Social Change

Bringing Allies to the Field. An Interdisciplinary Model

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Abstract

This chapter discusses the proposition that development programmes may not place sufficient value on the use of strategic communication, and instead focus on information and awareness campaigns that offer no guarantee of effective change. The chapter seeks to emphasise the importance of strategic communication when applied to behavioural change and effective social change. To this end, certain fundamental concepts will be revisited, such as communication for development and social change and its capacity to embed strategic thinking. Furthermore, we will try to understand the essentials of participatory communication, social marketing, and behavioural sciences, as disciplines to be convened in communication strategies for social change. Assuming that any act of communication of development programmes aims to influence attitudes and behaviours that will foster better living conditions for communities or a more sustainable future, communication should be viewed less as an isolated task and more as a tool to promote effective change. It is not sufficient to launch information campaigns or create awareness about a specific topic. It is necessary to identify what kind of reaction is intended and set corresponding behavioural objectives. Setting concrete, delimited, and measurable objectives is one of the mandatory variables of strategic communication planning in many fields and must underpin social change strategies. Strategic communication is also characterised by the attention given to situation analysis, making it possible to obtain objective data and an overview of the context, in order to support strategic decisions. This is a traditional practice in activities that are pursued by private organisations and should always remain top of mind in contexts of societal development. Strategic communication must also increase interdisciplinarity, as has been pointed out by academic experts. Revisiting the associated arguments inspires us to create a strategic communication matrix for social change, based on a cross-disciplinary perspective. As an ultimate goal, this chapter defends the transposition, with the necessary adaptations, of consolidated practices in other field, to the arena of social change. On this basis, a working model will be proposed that articulates the contributions of the various aforementioned disciplines to be adopted, for instance, in the communication strategies of sustainable development goals.

Keywords

To Inform Is Not to Communicate

Strategic communication is the opposite of episodic, erratic or spontaneous communication. It is a field of knowledge and practices that values accountability, since it is based on pre-defined objectives and follow-up procedures. In fact, setting objectives is one of the most powerful aspects of strategic communication, since this commits the communication plan to concrete and measurable results, wherever possible, responding to the anacronym for specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timely (SMART) guidelines.

Many communication initiatives are created in an isolated manner, without framing a strategic logic in many areas. The field of development and social change is no exception. Development programmes are supported by awareness campaigns and communication materials, but the way that they are created may fail to deliver results unless they are well planned. Perhaps because communication practices do not always follow the principles of strategic communication.

As detailed throughout this chapter, communication implies the ability to influence a specific audience, within a specific social, political, and economic context, with the purpose of changing the audience's behaviour. This implies a capacity for persuasion and motivation. To be successful in these complex processes, it is not sufficient to consider that simply informing will deliver results from our communication.

On the other hand, there is a solid academic background in various critical fields, such as communication for development, communication for social change, and communication for behavioural change (Thomas, 2014; Wilkins et al., 2014). The fact is that there is no real effort to bring the contributions of these disciplines into the field of campaign design and, on most occasions, it is solely based on the production of information, education and communication materials, without reference to any specific behavioural objectives, as has been highlighted by Hosein (2014). Moreover, strategic communication foundations seem to be missing in the process.

Combining the idea of the potential of strategic communication applied to social change with an interdisciplinarity vision based on the aforementioned areas and adding others, such as social marketing and participatory communication, is the main intended output of this work.

Strategic Communication Foundations and Current Challenges

Strategic communication is a recent but growing discipline, aligned with the need to develop communication activities in organisations. The most quoted definition refers to the purposeful use of communication by an organisation to fulfil its mission, assuming that people will engage in deliberate communication practice on behalf of organisations, causes, and social movements (Hallahan et al., 2007). Furthermore, "it examines organizational communication from an integrated, multidisciplinary perspective by extending ideas and issues grounded in various traditional communications disciplines" (Hallahan et al., 2007, pp. 3–4). On the basis of this pioneering definition, two concepts seem to be relevant herein: the purposeful use of communication and the behavioural change that is implicit in communication practices. These two issues will be discussed later in this chapter.

Strategic communication was subsequently defined as the practice of deliberate and purposive communication that a communication agent enacts in the public sphere on behalf of a communication entity, in order to attain specific goals (Holtzhausen & Zerfass, 2015). Also, at a macro-level, it is considered to be an area that analyses communication in line with the company's overall strategy, in order to achieve its strategic positioning (Argenti et al., 2005), for which a holistic and integrated approach is required.

Taking sustainable development goals (SDG) as an example, it is clear that the challenges are immense. They are perhaps so vast that implementing strategic communication may seem to be an impossible mission, especially if we look at the SDG from an overly global perspective. It is necessary to work step-by-step to achieve precise, realistic goals, by analysing the context, setting priorities, identifying key stakeholders, finding the right messages for each one, defining communication tactics and channels, and programming the communication with a clear timeline, like a well-tuned orchestra. In other words, it is necessary to think strategically.

Trends in Strategic Communication

Proposing strategic communication as an ally of development programmes implies understanding its contributions. According to Falkheimer and Heide (2018), this is a multidisciplinary area, that has been influenced by three main approaches: mass communication theory, organisational theory, and humanities. This means that it combines the influence of the media, with the importance of communication management as part of the organisation

and, finally, with aspects of rhetoric and language as ways of capturing people's attention (Heide et al., 2018; O'Connor & Shumate, 2018; Werder et al., 2018).

In its operationalisation, this field uses several disciplines, ranging from public relations to advertising, branding or marketing, among others. Therefore, ever since its genesis, it appears as an area that has a major capacity of integration in relation to perspectives and tools.

However, as stressed by several authors, strategic communication has to become more interdisciplinary, in order to strengthen the field (Nothhaft et al., 2018; Werder et al., 2018). It is critical but not a recognised component (Smith, 2013, as cited in Werder et al., 2018). The interdisciplinary paradigm enables more predictable or more surprising disciplinary combinations, which seem to be the key to achieving greater confidence and consistency when applying strategic communication principles in a specific context, for example in a social environment.

The main question is: can we say that strategic thinking applied to social contexts is a current practice? It is more acceptable to believe that this practice is more well-established in competitive organisations, such as big enterprises. Therefore, it is time to widen the scope in depth, accepting that strategic communication plays a substantial contribution to the survival and sustained success of any entity, including all kind of organisations (e.g., corporations, governments, or non-profit organisations), as pointed by Zerfass et al. (2018).

Strategic Communication and Communication for Social Change

In line with the framework of expansion of the discipline, the aim of this chapter is to identify and articulate other fields of expertise with strategic communication, in the belief that this constitutes a sign of maturity for the area. Interdisciplinarity may bring more complete answers, in this case, applied to sustainable development and social change.

Ultimately, the objective is to understand whether strategic communication is a resource that is foreseen in communication for social development and change or, if not, what variables it should contain, in order to be adopted. According to Thomas (2014), social development and change is about understanding the role played by information, communication, and media, in directed and non-directed social change. Waisbord (2014) sees it as the

study and practice of communication for the promotion of human and so-cial development. To overcome the specific epistemological struggles of the area (as occurs in other areas) we will adopt the expression "commu-nication for social change", defended by Tufte and Obregon (2014, p. 179), based on the idea of moving beyond individual behaviour change towards a broader concept.

Thomas (2014) relates communication and social change with a wide variety of communicational and sociological disciplines as contributors to shaping the discipline, but he doesn't include strategic communication, even though this area seems to be determinant in the ability that communication can have to influence effective social change. Other researchers, such as Wais-bord (2014) and Wilkins (2014a), pay attention to the critical role played by strategic communication for social change in development programmes, so-cial movements, and community organisations. Yet, strategic communication applied to social change has not yet been sufficiently explored.

Beyond relevant theories and analysis about environments and struggles around social change, a pragmatic perspective is required. As stressed by Waisbord (2014), a key issue is to discuss how communication, strategy, and participation are interlinked, in order to achieve a strategic collective action.

Bringing the First Ally to the Field: Participatory Communication

Participation may be viewed as the exercise of the inalienable and indi-visible rights of citizens, which results in the generation of societal happi-ness and respect for the positions of all citizens, even though participatory practices can be affected by the political-ideological, communicative-cul-tural, and communicative-structural context (Carpentier, 2011). Power, pol-itics, inequalities, and other topics are key concepts of the participatory ecosystem. For Carpentier (2018), it is the equalisation of power relations between privileged and non-privileged actors in informal and formal deci-sion-making processes. But participation also has a sociological approach, including civic participation and empowerment. This perspective high-lights the idea that citizens become citizens through the performance of participation (Ribeiro et al., 2019). In this sense, participation is import-ant, since its performance produces citizens that are actively engaged in society (Oreg et al., 2011, as cited in Ribeiro et al., 2019). Jenkins' (2006) approach to participation is closer to the intersection line that we are seeking when we see strategic communication applied to social change.

The author is interested in identifying specific degrees of participation, by looking at different institutions, communities, practices, and infrastructures. In his book, *Convergence Culture* (2006), he sees participation related to the media as forms of audience engagement that are shaped by cultural and social protocols, rather than by the technology itself. Participatory culture occurs when fans and other consumers are invited to take an active part in the creation and circulation of new content.

According to Jenkins (2006), we are moving from an industry that is dominated by broadcast media and distribution to one that will be increasingly shaped by grassroots communication. However, the collective future will be shaped by a convergence culture, "where old and new media collide, where grassroots and corporate media intersect, where the power of the media producer and the power of the media consumer interact in unpredictable ways" (Jenkins, 2006, pp. 259–260).

Participation is a growing issue in the current era. The feeling is that we are evolving from a form of participation that did not build up genuine capacities in local populations "to a means for empowerment and the basis for engagement with reality in order to change it, in the twenty-first-century", according to Thomas (2014, p. 10).

Waisbord (2014) argues that strategic communication needs to be incorporated in a participatory perspective that links communication, collective action, and politics. It is hard to envision any possible, meaningful, and sustainable social change without addressing power, he says. Strategic communication "brings up issues that are critical in collective action: problem framing, objectives, local traditions, opportunities and obstacles, coalition building, and appropriate tactics and motivations" (Waisbord, 2014, p. 164). On the other hand, we believe that participatory insights can be incorporated in strategic communication programmes addressing social change mainly by diagnosing the contexts and degrees of participation, as well by identifying existing struggles between citizens and power, in a way that influences their adherence to change.

Participatory studies can also contribute to define the means to achieve participatory culture: grassroots participation, convergence media, community media, and so on.

Finally, when approaching participatory perspective to strategic plans it is relevant to stress that "it is more likely that participation does work in the context of small-scale projects" (Thomas, 2014, p. 10), an idea we totally subscribe to and which is aligned with the mantra of SMART objectives.

Perceiving Social Marketing as an Ally

It has not been easy to address the issue of social marketing in various academic forums, since it tends to be treated as a very distant relative, with a dubious reputation. Perhaps the fact that the term includes marketing creates a bad initial impression. This is somewhat unfair, if we accept that the connection with traditional marketing skills is merely procedural. In fact, social marketing is born from the transfer of successful techniques applied in the business field in favour of behavioural change. Therefore, social marketing should be considered from an interdisciplinary perspective, as a contribution for strategic communication for social change.

Social marketing has gained well-grounded experience in the field of public health. But it is still perceived with suspicion, associated with the policy agendas of powerful organisations that use the mass media and advertising techniques (Dagron & Tufte, 2006). Wilkins (2014b) is one of the few theorists who see the strategic benefit of social marketing for social change by targeting individual behaviour change, taking into account its success in health communication programmes that intend to encourage changes in behaviour that improve the chances of individuals to lead longer, healthier lives.

If we delve into social marketing studies, and also into practices, we might be surprised to encounter "touch points" with the foundations for communication for social change (CSC):

- CSC defends that "affected people understand their realities better than any 'experts' from outside their society, and they can become the drivers of their own change" (Dagron & Tufte, 2006, p. xix); in social marketing, strategies are developed in an ascending process, based on the target (Weinreich, 2011).

- CSC places importance on grassroots and alternative communication, paying attention to local knowledge and traditions; social marketing avoids the "on-size-fits-all" approach, and therefore seeks combined interventions and activities, or alternative media, seeing things through the audience's eyes (The National Social Marketing Center [NSMC], n.d.).

- CSC confronts individual behaviour towards collective actions, valuing cultural identity, trust, commitment, voice, community engagement, and empowerment; social marketing does not focus on people as isolated

individuals but considers them in their broader social and environmental context (NSCM, n.d.).

Although they have well-defined epistemological boundaries, communication for social change and social marketing share a certain common ground. Social marketing brings a pragmatic approach, given that it is based on systematic and planned processes when addressing social contexts. In this context, theory and tactics pay major attention to behavioural aspects. When planning, the first criteria is to set behavioural goals (clear, specific, measurable, and time-based), supported by behavioural theories. The ultimate goal is fulfilled only with a concrete action: behaviour change (Lee & Kotler, 2011; Weinreich, 2011).

Also, for social marketeers, when a specific behaviour is adopted by peers and is perceived to be popular, people are more predisposed to adopt the same behaviour (Weinreich, 2011), a perspective that is somehow aligned with citizens' engagement and collaborative action, mentioned in participatory theories.

Furthermore, social marketing criticises social programmes that aim to change behaviour designed by policymakers and forced upon communities using a top-down approach, given that they are not well informed about the behaviours and beliefs of the target group, which is considered to be irrelevant or misunderstood (French et al., 2011). According to French et al. (2011), the pursuit of protagonism in relation to issues of political agenda/media is another problem of such projects, which tend to be based on short term actions and the absence of baseline evidence or impact evaluation. On the contrary, social marketing proposes an approach that aims to develop effective social change programmes, based on sound evidence, user insights, and systematic planning.

The Hidden Issue: How to Change People's Behaviour?

Changing people's behaviour is, perhaps, the most formidable task in this context. If a communication planner isn't able to comprehend it, there are two possible outputs: (a) to design a communication programme based on the specialists' perceptions of the audience — a "sender"-based strategy; (b) to design a communication programme focused on informational and awareness messages (through pamphlets, websites, videos or social media campaigns) — an informational and educational based strategy.

In the first scenario, communication decisions are not the result of studies of the attitudes and behaviours of certain segments in relation to social

problems and their context, but of information provided by the institutions engaged in the social project. They are also conceived by the planners' professional expertise. But they often fail to see the problem through the eyes of the affected audiences. Therefore, they may miss the arguments that can lead to adherence and behavioural change, given that communication is not only about information but also about getting attention and being persuasive.

Following NSCM recommendations, starting from an understanding of an audience's attitudes, hopes, wishes, desires, and other motivations is generally more productive than trying to identify and overcome information gaps (NSCM, n.d.). Understanding people's emotional engagement is critical.

The second hypothesis — informational/awareness materials — is focused on raising literacy about the specific problem in the belief that, if the audience is informed about the respective risks, threats, opportunities, benefits, it will react to the message. This communicational approach is adopted by many institutions, but often without any evidence of success. Cecilia Lotse, regional director of the United Nations Children's Emergency Fund (Unicef) regional office for South Asia, says many communication initiatives have succeeded in enhancing public awareness, but have failed to move beyond awareness and stimulate positive changes in attitudes and practices and thereby create lasting social change (United Nations Children's Fund, 2005).

Social strategists must therefore go beyond mere perceptions or technical qualities. To understand why people do or do not react to positive messages or alerts is the starting point to attain effective results. To study the complex labyrinth of attitudes and behaviours should be mandatory in any strategic communication for social change. Behaviour is a pattern of actions over time, the action or reaction of something under specific circumstances (NSMC) and changes according to the context, culture, and time. It therefore cannot be viewed as a constant pattern across an entire group. For each situation that requires communication for social change, a specific plan needs to be developed. Even if the audiences are the same because, as mentioned above, human behaviour is dynamic.

In addition, attitude and behaviour are not always aligned. A positive attitude does not necessarily lead to a positive behaviour. Much of routine daily behaviour is about habits and does not necessarily involve conscious and active considerations. So, the challenges are immense for a communication strategist. The good news is that there is a considerable amount of consistent academic work around all these issues that needs to be incorporated into the strategies.

This belief is further reinforced when we consider some theories and models of behavioural sciences. Attitude is about conscious and can be influenced by three components — cognitive, affective, and behavioural —, that interact to structure the attitudinal model, according to the three-dimensional model of socio-cognitive attitude, proposed by Katz and Stotland (1959, as cited in Lima, 2000). The cognitive element encompasses all the information that the individual has about a specific object. The affective component contains the emotions and feelings of the individual. The behavioural component consists of the visible actions (physical or verbal) of the subject in relation to the object of the attitude. Each component or dimension is represented in a continuum that can extend from the extremely negative to the extremely positive, resulting in a three-dimensional representation of any attitude.

This theory reveals that communication actions cannot be merely informative and educational and must understand the inherent aspects that shape attitudes. Furthermore, it highlights the importance of an audience-centric perspective.

Psychology, social psychology, and, in general, the behavioural sciences, offer a range of theories and models, such as the theory of planned behaviour (Ajzen, 1991), stages of change (Prochaska & DiClemente, 1983), the elaboration likelihood model (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986), cognitive dissonance (Festinger, 1957) or social judgement (Brunswik, 1956), to name but a few.

For instance, social judgement theory is focused on cognitive processes, suggesting that people make value judgments about the content of messages based on their references or their positions on a specific message topic (Daiton & Zelley, 2005). Knowing people's attitudes about the theme can provide clues on how to approach it in a persuasive manner. Individual attitudes can be classified in function of three vectors:

- latitude of acceptance (ideas that are acceptable to them);

- latitude of rejection (ideas classified as unacceptable);

- latitude of noncommitment (ideas for which there is no opinion).

Therefore, a person's reaction to a persuasive message depends on his or her position on the communicated topic and also depends on the degree of their ego involvement (Daiton & Zelley, 2005). The greater the involvement of a person, or of their ego, the greater the latitude of rejection and the lesser the latitude of noncommitment. This can be a relevant insight to design more effective messages.

In fact, social judgement theory reinforces the need to segment and study the target audience of each social programme. As Daiton and Zelley (2005) point out, the pre-existing attitudes of the audience should be taken into account before the message is drawn up (p. 108).

Cognitive dissonance theory defends that influence is often an inner process, which occurs when the incongruence between our attitudes and behaviour generates a tension, which is resolved either by changing our beliefs or our behaviour, thereby leading to change (Festinger, 1957). This theory helps to explain why anti-smoking campaigns often fail. Daiton and Zelley (2005) argue that such campaigns often assume that the best way to get smokers to quit is to bombard them with information about mortality rates, health problems, and social stigmas associated with tobacco in order to change their attitude. "According to the theory of cognitive dissonance, this way of thinking may seem logical but potentially incorrect, explaining why so many smokers know the health and social risks and yet persist in such behaviour" (Daiton & Zelley, 2005, p. 114).

These theories can help shape the communicational intervention model. Schwartz's (1992) contribution can also be of great value to understand the social values that influence behaviours, proposing a theoretical framework on human values. The author has identified 10 different types of motivational values, which can be recognised within and among cultures and used as a reference for priority values: power, achievement, traditions, hedonism, independence, universalism, security, stimulus, benevolence, and conformism. His thoughts about patterns of conflict and congruence between values can bring important insights for communicational strategists, combined with participatory perspective, for instance.

Influencing behaviour is a precondition for social change. As has been shown, this is a complex process, but it is nevertheless clear that the study of audiences regarding their beliefs, values, expectations, and constraints is fundamental in order to take strategic decisions, which should not be based on stereotypes and assumptions. Attitudes and behaviours are dynamic and volatile, and therefore the knowledge of theories that study the complexity of people's decision-making processes can be a powerful ally in strategic design.

Time to Fine-Tune the Orchestra

Revisiting the essentials of the various knowledge areas brings a certain clarity about the intersection points with regard to the theme of social

change in a strategic perspective (Table 1). It is now necessary to advance and operationalise the principle of interdisciplinarity.

Table 1 Intersection points between disciplines.

Discipline	Intersection with strategic communication for social change
Strategic communication	The practice of deliberate and purposive communication that a communication agent enacts in the public sphere on behalf of a communication entity to reach set goals (Holtzhausen & Zerfass, 2015)
Communication for development and social change	Helps to empower development stakeholders with awareness and understanding that can be applied to effective decision making, accountable management, social and political mobilisation, helpful behaviour change, or individual and collective growth (Mozammel & Schechter, 2005)
Participatory communication	A means for empowerment and the basis for engagement with reality in order to change it (Thomas, 2014)
Social marketing	To influence a target audience to voluntarily accept, reject, modify or abandon behaviour for the benefit of individuals, groups, or society as a whole (Kotler et al., 2002)
Behavioural sciences	Theory that represents the accumulated knowledge of the mechanisms of action (mediators) and moderators of change as well as the a priori assumptions about what human behaviour is, and what the influences on it are (Davis et al., 2015)

To this end, we will begin by operationalising several possible key points of convergence, assuming strategic communication from an operative perspective. For that purpose, we will look at communication for behavioural impact (Combi) — a 10-step strategic communication planning methodology that is focused on behavioural results. This methodology was developed in 1994 by Hosein (2014) and was subsequently adopted by the World Health Organization (WHO), Unicef, and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). We assume that this is a stable starting point to design an interdisciplinary model for strategic communication for social change given that the author's arguments are quite convergent with that which has been defended herein so far. In fact, he believes that random communication is dominant in social development programmes, due to: (a) limited understanding of communication and its role in achieving behavioural results; (b) aesthetic pleasure in producing nicely designed material; (c) a dearth of professionals who have the training and experience to develop a strategic communication plan (Hosein, 2014).

For the purpose of the present chapter, the 10-step Combi planning, designed in 1994, is blended with the seven-step Combi toolkit adopted by

World Health Organization (2012). The following steps were selected for the interdisciplinary framework, with adaptations: identify the expected behavioural goals; conduct situational "market" analysis vis-à-vis the current situation (market segmentation; strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats [SWOT] analysis; audience analysis); set communication goals; develop the communication plan; implementation; monitor and evaluate. Finally, positioning and key messages definitions have been included.

Thus, based on Combi models and on the strategic communication common process, the following interdisciplinary model is proposed (Table 2):

• Behavioural goals: as mentioned above, strategic communication values the persuasive nature of communication to achieve pre-defined objectives. These criteria can be supported by the valuable insights of behavioural sciences and may also benefit from experience in setting behavioural objectives proposed by social marketing practices.

• Situational analysis: consistent strategic communication programmes are designed after rigorous political, economic, social, and technological analysis — the political, economic, socio-cultural and technological (PEST) analysis — for which the contribution of participatory studies can assume significant value. Also, the epistemological background of communication for social change is of major interest. But it is fair to say that all the aforementioned disciplines can be called into play.

• Communication goals: which will need to be defined in order to achieve behavioural result(s). Guided by the SMART principle, the objectives are the basis for defining action plans, monitoring, and evaluation and may benefit from the expertise of communication for social change.

• Audience analysis: participatory angles propose community participation as an active process, whereby the beneficiaries influence the direction and execution of development projects rather than simply receiving a share of the benefits (Samuel, 1987). This therefore implies in-depth knowledge of communities' profiles. Social marketing criteria also reveals a citizen-centric perspective, based on the audience's beliefs, expectations, and blocks. In this respect, one of the greatest contributions is the effort to understand the behaviour that competes with the one to be induced, in order to propose a benefit for that change. Finally, communication for social change gathers relevant knowledge of groups and communities in quite different contexts. All these visions will help characterise the target audiences in a consistent and innovative manner.

Nonetheless, behavioural theories and models deserve specific attention that has not been given in the characterisation of audiences (Figure 1).

- Positioning and definition of key messages: rather than to inform, any communication act aims to motivate and persuade towards an effective change. Therefore, behavioural studies can bring new insights to positioning and the definition of messages.

- Communication plan: communication for social change (focus on the study and practice of communication for the promotion of human development) as well as participatory communication (considering the importance given to community media or to grassroots media and to the degree of engagement as part of the process) might be of great value for design of the strategic communication plan.

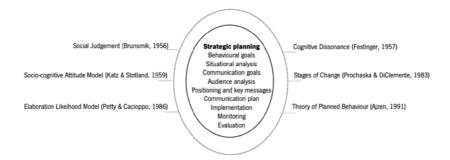**Table 2** Strategic communication for social change planning: an interdisciplinary model.

Strategic operational stages	Disciplinary contribution
1. Behavioural goals	Behavioural sciences Social marketing
2. Situational analysis	Communication for social change Participatory communication Behavioural sciences
3. Communication goals	Communication for social change
4. Audience analysis	Communication for social change Behavioural sciences Participatory communication
5. Positioning and key messages	Behavioural sciences Social marketing
6. Communication plan	Communication for social change Participatory communication
7. Implementation	
8. Monitoring	
9. Evaluation	Behavioural sciences

The model proposed herein illustrates how different disciplines can come together in a harmonious ensemble, even though each one plays specific instruments, just as in an orchestra. This interdisciplinary contribution can be achieved through teamwork that brings together specialists from each area, and offers the foundations of strategic communication, as the backbone of the entire process.

What kind of contributions can be expected? Communication for social change, present in stages 2, 3, 4, and 6 (Table 2), is, in fact, cross-cutting in the entire process, since it brings strong insights for situation analysis, audience involvement, and communicational strategies, such as entertainment education, social mobilisation, advocacy, and social networks, to name but a few.

Participatory approaches seem to be useful to understand the importance of grassroots participation and engagement, as well as the perspective offered by Jenkins (2006), about convergent media, community media and, in general, the importance of bottom-up communication flows (stages 2, 4, and 6).

The behavioural sciences predominate in the model proposed herein (Table 2) and this fact arises from the outcomes of theoretical revision of certain models and theories. Therefore, experts in the fields of psychology, social psychology, and behaviour should be integrated in any communicational programme for social change. The exercise presented in Figure 1 regarding the type of contributions in the various stages of the planning process is merely exploratory but gives an idea of the great potential of this disciplinary area.

Figure 1 Behavioural sciences examples of inputs for strategic communication planning for social change

Far from being a finished proposal, this chapter proposes clues for new working models when it comes to thinking about communication in the framework of social change.

Conclusions

This chapter proposes a discussion of a range of possibilities. However, accepting the proposed working model is like taking a step on the moon. We still have to look at the steps taken on earth. As has been stated by several academics, strategic communication must broaden its scope. According to Werder et al. (2018) study about the evolution of the discipline (content analysis of 11 years of *International Journal of Strategic Communication*), strategic communication areas of study present significant interaction with the following areas: public relations/corporate communication; organisational communication; political communication; marketing; management and communication. Social change was absent from these studies. Using content analysis, the same article concluded that 25 topics have been studied over the last 11 years and social change was never referred, to although the authors considered reasonable to say that it may be implicit in several topics. Secondly, the arguments presented highlight the need to open strategic communication to an interdisciplinary approach.

The opportunities for the strategic communication area are very clear: the field of development and social change is anxiously searching for new and qualified responses to complex societal problems around the globe: sanitary crises, climate changes, migration movements, political extremisms, and also the long-term problems of inequality or lack of access to essential resources require more consistent and integrated solutions, starting with communication. Thinking about SDG is a good starting point for valuing strategic thinking and processes: how to involve the various stakeholders and make them increasingly part of the process, in order to achieve the goals of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development? How can we design small-scale communication projects in each country with results? How can we measure and improve? Issues that are related to behavioural goals, such as SDG, benefits from the integration of specific knowledge in areas such as communication for development, participatory communication, and also social marketing or behavioural sciences. The element in common, in one way or another, is that these disciplines have a citizen-centric perspective, which is a precondition to promote effective social change. We therefore see them as powerful allies in the design of future communicational

strategies for social change, with strategic thinking as the main guideline across the entire process.

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