% in traditional media, 41% in news websites) and popular opinion givers (38% in traditional media, 39% in news websites).

Gender-lens-deficient pandemic news coverage

Overall, women's presence as subjects, sources and journalists in stories related to Covid-19 may be higher than in stories that are not about the pandemic, but the quality of content from a gender perspective is worse. Stories about or regarding a dimension of the coronavirus focus on women four points less than stories not linked to Covid-19, and they are less likely to raise gender equality or inequality issues, or to clearly challenge gender stereotypes. Women are more likely to appear in pandemic stories related to social/legal issues, while the possibility that a story will be about a woman or will carry a woman's voice is slimmest in Covid-19 stories that are also about politics and government.

Gender equality in the world depicted in the news still lags behind gender equality in the physical world.

While understanding and acknowledgement of women's contributions have grown in the lived world, the same would not be said of the news media. An example is provided in pandemic stories: women are 27% of the health specialists appearing in coronavirus stories, far fewer than the 46% world average given in labour force statistics. Of the persons portrayed as homemakers, women are almost seven in 10, similar to the 2015 findings. Similarly, their ranks among the unemployed as portrayed in news reports have increased by about eight points in the past five to 20 years. In reality, World Bank modelling of the ILO's sex-disaggregated labour force statistics suggests that unemployment rates have reduced for men by 0.4 points and even more for women by 0.5 points since the year 2000.

Gendered ageism in the news

2020 is the first time that the GMMP investigated the representation of people 80 years and above in the news. 2020 was also the first year of the global Covid-19 pandemic, where old age was considered a common denominator for being at risk. However, people in the oldest age group rarely got attention in the news: only 3% were above 80 years in newspapers, and in television news less than 1% were above 80 years of age. Women 80+ were even more invisible than the men in that age group.

Overall in print news, men who are 50 years and older are very likely to be in the news; 42% of all people in the news belong to this age group. The largest age category for women is 35-49 years, whereas men peak in visibility at 50 to 64 years. Over time in newspapers and on television, women above 50 have become more invisible. Only 3% of all women in the news are between 65-79, compared to 15% of the men.

Following stagnation between 2005 and 2015, women's visibility as reporters has increased by three percentage points overall across print and broadcast news.

Currently, four out of 10 stories in traditional news media are reported by women, compared to 37% since 2005.

In the past two decades, women's newspaper by-line credits have increased by 11 points, their visibility in newscasts has increased by 9%, and online, 42% of journalists named in news articles, seen or heard in multimedia clips are women.

A comparison between print and digital

newspapers reveals that stories by women reporters are distributed more or less evenly across the major topics online and offline, as those by men are skewed towards the politics & government beat.

The reporter gender gap is exactly the same in Asia, Europe, and Latin America despite variations in the pace of change on this indicator across two decades. Pacific media have progressed slower than the rest of the world, but they are currently the second-best performers after their Caribbean counterparts.

The sex of the reporter matters for the gender dimensions of the story

GMMP findings across time indicate that women reporters are more likely than men to turn to women subjects and sources. In 2015, the results suggested that the gender source selection gap was narrowing, but in the 2020 wave, the gap has more than doubled to reach 7 points. Currently, 31% of the people in traditional news covered by women reporters are female, in contrast to 24% of subjects and sources in stories by men reporters.

There is a consistent 5-7% point gap between women and men reporters on female source selection in all regions except for the Caribbean, where men reporters are almost as likely as their women colleagues to select female sources.

The pattern is repeated on digital news platforms where there is a nine-point gap in gender source selection, with 34% of female sources in stories by women reporters compared to 25% in stories by men reporters.

Story quality from a gender perspective tends to be marginally higher in the output of women journalists, in terms of likelihood to clearly challenge gender stereotypes, to raise gender (in)equality issues and to make reference to legislation or policy that promotes gender equality or human rights.

Even with the gender difference, it is important not to lose sight of the overall decline or stagnation across time on these indicators in the output of all journalists, women and men alike.

Patterns of stagnation and decline are consistent across the GMMP measures of the quality of news journalism from a gender perspective.

News stories are as (un)likely to clearly challenge gender stereotypes today as they were 15 years ago.

Between seven to nine out of 10 stories on sexual harassment, rape, other forms of gender violence and specific gender inequality issues reinforce or do nothing to challenge gender stereotypes, with implications for the normalization and continuance of the very injustices that are the focus of the stories.

Fewer than half of gender-related (sexual harassment, rape, other forms of GBV…) stories actually highlight gender (in)equality issues.

Reprinted from the final report of the 6th Global Media Monitoring Project (2020).

Note

1. The Gender Equality in the News Media index (GEM Index) calculates the average gender equality gap based on six GMMP indicators: in people in the news (subjects & sources), in participation as reporters, in voice as experts and as spokespersons, and in presence in economic and in political news. Details on the calculation and individual country scores are indicated in the full report.

GMMP 2020: Methodology

A key characteristic of longitudinal research is the assessment of change over time on the observed indicators. In the case of the 2020 Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP), the methodology, indicators, approach to data collection and analysis are consistent with past editions of the research in order to allow for the usual historical comparisons.

A group of women journalists in Malaga, Spain, carry out a monitoring exercise using the GMMP 2020 methodology. Photo: AMP.

The global monitoring day scheduled initially for the first quarter of 2020 was postponed to later in the year due to the upheavals caused by the first coronavirus (Covid-19) wave worldwide. As the April monitoring day approached, it became quickly clear that proceeding as planned would result in a news sample that would be almost entirely focused on coronavirus stories. A new need emerged to address the practicalities of monitoring during the lockdowns and curfews imposed to contain the spread of the virus, as the regular sit-down communal coding sessions were now out of the question for most teams.

The GMMP technical advisory group and the database development team Code for Africa[1] worked to systematically address the issues. A new monitoring date was set for September, the coding tools were tweaked to capture Covid-19 stories without compromising on the ability to compare results across time based on story topics, exhaustive audio-visual training resources on how to code in a pandemic were put in place, electronic coding instruments were developed and the teams were re-trained in numerous webinars.

As with previous editions of the GMMP, the initial data capture was conducted offline by volunteer teams across the 116 participating countries. For the 2020 GMMP, a spreadsheet version of the coding sheets was provided, to allow for electronic recording of the observations.

In the period leading up to the monitoring day, a series of regional and national training sessions were organised to build a uniform understanding of the teams on the methodology and approach to coding. The teams received training on media selection, newscast and article selection, and the number of media to code.

For the 2020 GMMP, teams could choose from two possible options for the monitoring:

* *Full monitoring*, whose results provide a comprehensive picture of the status of gender equality dimensions in news media.
* *Short monitoring*, a shorter version which focuses on the key GMMP indicators, for teams who wished to participate but for various reasons could not implement the full monitoring.

To ensure accuracy in the coding process, radio and television bulletin were recorded, and copies of digital and print media items were col-

lected. Across the different media types- both for the full and short monitoring-monitors captured information about the story, its main themes and the people in the story, as journalists, as story subjects and sources.

Additionally, three optional special questions, unique to each country, allowed individual countries to analyse issues of national interest. For standardisation purposes, as well as the multilingual nature of this study, all responses were numerically coded from fixed lists.

To enable comparability of data gathered from a pandemic-heavy news agenda with the historical results, an additional question was included which asked whether the story was related to Covid-19. For such stories, monitors were requested to select the most relevant secondary topic. While global news stories had diversified to pre-pandemic levels by the global monitoring day in September 2020, the regional analysis demonstrated the significance of this question, particularly for North America and the Middle East, which recorded 37% and 36% of Covid-19-related stories respectively.

Media bands

The media bands system was introduced in 2005 to ensure a more even spread of data and also serve as each country's reference point on the minimum number of media to monitor. This system was retained for the 2020 GMMP and was updated with the input of country coordinators.

Weighting

While the GMMP seeks to understand how gender is represented in media across the world, differences in media access and impact across the participating countries mean that a simple aggregation of the data would lead to biased results. For example, if a country like France submitted data from 100 media, the entries from a smaller country like Fiji would have little, if any, impact on the results.

Additionally, while two countries may have similar numbers of newspapers, their impact, in terms of the number of people who read them, may be significantly different. To address these challenges, GMMP 2020 updated, re-tested and applied the weighting system first developed for the 2005 edition.

Accuracy

The GMMP involved several thousand people across 116 countries from diverse gender and media stakeholder groups, with different research abilities and working in a wide range of languages. For a study of this scale, it was crucial that accuracy was considered at each stage, to maintain the high levels achieved in previous years.

Data entry and processing errors can have severe biasing effects on the data analysis, resulting in misrepresentation of the observed variables. To minimise this risk, we leveraged on a variety of automated processes, as well as the extensive media monitoring experience of the country coordinators.

Limitations

As with any study, great effort was made to ensure accuracy of the data. As observed in previous GMMPs, an exact error of measurement cannot be determined due to the study's magnitude. Conventional error measurement would involve different researchers coding the same story and then calculating a level of error from the differences between the results. Although this was not possible for GMMP, we followed best practice to make sure that there were minimal errors in the data capture and analysis generation process. ▪

A fuller discussion of the methodology used can be found in the GMMP 2020 Final Report.

Note

1. Code for Africa (CfA) is the continent's largest network of indigenous African civic technology and investigative data journalism laboratories, with over 70 staff in 19 countries, who build digital democracy solutions that are intended to give citizens unfettered access to actionable information that empowers them to make informed decisions and that strengthen civic engagement for improved public governance and accountability.

Windhoek+30 Declaration

We, the participants at the UNESCO World Press Freedom Day International Conference, held in Windhoek, Namibia, 29 April – 3 May 2021:

RECALLING Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), which states: "Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers";

COMMEMORATING the continuing relevance, legacy and role of the 1991 Windhoek Declaration as a catalyst for the proclamation of World Press Freedom Day, and as an inspiration for ongoing action to promote and protect freedom of expression, free, independent and pluralistic media, and access to information around the world;

APPRECIATING the impact and legacy of the regional declarations adopted in the wake of the Windhoek Declaration, namely the Alma Ata, Santiago, Sana'a and Sofia Declarations;

RECALLING the 2001 African Charter on Broadcasting adopted on the 10th anniversary of the Windhoek Declaration in 2001, and the Pan-African Declaration on Access to Information adopted on the 20th anniversary in 2011;

REAFFIRMING paragraph 5 of the 1991 Windhoek Declaration, which states: "The world-wide trend towards democracy and freedom of information and expression is a fundamental contribution to the fulfilment of human aspirations";

EMPHASISING that information is a public good to which everyone is entitled and, as such, is both a means and an end for the fulfilment of collective human aspirations, including the Agenda 2030 Sustainable Development Goals and the African Union's Agenda 2063;

CONVINCED that, as a public good, information empowers citizens to exercise their fundamental rights, supports gender equality, and allows for participation and trust in democratic governance and sustainable development, leaving no one behind; and that information as a public good is also a key underpinning of effective measures to address global emergencies, such as climate and health crises, specifically the Covid-19 pandemic;

RECOGNISING the role of journalism in producing and disseminating public interest information, especially in times of crisis, and emphasising the overriding importance of this role remaining free from capture or distorting influence;

ACKNOWLEDGING the far-reaching transformations of the information ecosystem since the adoption of the 1991 Windhoek Declaration, in particular the digital transformation and the enormous role played by the Internet and digital platforms in facilitating the sharing of knowledge and information, including for vulnerable, marginalised groups, independent journalists and human rights organisations;

RECALLING the UN Secretary General's Roadmap for Digital Co-operation and UNESCO's Internet principles of human rights, openness, accessibility and multi-stakeholder governance (ROAM);

CONCERNED at the increasing proliferation, amplification and promotion, through human and automated systems, of potentially harmful content digitally, including disinformation and hate speech, which undermines people's rights and the quality of collective public debate;

COGNISANT of the fact that there are no easy solutions to modern digital challenges which are both effective in addressing potential harms and yet maintain respect for freedom of expression as guaranteed under international law;

ALARMED by both enduring and new threats to the safety of journalists and the free exercise of journalism, including killings, harassment of women, offline and online attacks, intimidation and the promotion of fear, and arbitrary detentions, as well as the adoption of laws which unduly restrict freedom of expression and access to information in the name, among other things, of prohibiting false information, protecting national security and combating violent extremism; and also deeply concerned at the increasing numbers of Internet disruptions, including Internet shutdowns, particularly during elections and protests;

TROUBLED by the severe economic crisis which is posing an existential threat to independent news media worldwide, and recalling that economic sustainability of free media is a key prerequisite for its independence, as enshrined in paragraph 2 of the 1991 Windhoek Declaration, which states: "By an independent press, we mean a press independent from governmental, political and economic control or from control of materials and infrastructure essential for the production and dissemination of newspapers, magazines and periodicals";

HIGHLIGHTING the urgency of equipping citizens worldwide, including youth and marginalised groups, with media and information literacy competences, developed through a gender sensitive approach, to enable them to navigate the evolving information landscape, and to promote freedom of expression and access to information as a public good.

We Call on all Governments to:

COMMIT to creating a positive enabling environment for freedom of expression and access to information, online and offline, in line with international guarantees of these rights, including a free, independent and pluralistic media, through adopting appropriate legal measures in a transparent manner and following adequate public consultation, guaranteeing the exercise of journalism free of governmental interference, whether formal or informal, promoting universal access to the Internet, and taking measures to reinforce the safety of journalists, including with a specific focus on women journalists;

TAKE effective steps to nurture a diversity of viable public, private and community media, and implement specific policies, along with relevant safeguards, to promote the production of independent, quality journalism, with the aim of ensuring people's access to relevant, diverse and reliable information;

ENSURE that flows of funding from public sources to the media, including subsidies and advertising, are allocated fairly and overseen in an independent and transparent manner; and guarantee investment in journalism and jobs, while respecting gender equality and promoting decent working conditions;

MAINSTREAM media and information literacy into strategies and action plans in order to build the resilience of citizens to misinformation, disinformation and hate speech, and promote civic participation in democratic life;

ALLOCATE adequate human, financial and technical resources, including as part of development assistance support, to ensure the proper implementation of the steps and measures outlined in this Declaration.

We Call on UNESCO and other Intergovernmental Organisations to:

REINFORCE cooperation with governments and civil society organisations in order to safe-

guard and enhance guarantees for the full exercise of the right to information and freedom of expression, both online and offline, with a particular focus on strengthening media freedom, pluralism and independence as well as media viability, transparency of digital platforms, and media and information literacy;

ENCOURAGE the development of joint funding instruments supported by a combination of States, multilateral institutions, private foundations and philanthropists to promote information as a public good.

We Call on Technology Companies to:

WORK to ensure transparency in relation to their human and automated systems which could impact user interaction with content, as well as their terms and conditions of service;

PROVIDE robust notice and appeals opportunities to users, process complaints and redress requests from users in a fair manner, and take action whenever their terms and conditions of service are breached;

CONDUCT transparent human rights risk assessments, including to identify threats to freedom of expression, access to information and privacy, take appropriate action to eliminate or mitigate those threats, and disclose the impact of those actions;

SUPPORT information as a public good in various ways, for example through fair and inclusive partnership arrangements, which may include donations or other financial measures, and the protection of journalists who are the victims or at risk of online attacks.

We Call on journalists, media outlets, civil society and academia to:

ADVOCATE with States and digital platforms, as part of their wider protection of freedom of expression and information as a public good, to recognise media viability as a priority;

UNDERTAKE monitoring, advocacy, research, policy development, awareness raising, including among official actors, and the provision of expertise and support to address problems caused by measures taken by governments and digital platforms, including due to their lack of transparency, and to increase their engagement in media and information literacy actions;

PROMOTE a more inclusive, pluralistic and sustainable media sector, including through measures that promote the involvement of young people, women and marginalised groups in the media.

We Call for Collective Action to:

WORK TOGETHER to ensure the effective realisation of the steps and measures outlined in this Declaration;

AGREE AND ADOPT new and innovative measures and mechanisms, including of a multilateral and multi-stakeholder nature, following broad consultative processes, to ensure respect by States for freedom of expression and access to information, and that digital platforms' practices and systems which affect user interaction with information are appropriately transparent;

COLLABORATE through multilateral fora to promote respect by governments, intergovernmental organisations and digital platforms for human rights, including freedom of expression, access to information and the safety of journalists.

Road map for the future

The world today faces critical new and historic challenges to freedom of expression which re-

quire concerted global action by all stakeholders. The 1991 Windhoek Declaration was a bold and forward-looking statement that has helped to change the world for the better over the last 30 years. It is now time for the generation of 2021 to make our contribution.

Press freedom, independence and pluralism remain major goals to guarantee information as a public good that serves as a shared resource for the whole of humanity. To these goals we now add those of media viability, transparency of digital platforms, and citizens empowered with media and information literacy.

This Windhoek+30 Declaration pays tribute to those who opened up this path. Now, let each of us resolve to do our part to help secure information as a public good as an urgent need today, and as a legacy for those who come after us. ■

"Many different levels of press freedom exist in Africa, from Senegal and its lively newspapers to Eritrea and Djibouti, where there are no privately-owned media at all. After a wave of liberalisation in the 1990s, press freedom violations are now only too common. They include arbitrary censorship, especially on the Internet (by means of ad hoc Internet cuts in some countries), arrests of journalists on the grounds of combatting cybercrime, fake news or terrorism, and acts of violence against media personnel that usually go completely unpunished.

Respect for press freedom is still largely dependent on the political and social context. Elections and protests are often accompanied by abuses against journalists. The financial weakness of many media outlets makes them susceptible to political and financial influence that undermines their independence. For the most part, state-owned media still tend to be governmental mouthpieces or propaganda tools and have a long way to go before they become really independent public service media reflecting a wide range of opinion."

Source: Reporters Without Borders: Africa

ON THE SCREEN

Cannes (France) 2021

The 2021 Ecumenical Jury awarded its Prize to *Drive My Car* directed by Ryusuke Hamaguchi (Japan) for its poetic rumination on the healing power of art and words through a long journey towards forgiveness and acceptance. This is a film that solidly portrays a universal message of overcoming the communication barriers of convention, class, nationality and disability.

The Jury awarded a Commendation to *Hytti* N°6 (Compartment N°6) directed by Juho Kuosmanen (Finland/Russia/Estonia/Germany) for its sympathetic view on the encounter between two wounded people who would not choose each other even as neighbour. They both overcome solitude by walking the extra mile with the difficult other.

The 2021 Jury comprised: Douglas P. Fahleson, President (Ireland); Anne-Claire De Gaujac (France); Mariángeles Almacellas (Spain); Ingrid Glatz (Switzerland); Peter Ciaccio (Italy); Maxime Pouyanne (France).

Fribourg (Switzerland) 2021

At the 35th Festival International de Fribourg (July 16-25, 2021) the Ecumenical Jury awarded its prize to the film *True Mothers* (Asa Ga Kuru), directed by Naomi Kawase (Japan, 2020).

Motivation: With great sensitivity, Naomi Kawase tells us the story of family dramas, especially the difficulties associated with adoption. The film, set in a modern Japan that is nevertheless strongly influenced by traditional values, questions the model of the classic family and gives a glimpse of a possible other model of "parenthood". This work is distinguished by a luminous visual language that creates a harmony between the characters and the landscapes.

Venice (Italy) 2021

The 10th INTERFILM Award for Promoting Interreligious Dialogue at the 78th Mostra internazionale d'arte cinematografica, Venice, went to the film *Amira* directed by Mohamed Diab (Egypt, Jordan, United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, 2021).

Motivation: *Amira* is about walls between people. It questions how enemies can live together. It is a personal story against the background of the political situation in the Middle East. *Amira* also poses the question who we really are. Is it a matter of nature or nurture?

The members of the 2021 Jury were: Brigitte Affolter, Switzerland; Piet Halma, The Netherlands, President of the Jury; Peter Paul Huth, Germany; Davide Perego, Italy.

Miskolc (Hungary) 2021

At the 17. CineFest Miskolc September 10-18, 2021, the Ecumenical Jury, appointed by INTERFILM and SIGNIS, awarded its Prize to *Mila* (Apples) directed by Christos Nikou (Greece, Poland, Slovenia, 2020).

Motivation: The film Apples – describing a situation that mirrors the difficult pandemic times in which we live – presents a way to deal with loss and to find meaning in life. With very accurate and minimalistic visuality, the movie leads us to reflect about the healing power of loving your neighbour and living an authentic life beyond the risk of isolation we are facing in our social media society. Furthermore, Apples opens up horizons for discussions and reflections at several levels about human relations, the complexity of every person, and the spiritual meaning of life.

Synopsis: Amidst a worldwide pandemic that causes sudden amnesia, middle-aged Aris finds himself enrolled in a recovery program designed to help unclaimed patients build new identities. By prescribed daily tasks on cassette tapes he can create new memories and document them on camera, Aris slides back into ordinary life, meeting Anna, a woman who is also in recovery. A sci-fi which suddenly becomes reality in many ways.

The members of the 2021 Jury: Piero Loredan (Romania, President of the Jury); Mia Lund Rao (Denmark); András Petrik (Hungary); Tamás Vígh (Hungary).

Zlin (Czech Republic) 2021

At the 61st International Film Festival for Children and Youth Zlín, September 9-15, 2021, the Ecumenical Jury awarded its Prize in the International Competition for Feature Films in the Junior category to *Beans* directed by Tracey Deer (Canada, 2020).

Twelve-year-old Tekahentahkhwa ("Call me Beans") belongs to the indigenous Mohawk people of Canada. During the Oka Crisis in 1990, she searches for her way and emancipates herself between the role, which was meant for her in the family, and role models of older youths.

A peaceful protest against a planned golf course on a traditional Mohawk cemetery is answered with racist riots. The film shows impressively how this affects people and how also anti-racism becomes radicalized. On the other hand, strong women become peacemakers in a world of violence.

The film functionally combines fiction style with documentary footage. The aesthetics of the film thus collaborates with the two thematic levels of the story: the personal and the social.

In addition, the Jury awarded a Commendation in the International Competition of Feature Films in the Youth Category to *Valentina* directed by Cássio Pereira dos Santos (Brazil, 2020).

Valentina is 17 and trans. She moves from the city to the Brazilian countryside with her mother to start over as a young woman. But a sexual assault exposes her and again she faces resentment. In all her despair, she always finds friends who stand by her. An impressive film with a simple narrative that touches us deeply and opens up possibilities for dialogue especially for young people and gives courage.

The members of the 2021 Jury: Dietmar Adler, Germany; Marta Sedláčková, Czech Republic; Andrej Chovanec, Slovakia/Czech Republic.

Warsaw (Poland) 2021

At the 37th International Film Festival Warsaw 8-17 October 2021, the Ecumenical Jury, appointed by INTERFILM and SIGNIS, awarded its Prize to *Virgjëresha Shqiptare* (The Albanian Virgin) directed by Bujar Alimani (Germany, Belgium, Albania, Kosovo, 2021).

Motivation: The film tells of the struggle for happiness in an archaic world. The heroine experiences severe trials and has to sacrifice her happiness to save the ones she loves which clearly shows how the male-made rules of a patriarchal order determine women's choices. In the end, the film opens up a spiritual path to overcoming centuries-old traditions.

The Jury also awarded a Commendation to *Ringu wandaringu* (Ring Wandering) directed by Masakazu Kaneko (Japan, 2021).

Motivation: A film like a window opening into the rich tradition and heritage of the Eastern world that a young man searches for. The film shows the desire of young people to help others, revealing the secret of happiness, a secret that can be felt but neither objectified nor captured. By preserving, sharing and celebrating human values, the film operates on a high artistic level.

The members of the 2021 Jury were: Ewa Przyjasna, Poland; Vladyslav Robskyi, Ukraine; Anita Uzulniece, Latvia.

Chemnitz (Germany) 2021

At the 26th International Film Festival for Children and Young Audiences Schlingel 9-16 October 2021, the Ecumenical Jury, appointed by INTERFILM and SIGNIS awarded its Prize to *Mon cirque à moi* (My Very Own Circus) directed by Miryam Bouchard (Canada, 2020).

Motivation: Laura has always been on the road, as assistant of her father, a professional clown. But at 13, she wants a more stable life and mostly, to go to school regularly. And maybe also to oppose her father. With bright images, sets and scenes full of poetry, the director subtly unfolds a scenario full of humour, twists and turns, sorrows and small victories.

Thanks to the friendship of a neighbour and the kindness of a teacher, Laura will finally be able to continue her studies, without losing the fantasy of her previous life.

With delicacy, the film shows the difficulty of being a parent and letting children live a different life: we can love each other without being alike. Our emotional life is a circus and we all are clowns!

The members of the 2021 Jury were: Juliane Ebert, Germany; Viktor Kókai-Nagy, Hungary.