



## IN THIS ISSUE: C4D GOES TO ROME

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Convened for the first time by three organizations quite different in terms of their background in the field, their structure and agendas -The World Bank, the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) and The Communication Initiative-, the World Congress on Communication for Development (WCCD), held in the FAO headquarters in Rome between October 25 and 27 2006, proved to be a peculiar event.

It indeed succeeded in conveying a larger picture of the field's who's who - according to statistics presented by Rosa María Alfaro in an article published online <sup>[1]</sup>, the event itself gathered 915 participants from 84 countries- and served to catalyze the publication of several important studies (three of the more relevant are introduced here in ad hoc abridged versions). For those of us who had the opportunity to attend, however, as the WCCD unfolded, contested interests, competing goals and basic underlying questions that remain unanswered became somewhat disturbingly obvious.

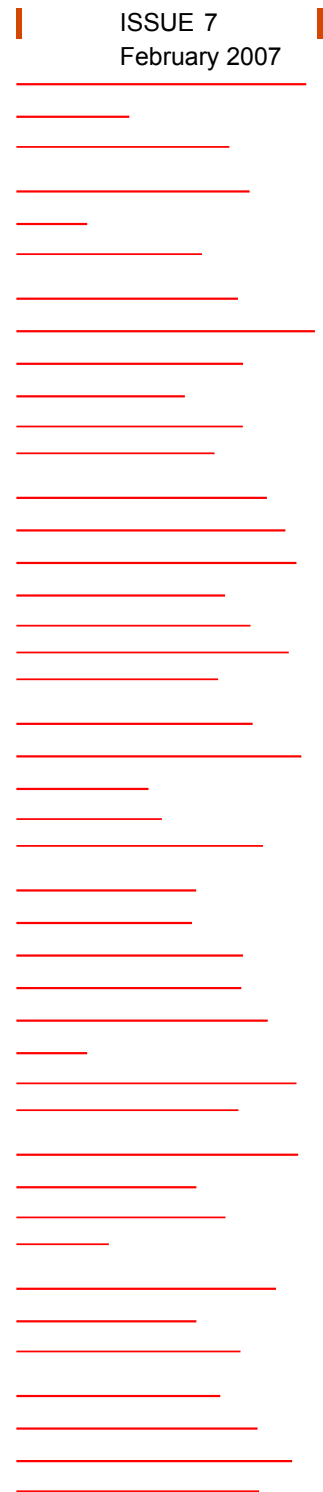
Some of those questions underpin three of the contributions to this new issue of *Glocal Times*: Are we communicating development? Communicating as one? What do policy-makers want?

But perhaps that's precisely what is necessary for the field communication for development to make substantial progress: an updated transparent map of differences, disagreements and doubts as from which to keep on working.

In my introduction to the prior issue of *Glocal Times*, drawing on the powerful images of the FAO's Plenary Room crowded with over-tired but ever-active practitioners, advocates, technicians and academics during the WCCD's closing ceremony, I wondered:

*How can we develop and nurture that faculty? How do we make ourselves better able to listen? How do we make ourselves heard? How do we give dialogue every possible chance?*

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I remain critical of several aspects of the WCCD on many different levels, and concerned about some of the developments for the field that have been unfolding in its aftermath (see e.g. Alfonso Gumucio Dagron's article as regards the current situation at FAO). However, as I wrap up this new issue of *Glocal Times*, I am glad to convey that it was an eagerness to listen, collaborate, express, respond promptly and share –the best of the WCCD spirit- which characterized the editorial process which I hereby present to the readers.

This seventh issue of *Glocal Times* is grounded in kind original contributions from well-recognized professionals in the field of Communication for Development as well as the steady collaboration of The Communication Initiative, The World Bank's Development Communications Division and key Communication for Development and Communication officers at FAO.

I must thank Deborah Heimann, Chris Morry and Adelaida Trujillo from The Communication Initiative for their key input at an early stage; Lucia Grenna and Paulo Mefalopulos from The World Bank's Development Communications Division for their good disposition and prompt replies; and Mario Acunzo and Riccardo DelCastello from FAO for bearing with my insistence during awfully busy times.

The leading authors of two of the three WCCD-bound studies introduced in this issue –Wendy Quarry and Ricardo Ramirez on the one hand, and Colin Fraser, Sonia Restrepo-Estrada and Leonardo Mazzei on the other- kindly took the time to discuss the materials and oversee the abridged versions.

I am personally indebted to Colin Fraser and Sonia Restrepo-Estrada in particular, since the e-mail conversation and discussion of ComDev in which they agreed to engage in preparation of this issue was in itself an educational experience. Their article "Policy-makers perceptions' of Communication for Development: Two surveys twelve years apart", a companion to the study they co-wrote with Leonardo Mazzei for The World Bank based on their personal reflections, is a must-read.

Rosa María Alfaro –and Roxana Jurado, in charge of Communications at Calandria in Perú- readily accepted my invitation to share the collaborative material produced in Latin America in preparation for the WCCD. Alfonso Gumucio-Dagron willingly updated a piece he had originally written for MAZI <sup>[2]</sup> to incorporate last-minute occurrences.

Peter da Costa wrote an original article that connects the WCCD to a

fundamental background: the United Nation's Communication for Development Round Tables. The 10th Inter-Agency Round Table on Communication for Development will take place in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, as this issue of *Glocal Times* goes online. The Round Tables' historical instrumental role in building a strong communication for development constituency within and beyond the UN system indeed informs the recently held WCCD.

Last but not least, Maria Eriksson Baaz revisited the concluding chapter of her book *The paternalism of partnership: a postcolonial reading of identity in development aid* to remind us of the fact that “rather than rejecting development, the task is, as Spivak put it, to ‘engage in a persistent critique of what one cannot not want’”.

*Glocal Times* salutes the advent of the 2006 WCCD and the multiple, concerted efforts that led to it, and hopes to be contributing to the process of discussing “its value, process and possible next steps” (I am quoting Warren Feek's words in his e-mail to The Communication Initiative's network soon after Rome) through the contents included in this issue.

Of special interest in that sense is “The Rome Consensus”, a 4-pages paper aimed at serving for advocacy purposes that was circulated and discussed during the WCCD and has now been finalized by the three organizers. Signed by “The Participants”, it should serve not as a new beginning –yet another reinvention of the wheel- but rather as a critical reminder of all that remains to be done.

As always, your comments, questions and further suggestions are welcome.

[1] <http://observatorio.ultimosegundo.ig.com.br/artigos.asp?cod=410IPB007> (in Spanish).

[2] <http://www.communicationforsocialchange.org/mazi-articles.php?id=325>

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