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　　"Communication in Three Sierra Leonean Villages: Mass vs. Traditional Media."

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Tiivistelmä - Abstract

A common impression in the West is that mass media (newspapers, magazines, radio, television and film) are worldwide sources of information; especially radio is believed to be widely spread: compared to other mass media, it is rather easy medium - cheap, small, does not preclude electricity or literacy, the radio signal reaches almost everywhere, etc.

My interdisciplinary work on three rural villages in Sierra Leone revealed that at least in the villages, mass media are far from common. Even radio is rare (50 out of 250 listen to it); there are no TVs or films, and even newspapers and magazines are rare. It is the traditinal media, especially word-of-mouth, that prevail. Reasons for little use of mass media are various: mass media are produced and distributed mainly in the capital Freetown; illiteracy - even in local languages - is wide (about 70 per cent); the avarage villager earns his or her living from subsistence farming, with no regular income; etc. In my opinion, however, the main reason is that the traditions are still so much part of the everyday life that mass media simply are of little relevance to the villagers. People are generally aware only of the close surroundings (at the time of my stay, the civil war made a clear exception) - few people follow national events, even fewer international. It it the practical pieces of information that matter: family matters (births, sickness, deaths, funerals, initiations, visits), hunting and fishing, celebrations, sports, etc.

My main research questions are: How is the village setting culture-wise? What media (any channel of information) are used? By whom, how, with what effect? What are the most important media? What is the relationship of the traditional culture and the use of media?

I also lay out the mass media situation in Sierra Leone in 1994.

Main methods used were a questionaire (53 households), observation, interviews, visits, discussions; in addition, the literary review consists of the previous studies on mass communication, interpersonal communication, development communication and traditional communication in Africa (or other developing countries).

Asiasanat 　　mass media, traditional media, development communication , Sierra Leone

Säilytyspaikka 　　Jyväskylän yliopisto, Tourulan kirjasto

Muita tietoja

Communication in Three Sierra Leonean Villages:
Mass vs. Traditional Media

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ABSTRACT

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A common impression in the West is that mass media (newspapers, magazines, radio, televion and film) are worldwide sources of information; especially radio is believed to be widely spread: compared to the other mass media, it is a rather easy medium - cheap, small, carriable, does not preclude electricity or literacy, the radio signal reaches almost any corner of the world, etc.

In the 60s, both international and national development scholars tried to harness mass media as the main vehicle for developing the newly independent African states. The media did not, however, fulfill the task. It was finally admitted that also interpersonal and traditional communication needed to be considered. A field that most succesfully combined the different views is development communication.

Much of the communication research had been on mass communication and taken place in urban centers. What about the rural areas: How does communication work? What media are used and why? How is the culture (traditions, values, norms, etc.) in the small villages where 'development' is minimal?

My interdisciplinary work on three Sierra Leonean villages reveals that mass media have only a marginal role on the countryside. Radio is with no doubt the most common mass medium but by all means it is not the most influential medium. The traditional media and communication culture still prevail. The most important source of information are the people daily walking between the villages (convergence). Oral tradition, though not as reliable as printed media, has a long tradtion and is taken as a reliable source. The contents of mass media do reach even the smallest villages but are transformed into varioustraditional modes before reaching the avarage villager who lives on subsistence farming and is illiterate.

I discuss some components of the local culture (e.g. education, time, space, ownership, power, religion) at great lenght for, in my opinion, this is what is missing from many earlier sommunication studies.

In the West, the mass media are a prominent factor in shaping the society and the culture; in these Sierra Leonean villages it is the opposite: the culture and the traditions determine the communication environment and the use of media.

1.   INTRODUCTION

1.1.   A personal note to start

This work arose, first, from my personal desire to understand the rural African setting because one day I hope to be working there, and second, from my frustration towards Western ethnocentric theories (also) in the field of communication science.

Africa has been close to my heart for years. I am especially interested in the rural areas where people hold on to their traditions, more than in cities where life is more Westernized. My attitude towards the traditional way of life may be even too romantic but I am starting to accept that change is inevitable. Instead of rejecting the change, I want to understand it - to be more fully aware of its causes and effects.

Communication is a fascinating and vast field. I am a student of it exactly because it is involved in every turn of our lives. Communication plays a major role in the change process in developing countries, too, on various levels. As I did voluntary work in Sierra Leone in 1993-94, I got a chance to practically combine my personal and academic interests.

I am most interested in the development issues. Much of the African communication discussion started as a side product of national development programs; many problems of development are communication-related; much more intercultural communication is needed for enhanced programs in the future of international cooperation. Therefore, I cannot avoid discussing development-related topics. This thesis is, however, not about development. The main area of concentration of my work is communication, though strongly stressing that communication did not, does not, and will not take place in a vacuum.

Until recently, theories of both communication and development were written from a Western view point. However, many Western models are irrelevant in a non-Western setting where traditions still dominate and 'development' is minimal, if not non-existing. The purpose of this work is to discuss communication in the rural Sierra Leone through a multidisciplinary approach.

I lived in Taiama in the Southern Province of Sierra Leone for one year and taught English and Creative Arts at Taiama Secondary School. The year was the fourth year of the on-going rebel war. Still, I have have never met people so contended at what they have. These people made the year the best year in my life. Living on the school compound, I had the chance to see the everyday life of the people in Taiama and in some of the surrounding villages. I have not the words to thank for the friendship, the hospitality and the help people offered me during my stay. Not a day passes by without me remembering the people and thinking how they are faring at present, in the afterwawes of the civil war.

This work is dedicated to the people of Taiama and to my family who made my journey possible.

1.2. Obstacles in conducting communication research in Africa

A UNESCO summit held in Nairobi in 1981 to address African communication research resolved that Africa has a different communication profile from the other regions of the world due to "the interplay between communication processes and the forces of Africa's culture and history". The summit underlined four characteristics of communication in Africa: first, majority of the people live on the countryside; second, roles and effects of communication need to be examined in the context of development; third, modalities, styles, values, and constraints in communication are different from the West; and, fourth, there is a need for regional self-reliance in communication research. In addition, four research areas for special attention

were named: traditional communication, communication in rural areas, the World New Information and Communication Order (NWICO), and the implication and impact of new communication technologies. (Ugboajah 1987, 11-15.)

Thus, on top of the universal problems of research, Africa has an additional set of problems due to the different communication environment. These have most comprehensively been listed by two Nigerian communication scholars, Frank Ugboajah and Ikechukwu Nwosu.

Ugboajah notes many fundamental and some practical problems: unappreciation of communication and social research, lack of trained local researchers, absence of adaptable research methods, lack of financial support; contamination of responses due to methods (tape recordeer, pad, pencil) harming the assurance of confidentiality to respondents, abundance of urban-oriented studies, relative deprivation of respondents, weakness of questionaire as the main source of information, unworkability of the sampling procedure, and "official involvement of untrustworthy leaders in the conducting of surveys". (Ugboajah 1987, 10-11.)

Nwosu adds another group of practical problems: ruralites are not involved in planning; research problems are irrelevant; literature and data are scarce, unpublished or secret; defining traditional concepts without losing original meaning (e.g. dowry, kola nut breaking, oracle consultation) is difficult; reseacher is alien to the culture (often urban/foreign); conditions are difficult (lack of roads, poor weather, diseases, lack of computers); deficiencies, apathy or cultural traits of respondents; over-concern with theories and statistics. (Nwosu 1987, 79-84.)

Personally, I was faced mainly with three problem areas, namely *the sources, the cultural barriers, and the civil war.* The *sources* appeared problematic at three levels. First, the early communication theories were West-centric and general, mentioning the whole continent of Africa in one paragraph, if at all. From the 1980s on, there have been noteworthy African scholars but

communication research in West-Africa has concentrated mainly to Nigeria and Ghana. Moreover, the studies often concentrated on urban areas. Information on communication and media in Sierra Leone especially scarce and scattered. Second, the general literature on Sierra Leone is also scarce and often out-dated - though little has changed in rural Sierra Leone in the last 30 years. The last census had been carried our in 1985, thus much of the national statistics had to be based on estimates. Third, the precence of wide concepts like 'development', 'communication', 'colonialism', 'independence' and my own aim at interdisciplinarity made the literature hard to deal with.

The ethnocentrism - even if nothing to be proud of - is quite understandable: Communication science, having 'born' as such only in the 1950s (Berger & Chaffee 1987, 20, 284), is a young field. During the 'first decades' of communication research, most African countries were under colonial powers, which hardly were interested in developing communication structures for the sake of the native Africans. The Western mass communication writers in the 60s followed the prevailing ideas of development, according to which the developing countries were like the developed ones, "only a bit behind" (Golding 1977, 292), and would undergo the same processes as the West. Golding noted that although that line of thinking was criticized already in the 70s, the discussion had not reached the field of communication (ibid.). On the other hand, for African researchears communication-related issues may not have been of much importance or encouraged when e.g. national stability and socio-economic development were more acute in the post-colonial era. Thus, communication studies established itself as a field of its own much later in Africa.

Having previously visited Africa and studied cultural anthropology and sociology, I was partly prepared for the *cultural differences*. Yet, many characteristics of the life in rural Sierra Leone remained but superficial glimpses, mainly because I did not learn Mende, the local language, which was mainly a spoken vernacular. (Only elder people knew the writing; teaching Mende was just started again in schools in 1993.) I used English and Krio, the widely-spoken creole, in all my encounters and relied on

translations by friends with Mende-speking respondents. There was surely much I missed since language is a very integral part of the culture; as the linguistic Sapir-Wharf hypothesis states, the language one uses affects the way one thinks. There were also some major aspects of the culture, e.g. secret societies, that people were reluctant to talk about to outsiders.

Another hindering factor was the *civil war*, or, as the local people called it, the 'rebel war'. Although it caused no physical threat at the time, the tension was in the air - after all, I might also be a rebel! Both officials and villagers, though friendly and cooperative, were at first cautious about my motives and questions. One radio station forbade a visit referring to national security. Throughout - also according to the tradition - I was obliged to petition cooperation from the chiefs and the villagers before continuing the research. Long discussions were also held before entering each village why the villagers should take part in the questionaire instead of going to their farms.

1.3.   Earlier combination studies are few

Originally, I wanted to study the use of mass media - especially radio - in the small villages in Sierra Leone. My main hypothesis was that radio is the most important medium (at that point, I defined 'media' as 'mass media', i.e. radio, television, newspapers, magazines, and film) in the rural areas. I intended to follow Lasswell's basic model of communication, trying to answer to the Who says what in which channel to whom with what effect? - question.

Various studies on communication on Africa (e.g. Ainslie 1966, 152; Meyer 1979, 3; Ugboajah 1985, 96; Kivikuru 1989a, 114) had concluded that radio is both the most common and most powerful mass medium in reaching people: radio does not preclude electricity or literacy, a set is rather cheap and easily movable, radio wawes can reach people almost anywhere, programs can be produced locally, in local languages, too.

Most studies had, however, been carried out in urban centers; the only radio survey conducted in Sierra Leone in 1991, too, by the BBC for internal use, had concentrated on urban centers, namely capital Freetown and two other urban centers.

What about the rural areas? How much and how are radio and other mass media used, and by whom? How important are the other sources of information?

Kivikuru's study (1990) on nine Tanzanian villages was one of the first extensive attempts to charactirize mass media consumption in rural areas (more in 2.1.). Even if Kivikuru (1989a, 110; 1989b, 20), unlike other communication scholars, included the traditional media within mass media (because they carry similar tasks), she still maintained that radio is the most important medium in the villages and that radio is the only medium covering the whole country. She did not, however, study taditional communication extensively.

However, as I had spent some months in Sierra Leone and visited villages around the town I was living in, based on even superficial observation, I realized that *radio as well as the other mass media were of quite minimal importance in the villages*. Concurrently, it became obvious that 'media' must not be understood as narrowly as we easily do in the West but literally as 'any channel through which information is transmitted' - be it mass media, 'bush-radio', body language, signs, songs, drums, town-crier, meetings, etc. It was apparent that, out of the mass media, radio was without doubt the most common medium. But whether it was also the most influencial medium or the most important source of news was questionable.

Consequently, it was necessary to understand more of the whole village setting and the traditional media before I could ask questions about mass communication or mass media. Communication could not be separated from the larger contexts of culture, traditions, society, economics, development, or education, to name but a few components.

Much of the communication studies on Africa concentrated on mass media and their role in either colonialism, independence, development, nation building, etc. (more in 2.3.). Combined studies (interpersonal, traditional, mass communication) Africa are not many.

One of the first scholars interested in the confrontation of the traditional and the modern media in Africa was Leonard Doob. According to Schramm (1964, 51), the change from oral to mass media communication was only starting when Doob wrote in 1961 in *Communication in Africa*:

> Africans themselves, living in variety of societies, have evolved their own forms of communication, which for them at the time were adequate (except perhaps for the almost complete absence of the permanent flexible record provided by writing). As they accept more and more practices and values from the West, they come to be intimately dependent upon the extending and especially upon the mass media of the culture they absorb. Modern Africa contains a mixture of traditional and novel communication systems because those systems so sensitively reflect and affect the changes in progress. (Schramm 1964, 51.)

Doob noted the potency of the new media and the overwhelming welcome the novelties received at first. He also realized the importance of awareness of the local culture and symbol systems without which even the most sincere attempts to introduce modern media failed, as happened e.g. in Nigeria, as a film about bathing a baby offended the mothers who said the baby should not be shown naked; or, in the ex-Congo during World War II, as soldiers stoned the screen, where a cartoon Donald Duck was talking and walking naked. (Schramm 1964, 51-52.)

Ugboajah (1985, 174-175) criticizes the earlier communication (and development) studies for focusing on technological and organizational aspects of mass communication and for ignoring the indigenous media with their wide socio-cultural features. He calls for alternative approaches to media research. Both Ugboajah and Kivikuru stress that mass communication should be studied in the appropriate cultural context (Kivikuru 1989b, 29).

1.4.   A holistic approach to the village communication

I aim at discussing the communication in the Sierra Leonean villages in a holistic way, through an interdisciplinary approach. Questions to be answered include: How does communication work in the villages? What are the most important **media**, referring to *any channel through which information is transferred*. In addition, four components deserve special attention: First, how are the **mass media**, *newspapers, magazines, radio, television and film*, used in the villages? What is the possible nation-wide supply of modern media in Sierra Leone? What is the actual supply in the villages? What is the demand for modern media? Radio is without doubt the most common mass medium in the the villages - but is it also the most influencial medium?

Second, how are **traditional media**, *town criers, drums, symbols, songs, orature, etc.* used in the villages? How much do other media compensate the lack of modern media?

Third, what kind of **news**, here referring to *any important information*, circulate in the rural areas? What kind of information is important to the villagers? How is the interplay of **culture** - understood in the widest anthropological sense as the *traditions, customs, beliefs, values, norms, laws, knowledge, language, art, etc. of a given society* - and information needs: What do the information needs tell about the culture, or, how much does the culture determine the information needs?

Fourth, how is the village setting in terms of **culture**? How is the village life? What is important for the villagers? What are their needs? How do the cultural factors affect communication and use of media?

1.5.   Multidisciplinary theoretical approach

My starting level in **communication theories** is *mass communication*. I also include aspects from *interpersonal, development and traditional communication*.

However, communication theories have treated the rural Africa superficially, thus a wider **cultural approach** is also needed. This will be accomplished mainly through *sociology* and *anthropology*. The sociological components are embedded in the underlying framework throughout the work, and the anthropological aspects appear most in chapters 4 and 5.

The **sociological schools** preferring the *macro-approach* (e.g. Parsonians, structuralists, functionalists, Marxists) maintain that social processes cannot be explained through the attributes of the individual - attitudes, values, beliefs - constructing the social unit, but individual behavior is determined by the collective, 'society', 'system' or 'functional prerequisites' (Silverman 1985, 29). On the other hand, the schools leaning towards the *micro-approach* (e.g. interactionalists, phenomenologists, methodological individualists, ethnomethodologists) argue the opposite, that "social processes [can] *not* be fully explained by an appeal to social structures", thus they look at variables like 'individual', 'everyday world', and 'symbolic interaction' (ibid.).

The interaction of the macro and micro approaches is inevitable. Thus, I do not follow any special school of thought but combine them quite freely. However, my approach does lean more towards the macro level since I concentrate on the collective characters. My insistence on explaining the village reality holistically before bringing in communication stems from *structural-functionalism* according to which society is a system of interdependent parts, in which one part cannot be independently understood but needs to be considered in relation to the the other components making up the whole. The *macro-approach* appears also in the presumption that the local traditional culture determines also the communication behavior. Thus I look at the collective characters in the village setting, e.g.: How is it structured? How does it function? What types of relationships exist? How is the local culture? The *micro-approach* is realized in the use of *observation*. Interactionalists and ethnomethodologists conceive that a proper description, in itself, is enough as an explanation; there is no need to produce "deductive causal explanations" or "sets of law-like propositions" (Silverman 1985, 96). I am interested in: How do the villagers interact? What kinds of values

prevail? Why do the people do what they do?

The communication theories are also greatly influenced by sociology. My **communication approach** falls mainly under the *social scientific theory* which McQuail defines as "general statements about the nature, working and effects of mass communication, derived from systematic and, as far as possible, objective observation and evidence about media and often reliant on other bodies of social scientific theory" (1987b, 4).

McQuail categorizes six **levels of human communication:** 1) intrapersonal (e.g. processing information), 2) interpersonal (e.g. dyad, couple), 3) intragroup (e.g. family), 4) intergroup or association (e.g. local community), 5) institutional/organizational (e.g. political system or business firm), and 6) society-wide (e.g. mass communication) (1987b, 6). I discuss mainly two levels, i.e. **society-wide** (mass communication) and **intergroup** (local community) - even though elements from other levels, too, are inevitably embedded in both of them. However, I make the villages the focal point and discuss how *mass commmunication* and *intergroup communication* function.

Mass communication is approached through a structuralist-functionalist perspective: What are, in general, the purposes of mass media in society and for an individual? How are mass media structured in Sierra Leone? How do they function? What is the supply? What is the demand for mass media in the villages? Do the supply and the demand meet?

Intergroup communication is for large part *interpersonal communication* that takes place within a certain group specified in time and space. But in the African context, it can also be *traditional communication.* In addition, a field that combines both mass as well as interpersonal and traditional communication is *development communication.*

1.6.   Survey as the main method

My work is qualititative rather than quantitative. The main method is the
survey consisting of observation, a questionaire, visits, interviews,
discussions and literature overview.

I carried out the empirical part in Sierra Leone between July -93 and July -94.
The theoretical and the analytical work I have done in Finland prior to and
after the field work.

During the year, I *visited* three radio stations, the only television station, a
few local newspapers and the Ministry of Information to map out the general
media environment in Sierra Leone. Countless *formal and informal discussions*
with journalists, administrators, teachers and friends have contributed to my
understanding of the country and its media.

Observation became especially important; only by living and interacting in the
research setting did I start understanding the forces at work. Much of the
descriptions of the village setting, the actual media situation, etc. are based
on these personal notes. (I did not, however, live in any of the three villages
but in Taiama, a much bigger town - the provincial center. Life in Taiama
was different from the smaller villages.)

The most important part of the survey, however, is the *questionaire* (see
Appendix 1) which was carried out in three rural villages. The questionaire
included 53 households and 269 adults.

The preparations for the questionaire started in September 1993. I visited
several villages informally with the interpretator. Jolohun, Kimbima and
Waima were later chosen for the survey because of their equal approximity
from Taiama, location off the main roads, the number of households and also
the general attitude towards us as visitors.

A formal letter was written to the Paramount Chief to make him aware of the work, to obtain a permission to carry on with it, and also to ask for his assistance in contacting the villages. A 'traditional bribe' - little cash and a bottle of spirits - had to change hands to fasten the process. The Chief approved the plan and promised to inform the section and town chiefs in question to quarantee the smooth running of the study.

A draft questionaire of 28 questions was then prepared and tried in five households in Taiama. Modifications and additions were made before printing (with the manual copying machine of Taiama Secondary School) the final questionaire of 39 questions, divided into five sections: background information, general news receiving and word of mouth, use of newspapers and magazines, use of radio, and other information. There was no need to include questions on television, since practically nobody on the coutryside could afford a TV-set and a generator.

The questionaire was carried out over the Easter break, April 5-10, 1994, during the dry season when the villages were easily reachable by foot. Waima was visited first, Jolohun second and Kimbima third, each for two days.

The town chiefs had received an introductory letter - except in Kimbima - from the Paramount Chief but before starting the work, a 2-3 hour meeting had to be held in each village. The meeting took place late in the evening, around eight or nine, only after all the villagers had returned from the farms and had been informed about the visitors by the town crier. We then had to introduce ourselves and the purpose of our visit. The chiefs, elders and villagers asked various further questions before they were satisfied and willing to cooperate with us. The on-going rebel war caused a lot of suspicion and fear towards visitors. Only because the interpretator was known in all villages and I had three local identification cards to show, the villagers were convinced we were not rebels.

A map was drawn of each village on the second morning of the stay.

Carrying out the questionaires in the households took about five hours, from 7 a.m. to 12 noon. (Question number 16 was left out due to its resemblance to number 18.) One adult was asked to answer the questions for the household, though majority of the inhabitants were present and contributed to the final answers. An English-speaker in each village helped with the questioning.

Most of the answerers were males, usually the heads of the household. Most people answered in Mende, a few in Krio and one in English. The interpretator recorded all the answers, after consulting with me or the native helper about any unclear answers.

A second visit was made to each village in June during which the households were revisited and the following questions added to questionaires: 1) ethnicity, 2) religion, 3) education, and 4) possible active visiting of friends or neighbors in order to listen to the radio.

2.   **COMMUNICATION THEORIES**

> Communication is a mechanism by which we make sense out of our social world by continually transmitting messages that require us to make and affirm collective social interpretations of reality... Communication and communication networks are essential in the creation of the fundamental human social structures we call culture. (Monge in Berger & Chaffee 1987, 247.)

Throughout time, there have been various models of communcation. Harold Lasswell developed the **linear model of communication** (Who says what in which channel to whom with what effect) which was later criticized for its simplicity. Some refinements were added: feedback, interaction, encoding, decoding, media organization, personal mediation, and social context (McQuail 1987b, 43).

McQuail (1987, 7) combines Lasswell's classic linear model followingly: 1) Who communicates with whom? (sources and receivers), 2) Why

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communicate? (functions and purposes), 3) How does communication take place? (channels, languages, codes), 4) What about? (content, objects of reference, types of information), and 5) What are the consequences of communication? (intended or unintended).

Rogers and Kincaid disproved the linear models of communication by emphasizing that **communication is networking**, "a process of mutual information-exchange". By analyzing communication flows from the perspective of an examplary interpersonal relationship, their *communication network analysis* aims at identifying the communication structure and individuals' influence on each other in a given system. The linear models were formulated by communication scientists; Rogers and Kincaid, however, stressed that communication networks require an interdisciplinary approach (sociology, mathematics, social psychology, anthropology). (Rogers & Kincaid, 1981, xi.)

Communication can be ritual- or transmission-oriented (James Carey). In the **ritual view of communication** "communication is linked to such terms as "sharing", participation, association, fellowship and the possession of common faith... A ritual view is not directed towards the extension of messages in space, but the maintanance of society in time; not the act of imparting information, but the representation of shared beliefs." The **transmissional view**, on the other hand, centers on the sending, giving and transmitting "signals or messages over time for purpose of control". (McQuail 1987, 43.)

Communication involves simultaneous producing, sending, receiving, storing, processing, and seeking of information which can be divided into various subcategories, each carrying a different tasks. Gurvitch (Aittola & Pirttilä 1989, 23-37) mentions seven categories of information and social fuctions: 1) *observations of outside world* are inevitable for orientation in space and time, 2) *information about other people, ourselves, groups, classes and collectives* is important for functioning of a social group, 3) *common sense - knowledge* guides every day life and activities, 4) *technical knowledge* is a

means to something but also a way of producing, organizing, planning, communicating or destroying, 5) *political information* explains the value objectives and facts of politics, 6) *scientific information* is connected to the technical knowledge, and 7) *philosophic information* analyses all other forms of information.

According to Gurvitch, the most important kind of information in the agrarian society is observations of the outside world because it is needed in the farm production. The second most important is political information since the farmers to fight for their interests, and information about other people the third most important to the relatives and local community. (ibid., 36) Jurgen Habermas (Aittola & Pirttilä 1989, 12-13) differenciates three view points from which information is drawn in society: work, language, and legitimacy of the community. Work builds the security for physical survival against nature and language also ensures survival by creating common life and traditions. Berger and Luckman (Aittola & Pirttilä, 60) describe the legitimacy of the community as the process through which the community objectifies itself to its members as a meaningful unit. They describe the four stages of legitimacy: 1) language modifies many societal structures and, through symbols, simultaneously teaches a way to perceive one's reality, 2) aforisms, proverbs and stories furthen this, 3) specialists form explicit theories and special knowledge, and 4) the final legitimizing of the symbol environment is done by explaining and justifying the social reality and its ideologies formed by societal institutions.

"The media institution is engaged in the production, reproduction and distribution of **knowledge...**" McQuail writes and argues that on the daily basis mass media contribute to the **socialization** (more in chapter 4) more than any other knowledge institutuions (e.g. art, religion, science, education). He defines 'knowledge' as "sets of symbols which have meaningful reference to experience in the social world. This knowledge enables us to make sense of experience, shapes our perceptions of it and contributes to the store of knowledge of the past and the continuity of current understanding." (1987b, 51-52)

Knowledge is thus one component of the *symbolic environment* (of information, ideas, beliefs, etc.) on which the *common perception of reality* of people is based on (more in chapter 4).

Lasswell saw communication fulfilling three societal needs: surveying the environment, reaching consensus on important matters, and socializing the new members (Schramm 1987, 6).

2.1. Mass communication theories

Mass communication refers to the processes in which messages are produced, reproduced and spread widely through an mechanic medium. Even if various media (books, posters, fax machines, etc.) could be included under this label, I remain in the most 'traditional' mass media, i.e. newspapers, magazines, radio, television, and film.

Main **features of mass communication** include the following: the *sender* is a formal organization and/or a professional communicator; the *message* is manufactured, standardized and multiplied; and the *sender-receiver relationship* is one-directional, impersonal, non-moral and calculative. (McQuail 1987b, 31-32.) By definition, mass communication is aimed at a 'mass' and it creates a 'mass culture'. 'Mass' was originally defined by Herbert Blumer (1939). Characteristics included: interaction and level of conscience are low, control and organization are external and manipulative, and interest is based on organized objects. McQuail added that a 'mass' is very large and widely dispersed, heterogenous and changing in composition but homogenous in behavior, and that its members are unknown to each other and lack self-awareness, self-identity, and power to act as a group. (McQuail 1987b, 29-30.)

Characteristics of mass culture include e.g.: the products are technically mass produced for mass market; the purpose is immediate grtification and diversion; the audience is heterogenous and consumption-oriented; content

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and meaning are superficial, unambigious, pleasing and universal (McQuail 1987b, 37).

Mass media do not function uniformly world-wide, even in theory. There have been various attempts to develop **press theories** (includes also electronic media) on different media systems and environments. These categories - even if general and over-simplified - tell something about a country's media system. African countries have, however, been treated very superficially. Mass media have existed and functioned in many African countries since last century. During the colonial era they were, however, mainly used for satisfying the colonizers' needs. As Siebert, Peterson and Schramm wrote their four **press theories** (*authoritarian, libertarian, social responsibility, Soviet*) in 1956, African countries were still colonies. Mass media were really brought into the discussion only in the context of national development after the countries had proclaimed independence (more on mass media and development in part 2.3.). In the 80s, Altschull made another simple press system division: the First World (liberal-capitalist), the Second World (Soviet-socialist), and the Third World (developing) (McQuail 1987b, 123).

McQuail (1987b, 119-121) added two more categories to the work of Siebert et al: the development media theory and the democratic-participant theory. Admitting the generalization on countries with varying economic and political conditions, he lumped all developing countries under the former. According to the **development media theory**, the countries share the opposition to dependency, foreign domination, and authoritarianism. They all support autonomy, cultural identity, participatory communication, collective ends, and the use of media in national development. Common circumstances hindering the potential benefits of of mass media include *poor conditions* for mass media system development (communication infrastructure, professional skills, production and cultural resources, available audience); *dependency* on developed world (technology, skills, cultural products); and the *priory of national development* as the main task. (McQuail 1987b, 119-121.)

There are multiple ways to describe the **functions of mass media** (e.g. Pye 1967, 39-43; McQuail 1987a, 343-345). McQuail (1987b, 70-74), building on Lasswell (1948) and Wright (1960), lists them from a structural-functionalist viewpoint, both for society and the individual:

FIGURE 1.

McQuail's functions of mass media in society and for the individual.

PURPOSE	SOCIETY	INDIVIDUAL
INFORMATION	* providing information * indicating power-relations * facilitating innovation, adaption and progress	* finding information * receiving decision-making and practical advice * satisfying curiosity * learning, self-education * gaining a sense of security
CORRELATION/ PERSONAL IDENTITY	* explaining, interpreting and commenting events * providing support for established authorities * socializing * coordinating activities * building consensus * setting priority orders	* finding reinforcement for personal values * finding behavior models * identifying with leaders * gaining personal insights
CONTINUITY/ INTEGRATION AND SOCIAL INTERACTION	* expressing dominant culture, recognizing subcultures * maintaining values	* gaining social empathy * identifying with others, gaining a sense of belonging * building conversation and social interaction * substituting human company * helping in social roles * connecting with family, friends and society
ENTERTAINMENT	* providing amusement, diversion and relaxation * reducing social tension	* escaping from problems * relaxing * receiving cultural or aesthetic enjoyment * filling time * emotional release, sexual arousal
MOBILIZATION	* campaigning for societal objectives (politics, war, economic development, work, religion)	-

(McQuail 1987b, 70-75.)

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There are also various opinions on the relationship of mass media and society. There has, however, been wide agreement (between communication scientists) on the role of mass media as the main component in producing and sharing culture - in advanced societies (e.g. McQuail 1987b, 51-52; Ugboajah 1985, 15).

The so-called **techno-utopians** (e.g. Marshall MacLuhan 1989, Yoneji Masuda 1883) claimed that mass media will spread to every corner of the world and make 'a global village' of it. Communication technology was to help the developing countries leap-frog from agricultural society straight to information society, completely skipping the industrial stage. (In their terms, Sierra Leone is still an agrarian society since most people make their living on farming. This categorization does not, however, do justice to the country: the capital, for example, is highly developed with its computerized offices and organized merchandice. The difference between the urban and the rural is so vast - like that of industrialized and developing country in a grander scale - that it would be unfair to generalize the situation of the country on neither the rural nor the urban alone.) The visions of the techno-utopians are rather questionable, for they assume that the societal continuum agrarian-industrial-information is a natural trend that all societies will pass and that the earth can sustain such development.)

In reality, the case is rather the contrary: Schramm, among others, conclude that mass media are "minority media" in Africa, used only by a fraction: the wealthy urban people (Menkir 1979, 25), which may lead to "reduced message fidelity, delayed feedback, rumour-mongering and stifling of develoment efforts" (Meyer 1979, 2).

Kivikuru (1989a, 113) concludes that mass media are actually present in the (Tazanian) villages more than believed but they are "continuously combined with interpersonal communication. The information networks operates quite well and reaches also the illiterates or non-owners of radio sets."

Kivikuru's general findings were that radio was consumed equally by males

and females, listening was news-oriented (news bulletins, death announcements, sports), listening time was 30-40 minutes on weekdays and 60-90 minutes on weekends or holidays (more varied program), educational and political programs were not popular, older people usually determined what was listened to, younger and educated people listened to also special programs (sports, religion, music, announcements), literate people and those with frequent contact to urban centers listen more to radio than others. (1989a, 114-116.)

Newspapers, on the other hand, were consumed more by males. Literacy did not, however, necessarily increase newspaper consumption, which was so occational that people were not able to differentiate on what they read. Regional news were the main focus of the readers. Religious and educational papers (as well as books) were most common due to their well-organized distribution; entertainment maganines were most popular but scarce. In general, any paper was read by a number of villagers. (Kivikuru 1989a, 113-117.)

Kivikuru notes that the rural (peripheral) societies have two deficiencies hindering wide spread os mass communication devives and services (infrastructures, content, professional philosophy, communication culture): first, the general scarcity of resources, and second, the fact that the field itself originates from urban centers, not the rural areas (1989b, 28). Also, "ethnic uniformity turns the community 'inwards', and this is reflected in somewhat lower interest in the available nation-level mass communication" where as frequent contacts with the outside world enhance it (ibid., 117-118).

2.2. Development communication theories

One kind of combined effort (mass media - interpersonal media - traditional media) that I am after can be found from **development communication** which is defined as:

The art and science of using modern and "trado-rural" communication resources, personnel and technologies to achieve the rural development objectives... It is a process that ensures a continual, participatory two-way flow of information that is aimed at improving the quality of life among rural dwellers and getting them involved in national life and development. Rural development activities may focus on rural health, nutrition, agrarian reform, literacy, family planning, environmental sanitation, small scale industries, fisheries, agriculture, transportation and politication. (Nwosu 1987, 70-71.)

Development communication inevitably overlaps with mass communication, interpersonal communication and traditional communication, but the difference lies in the more practical approach: development communication - at its best - is more about applied communication methods, that are needed at a cross-cultural grassroots encounters, than about theories.

Defining 'development' is not an easy task. Various terms have been used to describe more or less the same change processes in human life: social change, growth, acculturation, sociocultural evolution, modernization, industrialization, Westernization, etc. These kinds of divisions are, however, rather arbitrary - some are broader, some narrower, all are value-laden and consist of complex interwoven factors - and have mostly depended on time and the author's ideological background; here they are to be understood interchangeably. At the moment, 'development' may carry the least baggage. I cling to Nwosu's (1987, 70) general definition: "Positive change or improvement of human kind by reduction of disparities between the haves and the have-nots, either within or beyond national frontiers."

It can be said that developments communication has formed in stages: It was 'was born' as 'mass media for national development' -approach and developed into 'real development communication' after interpersonal and traditional communication elements were added.

National development refers to the holistic improvement of both economic, social, political, spiritual, and cultural elements; the two last components were especially neglected by the Western 'specialists' and even the local elites, who were often educated in the West (Frey 1973, 407; Meyer 1979, 2; Ugboajah 1985, 174). National development was often the main item in the

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agendas of newly-independent countries. The colonizers had looked mainly after the benefits of their own citizens, not of the masses; the cities became Westernized African cities, the countryside remained traditionally African. The new states were in a rush to build their 'own country', working in the 'African way' after long years of colonization. Infrastructure (new roads, schools, hospitals, literacy programs, etc.) needed to be built nation-wide. The colonial times had, however, left their mark: the traditions were partly lost - in many cases, there was not much choice but to try to copy the West. Becoming Western-like could also be seen as 'advanced'.

Thus, at first the *mass communication* scholars (e.g. Schramm, 1964; Lerner & Scramm 1967; Pye 1967: 35, Dube 1967: 93; Roy et al. 1969; Frey 1973, 392) tried to harness mass media as the main vehicle for development, though Katz and Lazarsfeld had concluded already in the 50s that, compared to interpersonal communication, mass media effects remained relatively mild (McLeod & Blumler in Berger & Chaffee 1987, 298). Their two step flow - model stated that information from mass media is transferred to the large population through opinion leaders. (Their research was, however, completely carried out in a Western context (U.S.A. presidential elections), thus the applicability on other cultures was questionable). (Schramm 1963, 184).

In **Lerner's communication theory of development** (1957), mass media are one of the contributing factors. Modernization takes place through four stages: increased *urbanization* tends to raise *literacy* (until the threshold of 25 % urbanization has been reached), which increases *media exposure,* finally leading to economic, political, communication and psychological *participation.* He later added that increased media exposure in turn enhances literacy and that literacy increases participation. The final aim on the society continuum of traditional-transitional-modern is the "participant society". (Frey 1973, 400-401.)

The above precludes urbanization - but what, then, happens to and in the rural areas: no modernization or development? All areas cannot become

urbanized because the environment could not sustain such development, and majority of people still live on the countryside in developing countries.

Mass media were to help in the transition to new customs, practices, and social relationships (Schramm 1964, 114). Schramm accredited to mass media three main tasks: 1) **supplying information** about national development (needs, opportunities, methods, means of change), 2) providing a **forum for participation in the decision process** (dialogue, leaders, common people, issues and alternatives made clear), ans 3) **teaching the necessary skills** (reading, education, occupational training, health) (Schramm 1964, 127-145.)

Scramm concluded that the mass media can easily accomplish the informing task. In the decision making and the teaching media can merely *help*. Media can feed information to the discussion, carry the words of the leaders, and clear issues; yet the decision is made by a group. Alsothe teaching role of mass media is insufficient without the combination with interpersonal communicators. (Schramm 1964, 126.)

Many of the mass communication scholars were American (also Lang, Blumer, Gerbner, Gross, Halloran, Hirsch, Newcomb). They represented the so-called *administrative school* which placed most emphasis on the technological power of mass media. The *European critical* scholars, however, doubted the American approach:

> The need for Third World communication research has been (and continues to be) largely defined by the interests in operational effectiveness and audience feedback, conviniently leaving aside the gigantic problem of communication media carriers of Western domination. Questions about methodology, cultural differentation and the validity of research schemes and models are often posed by scientists from the West." (Ugboajah 1987, 10.)

At the second stage, it was gradually admitted that mass media cannot carry the task alone but *interpersonal communication* is also needed. Schramm accredited the task of modernization mainly to mass media. Rogers, however, stressed the combination of mass media and interpersonal communication:

When the task is to reach large numbers of and to affect them in substantial way, the combination of mass media and interpersonal communication channels is the most effective means of (1) reaching people with new ideas, and (2) persuading them to utilize these innovations. (Rogers 1973, 303.)

One quite succesful example was the **media forums**, started in Canada but later applied in many developing countries, too: a group of farmers listened to a radio program on new farming techniques after which a discussion lead by an extention worker followed. Rogers (1973, 304) concluded that the effects were thus greater because (1) there is more attendance and participation due to group pressure and social expectations, (2) the group decisions enhances individual acceptance of the matter and attitude change, (3) the forum may work well as a novelty, and (4) feedback to the broadcaster is rather immediate. (For more, see Rogers 1973, 303-.)

All the studies [on personal influence processes] reveal a common process whereby mass media provide their audience with background information directly; however, before going beyond passive receipt of that information to making a personal commitment to action, most people seek confirmation by direct face-to-face consultation with an opinion leader. (Pool in Pool et al. 1973, 10.)

The most basic finding is that the mass media are reported as influencial mainly in the awareness stage. After that interpersoanl communication with close associates seems to be the predominant factor in the adaption of these discrete innovations. (Frey 1973, 397.)

Figure 2.

Characteristics of communication channels by Everett M. Rogers. (Adapted.)

CHARACTERISTICS	INTERPERSONAL CHANNELS	MASS MEDIA CHANNELS
Message flow	Mostly two-way	Mostly one-way
Communication context	Face-to-face	Interposed
Amount of feedback	High	Low
Speed to large audiences	Relatively slow	Relatively rapid
Possible effect	Attitude formation and change	Knowledge change

(Rogers in Pool et al. *Handbook of Communication*, 1973, p. 291.)

Finally, the 'real development communication' appeared when attention was called for native experience and *traditional communication*.

Western pioneering works in development communication thus included e.g. Hovland et al. (1949), Pye Lucian (ed.) (1963), Daniel Lerner, Wilbur Scrhramm (1964), Lerner and Schramm (1967), Everett Rogers and F.F. Shoemaker (1971), and Sean McBride et al. (1980). Then African development communications studies emerged: A. Basu (1969), M. Mbithi (1973), Frank Ugboajah (1976 and 1983), S.K. Williams (1978), A. Moemeka (1981), Nwuneli (1984), Sobowale and Sogbamu (1984), Ikechukwu Nwosu (1985). (Nwosu 1987, 72.)

Both the *administrative school* and the *critical school* were criticized by African academics, e.g. Nwosu and Ugboajah:

> ...rural development communication research should focus more on applied, functional, utilitarian, field-operational need-based and culturally relevant studies. What is needed... is a shift of emphasis and not a complete neglect of the prototype and theory building studies aimed at general development of scholarship and research in mass media. (Nwosu 1987, 77.)

> ...the so-called administrative research... [favors] the effects of communication media where development is defined in ethnocentric terms and a realization of western [sic] economic and mechanical standards.... There is a proneness to consider the technological advantages of mass communication rather than understand the part the media play in society from the point of view of their processes within appropriate contexts. (Ibid., 3.)

Nwosu (ibid., 78) calls for "[sifting] the relevant foreign models, [modifying] them contextually and [using] them in finding answers to the many problems of rural development communication." He sketches a model for training effective rural development communicators who would master both the traditional and the modern media as well as the theories and the practice of development. (For more, see Nwosu 1987.)

Ugboajah (1987, 10) suggests that the 'communication and national development' -type of studies of Schramm, Lerner, and Rogers "which were carried out with paramount academic qualifications but not necessary with

social relevance" should be de-emphasized and, instead, case studies and observational approaches emphasized.

> One observes at once that the formal media [radio, TV, newspapers] become little used immediately communication or information reaches the traditional authority usually represented by a king or a chief or in some cases a council of elders. Communication from that point takes a flow or diffusion approach and is dominated by the informal media or oral media ('oramedia'). These are the traditional media or folk media repressented by a diffusion network of lower chiefs, age groups, the marketplace, market women's organizations, traditional priests, stall heads, village teachers and the indomitable village crier. (Ugboajah 1985, 167.)

A proper mix of mass, interpersonal and traditional media, at least in theory, was to bring about the desired effects. Nwosu (1987, 75) borrows a chart adapted and modified from World Bank (Working Paper No. 266, 1977, p. 363):

Figure 3.

Characteristics of mass media, trado-rural media, and combined.

Characteristics	Mass media	Trado-rural media	Mass media and trado-rural media combined
Direction	One-way	Two-way	Two-way
Time taken to reach a large audience	Rapid	Slow	Rapid
Accuracy in large audience	High	Low	High
Ability to overcome selective exposure and selective perception	Low	High	High
Feedback	Little	Much	Much
Ability to answer rural needs	Low	High	High
Participation	Low	High	High
Rural credibility	Low	High	High
Rural accessibility	Low	High	High
Main effects	Increased knowledge	Attitude change	Increased knowledge and attitude change

(Nwosu 1987, 75.)

2.3.   Traditional communication theories

> Oramedia or folk media are grounded on indigenous cultue [sic] produced
> and consumed by members of a group. They reinforce the values of the
> group. They are visible cultural features, often strictly conventional, by which
> social relationships and a world view are maintained and defined. They take
> on many forms and are rich in symbolism.... Folk media cannot therefore be
> conviniently separated from folk cultures in whose context they are
> significant." (Ugboajah 1985, 166-167.)

The 'remaining' communication, then, that takes place in the rural areas in addition mass and other modern communication is categorized as **traditional communication** (see below). It consists of both instrumental **traditional media** (e.g. drums, music, signs, symbols) and **oral tradition** (e.g. stories, provebs, 'bush-radio'), by the most important medium, the human being. Interpersonal communication - "word-of-mouth communication that occurs in face-to-face interaction between two or more individuals..." (Rogers 1973, 290-91) - is thus also included even if it was 'normal talking', for, in this case, it is inseparatable from the oral tradition.

Only after various communication scholars had tried either to encourage or simply to describe the use of mass media in developing countries (both of which succeeded questionably), traditional communication started to gain attention, mainly from native scholars. One Western pioneer in traditional communication research in Africa was L. W. Pye (1963: *Models of Traditional, transitional and Modern Communication System*). Some references to Pye's work "for its anthropological value" were made by Ainslie (1966), Doob (1966), Hachten (1971), Head (1974), and Wilcox (1975) - all Americans - but in Wilson's opinion, "serious academic efforts" did not start before Ugboajah (1972), Nwuneli (1981), and Wilson (1981) - all Nigerians - entered the discussion (Wilson 1987, 90).

As said earlier, many scholars had concluded that there were few mass media devices available in the rural areas. Wilson (1987, 87-88) estimated that the traditional communication media "remain what essentially sustain the information needs of the rural which represent over 70 % of the national populations of most Third World states". In many cases, the the traditional

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media are practically the only regularly operating means of communication (Kivikuru 1989b, 21; Menkir 1979, 25).

There are multiple **types of traditional media** - also referred to as 'indigenous media', 'folk media', 'oramedia' (Ugboajah), and 'trado-rural media' (Nwosu). I concentrate and expand on but a few types (in part 5.2) - those that fucntion as supplements or extentions of mass media or are otherwise prominent in the villages under study.

Traditional modes of communication in West-Africa (examples from Ghana and Nigeria) include: folk songs, dances, and theater; village rituals and rites; town criers; family visits; marriage and circumcision ceremonies; village festivals; village meetings; puppetry; age grade functions; marketing; ceremonies; talking drums; schools; churches; mosques; and initiations. Body language, communal shrines, the kola nut, aliases, parables, proverbs, riddles, and music can be added to the long list. (Nwosu 1987, 74; Ugboajah 1985, 170.)

Wilson, who studied the subject in Nigeria, makes a more specific division between instrumental communication and interpersonal communication. **Instrumental traditional media** include: 1) *idiophones*, i.e. self-sounding instruments (gong, woodlock, wooden drum, bell, rattle), 2) *membraphones* (skin or leather drums), 3) *aerophones* (flutes, pipes, horns, trumpets), 4) *symbolography* (symbolic writing or representations), 5) *signals* (drumming to draw attention, fire, gunshots, canon shots), 6) *signs*, 7) *objectives* with specific traditional contextual meanings (kola nut, charcoal, white egg, feather, cowries), 8) *color schemes*, alone and in combination, 9) *music*, especially satirical songs, praise songs, stories about future events, 10) *extra-mundane communication*, i.e. communication with the dead (incantation, chants, rituals, prayers, sacrifice, invocation, séance, trance, hysterics, liberation), and, finally, 11) *symbolic displays* i.e. gestures and expressions (smiling; sticking out the tongue; expressions of anger, disgust, happiness, anf fear; the way one walks or sits; voice qualities). (1987, 90-95)

Ugboajah, perhaps the strongest advocate traditional communication, stresses its potency for horizontal and participatory communication (whereas mass communication is vertical, from the few on the top to the masses at the bottom) (1985, 173). He (ibid., 167) lists **characteristics of traditional media:**

* simple in form
* generally available for free
* in the public domain
* anonymous in origin
* little differentation between the producers and the consumers
* communication directly through any of the senses
* made up of dialogue and verbal exchange
* functional and utilitarian
* the most important purpose is socialization (teaching traditional aesthetic, historical, technical, social, ethical and religious values)
* stories and proverbs provide a legal code
* makes people aware of their own history, past events and ancestors; unites people and gives cohesion
* owned by the local society (Wilson 1987, 90)

Africa has a long legacy of passing information orally. The **oral tradition** consists of mythology, oral literature (poetry, storytelling, proverbs), masquerades, rites of passage and other rituals "expressed through oracy, music, dance, drama, use of costume, social interplay and material symbols which accompany people from womb to tomb and much beyond". Main task of oral tradition is to maintain interpersonal relations, social cohesion, social processes, and historical continuity. (Ugboajah 1985, 166.)

Although he does not call a human being a medium, Wilson (1987, 94) lists various **traditional institutions, clubs, or societies which are also used for information dissemination:** cooperative societies, clan/town/village/family unions, ethnic unions, voluntary organizations, drinking clubs, old students associations, market women's associations, traders associations, religious groups, men's clubs, women's clubs, secret societies, cults, sport clubs, recreational clubs, age traders, choral groups, self-help groups, and occupational groups.

As one can see, traditional communication is integrated into almost every aspect of life!

Wilson (1987, 88-89) stresses that, contrary to a common connotation, 'traditional communication' does *not* equal to *'outdated'* or *'primitive'* nor *'antagonistic to modern systems of communication'*. Notably, the traditional communication system adjusts along the way. Nor does 'traditional media' equal to mere rumor, which - though unreliable - are often not as wild and widely-spread as laboratory studies suggest but "most rumors in the field turn out to be reasonable" (Pool in Pool et al. 1973, 13). Wilson also refutes the view that old traditions become displaced by new ones, and that traditional and modern forms of a culture are inevitably in conflict (1987, 88-89). Ugboajah even calls traditional media "very credible and motivating for multi-ethnic societies where messages might be blocked by linguistic, cultural or semantic obstacles" (1985, 93).

All in all, traditional communication has five greater objectives: 1) *passing directives* (announcements about events and collective duties, instructions for decision making), 2) *providing news* (past events, deaths, impending events), 3) *advertizing* (display or singing/drumming the name products; use of vendors and hawkers; use of fragrance, odors and aroma), 4) *PR* (praise-singing, entertainment), and 5) *educating* (formally or informally through cultural and socio-cultural groups, membership in societies) (Wilson 1987, 96-98).

According to Wilson, **traditional communication functions** in at least five ways: First, it *mobilizes* rural people towards community development and national consciousness. Second, with its cultural, political, health, and educational programs it leads to self-actualization and *national development*. Third, it *entertains* through arts, cultural festivals, musicals, performances. Fourth, it *brings about group and national unity* through intra-cultural and intercultural events. Fifth, it *exposes aspects of the culture* to other cultures. (1987, 99-101.)

Traditional communication is much more integrated into the everyday life than the modern media; it is almost everywhere, it is a way of life (e.g. Ugboajah 1985, 166-170; Menkir 1979, 2, 22). On the other hand, Kivikuru observes that "traditional culture is a living sentiment even in the most 'urbanized'... villages" (1989a, 123). In other words, the *everyday life*, *traditional communication*, and *traditional culture* are interwoven. To fathom the village setting, a proper understanding of the interplay of these three components is needed.

Kivikuru, however, warns from romanticizing traditional communication too much since - "conditioned by custom and tradition" - it is as stiff as mass media and its use is highly specified, concentrating on passing the tradition:

> Sometimes the mode and substance of traditional culture is tranferred to present-day news... But this happens quite rarely. In most cases, people keep the tradition and present clearly separate. This is what makes the role of traditon quite cumbersome, much more so than Frank Ugboajah and others seem to suggest. (Kivikuru 1989a, 121-124.)

2.4.   The rural-urban dichotomy

Communication in developing countries has been studied, but the results remain rather urban-centered. Yet, the majority of the population in a typical developing country live on the countryside.

Schramm lists multiple reasons why mass media concentrate in the urban centers: production outside urban centers is expensive, there is no electricity, set-up and maintanance of technical facilities would become problematic, literacy rate drops, circulation of newpapers is difficult and costly (poor postal system, few vehicles, poor roads, small circulation), existence of many languages complicates the situation. (1964, 99-104.)

Despite the lack of mass media devices in developing countries, the communication works even on the countryside. Schramm (1964, 104) credits this to the traditional channels of communication that are used to extend the

modern media: talking drum, reading to illiterates, bazaars, puppet shows, storytellers, poets, ballad singers, dramatic groups, radio listening and discussion groups and public meetings. (More on traditional media in chapter 5.)

> ...for the most part, the traditional village lives on in its ancient life patterns and its restricted horizons - until "developement" begins. The government, roads, schools, literacy, and mass media invade the privacy of the village and invite the villager into a larger world. With that larger world comes a profound psychological change. The traditional villager has lived in a world that he could encompass with his feet and his senses. Now he is shown a world that he has to depend on others to tell him about... (Schramm 1964, 79.)

Many writers have noted the dichotomy of the urban and the rural setting in developing countries, the coexistence of the traditional and the modern, e.g.:

> Old and new communication systems are functioning side by side. Just as there are two social systems - the modernizing cities and the traditional villages - and two economic systems - industrialization and money exchange in the cities, subsistence farming and barter in the villages - so also there are two communication systems. In the cities, newspapers and transister radios are in common use, there are many cinemas, and there may be television. In the villages, communication is chiefly oral and personal, as it has been for ages. The new system is reaching into the villages, but slowly, slowly... Therefore, if the media concentrate on urban centers in developing countries they are really concentrating on a *minority* of the people. (Schramm 1964, 100, 203.)

In general, there is the urban people (or elite) and the rural people (or mass). Dube identifies also a third, an intermediate group, between the urban elite and the rural masses: the rural elite, which has taken steps towards modernization but especially in crises tends revert to the tradition; people may have experience of modern education, urbanization, and industrialization but are still inhibited by customs and taboos. (1967, 94-95.)

Kivikuru (1989b) makes a four-fold division of the people, residing either in (1) the core of the core, (2) the periphery of the core, (3) the core of the periphery, or (4) the periphery of the periphery.

3.1.   The country of Sierra Leone

Sierra Leone is a small republic on the coast of the Atlantic Ocean in West Africa, bordered by Guinea in the north and the northeast, and by Liberia in the east (see the map below). It has surface area of 71 740 quare kilometers and an estimated population of 4.3 million (all statistics are from 1993, unless mentioned otherwise). There are at least 16 ethnic groups and languages; the biggest are Krio, Mende and Temne. English is the official language, but Krio is also widely spoken. (UNDP 1996, 137-187.) There is also a minority of Lebanese who own most of the shops and other businesses.

FIGURE 3. Maps of sierra Leone
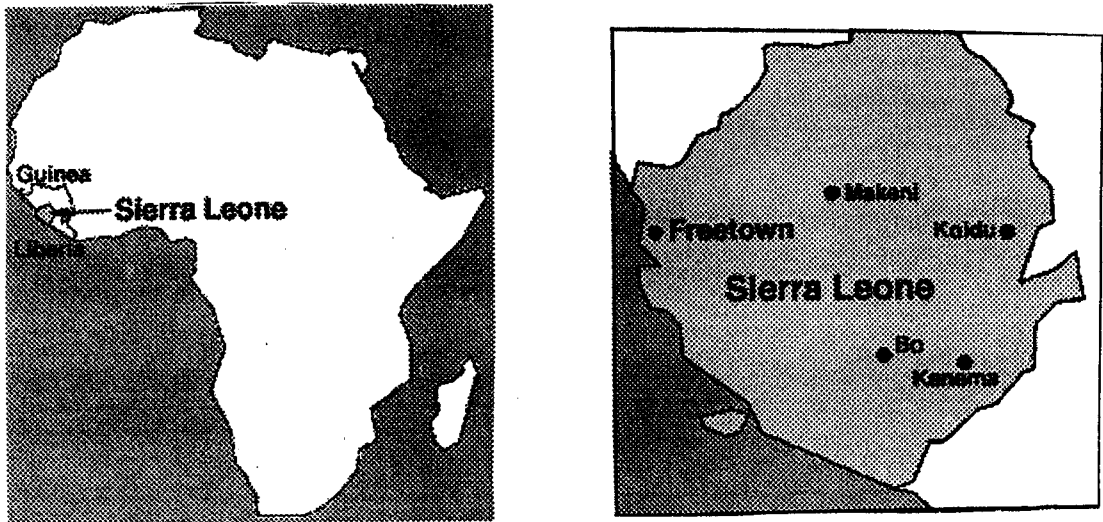
(Http://www.whyy.org/edison/office/lisa/map.hml)

Sierra Leone is one of the least developed countries in the world: in 1991, it was listed the last in the UN Human Development Index, and the next year, the second last before the neighboring Guinea. The life expectancy is 39 years (males 38, females 41). The Gross National Product (GNP) was 0.7 billion USD, while external debts rose up to 1.4 billion USD. GNP per capita was 150 USD. Majority (65 %) of the people live in rural areas and get their living out of (subsistence) farming (67 %, 1990), though only 7 per cent of the land is arable. The agricultural production is 38 per cent of GDP. The remaining labor force work in services (17 %) and industry (15 %) (1990). (Ibid.)

Adult literacy rate was 30 percent (males 43 %, females 17%), leaving 1.7 million adults (1995) illiterate. Public expenditure on education was 1.4 per cent (1992), on health 1.7 per cent (1992), and on defence 4.4 per cent (1994) of the GNP. A total of 28 per cent of school-going youth attends (primary, secondary or tertiary) school (males 34 %, females 22 %). (Ibid.)

In rural areas, 20 per cent have access to health services, 21 per cent to clean water, and 8 per cent to sanitation (1995). In the urban centers the respective percentages are 90, 58 and 17. The infant mortality is the highest in the world: 165 per 1,000 live births. (Ibid.)

Sierra Leone got independence from Britain in 1961 and became a republic in 1971. The country was firs ruled by the Sierra Leonean People's Party (SLPP), until the All People's Conress (APC) came to power. The first president was Siaka Stevens, and he chose major-general Joseph Momoh as his successor 1985. The 23 years of APC rule was said to have sunk Sierra Leone into the lowest point in its history: all kinds of mismanagement flourished - corruption, nepotism, exploitation, smuggling; education, health, transport and communication systems collapsed. President Momoh promised free elections but nobody believed. There were several coup attempts but they were all forcefully put down. Any criticism towards the government was said to lead into a 'disappearing'.

On April 29th 1992, the military took over the APC government and a military government, *National Provisional Ruling Council (NPRC)*, was formed. The 29-year-old captain *Valentine Strasser* became the president, and other young officers formed the government. Only one minister from the APC regime retained his position in the new government. APC politicians were discharged and many were executed, for which Sierra Leone received criticism from Western countries. As a result many aid organizations pulled out their personnel and aid.

Even if a military government was not favorably looked upon in the West, the local people gave their support to the military rule because any change brought hope for better conditions. NPRC promised improvements, e.g. multiparty elections.

At the time of the survey, NPRC was still in power. It had reached some progress in the nation building, e.g. free books for education. Still, the main task of the government was to stop the rebel war which had continued since 1990 in the Eastern and the Southern provinces and had started to effect the rest of the country as well, as the refugees fleed to safety. There were military checkpoints along the main roads and temporal curfews mainly in major urban centers, with the soldiers on guard.

During the spring 1994, rumors started to spread that there were no more 'rebels'; it was suspected that it was government soldiers who were looting villages, burning houses, killing people and stealing properties. Especially the diamond and gold mines of the east were under constant attacks. Another military coup - by APC supporters or part of the military - was also expected to take place any moment.

After all, the situation remained constant throughout my stay: the closest villages hit by the rebels were only dozens of kilometers away but nothing major happened in Taiama. The war was seen in almost daily passings of army vehicles on the main road passing Taiama, and on the other hand, and ordinary people fleeing - even by foot, with all earthly belongings - to the

other direction. Newspapers presented articles and commentaries of the war but the papers rarely entered the villages. Occationally, there were special radio broadcasts in vernaculars on the war (more in 5.1. Mass media in the villages).

3.2.   Mass media in Sierra Leone

Even if equal right for information was to be one of the basic human rights (United Nations Conference on Freedom of Information in 1948), in the 60s still over 70 per cent of the world population lacked adequate information facilities (Schramm 1964, vii). UNESCO defined the 'adequateness' of information as ten copies of daily newspapers, five radio receivers, two cinema seats, and two television receivers for every 100 people; if the UNESCCO stardards had been met, every second family in the world would have had a daily newspaper, every fourth family a radio receiver, and every tenth family a television and one cinema seat (Schramm 1964, 94-95).

Mass media are still 'minority media' in Sierra Leone. In 1961, Sierra Leone was way below the UN standards. By the 1990s, Sierra Leone fulfills the UNESCO standards only in radio receivers. (Even this figure is distorted because radios are not evenly distributed between urban and rural areas.)

FIGURE 4. UNESCO standards and mass media in Sierra Leone.

	UNESCO standard	Sierra Leone 1961	Sierra Leone 1992
Daily newspaper copies	10	0,7	0,2
Radio receivers	5	0,4	22,4
Cinema seats	2	0,06 (1960)	?
Television receivers	2	> 0,1	1

(Schramm 1964, 94, 277; UNESCO 1994, 145, 167.)

Sierra Leone has a long history in press. It was - after South Africa - the second African country to publish a newspaper, *The Royal Gazette and Sierra Leone Advetiser*, in 1801 (Ainslie 1966, 21, 38). *The Sierra Leone Guardian and Foreign Mails* (from 1933 onwards *The Daily Guardian*) was founded before the First World War, and *The Sierra Leone Daily Mail* appeared in 1933 (ibid., 32-33). The latter was bought by the British *Daily Mirrow* -group (the International Publishing Corporation) in 1952 (since then, the *Daily Mail*) (ibid., 56-57). By 1966, there was only one other daily paper, *Shekpendeh* of the opposition, and one bi-weekly (*The African Vanguard*) and four weeklies, one of which was published in Bo (ibid., 70-71).

All **newspapers** had to fill the guidelines set by the government in spring 1993 (see Appendix 1.). At the time of my study, 11 independent newspapers were published in Freetown: *Concord Times, Daily Mail, The Globe, Echo, Liberty Voice, New Breed, New Citizen, New Shaft, Unity Now, Vision, and Weekend Spark*. In addition, there was at least one published in Bo.

Daily Mail was the only government-owned paper. None were published daily - despite its name, not even *Daily Mail* - but bi-weekly. All papers are in English but many also have articles in Krio.

At least ten other newspapers had closed down in the last previous years: *For Di People* (Krio), *The National, The New Oracle, The New Star, The New Tablet, The Observer, Progress, Quilt, The Rural Post, and We Yone* (Krio; owned by APC).

The only local **magazine** published during the research period was *The Mentor*. However, it was possible to buy foreign magazines on the streets of Freetown (*Time, West Africa, Newsweek, Africa Now, Concord*). The embassies, companies and organizations often subscribed to them; otherwise it was rare to see anybody else than a tourist or an aid worker buing a magazine.

During spring 1994, there had been criticism towards the NPRC in many foreign magazines. Thus, some editions of the magazines published in the United States (Time, Newsweek), Great Britain (West Africa) and other African countries (Concord; Nigeria) were pulled out of the street newsstands, and guidelines for magazines were also under planning. (Ministry of Information.)

Also **radio broadcasting** was started early in Sierra Leone, in 1934, right after Kenya and South Africa. In 1936, the British colonial authorities decided to develop radio as a public service - after BBC's model - to extend the wired services and to establish new transmitters; however, the plans were abandoned due to the Second World War. (Ainslie 1966, 154.)

By independence, the *Sierra Leone Broadcasting Corporation (SLBC)* was broadcasting 63,5 hours a week, of which 36 hours was local programs. The remaining was BBC relays, transcription material from the BBC, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, the United Nations, Voice of America, Radio Netherlands, Radio-Televisione Italiana, R.T.F. (France), Israel and West Germany. (Ainslie 1966, 157). In their quest for world power, the foreign stations sent more programs in English and vernaculars to English-speaking Africa: Soviet Union (125 h/week), the United States of America (VOA, 50 h), China (66 h), West-Germany (53 h), East-Germany (66 h), France and Britain (round-the-clock); also Belgium, Italy, Holland, the United Arab Republic, Ghana, and Nigeria also had external services (ibid., 166-167).

In 1993-94, there were four independent radio stations in Sierra Leone (see Appendix 3): *Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service (SLBS)* and *Atlantic Broadcasting Corporation (ABC)* in Freetown, *Karim Koam* (Arabic) in Waterloo, and *FM 104 (Kiss 104)* in Bo. An FM station in Kenema and a station in Njala were under planning. (Ministry of Information.)

In addition, various foreign radio stations could be heard.

Television broadcasts in Sierra Leone were started by the *Thompson Television International,* a British media firm, in 1963 (Ainslie 1966, 228). Also another British company, *Television International Enterprises Ltd.,* tranmitted programs to Sierra Leone (ibid., 239.)

The first national company, *Sierra Leone Broadcasting Corporation (SLBC)* was run by Sierra Leone Television Ltd., in which Thompson Television International, Television International Enterprises, and National Broadcasting Corporation of America had interests. It was transferred to *Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service (SLBS)* (see Appendix 4.), the combined TV and radio station, which is a typical example of BBC's influence: a public service company owned by the state, transmitting mainly in English, non-commercial (exept for recently) programs. Televisions broadcasts lessened gradually, coming to an abrupt halt as the ceiling of the station collapsed as a result of a storm in the 80s. TV broadcasting restarted in the sping 1993 after a long silence. The televion signal could still be received only in the capital.

3.3.   The villages: Jolohum, Kimbima, Waima

The three villages under the study - Jolohun, Kimbima and Waima - are located in Kori chiefdom in Moyamba district in the Southern province, about 200 kilometers the capital Freetown, 80 kilometers miles from the district headquarters Bo, and 3-5 kilometrs from Taiama (see the map below).

Altogether there were *418 people* (Joluhun 118, Kimbima 134, Waima 166) living in the villages at the time of the questionaire: *269 adults* (J 78, K 79, W 112) and *149 children* (J 40, K 55, W 54). Noteworthy was the almost total absence of school-aged children; they were living with relatives in Taiama or further to attend school since there were no schools in the smaller villages. The only seven (J 2, K 5) school-aged children staying in the three villages were children of indefinitely residing refugees who had fled from the rebel war.

All in all, there were *62 houses* (Jolohun 17, Kimbima 19, Waima 26) in the three villages but only *53 households* (J 17, K 15, W 21) since due to the extended family structure, inhabitants of many houses may cook and eat together - the Waima Chief's household, for example, fed 25 mouths! In 44 households, the leader was a male and in 9 a female.

Like most of the Kori chiefdom, Jolohun, Kimbima and Waima are also Mende villages: all except one (268) adults were Mende by ethnicity; one was a Limba through intermarriage. The common language spoken by all adults (269) was Mende. Less than half (113) spoke Krio and less than one tenth (24) English. Eight other local languages (most Temne, Kono and Sherbro) were mentioned to be spoken by 18 adults.

The villages are all 'in the bush', off the main roads. The only 'road' leading to the villages is a footpath. Jolohun and Waima also lie by the Taia-river, but little passage is made by canoes. The land around the villages is covered with bushes and forests, broken only by river branches and seasonal swamps or small farms. The main sources of income are farming, fishing and hunting.

All 53 households received their main income from farming. The farming is *subsistence farming* in which crops (cassava, sweet potato, rice, corn, eggplant, pepper, okra) are grown mostly for domestic consumption. Villages are quite self-sufficient; only items like sugar, salt, onions, kerosine, matches etc. have to be brought from outside. On return, agricultural products, fish and handicrafts are taken to the towns to be sold at the markets. Every day, there are people walking in and out of the villages with the goods. In July-August, in the middle of the rainy season, the villages run out of their stored food and the need for items from outside grows more urgent. However, the paths to other villages and towns are sometimes completely cut off by floods. Transporting food is possible only by paddling with a canoe or walking through the shallower water.

Majority of the adults were illiterate. Surprisingly, only ten could read and write Mende (which, like many local languages is mainly a spoken language.

It was taught only in colonial times in missionary schools. Nationwide teaching of native languages in primary school started again in 1993) and three Krio. All except one (23) English-speaking adults could also read and write it. Over 80 percent (226) of the adults had not gone through any formal education; 22 had finished at the primary school level, 20 at the secondary school level and only one had studied in a university.

About 60 percent (153) of the adults were Christians and 40 percent (116) Muslims. Over half of the households (30) had both Muslims and Christians. There was also at least one church and one mosque in each village.

FIGURE 4. Map of Taiama area with Jolohun, Kimbima, and Waima
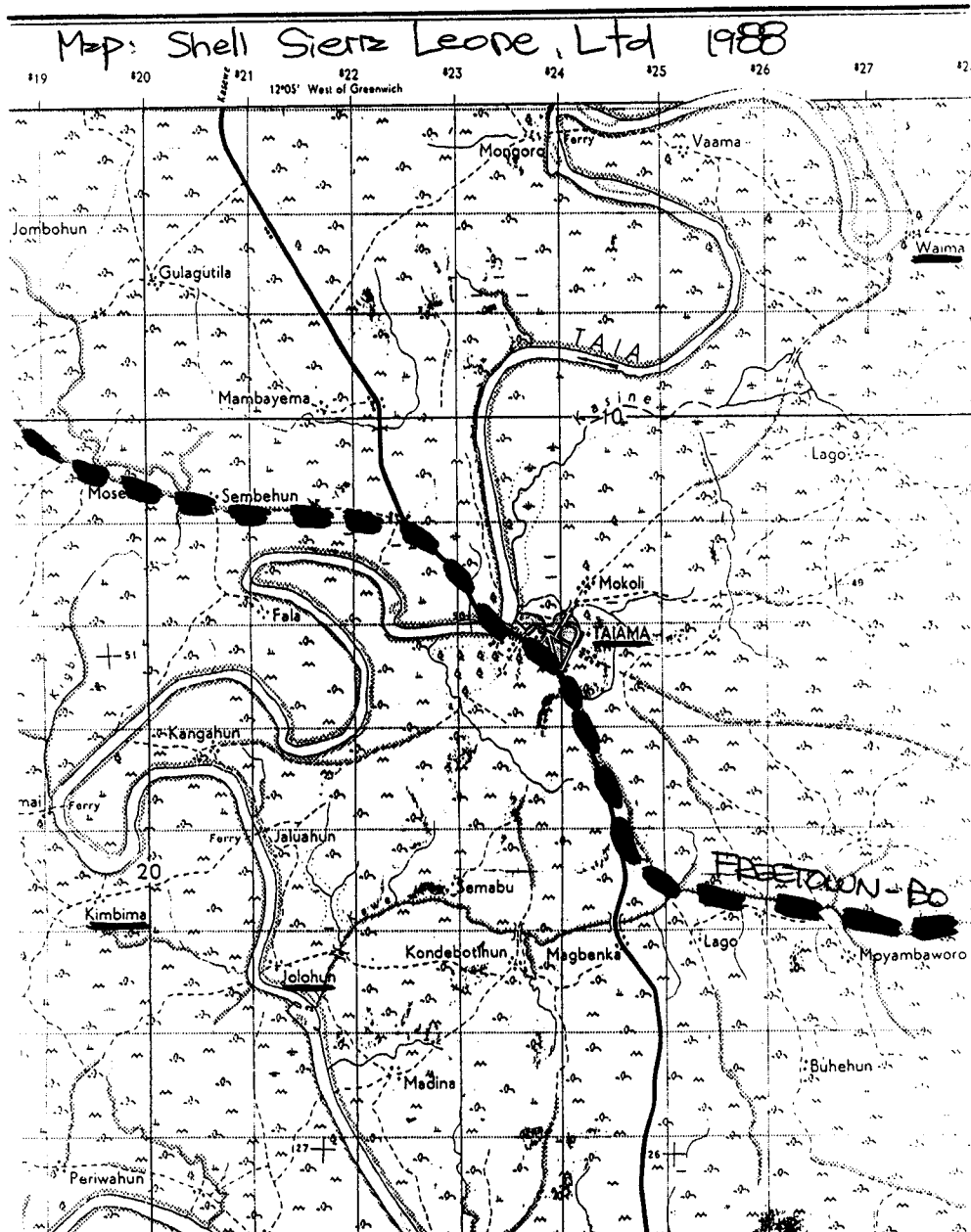
4.   A CULTURAL DESCRIPTION OF THE VILLAGES

> Culture is seen then as a complex whole including knowledge, beliefs, art, the moral code, law, customs, and any abilities and habits acquiter by man as a member of society. It is the way of life of a social group or the pattern of values, norms, ideas and other symbols which shape individual behavior. It is a complex of spiritual and symbolic elements, something that exists primarily in the consciousness of society and the individual (Ugboajah 1985, 14.)

The reality in the rural African villages is far from the West; the villagers have a completely different concepts of e.g. time, space and ownership. Thus they also behave differently. People's actions are based on their **perception of reality** - which, in turn, is culturally determined. Reality can be said to consist of what people consider real, right and valued (Turunen in Liikenneministeriö, 21). In other words, reality is based on the **information** people share (Berger and Luckman in Aittola & Pirttilä 1983, 60). (Types of information were listed in the beginning of Chapter 2.)

I claim that it is the cultural elements that determine the kind of communication, not the other way round. (If and how they do, I discuss in the next chapter.) Since the rural African setting is so different from our Western culture, based on both observation and literature, I first try to lay out some most significant cultural characters.

4.1.   Collectivity

There are many people living in Africa; they have to get along. It is the collectivity that matters: an individual is not important - family, kin, village, community are. Decisions are rarely based on individual desires but on the common good: who should marry, go to school, work on the field, etc. Even fights are common property: in Sierra Leone, a middle man (usually one of the elders) is called to settle a fight between two individuals.

Even the roles are, in a way, collective: e.g. in addition to the natural mother, every woman of the mother's age is considered and called 'mother' by the child (I was Auntie-Mirja, too!). Thus women also get to run their errands

The collective (unwritten) rules bind the communities together; misbehavior is rare in the fear of collective sanctions (shunning, ridicule, disrespect) since a person without status is left outside society. Otherwise nobody is marginalized, even the mentally ill: it was said that at some point all 'crazy' on the street were put in prison, but during my stay I saw some disturbed people who were just walking among the other people, harming no-one, whom peolle gave some food and looked after out of pity.

4.2.   Extended family

The extended family is the social security system in Africa. 'Family' extends to relatives - grandparents, aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews - and even further; cousins or nieces/nephews are often called 'sisters' or 'brothers', distant relatives 'aunts' and 'uncles'. One is basically obliged to help any blood relative, no matter how distant, to the extend one is able. Often this means that those well-off - especially teachers, clerks, etc. in cities - are paying school fees and hosting a bunch of nephews and nieces, or paying for medical treatment of sickly elders. On the other hand, one may also ask for assistance when needed.

A household may consist of even 3-4 houses; especially chiefs have big families; e.g. the chief of Waima was feeding 25 mouths! Many men - mostly Muslims - are also polygamous. In one house, the three wiwes - each with her own room - lived peacefully together and even ran together a business of cloth-dyeing. The more children - especially boys to take care of you in the old days, girls are married out - one has, the wealthier the person is regarded. In Sierra Leone, it is still often the grandmother living on the same compound who takes care of the children - thus solving the problem of both child-care and elderly-care.

4.3.   Politics and power

> ...politics is the biggest industry in black Africa and a major source of power, social mobility and prestige. Politics is practically coterminous with society rather than just a part of it. (Ugboajah 1985, 25.)... There also exists a number of invisible or secondary organizations and networks such as landowners' association, secret societies, herbalists' associations, town unions, religious groups and dispute-settlement bodies which must be considered as a functioning part of the political process. The extend to which these bodies complement rather than contradict formal governmental institutions should be of cultural importance. (Ibid., 88.)

As a legacy of the colonial rule, Sierra Leone has a democratic power structure (president, government, etc.). The colonianial had tried to lessen the the power of the traditional rulers; on the other hand, the colonizers needed their co-opertation. At the time of the study, the military government somewhat held to the democracy, somewhat ruled dictatorally. Though the decisions of the government always reached even the smallest villages (all village and town chiefs were occationally called to a meeting in Taiama), it was still the traditional rulers that had the most authority.

On top of the local power structure in the Taiama area was of the **Paramount Chief** (Thomas Bobor Gbappi V), the highest chief of the whole Kori Chiefdom. The chief also has a **Chief Speaker** who is the right hand and the actual articulator of the chief's will. High in power is also the **Council of elders**, in Taiama consisting of the 11 (town) **Section Chiefs**. Each of these lower chiefs is the higher authority to a number of **Village Chiefs**. Each village also has a Chief's Speaker Council of Elders.

In any level of meeting, matters are discussed at lenght, basically until every participant is satisfied and has been heard.

4.4.   Patriarchy

African societies are often **patriarchical**, i.e. ruled by mostly men; they are usually chiefs, heads of the family, powerful elders. However, this does not

completely exclude women from power: there had previously been also some female chiefs in Sierra Leone. ordinary women are not powerless either; rather, there is a clear division of the male and female tasks: e.g. both men and women work on farms but cultivate different crops (men maize, cassava and sweet potato out in the bush; women egg plant, pepper and okra behind the house); still it's the women and children who do most of the house work: cooking, washing, cleaning, carrying water and fire wood. It is often said that it is actually the woman who has the power in the house but publically she lets the man make the decisions.

4.5.   Education

In the rural villages, formal education is not valued high; it is difficicult to answer the question 'What is the use when help is needed on the farms...?' when most will end up to be farmers. Life centers around the daily chores; children are expected to help with the work - collecting fire wood, cooking, washing landry, baby-sitting younger siblings, carrying water, selling small goods at the junctions - thus they have little time for playing or studying. Many children have to work after school and do the home assignment at night with the light of a lantern - if there is one. Also, the cost (actual fee, school uniform, notebooks, pens; lunch is provided by international aid organizations in many elementary schools), even if only a couple of US dollars a year, is too high for an avarage villager who does not receive wages. Even those who can afford to sent their children to school cannot afford to do so with all the children. Boys usually get the preference, though more so only in the upper grades; there were almost as many girls as boys in elementary schools in Taiama. Girls often drop out in the upper grades due to either lack of funds, the amount of work at home, or pregnancy.

There were no schools in the three villages (though some Koran-classes were given), the closest were in Taiama. But to send a child even a few miles away is difficult: they have to stay with relatives in town and they can visit their villages only during weekends and holidays.

Much of the education is informal (**socialization**), many times in the form of storytelling. The older generations repeat stories telling about the ways of the people to younger generations. Since the people are used to oral culture the stories often remain quite unchanged thoughout generations. Many times there is a rhyme or a beat or music to carry the story.

'Socialization' refers to the process of transmission of knowledge, skills, values, norms, manners, etc. to an individual about what is appropriate for a person of his or her age, sex, and social status as a member of a given society. Socialization takes mainly place during childhood (by parents, siblings, relatives, neighbors) but continues later throughout life (by school, law and other institutions).

4.6.   Concept of time

Also time is perceived differently: in the West, it is linear, rationalized and mechanized; in Africa, **time is cyclical and event-oriented**. In the agrarain life style, the cycle repeats itself *daily* (the day is always the same lenght; activities follow the fall and rise of the sun - there is a time to sleep, to wake up (often literally at the cock-crow), a time to work, and a time to eat and socialize, etc.), *monthly* (rising of the moon), and *yearly* (dry and rainy season, harmattan wind). The religious holidays (Easter, Ramadan, Christmas) are also points of reference.

When an event is said to start at 9 a.m., it may as well start around noon, or afternoon, and there is still no need to anger. Once a meeting has started, it does not end until everyone is satisfied with the outcomes - and people tend to speak elaboratelly just for art's sake. (The longest teachers' meeting I attended lasted over 7 hours.) Also festivities last and last: one funeral of a prominent man in the town lasted for 3-4 days: day in, day out, there are prayers, speeches, singing, dancing, eating and mourning to honor, to thank and to console the deceaced, the ancestors and the family.

Schools, office hours, bus schedules, etc. of the 'Western origin' usually start and last as planned - except a 4-hour 'taxi' ride from from Taiama to Freetown which took anything between 4 and 24 hours, with at least one breakdown!

Many people do not know their *age* in years but simple calculate that they were born "when the bad drought took place" or "when that chief died". Age increased authority: the older one (women, too) is, the more power one has in the family and village matters. Old people are respected by the younger. The transformation from a child to an adult is not a matter of age but **initiation ceremonies** performed during puberty.

4.4.   Space and ownership

Also space and and ownership are culturally determined. In Sierra Leone, no-one owns the land. (Only the chiefs' or other high rank individuals' families could have permanent right to use a piece of land around the village.) Anyone is still allowed to use a piece of the bush for a (non-commercial) farm.

Doors of the houses are usually open or unlocked (I was at first considered unfriendly because of my locked house door) for people - as well as dogs, chickens, or goats - to walk in, after a polite request for visiting. Rooms are used mainly for sleeping and storing; all major events - cooking, eating, washing, socializing - takes place outside. There are rarely fences or gates around the houses.

4.7.   Religion

Religion has much importance in the village setting. The traditional beliefs (e.g. ancestor worship, natural deities, magic) mix with Christian and Muslim practices; all major events (rain, drought, crops, disease, deaths, births,

wealth) are believed to happen according to the will of God or gods.

> A man can be a Christian and might still perform traditional rituals....
> Africans, no matter the depth of their education or Christian or Islamic
> affiliation, have often turned to traditional belief and practice for consolation
> in times of crisis.... For whatever they may say, Africans have by no means
> abandoned their allegiances to traditional supernatural forces when they
> accepted the deities of other people. Rather the new deity is added to the
> totality of supernatural resources on which they call for aid. (Ugboajah 1985,
> 171.

The exact phenomenon actually happened: all the adults in the villages categorized themselves as either a Christian or a Muslim (for a more 'civilized' status?). Almost everyone went to a church or a mosque weekly. I visited several (of Taiama's at least ten) churches from Catholic to Lutheran; the sermon were, in general, very lively and joyous - with negrospirituals, drums and jingles - and also very informative (though mostly in Mende). There were often both Muslim and Christian prayers in the beginning of any other event (meeting, meals, classes), too.

4.8.   Secret societies

Secret societies were something that did not quite open to me - because they were secret... These societies seem quite mystic but are apparently more for social than religious purposes. Each has its rules for membership, communication, habits, etc. but the members are not discuss them with outsiders, even other natives. There are societies for men only (e.g. Poro), for women only (Bundu), and for both.

The Poro-men have a 'forest' just outside the village, a small obliviously fenced area by the main path, where the men supposedly meet. At the risk of some misfortune, I was warned from entering the the forest since I was a woman and a stranger - and even if I had to smile to the warnings, it never entered my mind to disobey. At another occation caused me much frustration: an important Poro-man had passed away and I was curiously waiting for the funerals - just to find out that women and children could not

watch the funeral march but had to hide inside the house behind closed doors and windows! (I was actually so hurt that I refused to join the women who were, after all, peeking from begind the doors - and I even lost my funeral mood for that day...)

The womens Bundu-society was more open to the community. I witnessed e.g. an initiation ceremony for 6 young girls, who 'came out of the bush' - where they supposedly had spent two weeks with the guidance of grandmothers to learn about femaleness and motherness? - back to the village to sing and dance to the villlage in the presence of the masked 'Bundu-devil'.

4.9.   In general

In general, life in the villages is very quiet and simple. It rotates around getting the daily bread: working on the farm, fishing, cooking, washing clothes, etc. Routines are broken by funerals, weddings, initiation rites, fishing trips, football matches with the neighboring villages.

In a way, the villages are a world of their own. They share many of the characters of 'a traditional society' listed by Lailitsen (Menkir 1979, 4-5) mentioned below. Although the polarization has been criticized for its idealism (Menkir 1979, 8), it does tell some truth about the cultural environment of the villages.

Little has changed in the rural areas in the last thousand years; people have found out that their methods have worked out for centuries, there is not much need for 'development' since people survive - and even live happily - even if they need to work hard to earn their living. They have the most important: food for the whole family for tomorrow and the family members around. A man told me a story:

'There once was a fisherman who lived by the sea. Every morning, he woke up very early and took his boat to the sea to catch fish for his family. And every morning, he came back with enough fish for that day. Then he ate with his family, and the rest of the the day lied under the palm tree, watched his children work and play, and enjoyed himself.

One day, a white man came to him and said: "Why are you just lying here? Why are you not working? And the fisherman said: "I have already worked today. I went out to the sea very early this morning and caught enough fish for today." The white man continued: "But why are you not fishing more? You could catch a lot of fish and save it for tomorrow, or you could sell it to the others and get money? And if you worked really hard, you could even hire other fishermen and get more fish, or perhaps one day you could even found a fish industry! Then you could be the boss and tell to the others what to do. And you could just sit in your office and invest your money and get more money!" "And what would I then do then?" the fisherman asked. "You could just sit back and enjoy!" said the white man.

"Very good, said the fisherman, "but the fish will rotten before tomorrow. And how could the others buy from me when they have no money? And what would they do with all the time they would have if they didn't go fishing? And what would I do with the money when my family needs nothing else than fish and there is nothing else to buy than fish. And," finished the fisherman, "that is what I'm doing right now - enjoying myself."

5. COMMUNICATION AND MEDIA IN THE VILLAGES

5.1. Mass media in the villages

Even though there seemed to be an abundance of national and foreign mass media available in Sierra Leone, the actual supply in the villages was rather small; the production and transmission concentrate to urban centers, mainly to Freetown. Out of the national radio stations, only SLBS (FM, SW) and KISS 104 (FM 104 Bo) could be heard in the villages, KISS 104 - about 60 kilometers away - the clearest. Signal of the foreign stations, especially VOA and BBC, was often clearer. There was no distribution infrastructure for newspapers or magazines to the rural areas (papers are bought for 100-150 Leones - 0,20 USD - from 'paper boys' on the city streets) occasional copies entered the villages with people coming from Freetown or Bo.

As expected, radio was clearly the most used medium (but even that reached only every fifth villager), magazines were the second, newspapers the third. There were no conditions for either television or film in the villages. (Only in Taiama there was one TV run by a generator - at the hands of the only Lebanese shopkeeper.) 17 households (out of 53) had a radio receiver; 15 sets also had a cassette player. All together 51 people (out of 269) listened to radio: 38 (26 males, 12 females) daily and 13 non-owners occationally (1-3 times a week) at the neighbor's.

The two most listened stations were clearly SLBS SW (mentioned by 16) and Kiss FM Bo (13). Other channels mentioned were BBC (6), Radio Liberia (religious, 6), Radio Nigeria (1), SLBS FM (1), and VOA (1). Three types of programs gained most interest: national news, music, and announcements and obituaries. 14 listeners would like to hear more programs in Mende; other wishes were for more music, local news, and religious (both Muslim and Christian) programs. All listeners view radio news 'very reliable'.

The most common listening time was the early morning (before 7 a.m.) and second the evening (5-9 p.m.). The listening time varied from 30 minutes to 4 fours, being on the avarage 1 hour 40 minutes. Those with a cassette player listened to tapes approximately 1 a day.

On the other hand, 49 households answered that they never had newspapers or magazines. Only four households in one village (Jolohun) expressed that they received a magazine regularly. In all cases it turned out to be Our Family, a religious magazine in English, supplied by the New Apostolic Church.

Out of the 19 adults in the households that received the religious magazine, only four males read it regularly; in one receiving household no-one was able to read! The magazine was usually read twice, 1-2 hours at a time, and then given to others - so there may be a few other readers - kept or used for wrapping.

Readers did not distinguish between different types of texts. They looked through the whole magazine. All readers found texts very reliable.

It was more common to see old newspaper and magazine pages from the 1960s and 1970s used as wall paper on the mud walls inside the houses and huts. Another common use for newspapers and magazines in the villages was wrapping; old papers are almost the only packing material for daily foods like fish, sugar, cakes, peanuts, etc. A bulk of the wrapping paper is of Danish origin: Danish Scouts donate afternoon papers to Sierra Leonean Scouts based in Grafton just outside Freetown. The local Scouts then sell the paper for a minimal profit. There are also plastic bags on sale but local people buy them only when paper is not sufficient.

Even if radio was to be an 'easy' medium (see 1.4.), in the villages the reality proved to be the contrary. First, radio is not is not a cheap purchase to an avarage farmer who receives no other wages than the crops from the field; both sets (7,000-31,000 Leones or 15-60 USD) and batteries (200-700 Le, local ones of lesser quality) are expensive. Second, radio requires no literacy but does demand mastering English, for most programs are in English (some in Krio and occationally also in Mende and other vernaculars); only 24 people, however, understood English. Third, the radio signals were not very clear in the villages, either. Both the national transmitters and receivers were not the most powerful and the hills of the east block the signal. The clarity depended also on the time of the day and the weather. Fourth, even if a radio set is light and carriable, it makes little sense to carry to the farm where most of the day is passed working. Most receivers were of such low quality that they had to be listened to at very close approximity. (In Taiama one could every now and then witness mainly youngters carrying sets blasting recorded music throughout the town.)

However, the main reason behind the mass media not reaching the villages seems to be cultural: there is no dire need for mass media since the life centers around the daily chores and the traditional media function well. Also, awareness of the outside world (more in 5.3.) is limited; one cannot long for

what one does not know to exist - which is not to say that the villagers are stupid but rather that the outside world is of little importance to an avarage villager. (The rebel war was a clear exception.) Also, most people have not been exposed to mass media. There is no mass audience in the villages, nor mass culture (nor much leisure time, need for entertainment, or teenculture). The prevailing cultural form is *folk culture* which "was originally made unselfconsciously, using traditional designs, themes and materials, and was incorporated into everyday life" (McQuail 1987b, 35). Most issues mentioned in mass media remain distant in the daily experiences and reality. Instead, it it the group-characters and folk culture that prevail. Work more or less fills the day. Music is somewhat used as background sound but mostly the listening is attentive since there is no money to waste on an unattended radio.

The functions of mass media for either in society in general or to the individual more specifically cannot be met when the access and exposure to mass media are so low. Thus the impact of the media cannot be magnificient, either (to the local community as a whole; I did not ask in detail for the individual expectations and their fulfillment from those who did attend to mass media). However, the general functions seem to be news- and entertainment-oriented.

The kind of information needed in the villages is not found from the mass media (more in 5.3.). Even if the national elite - who are often West-oriented, too - may use the media for education or development, the villagers are mainly concerned with preserving the past and the present, not inventing new strategies.

All in all, news heard, read or seen in mass media are passed on in daily encounters with other people. The traditional media substitute for the lack of mass media - or it is errous to even call it 'lack' if the media have not (yet) even entered the villages in a major way.

5.2.   Traditional media in the villages

The most important traditional media in the villages seemed to be word-of-mouth (convergence, meetings) and the town crier.

Everybody mentioned in the questionaire that the most important news (local) are heard from other people. Even national and international news are heard mostly from other people; only 13 households heard of national events and 16 of international event first in radio.

Convergence appeared the most essential means of receiving information: since the villages are so small (no markets, schools, store, hospitals) people have to walk to Taiama or Njala (7 kilometers from Taiama) for many services; in carrying goods they also carry news daily. At the time of the survey, there were especially many stories and rumors about the ongoing rebel war that entered by the convergence. News spread fast in the village; in one day, everyone knows about events that have taken place even in faraway places.

The villager estimated that they hear news from 1-5 people, on the avarage from 2; in most cases (32 households), the information heard is considered 'very reliable', the rest called it 'reasonably reliable'.

When any important news comes to the village and reaches the chief, he calls for the town crier to walk around the village and invite all villagers for a meeting, latest the same evening. These meetings are important also to separate rumors from real information. In addition to political decisions, any of the following topics is reason enough for a village meeting to be called: theft, quarrel, accident, initiation, burial, administrative information, social event (pouring of libation, visitor) or communal event (sharing of farm work, sharing the bush).

In a way, the villagers are 'in between' in the sense of power: the power of chiefs has been reduced, the (supposedly democratic) government is the

authority. Yet, the majority of the villagers cannot follow the government' doings straight from mass media, but information is spread in the meetings. Thus the power of interpersonal communication and oral skills are essential to the middlemen. In the meetings, the matters of trustworthiness and participation are also involved.

A **town crier** is literally a person, usually an older man, who walks across the village or town and cries out the matter along the way so many times that he can be heard in everyhouse. Usually he is not interrupted or asked questions. Against an agreed sum of money, anyone may ask the crier to spread the word (e.g. I did when my knife was stolen). The crier also informs the people about important meetings.

Wilson (1987, 90-91) accredits multiple roles to the townc crier, the traditional newsman: news reporter, correspondent, news agent, messanger, spokesman, envoy, contactman, courier, postman, broadcaster, and herald.

The villages are so small that one does not need to walk much for everyone to hear. A gong is also used to call the attention.

Spread of information is slow because in most cases the rural societies do not have the benefit of multiple channels like in the West, where a person may have simultaneous access to radio, TV and newspapers. In the villages, there was mainly two prominent channels: word-of-mouth and radio. In practice, though, the only meaningful system is the oral tradition.

5.3.   What kind of information is important in the villages?

In the questionaire, each household was asked to name three most important pieces of news heard within the prior week. At the time of the study, the rebel war was the foremost topic - mentioned in every household, as the most prominent subject in 45 households. The second most important area was fishing, then burials and other family matters (disputes, births, visitors,

accidents, sickness). Other topics mentioned included: hunting, initiation, pouring liabation (a small amount ofalcohol poured to the ground in rememberance of the ancestors), dances, and football matches.

The **rebel war** caused general caution, fear and curiosity. There was a constant need to survey the situation for the rebels hit the distant villages in serach for food, riches, ammunition and more manpower. The villages, only reached by paths and surrounded by bush, were easily and hurriedly attacked unless not on guard. The military had no possibilty to defend the wide network of small villages out in the bush. Thus the villages had to organize their own defence. Even in bigger towns (Bo), the Poro-men organized themselves as a defence force and tried to ban the non-members soldiers. This lead to some unrest - but showed that the people trusted the traditional defenders more than the soldiers. In addition to these, there were 'kamajors', traditional hunter-fighters who were believed to turn invisible, to own bullet-proof bodies, to be able to stop trucks and gun shot with bare hands. Again, the fact that I personally never saw these men does not exlude their existence.

Self-protection and refugees were much discussed topics. At least three rumors about supposed attacks at close-by villages were circling in the villages. None of these attacks had taken place. Also, one of the major bridges was believed to be seized by the rebels.

Thus, the news mentioned by the villagers correspond mainly to three information types and functions mentioned by Gurvitch (see beginning of chapter 2), *observation of outside world* (orientation in space and time), *information about other people* (functioning of the social group), and *common sense -knowledge* (guidance for daily activities - fishing, hunting). In this case, the outside world is limited, consisting at the farthest of events taken place no further than in Sierra Leone. Of course also *philosophic information* is used in the village meetings in which the state of affairs is discussed.

Gurvitch claimed that observation of the outside world is the most important, information about other people the second, and philosophical information the third information type in an agrarian society. My own results came close to Gurvitch's; since farmers do not produce for market but for their own consumption, the defending rights is not so essential. Anyway, fighting for rights was subdued by the national security threat.

Out of the 159 pieces of news mentioned, 107 were local and 52 national. Noteworthy is that no-one mentioned any international events. In all except 2 cases (situation of the war heard from radio) the source was other people.

News from mass media are of interest, but the preference for other kinds of news suggests that people are less interested in trying to understand the world at large. There is no massive flow of information which confuses an individual and forces one to try to make sense of essential and unessential matters. Rather, the need of information is the kind that Carey called the *ritual view of communication* (sharing, participation, association, fellowship, possession of common faith).

Instead of mass characteristics, the villages share the characteristics of a *group* defined by Herbert Blumer (McQuail, 1987b, 29-30): "All members know each other, are aware of their common membership, share the same values, have a certain structure of relationships whichis stable over time, and interact to achieve some purpose."

6.   *CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION*

All in all, though most common, radio was not after all the most influencial media in the three villages because there is no 'listening culture' it would take: people have little time to actively attend to mass media; there is little interest in the the mass media content (except news, music and announcements) because the village reality differs much from it and the general awareness of the outside world is low; moreover, few people can

afford daily attendance to mass media.

Underlying factors contributing to the lack of 'mass culture' are the prominence of tradition and traditional media, the illiteracy even in the local language, and general lack of formal education. Even more basic problems, then, are poverty and 'lack of development'. But, then, why should everyone reach to the same goals defined by outsiders - are the villagers unhappy with their state? Usually not.

In contemporary societies, mass media are on prominent factor in forming and maintaining societal cohesion and culture. In the rural villages, however, mass media have a very marginal role. It is the traditional communication that prevails. The contents of mass media pass a process of **indigenization** (Lull 1995, 187), "the process by which imported cultural materials ranging from food to architecture and popular music are adapted to local cultural conditions"; they transform into many forms of interpersonal communication.

Mass communication is not effective on the rural areas because the national (or international) policymakers have not considered the reality of the rural people - traditions, conditions, values, problems. Thus it is the present cultural state that affects communication and the use of media, not the other way round.

I would argue that the spreading itself of new communication media to rural societies can be questioned - or that, at least, it will take many more generations than presently predicted. Schramm, however, does "not question *whether* the mass media will ultimately come into wide use in developing countries, but rather whether their introduction should be *hurried* so that they can do more than they are doing at the present to contribute to national development (1964, 90).

Theories of development are faced with the reality in a country like Sierra Leone. The people have lived on subsistence farming for centuries, following age-old traditions. They have kept the societies alive; thus the habits must

have worked. The resistance for change is much more understandable when one looks at the continuum. Even though holding on to the traditions must not be romanticized, it is unreasonable to anticipate the change, or the development, or the modernization, to take place smoothly or rapidly. Again, another question is what is 'fast' for a Westerner and for an African.

All in all, more question arise than are answered by the wide discussion around development issues. I do understand why African countries want to develop. But why do the Western countries want to 'develop' these countries? Are they paying their debt for colonialism? Are the Western people relieveing their agony and shame of having to watch someone living in poorer conditions than themselves? Are they trying to justify their own way of living by trying to provide the same standards to others? Have people thought whether it is sustainable? Are they responding to the call for human needs? Who are the people who want to help? How much can they do? How much countereffects are caused by other actions of 'development' that are done for more selfish - national, political, personal - reasons?

After all, my thesis remains a shallow attempt to touch some issues Western communication theorists will have to take into consideration if they want to try to understand the working of communication flows in the developing countries. Hopefully, one day it will be done in cooperation with the local people, those who know the best.

If I were to study this topic further, my concentration would be on *development* and *development communication*: What do the people **themselves** understand with development? What kind of develoment do they want? What role do modern media and traditional media play in the process? How would they best, in practice, be used for developmental goals.

Julius Nyerere has once said: "While some try to reach the moon, we are still trying to reach the villages." This was decades ago; the moons of today are cells and DNAs, but the the latter is still true in many developing countries, at least in Sierra Leone. It would be worthwile to put more effort into

narrowing the gap between the nations before going inside the DNAs of the DNAs. Organizations like UNESCO would probably have the initiating power to encourage wider international co-operaration needed.

Importance of Radio in a Rural African Village"
Mirja Laukkanen
University of Jyvaskyla, Finland

2. Number on the map: 37   P
                              S — 3
3. Village: ___ Waima   4
            ✓ Jolohun
            ___ Kimbima   N — 7

4. Leader of the hh: Daniel Lamboi
   ✓ Male   ___ Female

5. Name of answerer: Same
   ✓ Male   ___ Female

6. Number of permanent residents:
   10 Adults (over 15) M — / C 10
   ___ School children
   6 Children not in school
   M — 10

7. Main source of income in the hh:
   Farming

8. Main language used in the hh:
   Mende

9. How many adults in the hh speak:
   10 Mende
   4 Krio
   2 English
   ___ Other (What: _____)

10. How many adults in the hh read:
   2 Mende
   ___ Krio
   2 English
   ___ Other (What: _____)
* *

11. From where do you receive the
    most important news (= any info)?
    ___ Radio
    ___ Newspapers/magazines
    ✓ Other people

12. From where do you hear (first)
    most local news (Kori, Bo, Taiama)
    ___ Radio
    ___ Newspapers/magazines
    ✓ Other people

13. From where do you hear (first)
    most national news (Sierra Leone)
    ✓ Radio
    ___ Newspapers/magazines
    ___ Other people

14. From where do you hear (first)
    most international news?
    ✓ Radio, domestic
    ___ Radio, foreign
    ___ Newspapers/magazines
    ___ Other people

15. How often do you hear news (= any
    info) from people coming in to the
    village?
    ___ once a day
    2 times a day
    ___ times a week

16. What kinds of news (any info) do
    you usually receive from other
    people?
    _____
    _____
    _____

17. How reliable do you find the news
    (any info) you hear from others?
    ✓ Very reliable
    ___ Reasonably reliable
    ___ Not reliable

18. What are the three most important
    news (any info) you have received
    in the last week?
                        L N I   source
    1. Rebel war   ✓   People
    2. death in family ✓   "
    3. Self protection ✓   "
* *

19. How often do you have a newspaper/
    magazine in your hh?
    ___ every day
    ___ times a week
    1 times a month
    ___ times a year
    ___ never

20. Which one(s)? Our family

21. Where do you usually get it from?
    Church buy
    ___ get from others

22. How many adults usually read it in
    your hh? 2 Males   ___ Females

23. How much time do you usually spend
    on reading it? everyday 2h

24. How many times . . . read it? Twice

25. What do you usually do with the newspaper/magazine after you have read it?
___ Burn
___ Wrap things
___ Give to others
Keeping

26. What do you usually read most ?
(1= most, 2= second most, 3=etc.)
___ Local news (Taiama, Bo, Kori)
___ National news (Sierra Leone)
___ International news
___ editorial
___ Commentaries
___ sports
___ Cartoons, obituaries, ads, announcements, etc.
___ *Religious*
___
___

27. How reliable do you find the news you read in the newspapers/magazines?
✓ Very reliable
___ Reasonably reliable
___ Not reliable

****

28. Do you have a radio in your hh?
✓ Yes ___ No

29. If yes,
a) What kind: *Amsua*
b) When purchased: 1992
c) Purchase price: Le 20.000
e) How many bands: 1 FM
2 SW
1 MW
___ LW
f) How many batteries: 6 big
g) How many hours listen a day: 1 hr
h) How ma ny days batteries last 3 wks
i) How many batteries do you buy a month? 8 batts
j) Does it have a tape deck:
✓ Yes ___ No
k) Do you have a generator:
___ Yes ✓ No

30. How many adults in your hh actively listen to the radio?
2 Males ___ Females

31. Do you listen more to the radio or the tapes?
✓ Radio (2 hours a day)
___ Tapes (___ hours a day)

32. . . . times do you listen to the radio most?
___ Early morning (before 7)
1 Morning (7-11)
___ Noon (11-1)
___ Afternoon (1-5)
2 Evening (5-9)
3 Night (after 9)

33. Which stations do you listen most:
(1= most, 2= second most, 3=etc)
2 FM 104 Bo (X=aware)
___ Fm 99,9 Freetown
1 SW 99,9 Freetown
___ BBC
___ VOA
___ Radio Guinea (F)
3 Radio Liberia *(Church)*
___ Radio France
___ Gabon
___ Nigeria
___ ___
___ ___
___ ___

34. Which kinds of programs do you listen most?
1 Music
___ Local news
2 National news
___ International news
___ obituaries, announcements
___ Sports
2 *Religious music*
___

35. What would you like to hear more?
Mende programmes
___

36. Do you usually listen to Focus on Africa? ✓ Yes ___ No

37. From which channel?
✓ FM 104 Bo
___ FM/SW 99,9 Freetown
___ BBC

38. How reliable do you find the news you hear from the radio?
✓ Very reliable
___ Reasonably reliable
___ Not reliable

39. Other:

Appendix 2.

Guidelines for Sierra Leonean newspapers
January 29th 1993

1. The newspaper ought to be viable and vital component in the process of development, progress and national integration.

2. The newspaper has to re-register before February 8th 1993.

3. Proprietors of the newspaper must have a co-lateral of minimum of Le 2 Million
   (two million Leones).

4. The newspaper must have a permanent office, a telephone system and a visible
   sign of identification in front of the office.

5. The editor of the newspaper must fulfill one of the following:

   a) A degree holder from a recognized university with at least four years
      experience in a reputable publication (journalist/staff).

   b) Two years Advanced Certificate in Journalism with at least five years
      experience as staff reporter in a reputable publication.

   c) Ten years experience as a staff reporter in a reputable publication with
   at least
      two certificates of participating in workshops or cources in journalism.

6. The newspaper must have a staff of at least six fulltime workers with
   salary
   structure conditions of service for the staff. Income Tax Clearance must be
   sought.

7. Annual registration fee for all newspapers is Le 50 000 (fifty thousand leones).

Appendix 3.

Radio stations in Sierra Leone
Spring 1994

1. Sierra Leone Broadcating Service (SLBS), FM 99,9 Freetown.

The staff at SLBS was very friendly and introduced the house. The infromation collected is mainly from Mr. Joshua Nicol, Special Assistant to Director-General.

SLBS could be heard also at MW 1.206 (250 M), and SW 3.316 (90 M) and 5.980 (49 M).

Radio broadcasting in Sierra Leone started in 1934. The pioneering Freetown Rediffusion Service transformed to Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service in the late 1950's. By 1980's, transmission was troubled by lack of power - in 1991, the station has been reported to broadcast one hour per day. The transmission resumed fully in mid 1992.

When the station resumed, 80 percent of the old equipment was taken into use. As the national station, SLBS is funded by the government. In contrast to many other public service stations, SLBS just started selling advertizement time, too.

According to Nicol, the present number of staff was 350. The objective of the station is to "inform, educate, entertain and mobilize the populace for positive national development". Though government owned, SLBS claims not to have got directives from the government, although it operates "on a non-written social responsibility code."

SLBS was on air for 12 hours (on avarage) per day, more during the weekend. Music, commercials and public service announcements filled 85 per cent of the FM transmission, while news covered 10 per cent and other programs 5 per cent. On the national service, i.e. MW and SW frequences, public service programs (health, agricultural, educational and environmental) constituted 60 per cent of programming time, music and news each ten percent, and other news and current affairs programs the remaining 20 per cent.

News for the daily national news, Bulletin, were aqcuired mostly from Sierra Leonean News Agency (SLENA) (40 %). The rest came from Government Information Services (20 %), own production (20 %) and other sources (20 %). International news was exclusively prepared by the station, using many international sources.

SLBS restrasmitted BBC's Focus on Africa nad Sports Round Up on F.M. (daily 17.05 - 18.00).

SLBS could in theory cover the whole Sierra Leone (and across the borders) with the 10 kW transmitter (Continental Electronics) for the SW transmission.

The 300 W FM transmitter (Loren-Sebo TX) covered Western Area as well as parts of Northern and the Southern Provinces, whereas the 50 kW MW (Marconi TX) transmitter could only be heard in Western Area.

Nicol listed the problems of the station in the following order: equipment, spare parts, power, staff, transport, training for both technical and program personnel.

SLBS was looking forward to changing "from a department in the civil service into public corporation with an independent recruitment, staff retention and renumeration policy".

SLBS, FM 99,9, SW & MW
Monday-Thursday	6.00 - 9.00
	18.00 - 24.00
Friday	6.00 - 9.00
	12.00 - 14.30
	18.00 - 24.00
Saturday	6.00 - 10.30
	18.00 - 24.00
Sunday	6.00 - 24.00

2. Atlantic Broadcasting Corporation (ABC), Freetown, FM 94/106.
The information was acquired in an interview with Mr. Rupert Palmer, the production Manager.

Atlantic Broadcasting Corporation, stationend at the top floor of Bintumani Hotel on Lumley Beach of Freetown, was the first non-governmental and the first FM station in Sierra Leone. It has had British backing, e.g. 90 per cent of the equipment came from BBC, and the three important pioneers - Martin Davis, Jackie Chambers and Gus Williams - were also from Britain, as was the present 24-year-old production manager Rupert Palmer.

ABC received its licence in early 1990 and started broadcasting in September 1990. At that point, with the staff of 30 plus 8 DJs, the station was on air 17 hours daily. Programming paused in November 1992 due to financial and administrative problems. (In February 1992, ABC became famous from Captain Valentine Strasser using the station during the military coup.) The station was started again in July 1993 and the broadcasting began in March 1994.

Earlier, the station had been financed solely from Britain. At the time of the research, there was still some British backing but major financing came from local advertizers. Palmer planned that in the future advertizing should cover all costs, though competition is tougher as SLBS brought down advertisement prices by starting advertizing, too.

With 12 staff members, ABC broadcasted 12 hours (6 - 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. - 1 a.m.) The objective was to increase the hours from 12 to 20 by July 1994 and the staff upto 26. Palmer saw the audience as "choosy, with wide age range from 12 to 60, social, and literate also in English". 90 percent of programs were in English, once a week there was a French program (and the rest must have been in Krio?).

The program supply of the station was entertainment-oriented, consisting mostly of music and weekly arts and sports programs, as well as obituaries. In Palmer's view, the objective of the station was to play "good music" and to get "community actively involved". Out of the music, one third was of African origin, another third reggae from outside, and the rest soul, funk, jazz and latino music. News were aqcuired from SLENA.

ABC also occasionally rebroadcasted e.g. Vatican Radio and Radio Netherlands.

Although the station claimed to have covered 60 per cent of the country (Western Area and Southern and Eastern Provinces) during the first years of operation, Palmer confirmed that the present 200 W transmitter at Aberdeen Hill reached about 100 miles (km) (up to Sembehun, Moyamba, Mile 91, Makeni). A new 2000 W transmitter planned for Leichester Peak should extend the coverage also northbound. The southern and eastern parts were inaccessible because of the hilly landscapes.

Palmer saw the power supply as an obstacle for the future and also said that "the government is careful" yet very cooperative with ABC. In addition to aqcuiring a bigger transmitter, the station planned to start a second station in the provinces, most likely in Kenema, and to start a multichannel television in 1-2 years.

ABC, 94 and 106 FM, during the reseach

Monday - Friday:

6.00-10.00   SIERRA SUNRISE   Music, updates, financial news, news headlines

17.00-18.00 ABC NEWSHOURBBC International news, Focus on Africa, sports

18.00-21.00 HITMIX   Music, tips for the night

21.00-1.00   CITY LIGHTS   Music

Weekends:
Music round up, sports shows, updates, Gospel show, and request slots included

ABC, 94 and 106 FM, as from July 1994:

Monday - Friday:

6.00-10.00	SIERRA SUNRISE headlines	Music, updates, financial news, news
10.00-14.00	ATLANTIC CRUISE	Music, updates, competitions
14.00-17.00	DRIVETIME	Music, tips for the night
17.00-18.00	ABC NEWSHOUR sports	BBC International news, Focus on Africa,
18.00-21.00	HITMIX	Music, tips for the night
21.00-24.00	CITY LIGHTS	Music
24.00-2.00	NIGHT TRAIN	Jazz, soul and latin rhytms

Weekends:
Music round up, sports shows, updates, Gospel show, and request slots included

3. FM 104 (Kiss 104), Bo

The information about FM 104 was aqcuired in an interview with Mr. Donald During, the Acting Production Manager. Mr During was, however - most likely due to the present unstable political situation - quite suspicious about my questions and did not let me visit the station.

FM 104, popularly known as "Kiss 104", was a privately owned radio station in Bo, the provincial headquarters of the Southern Province. It had been broadcasting since July 27th 1993.

The station was financed by ads and had a staff of 20 people, out of which eight were on the air.

With its 1000 kW transmitter, FM 104 claimed to be heard nationwide - except for a few mountaneuos areas - and even accross the boarders. (The short wawe was not sustainable.) During the first year, the station was on air for 15 hours per day (see appendix). Almost 95 per cent of the program consisted of music, both African and Western. The rest was made up of advertisements, obituaries, announcements and short news. The station also retransmitted BBC twice a day.

Obituaries were usually read in Mende -as were many programs concerning the civil war - advertisements in Krio and everything else in English.

According to Mr. During, the station was to start the Phase II by May 1994, in which the daily program would include more educative programs: the share of music was to be dropped to 60 percent, and other programs would take 40 percent. French programs, children's programs and health programs were also under planning. In July 1994, there were still no major changes in the programming.

FM 104 BO

Monday - Sunday:

6.00-6.10	Prayer
6.10-7.00	Music
7.00-7.15	News
7.15-7.30	Thought for the day
7.30-8.00	Obiatury announcements and public notices
8.00-8.80	BBC: World News Bulletin
8.30-10.00	Music

13.00-15.00	Music
15.00-15.05	News
15.05-17.00	Music
17.00-18.00	BBC: Focus on Africa
18.00-18.05	News
18.05-20.00	Notices, obituaries
20.00-20.30	News
20.30-22.00	Civil defence issues (Mende, Krio)
22.00-22.05	News
22.05-24.00	Music

4. Karim Koram (Arabic), Waterloo.

This small station was located in Waterloo, about 20 miles outside Freetown, and broadcasted in Arabic. However, I did not visit the station.

More specific information about the station was not aqcuired for this study due to the stations location, highly specified audience and inavailability in the villeges under the study.

Appendix 4.

<div align="center">

TV in Sierra Leone
Spring 1994

</div>

Television broadcasting was introduced in Sierra Leone in 1963. The first 30 years of the national TV-station, SLTV, can be characterized as constant struggle with technical and financial problems.

Pye TVT, a British company later taken over by Philips, built the pioneer 100W (or 5 kW?) black and white transmitter first at Aberdeen, later at Signal Hill in Freetown. Its coverage radius was 15 miles (km) and it broadcasted 5 hours daily, prominently foreign films and programmes.

In 1978, SLTV built a 10 kW color transmitter at Leichester Peak in Freetown. This also enabled "nationwide" broadcasting which in practice still meant only three quarters of the country (WBN 86). At any rate, TV sets were very rare outside of Freetown area, since only the biggest towns had access to electricity.

In 1980, the OAU-summit held in Freetown temporarily boosted the techinical and financial situation but in the following years the equipment slowly deteriorated. In 1985, SLTV was still broadcasting 6 hours a day (WBN 86) until a thunder storm collapsed the roof of the station and virtually all the equipment that had still worked was destroyed (Konteh).

SLTV was inactive for seven years. Finally, in 1993, the NPRC started to rehabilitate the station. Negotiations started in April with ARCODE, Arabian Construction and Development Company, for a 2.82 million dollar loan, and in September the station was able to broadcast the first programmes. (Konteh)

The station ran a test period during which it broadcasted four hours during weekdays and eight hours during weekends. The funding for the test period came from the Lebanese who also controlled the program selection during weekdays. There were several complaints about the low quality of these programs (action movies, etc.). SLTV programmed the weekend hours. SLTV took completely over the programming in February 1994. (Konteh)

LIBERTY VOICE

SLTV Programme
A complete weekly guide

Saturday 12th March 1994

SLBS/TV PROGRAMME

SUNDAY

12 NOON	·	CARTOONS (2HRS)
2PM	·	ON THE BEACH (45 Mins)
2:45 PM	·	LEARNING ENGLISH (30 Mins)
3:15 PM	·	DELICIOUS DISHES (30 Mins)
3:45 PM	·	BILL GUNTER: US MARSHALL (30 Mins)
4:15 PM	·	CULTURE BREAK (25 Mins)
4:45 PM	·	UNDERGROUND ECONOMY (15 Mins) RPT
5:00 PM	·	CHILDRENS SHOW (90 Mins)
6:30 PM	·	INTERNATIONAL NEWS REVIEW (30 Mins)
7:00 P.M	·	SUNDAY SERVICE (60 Mins)
8:00 P.M	·	WE YONE TIATA (30 Mins)
8:30 P.M	·	OW DE REVOLUTION DAE GO (30 Mins)
9:00 P.M	·	NEWS AT NINE
9:30 P.M	·	DISCUSSION ON THE WORKING DOCUMENT
10:15 P.M	·	INTERNATIONAL NEWS
10:30 P.M	·	SINGSPIRATION
11:30 P.M	·	Derrick - Episode: Johanna (59 Mins)
00:00 P.M	·	CLOSE DOWN

MONDAY

5:00 P.M	·	CHILDRENS SHOW - KINDER- (2 HRS)
7:00 P.M	·	MY LIFE IN THE SEA (25 Mins)
7:30 P.M	·	DISCUSSION IN MENDE
8:00 P.M	·	GATEWAYS - (1st Mondays)
		HEALTHWAYS - (2nd, 3rd, and 4th Mondays)
8:30 P.M	·	ECOLOGY WORKSHOP (28 Mins)
9:00 P.M	·	NEWS AT NINE
9:30 P.M	·	EXPEDITION TO THE ANIMAL KINGDOM
10:00 P.M	·	GEORGE MICHAEL SPORTS MACHINE
10:15 P.M	·	INTERNATIONAL NEWS

THE NEW SLBS COMPLEX

TUESDAY

5:00 P.M	·	CHILDRENS SHOW - CLASSES ONE TO THREE
7:00 P.M	·	CULTURE BREAK
7:30 P.M	·	DISCUSSION IN TEMNE
8:00 P.M	·	OUR PLANET, OUR EARTH
8:30 P.M	·	NARECOM/ NASMOS/REBEL WAR
9:00 P.M	·	NEWS AT NINE
9:30 P.M	·	FRENCH PROGRAMME
10:00 P.M	·	CULTURAL FILLER
10:15 P.M	·	INTERNATIONAL NEWS
10:30 P.M	·	FEATURE FILM
00:00 P.M	·	CLOSE DOWN

WEDNESDAY

5:00 P.M	·	CHILDRENS SHOW - CLASSES FOUR TO SIX
7:00 P.M	·	ALLES GUTE (LEARNING GERMAN)
7:30 P.M	·	DISCUSSION IN LIMBA
8:00 P.M	·	AUSTIN CITY LIMITS
8:30 P.M	·	WOMENS WORLD
9:00 P.M	·	NEWS AT NINE
9:15 P.M	·	UNDERGROUND ECONOMY
9:45 P.M	·	CROPS FOR THE FUTURE
10:00 P.M	·	TRANSTEL FILLER
10:15 P.M	·	INTERNATIONAL NEWS
10:30 P.M	·	FEATURE FILM
00:00 P.M	·	CLOSE DOWN

THURSDAY

5:00 P.M	·	CHILDRENS SHOW - FORMS ONE TO THREE
7:00 P.M	·	DISCUSSION IN KRIO
7:30 P.M	·	YOUTH IN PERSPECTIVE
8:00 P.M	·	SPORTS MAGAZINE
8:30 P.M	·	CFO
9:30 P.M	·	CULTURAL SHOW
10:00 P.M	·	BY THE PEOPLE
10:15 P.M	·	INTERNATIONAL NEWS
10:30 P.M	·	WORKING WOMEN
11:30 P.M	·	FOOTBALL MADE IN GERMANY
00:00 P.M	·	CLOSE DOWN

FRIDAY

5:00 P.M	·	CHILDREN'S SHOW
6:30 P.M	·	MY LIFE IN THE SEA (Repeat)
7:00 P.M	·	FACING THE KAABA
8:00 P.M	·	LANDMARKS /CULTURAL MAGAZINE (To Alternate)
8:30 P.M	·	BILLY GUNTER (REPEAT)
9:00 P.M	·	NEWS AT NINE
9:30 P.M	·	AIDS: A REALITY
10:00 P.M	·	CULTURAL FILLER
10:15 P.M	·	INTERNATIONAL NEWS
10:30 P.M	·	FEATURE FILM
00:00 P.M	·	CLOSE DOWN
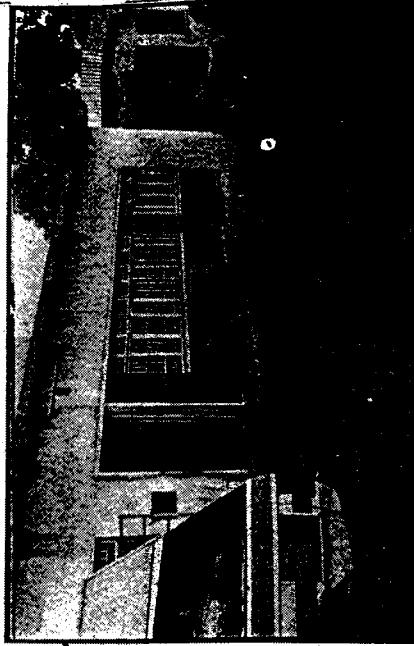
THE OLD BASE

SATURDAY

12:00 NOON	·	CARTOONS
2:00 P.M	·	SATURDAY SPORTS
6:00 P.M	·	FEATURE FILM (CHILDREN'S)
7:00 P.M	·	ON THE SPOT
7:30 P.M	·	THIS WEEK
8:00 P.M	·	LOCAL HEROES, GLOBAL CHANGE
9:00 P.M	·	NEWS AT NINE
9:30 P.M	·	VARIETY SHOW/SPLASH DOWN
10:15 P.M	·	INTERNATIONAL NEWS
10:30 P.M	·	FEATURE FILM

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