CAPACITY BUILDING TRAINING FOR CATCHMENT MENTORS (CHAMPIONS)

COMMUNICATION AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION SKILLS MODULE 1

SECTION 2: LEARNERS GUIDE

Integrated Water Resources Management

Strategies, Guidelines and Pilot Implementation in Three Water Management Areas, South Africa

Department of Water Affairs and Forestry

South Africa

> ## THIS WORKBOOK BELONGS TO:
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HOW TO USE THIS MANUAL

his manual provides an **Introduction to Communication and Conflict Resolution Skills within the Integrated Water Resources Management Framework.** It provides the participant with a background to communication, and how to overcome barriers and problems in communication. It also describes methods for developing communication plans and the communication skills needed to promote community awareness and develop an awareness of potential water related conflicts. Furthermore, the participant will develop the leadership skills to manage the conflict resolution process. The participant will also be able to gather and represent community opinions and needs, to source and interpret appropriate information for the community and provide relevant feedback to communities on a variety of aspects. The participant will be able to prepare relevant information for dissemination to the relevant stakeholders in the Integrated Water Resources Management Process.

It is expected of the participant to read the whole manual, and participate in all the exercises. The participant should make notes on this manual, as needed, in the wide right margin of each page.

In addition, the results of the various exercises must be verified with the information in this manual.

You must make sure that you understand the work presented in the notes and never hesitate to ask questions.

We hope you will enjoy this course and gain much from it.

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COMMUNICATION AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION SKILLS – MODULE 1

1.1   DEVELOP APPROPRIATE COMMUNICATION SKILLS

The purpose of this unit is to provide you with the basic communication skills to enable you to promote community awareness about the concepts of IWRM, CMA development processes as well as the interface between water resources management and water services.

1.1.1   COMMUNICATION: A FIRST LOOK

Approximately 70 per cent of our waking day is spent in one or more types of communication. Talking to others, reading books and newspapers, listening to the radio, making personal and professional relationships work – these activities link us to our environment and help to regulate all human behaviour. It may seem obvious to say that communication is important but communication experiences actually shape the very quality of our lives. We all depend on other people to help us meet our needs, attain happiness, and find personal fulfilment. Effective communication results from discovering better and more effective ways of relating to others and of having them relate to us. Much like life itself, communication is a process. That means it is dynamic, ever changing, and unending. The vehicle through which interpersonal relationships are developed or destroyed is human communication.

Communication theorists have never completely agreed on a single definition of communication. It all depends on one's perspective. Communication has been broadly defined as `the process of creating a meaning between two or more people.'

1.1.2   ENSURE A WORKING KNOWLEDGE OF COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Many people, whose success in their work is largely dependent on successful communication, do not know the first thing about communication. It is important to at least have a working knowledge of communication skills.

Communication is a cyclical and dynamic two-way process forming the basis of human behaviour. One communicates to relay information. Communication can also be used to enhance relationships, whether it takes the form of personal or professional relationships including managing, marketing, decision-making etc.

1.1.2.1   *Communication ingredients*

Let us look at the ingredients of communication in order to understand it better.

First, there is a **sender** or source or origin of communication. Communication must start somewhere. I start to talk to you. The television announces a new programme. The newspaper has a heading that catches my eye.   The sender initiates the communication and encodes a message.

Second, there is a **receiver** or target that decodes the message. Communication is directed at someone or at a group of people or at a certain type of person.

If I say: 'How are you today, Margaret?' the receiver or target of my communication is Margaret. If a notice in the newspaper says: 'To all those who want to start a new career', the target is not only one person, but also a certain type of person, or a group of persons.

Third, there is a **message**. Communication without meaning is not really communication. Language has meaning, even music has meaning – a certain kind of **music** will convey a certain kind of message. Even colour can have meaning. If I give someone a bouquet of red roses it means something. If the traffic light shows green it means something.

Fourth, there is a certain **coding**. We use certain codes to convey our messages. I may say: 'Hello'. Someone else may say: 'Good morning'. A third person may say: 'Hi'. The message in all three cases is about the same, but the coding differs vastly. Coding is also made up of non-verbal communication. A smile whilst talking means something and a frown means something else.

Fifth, there is a **medium** of communication. The most common medium is the word of mouth, where people speak to one another, but writing is another medium and so is music or pictures.

Sixth, there are various **channels** that can be used. I can make use of a direct channel by talking to someone, or I can write the person a letter, I can send the person a message via someone else, or I can send an e-mail message to the person.

Feedback is also essential to communication. Feedback or a response is given after a message has been received. It is essential in daily life and in business. If one says something to someone else and receives no reply, that in itself could be seen as feedback and contains some information. Feedback can therefore take the form of signals, words and written documents.

Lastly, the whole process of communication always takes place in a certain **context**. Communication in the cafeteria is different from communication in the boardroom. Communication between friends is different from communication between business rivals. Communication while we watch a football match is different from communication while we attend a funeral service.

1.1.2.2   *Cyclic nature of communication*

Communication consists of a sender, a receiver and a message, but that does not really tell us how communication takes place. If I say to you: 'It is very hot today', I am the sender, you are the receiver and the message is "it is hot today". But then you may react by saying: 'Isn't it', while you wipe your brow. Now you are the sender, using a different code and I become the receiver, decoding your code so that it means to me: 'Yes, it is hot'. Now both of us are senders and receivers, using different codes. The process of communication is also unpredictable. You could have reacted by saying: 'It is not really very hot', or 'Are you mad! It isn't hot! Haven't you got a fever?' Every time my reaction will be different. Imagine the communication process at a party where four friends talk with each other while loud music is playing and every now and then some other person passes the group of friends and may say hello or make any remark to one or more members of the group to which one or more of them may react.

All this simply means that communication is not **linear**. That means it does not take place in a straight line: from sender to receiver. It is rather **cyclic** which means after the receiver has received the message he/she becomes the sender and the sender becomes the receiver and these roles change all the time and at the same time different messages may be transferred between the participants and different forms of coding may be used. Our final conclusion, therefore, is that communication is not a simple process, but is intertwined and often complex.

1.1.2.3 *Barriers to reception*

It is very important to realise that there are many barriers to successful communication due to the fact that there are at least two parties involved in the communication process. The more people involved in the communication process, the more likely it would be that barriers would be experienced. We come across these barriers every day, quite often, without realising they are there and then we are surprised if our communication does not have the desired outcome. Barriers can result in delays, a total breakdown of communication or distortion. They make that the receiver of the information hear or read the sender of the message wrongly, or receiving little or nothing of the message. Such a miscommunication can be caused by:

- ➢ The receiver may have anxieties.

- ➢ The receiver may have expectations.

- ➢ The receiver may be preoccupied.

- ➢ The receiver may have a physical disability such as feeling sick.

- ➢ The sender may have a physical disability such as stuttering or a soft voice.

- ➢ Environmental circumstances such as noise may hinder reception.

1.1.2.4 *Barriers to understanding*

These barriers are common between people of different cultures or age or between professionals and lay people. They result in the receiver hearing or reading the message, but not understanding it or misunderstanding it or only half understanding it. The following list indicates some of the barriers to communication.

- ➢ The receiver may not understand the language used.

- ➢ The receiver may not understand the jargon used.

- ➢ The receiver may have a problem to listen intelligently.

- ➢ The sender may lack attention to feedback given by the receivers.

- ➢ The receiver may have a poor knowledge of the subject being communicated.

- ➢ The communication may be too lengthy, insufficient or not clear enough.

➢ The message may be garbled or coded in such a way that the receiver finds it difficult to decode.

➢ The receiver may be anxious or preoccupied which makes it difficult to listen intelligently.

➢ The sender might put the wrong emphasis in the information so that the receiver would not know what the most important part of the information is.

➢ The sender may fail to understand the needs of the receivers.

➢ The sender may assume that the receivers know more than they really do.

1.1.2.5   *Barriers to acceptance*

Barriers to acceptance occur when political, social, cultural, religious and moral differences exist between the communicating parties. In these cases the receiver receives the message and understands it, but rejects it on one or more grounds. This part of communication is so important because eventually we want our message to be accepted. Typical barriers to acceptance are indicated below:

➢ The receiver may have prejudices.

➢ There may be emotional conflict between the sender and the receiver.

➢ The way in which the sender communicates may make the message unacceptable.

➢ There may be a status clash or a marked status difference between the sender and the receiver.

➢ The values and mores of the sender and the receiver may be in conflict.

➢ The message may be in conflict with the receiver's interests.

➢ The receiver may not trust the sender.

1.1.2.6   *Reasons for the barriers*

There are many reasons why the barriers exist.

➢ Different perceptions exist among communicating parties. Because every human being is unique, our perceptions of things tend to be unique too.

➢ Communication has to compete with a lot of 'noise', including literal 'noise' like blaring music, or traffic. There are also psychological 'noise' like fear, social 'noise' like prejudice, cultural 'noise' like superstition, and political 'noise' such as opportunism.

➢ Much of our communication has emotional content. In such cases we tend to react to the emotion and not to the content.

➢ Very few of us are prepared to trust one another unconditionally and distrust is really the poison of communication.

➢ Apathy is not very helpful towards communication.

➢ It is human to feel apprehensive about change. If a message contains a hint of impending change or the need to change, we tend to close it out.

➢ Culture determines the meaning of the world we live in. The meaning of the message is therefore determined by my culture, which may differ from that of the sender.

1.1.3   IMPROVING OWN RESPONSES TO VERBAL COMMUNICATION

1.1.3.1   *Addressing barriers of communication*

It is important to be a good communicator, in other words, to overcome the various barriers to communication. The first thing on the way to overcome the barriers is to admit that they exist, also within your-self, and to decide to do something about it. This is an important starting point that must lead to a tackling of the problem on two levels, first, psychological and second, technical or mechanistic.

➢ The psychological level

The first step towards effective communication with others is successful communication with your-self. Intra-personal communication means messages sent and received within the same individual. It takes place whenever you evaluate and react to internal and external stimuli. It reflects your physical, emotional, intellectual and social self. In other words, it reflects your self-concept. If you are not satisfied with yourself, or if you doubt yourself, if you do not trust yourself in all situations, or if you do not have a healthy self-image, you will not be a good communicator. Your communication with others will be like a boxer who never throws a punch, but is just intent on defending himself all the time. Get to know yourself thoroughly. Self-awareness is the first step towards becoming a successful communicator.

As you increase your self-awareness you also tend to be willing to share that awareness with others. If you have reached this stage, you are on the brink of becoming a successful communicator because self-disclosure lies at the heart of communication. It is the vehicle by which others know what is going on inside you; your thoughts and feelings and what you care about. It is a window through which others can look into your soul. Self-disclosure is also the corner stone for any long-term relationship, and the most important, it leads to greater self-awareness because it works directly against the very negative natural tendency to hide feelings of incompetence, loneliness, guilt, fear and anxiety.

The less you feel threatened by communication, the easier it will be to trust the other party. If you succeed in trusting someone else, you can look forward to fruitful and productive communication because without that trust very little communication can take place. Trust is seldom instantaneous. It takes a while to trust people, simply because it takes time to get to know them. Trusting a person therefore develops over time and can be accomplished only with a genuine effort to trust the other person. As this trust grows, it becomes reciprocal in most cases. In other words, the more you trust someone, the more that person trusts you. Only as the mutual trust develops can there be real communication between two people.

The process of real communication is established by feedback. Effective communication stops when the receiver of the message gives no feedback. Feedback takes place internally and externally.

Internally people conform or correct their understanding of a message or feeling about a message by external feedback such as asking questions. Such feedback comes in the form of a message to the other party who will again react externally by asking further questions or agreement with the message, and internally by shaping his/her behaviour or perspective accordingly.

➢ The technical level

On the more practical or technical level there are a lot of things that we can do to overcome the barriers. As a starting point one should follow a few standard guidelines.

- Acknowledge barriers. That means admitting that barriers exist. This admission shows your honesty without which you will never overcome any barriers.

- Bring it out into the open. Even admit to the other party that there are barriers and try to engage the other person to help you to overcome them.

- Develop counteracting strategies to the barriers. Admitting to their existence is not enough. You must also do something positive to overcome them.

- Be aware of the context of your communication. Take note of the circumstances and the situation because the context determines what barriers are present and how to overcome them.

- Be honest. Do not lie to the person you are communicating with. Honesty will be the first step in breaking down barriers.

- Be sincere. Mean what you say. It invites a positive reaction from the receiver that makes it easier to overcome the barriers.

1.1.3.2 How to improve communication

Now we look at a number of useful hints to improve communication and to overcome barriers to effective communication on a practical level.

➢ Be aware of the importance of perceptions and take special care in ensuring that perceptions are clear and correct.

➢ Consider the other person's point of view or frame of reference and be sensitive to them.

➢ Use face-to-face communication if the situation is problematic. This could ensure direct feedback.

➢ Be sensitive to the other person's background and adapt to it.

➢ Use direct, clear and simple language and avoid insensitive or offensive language.

➢ Use frequent repetitions to make sure that the message is understood.

➢ Be supportive. Let a person be comfortable in your presence and note where messages are not understood or where it is resisted. It is be better to have a supportive approach than to be judgemental.

> ➢ Never use racist or sexist terminology.

> ➢ Focus on the common grounds and aims and avoid differences.

> ➢ Create a climate and atmosphere conducive to communication.

> ➢ Don't give a person the idea that you want something, but rather that you are willing to contribute or make a sacrifice.

> ➢ Make sure that your body language corresponds with what you are saying.

> ➢ Be perceptive to the other person's body language.

> ➢ Avoid politics and religion because there are too many tricky nuances that can jeopardise the communication.

> ➢ Be prepared to admit your own mistakes.

> ➢ Prepare yourself thoroughly if you have to explain a difficult or foreign concept.

> ➢ Communicate with confidence.

> ➢ Don't force the other person to communicate with you.

> ➢ Keep your information lean; in other words, give optimal, not maximal information.

> ➢ Plan properly before distributing information, especially in a business context. Take time to decide on the correct medium, channels and codes to use to convey your message.

> ➢ Use frequent repetitions e.g. written repetition and follow-ups.

> ➢ A participant in communication should never feel threatened, therefore, never put someone on the spot.

> ➢ Never gossip because the receiver will, rightfully, experience anxiety that you will gossip about him/her too.

> ➢ Be trustworthy and reliable, consistent and honest.

> ➢ Be a good listener.

> ➢ Persevere.

1.1.4   BECOMING AN EFFECTIVE PUBLIC SPEAKER

It may be necessary to address public meetings or smaller focused meetings on the IWRM or catchment management as part of the awareness creation drive. We have already seen how difficult communication can be and how many potential barriers can prevent successful communication. When speaking to a large group of people, the situation becomes more problematic with the result that communication becomes less successful. If the person speaking to the group does not know how to do it, there is no chance for success.

Even talented and experienced speakers will admit that good preparation is the key to successful public speaking. It ensures confidence and a confident speaker is someone who can bring the message with conviction in an attractive manner and can ensure that the message is clear, accurate and complete.

Herewith some steps to be followed in preparing your delivery.

1.1.4.1 Analysing the audience

It is important to first think about the people who would be attending the talk. The audience is the heart of public speaking and each step in the process of public speaking must take the audience into account. You may be an expert in your field, but unless you can capture the attention of your audience, even the finest speech will fall on deaf ears. The more you know about the audience, the better you should be able to plan your message. You will, for instance, not be very successful if you assume that only men will attend a meeting about IWRM, as women play a very important role in water related matters in rural South Africa.

In order to enable you to adapt your message to the specific audience, you need to assess the following aspects about your audience:

➢ The demographic profile of the group, which includes age, gender, occupation, language, educational level, income, cultural background, residential area, and so forth.

➢ The interests, values, attitudes and beliefs of the group. Ask yourself if the group has strong political or cultural convictions and why they would be attending the meeting or how they would react to certain topics. This might guide you in the level of detail to be provided and the words and tone of voice to use. If you know they would be hostile to the topic, you will have to be especially careful to be as objective as possible.

➢ Determine whether the audience have certain political, religious, social or occupational affiliations. This might give you insight on the audience's background and their knowledge of the subject.

1.1.4.2 Selecting a theme or message

One cannot start to prepare if one does not know what the theme or message or subject of the address is to be. If you are invited to address a group, confirm the subject from those who invited you. If you must choose your own topic, choose one that you know and one that will fit the group of people and the occasion. Remember that in the final instance you do not want to amuse a group of people, but you want to deliver a message they have to hear.

After you have established the theme or message, you must decide what you want to achieve. It is important to decide on a goal you want to achieve because that, together with the theme will decide the contents of the speech. Usually you would aim to increase your audience's knowledge of a subject by providing information in an interesting, organised and professional manner. Your **objective** can be to convey information, to explain something, or to convince people of something. In other words, you want people to accept something. Your objective will not only be important for the contents of your address, but also for the way in which you bring it. Never lose sight of the objective. Every word of a public address must be one step forward in order to get to the objective. It must therefore be logical and well structured. A speech that does not do this is no more than garbling and a waste of time.

1.1.4.3   Preparatory reading and supporting material

You must know what you are talking about and be able to support your ideas. A speaker who portrays ignorance or a lack of understanding of a topic will not be very convincing. It is therefore necessary to make sure that you can talk with authority and that you understand the topic. This may necessitate reading of documents, files, pamphlets, directives and books or even a search on the Internet. Before you can read the material you will first have to search for it and that may take some time, so do not wait too long before you get started. In terms of water related problems experienced in communities, interviews with key stakeholders and community members would also be useful. It is not necessary to know everything about a topic, thus it is not necessary to read everything on that topic. Just make sure that you have your facts right for the address and that you know and understand enough to address people on the topic.

Supporting material is an effective tool to break through some of the communication barriers as it helps to capture the audience's attention. Examples of supporting material are definitions, examples or anecdotes, statistics, testimonies, comparisons or contrasts, demonstrations (sketches, maps, models, objects, organisational chart etc.), and visual aids. The preparation of visual aids will be discussed later.

1.1.4.4   Organising and structuring your speech

While a speech is all about talking, it actually starts in writing, but remember that you will eventually deliver it and not read it. Therefore you must write it down as if you are speaking it. There is a difference between the written language and a spoken word and you want to write your speech as if it spoken, otherwise, it will sound as if you are reading it. It is not necessary to write down every word that you are going to say. The first draft may be in written form, yes, but your final text will only contain the main ideas.

When you write down the speech, make sure it is done properly from the start. An address must have a certain framework containing an introduction (beginning), a body (middle), and a conclusion (end).

➢   The introduction

With the introduction, you should aim to capture the listener's attention, establish credibility and rapport, as well as to state the purpose of your talk. The theme of the speech is therefore sometimes announced in the form of a problem statement, and the objective of the speech is the resolution of that problem. The audience is now tuned in. They know what you are going to talk about and where you are heading.

➢   The main body

After the introduction you should start on the main body of the address. Try to mould your speech in the form of an argument and everything you say must then substantiate that argument. Try to keep your speech lean, in other words, no frills or little extras to take the attention away from the main argument. Try to see your speech as a trip from point A to point B (the place you want to reach at the end or your objective). Try to reach point B in the shortest possible way. If you follow a 'highway' of logical argument, your audience will find it easy to follow, but if you use little twists and turns to reach point B, you are going to lose some of your audience.

Divide your speech into sections. Each section must form a logical entity and they must follow in a logical sequence on the road to point B, your conclusion.

➤ The conclusion

This should be the climax of your address. Your conclusion has to be the result of your argument and should compliment your introduction. It must be strong and short, bringing together all the ideas expressed during the address. Some speakers use the conclusion to wind down their speech. That is wrong because the audience will loose interest. Your conclusion should therefore be brief, but full of impact and must stop at such a high note that your last words will echo in the minds of your audience. When you travel from point A to point B the best moment of your trip is when you arrive at point B. Your speech should be exactly the same.

Here are some guidelines in terms of your written text that would assist you when delivering the speech:

- The letters or print must be large enough for you to see the text easily while you are delivering the speech.

- The writing should not overflow a page because then you are going to get lost.

- Separate different ideas from each other.

- Underline headings or use a larger print, but highlight it.

- Number each page so that they will not get mixed up while you are busy and stack them together in a corner so that the wind cannot blow them off the table or lectern.

The secret of success is that you stay in command of the situation right through your speech and for that you must be organised, such as having a text outline or framework that you can follow easily.

1.1.4.5 *Preparing visual aids*

Visual aids should not be stumbling blocks, but should enrich your speech and your audience! If you do not prepare your visual aids well and use it properly, it can easily obstruct your message. Visual aids should increase the effectiveness of your speech, by illustrating and clarifying ideas. Various visual aids that could be used are:

➤ Objects (e.g. a pre-paid water meter).

➤ Models (e.g. a scale model of the community outlay – town planning).

➤ Blackboards – this is useful in areas without electricity, but remember to keep the visual messages on the board short and simple to be most effective.

➤ Pictures, drawings and photographs.

➤ Maps.

➤ Charts, tables and graphs.

> ➢ Computer generated graphics.

> ➢ Handouts.

> ➢ Overhead projectors, slides, films and videocassettes.

> ➢ Records, tapes and compact discs.

Visual aids such as transparencies cannot contain your whole speech. They should only outline main ideas and rounded figures. Transparencies or charts should never be cluttered. The more you put on a transparency or chart, the longer it takes for your audience to read it, causing pauses in your speech while you wait for them to finish. In this way you lose momentum. Furthermore, the additional text you include, the smaller the print gets so that the audience cannot read it properly, making your visual aids meaningless. In order to remain organised, you should number your transparencies or

charts and indicate on the queue-card when to use them. Remember to consider the lay out of the venue where you will be delivering your speech as this could hamper or benefit your visual presentations. You cannot prepare transparencies if the room does not have a white wall or screen, or even if there is no electricity.

1.1.4.6   *Practicing*

You cannot deliver a speech without prior practice. If you are an inexperienced speaker this is even more so. Only after a few practice sessions will you be confident to speak in front of an audience and be able to present the information in a natural way. What you have written might not work in practice and it is therefore important to test your choice of words and visual aids beforehand. Time yourself when you run through your speech because it must not exceed the time allocated. It is very annoying when you exceed your allotted time and use someone else's time for your speech. A speech should never exceed twenty minutes because that is the approximate attention span of an average person.

All the preparation in the world cannot ensure that you will deliver the address successfully. It can only help to make it easier and to have a better chance of success. The following section deals with specific aspects that require attention to ensure success.

> ➢ Text dependency

> If you are too dependent on the text in front of you, you are going to read the speech instead of delivering it. The main problem is that you will not be able to make and maintain eye contact with your audience because you have your nose in the text all the time. If you do not have eye contact with your audience you do not really communicate with them. You rather transmit or broadcast and you have no way of ensuring that your message overcomes all the barriers that exist. If you read to your audience there is always a gap between you and them, but if you deliver your speech the interaction is secure and alive and the communication becomes dynamic.

> ➤ Eye contact

When you speak to someone you try and maintain eye contact. The same should be done with an audience. If you keep eye contact with someone a channel has been created which can be used for more effective communication. Without it, contact becomes more difficult. In the case of a large audience it is impossible establish eye contact with all the individuals, but you should present yourself in such a way that you can see all the faces and that every member of the audience can see your face.

> ➤ Personal appearance

Your personal grooming must be appropriate for the specific occasion. If it is not, you will feel out of place and the audience may pay more attention to your dress than to your address. Your clothes can set you apart from the audience that will hinder a dynamic communication and the audience can even feel that you do not respect their dignity if you are inappropriately dressed. Therefore, make sure beforehand what function it is and what kind of people will be present.

> ➤ Stance

Remember that non-verbal communication is just as important as verbal communication. Therefore the way you present yourself to an audience will tell the audience something of how you feel and how you approach the occasion. Your stance should therefore never portray nervousness, arrogance or boredom. It must exude confidence, eagerness and enthusiasm. Most importantly, your body language must be in line with your verbal communication, otherwise you will not get a willing and sympathetic ear.

> ➤ Confidence

You cannot be successful if you do not believe in your own ability. Never start your speech with an apology. Do not express regret for not knowing enough about the subject, for not being accustomed to addressing an audience or for having had only little time to prepare the speech. If you apologise for your limited knowledge, the audience will regard it as not worth listening to you. If you apologise for being inexperienced the audience will wait for you to make mistakes rather than listen to what you have to say. If you apologise for the little time you had to prepare, the audience might feel that you do not regard them as important and it will create a negative attitude towards you. Rather try and start with a few strong and well-spoken sentences. It will give you confidence and will impress your audience into attention.

> ➤ Enthusiasm

If you are not enthusiastic about your message you cannot expect any one else to be. Remember that interest is experienced in verbal and non-verbal communication. Your message has a much greater chance to be accepted if you are enthusiastic about it.

> ➤ Rapport

The secret of successful communication between people is that there is a rapport between them. Rapport means that people have positive feelings towards one another. As a public speaker you must show that you understand the situation of your audience and that you have respect for them, that you share their concerns and their hopes and that you have their interests at heart.

The audience will then have positive feelings towards you and your message. Try to create a relationship of trust between you and your audience, in order to form a better rapport.

➢ Voice intonation

In singing a song, we use different notes. We should do the same in delivering a speech. If you want to maintain the audience's attention, you must use your voice to do it. A lower key denotes seriousness or severity while a higher key gives a feeling of lightness and happiness. Emphasis on certain words shows that they are important. Repeating a sentence or phrase, perhaps slightly slower and louder, shows that you regard it as very important and that you want the audience to remember it. A longer than usual pause after a sentence tells the audience that you want them to think about it and let it sink in. While you can say certain things louder, it is not proper to shout at your audience. They may consider you as rude. Also, be careful of speaking too softly so that your audience cannot hear you properly. Remember, if they cannot hear you properly you have not even crossed the first barrier on the way of effective communication.

Another problem, especially with nervous inexperienced speakers is the tendency to speak too fast. This makes the speech difficult for the audience to follow and it makes it hard for you to use intonation to keep your audience captured. A voice must not be used to convey a message only. It should also be used to maintain interest and attention and to inform the audience as to enthusiasm, importance and seriousness. When a voice is used as a mechanical means of conveying a message, it usually lulls an audience into peaceful slumber.

➢ Mannerisms

Be careful of irritating mannerisms that may bother the audiences and/or act as distractions. Annoying mannerisms may be to scratch yourself, to fiddle with your hands in your pockets, if you are a man, or to play with the glass without drinking from it. Distracting gestures may be to shift your weight from the one leg to the other in an even rhythm all the time. Such a movement has a hypnotic effect on the audience.

Exaggerations in speech can also distract or annoy. Be careful not to precede every sentence with an 'um' or cleaning your throat. Avoid phrases like 'you know', 'sort of', 'on the other hand', 'therefore', and 'etcetera' after every second sentence. Remember you are on the highway between point A and point B and these mannerisms are bumps in the road or potholes that slow you down.

➢ Visual aids

Visual aids are very helpful, but you have to know when to use them and how they are to be used. Visual aids should never bring your speech to a halt. This breaks the logical flow of your argument and disturbs the concentration of the audience. In this way visual aids can have the exact opposite effect of what they are intended for.

> ➢ Outside influences

There are always external influences that act as disturbances. You should identify these quickly and try to counteract them. Outside noise is usually one of the most serious external influences.

If you cannot counteract it in closing a door or window, it will be better to stop altogether and first remove the source of the noise before you continue. If your audience is captured by your presentation and if you use all the tools available to you, outside influences need not be so disruptive.

> ➢ Reaction from audience

If your audience does not react to your speech, your efforts are futile. An audience reacts in laughter, a buzz after you have said something, interjections such as "yes!" or "right!" or just a nod of affirmation from a few people. You should respond to those reactions to keep a real and natural communication going. You must be alert in order to pick up these reactions and then to react to them through emphasis, repetition or by saying something in a different way.

1.1.4.7 *Characteristics of effective verbal communication*

Even if you have gone through the above-mentioned steps in preparing your speech, you should also take note of certain do's and don'ts regarding public speaking. There are a number of characteristics that make verbal communication effective:

> ➢ Credibility

Communication starts with a climate of belief. The receiver must have confidence in the sender and a regard for the sender's competence on the subject.

Credibility therefore revolves around a communicator's apparent expertise, trustworthiness and goodwill in the eyes of the audience. To be seen as credible one must ensure that the information is accurate and appropriate to the situation. You should also show the audience that you understand their needs and that you are a friend to them and their interests.

> ➢ Clarity

The way a message is coded by the sender and decoded by the receiver lay in the clarity of the message. The coding must be done in such a way that decoding will not be too difficult and will not give a new or wrong meaning to the message. The sender should therefore be careful of too long sentences, complex abstract philosophical ideas, jargon, muddled argumentation, byways and extras that are not really part of the message. Make sure the message forms a coherent whole.

> ➢ Accuracy

Accuracy implies the ability to verbally represent things as they are. Words have different meanings and combinations of words change the meaning of the individual expression. Sloppiness in speaking leads to a lot of misunderstanding. Make sure that the audience understand what you are saying, by not speaking above their understanding or by using oversimplified language, preventing the audience from paying attention.

➤ Completeness

Speakers deal their audiences short by not giving them the whole message simply because they assume the audience have the same set of information that they have. Speakers also dilute their point by giving incomplete messages.

➤ Conviction

The audience must always feel that the speaker regards the message as meaningful. They must believe that the speaker is interested in the message, beliefs in it and is enthusiastic about it.

➤ Tastefulness

Even if people do not accept your message, they must accept the way in which you have brought it. A public speaker must therefore never insult or offend the audience and never hurt their feelings.

1.1.5 INCREASING COMMUNITY AWARENESS THROUGH COMMUNICATION

1.1.5.1 *Identify the areas where the community needs awareness building*

The first objective of communication, in the catchments management areas, is to make the people aware of the situation, and the future intention as to improve their situation. We can say that communications main aim is to build awareness in the people. Awareness does not only mean knowing something, but also knowing something actively. To take this one step further, active knowledge means that awareness would bring about change. Awareness is not a passive unemotional knowledge. It contains that extra bit that is associated with commitment.

In building awareness in a community, information must be fed to the community slowly. One cannot provide general information about water and its uses and hope it will hit some target. The information must be more specific to really of the community, when creating awareness of important aspects. The information material should cover the following aspects:

➤ What is IWRM?

➤ What is an IWRM stakeholder?

➤ IWRM and subsidiary.

➤ IWRM and equity.

➤ IWRM and participation.

➤ Water Management Areas and the process of establishing a Catchment Management Area.

➤ The stakeholders' involvement in IWRM in his/her own Water Management Area.

➤ The framework in which IWRM operates.

➤ Progress towards a Catchment Management Strategy.

> ➤ Procedures for stakeholder participation.

> ➤ Structures for stakeholder participation.

> ➤ Methods of stakeholder participation.

> ➤ Water related issues in the Water Management Area.

This information should ideally be in the form of simple, basic documents translated into the vernacular with simple diagrams and drawings illustrating the process. The objective would be to first give the stakeholders understanding of the context and, secondly, help them to participate meaningfully.

Meetings or workshops must follow up documents. The aim of these sessions would be to:

> ➤ Sort out any vagueness about the concepts.

> ➤ Highlight certain important aspects.

> ➤ Give stakeholders the opportunity to decide whether they need more information or whether they are ready to go over to action.

It is accepted that in some cases more than one workshop or meeting will have to be held in order to bring the stakeholders to a certain level of awareness.

The information should be focused in two ways:

> ➤ Where specific information is to be disseminated.

> ➤ The target of information dissemination. It might be necessary to distribute different types of information to certain stakeholders, or to disseminate the same information, but in different ways to certain stakeholders.

1.1.5.2 *Establish opportunities for awareness building*

It is obvious that the identification of "awareness building needs" must be followed by opportunities to implement the awareness. These opportunities may consist of disseminating information via simple and clear brochures and pamphlets, or a more personal, eye-to-eye situation, created in meetings or workshops. One should never be overly prescriptive regarding the methods to be used. It is more important that the method fit the situation, than many methods used. The method must also be within the competence of the facilitator, the sender of the message. Awareness creation is creative and innovative approaches can be used to establish successful methods of implementing ideas.

A variety of information dissemination methods and structures can be used. Let us revisit the list, previously discussed:

> ➤ The public meeting

> This is an excellent tool for giving out information to a lot of people at one time. The public meeting, however, has, some negatives, as it can be big and unruly, resulting in chaos if a skilled facilitator is not present. One must also ensure that all stakeholders were informed about the public meeting to avoid a perception being created that some stakeholders are favoured above others.

Information provided at the meeting should be carefully worded to provide the audience with relevant and clear messages and to avoid any misunderstandings. Beware of a data overload.

➢ Mass media

Here we focus on the **radio and television** (including rural TV), which are very effective tools enabling you to communicate with a very large audience. Although these are usually expensive to use, it has been found that the receivers tend to accept the information provided through these mediums as largely true and objective. The receivers also do not necessarily have to be able to read to understand the messages created on television.

There are many other methods that can be used such as **brochures and pamphlets** if the audience is generally literate. These could, however, be seen by many as "junk mail" and the information might be ignored. The sender of the information must also have a good knowledge of the target audience for the information to reach those specific individuals.

Posters, outdoor billboards and motorcars with loudspeakers would be better especially when the illiteracy rate is high. When using posters and billboards, the wording should be carefully chosen and the illustrations should be large and visible to all. The message must be brief and to the point.

➢ Semi-mass media

With semi-mass media we refer to situations where many people can be reached, but where their presence is by invitation. Meetings, workshops and bi-lateral discussions by invitation would be part of this category. This is definitely a good way of conveying information to a large groups of people, and, very importantly, to get their reaction to it. By inviting specific groups of people to the meeting, workshops or discussions, it would assist the initiator to determine the specific information needs of the target audience and to adapt his/her message accordingly. This aspect makes semi-mass media sessions a better option than the public meeting.

➢ Institutions

Various institutions such as schools represent about eighty percent of all households. Therefore they are very good places to distribute information. The clinic is also a place where information can successfully be shared, because many women visit it.

If a community facilitator chooses this form of information dissemination, one should be aware of gender equality and not just focus on institutions where just men or just women are represented.

➢ Less formal organisations

Church services and prayer meetings take place regularly and can be used to provide information to those present and to ask them to spread the information further. One should be sensitive to the opinions and perceptions of those that do not belong to these organisations might have of the organisation itself spreading the information. It can negatively affect the communication process. All might not view a church group in the same light.

From the above, it seems as if the workshops, meetings, and bi-lateral discussions will be the most effective ways to create the awareness. In these situations there is face-to-face communication. There is ample opportunity to ensure that the awareness-creating message is understood correctly. There is also opportunity to move stakeholders from a passive knowledge to commitment and dedication. The problem is of course that workshops are expensive, time consuming, cumbersome and need well-trained personnel.

1.1.6 EXERCISES

EXERCISE 1

COMMUNICATION

1) Divide into two groups. Such a group is called a dyad. The members of the dyad should stand directly opposite one another at a distance of approximately one meter. Engage in a conversation on any topic you choose, but while you are talking, maintain the distance between you and your partner. After a while, reduce the distance and continue talking. After another minute, reduce the distance even more. Discuss your reactions concerning the distances you maintained.

2) Form a new group (four to five persons). Everyone should be seated in a circle. Starting at a point and, proceed to the right. In turn, each person should give three boasts about himself. If unsure, ask yourself in what way you have grown in the past year - if you are wiser, more skilled, or a better person than you were previously? Why do certain friends or family members care about you?

3) After everyone has finished boasting, discuss the experience. How you felt when you shared parts of yourself that you feel good about - was it this difficult? Consider whether you would have found it easier to list bad things about yourself. Consider the impact of such a habit on your self-esteem and willingness to communicate.

4) Discus one personal communication problem a person has and hopes to solve. Try to be as sincere and open with your feelings as possible. Try to keep the discussion focused on the problem. Every time someone shares and idea or experience, make it relevant to your situation. Don't get sidetracked by his or her comments. Your task is to tell the others about your communication problem. After the discussion, take a few minutes and talk about how you felt during the conversation - when others ignored your message and when you ignored theirs.

5) Choose a partner, and find a spot where you can talk. Sit back-to-back with your partner, making sure that no parts of your bodies are touching. You should be seated so that you can talk easily without seeing each other. Take two minutes to carry on a conversation about whatever subject you like. The only requirement is that you must not look at or touch each other. Communicate using words only.

6) Next, sit at a comfortable distance and face your partner. Now that you have eye contact, carry on with your conversation for another two minutes.

7) Continue to face each other, but don't speak for the next two minutes. Explain by means of non-verbal communication (gestures, etc.) what you want to convey.

8) After you have finished the exercise, take some time to talk it over with your partner. Start by sharing how you felt in each part of the experience. Were you comfortable, nervous, or playful?

EXERCISE 2

PUBLIC SPEAKING

1) Form small-groups (three to four people). What is the most impressive, interesting, or novel introduction you have ever heard in a speech? If you cannot recall any impressive introductions, brainstorm for several possible opening lines for a specific topic you have chosen.

2) While in your group, select another speech topic and brainstorm for as many possible types of visual forms of information that might be presented with that topic. Once you have completed at least 20 possible visual aids, evaluate them individually and select the three best ideas.

3) Create a three-minute informative speech about one of the following topics:

- Drug abuse

- Water pollution

- Motorcycle racing

- The rights of sex workers

- Environmental conservation

- Equal rights for women

- Fast foods

- How to make money

Choose a spokesperson to present the speech to the audience. The audience must evaluate the speech and make constructive comments on aspects that were good and aspects that need attention. The facilitator can allocate anyone from the group to continue the presentation at any time. Everyone must be prepared to present the speech.

1.2 DEVELOP PLANS TO IMPLEMENT THE COMMUNICATION PROCESS.

The purpose of this unit is to provide you with the skills and background to develop your own Catchment and Forum Appropriate Communication Implementation Plans. The focus will be on identifying the various aspects and skills needed to develop such plans.

1.2.1 IDENTIFY THE COMMUNICATION ENVIRONMENT

The communication environment is the context in which communication takes place. This context influences communication and is at the same time influenced by the communication taking place within its borders. Actually, the communication environment consists of, or presents itself in a number of different environments. These different types of environment have a profound influence on communication. The following should be noticed:

1.2.1.1 *Political environment*

The political environment consists of political leaders and groupings, as well as activities such as meetings and marches. Political communication consists of messages about political orientation and policy preferences. There can also be conflict and strife in the political environment.

You might experience situations where the political environment or forces have either a positive or a negative influence on your communication efforts. An example is criticism regarding the government's water and sanitation policies and the implementation thereof.

1.2.1.2 *Social environment*

The social environment consists of institutions such as the primary institution of the family and the secondary institutions such as the school and church, clubs and interest groups. There are also informal groupings such as friendship circles. Families are represented in the secondary institutions and communicate with one another, but there is a social layering that prohibits some families to interact with others.

The success of your communication could depend on the stability of the social environment you are working in.

1.2.1.3   Cultural environment

The cultural environment consists of the values and norms of a society. These values and norms are referred to as the traditions of the community. According to traditions, people have a set place in society with certain obligations towards society. In turn, they can expect the society's guidance and provision of a living environment as long as they stick to the customs.

If an information message appears to want to change tradition, or is critical of traditional values, it will not be easily accepted.

1.2.1.4   Economic environment

Every community has its local economy that is manifested in the informal and formal sector. The society is also economically layered so that you will find the very poor, the poor and those with disposable income. The economic environment is very important in communication and also influences aspects such as water management. Further, it is important to ensure that communication efforts are aimed at all the economic layers within the society.

1.2.1.5   Psychological environment

People experience life in their own peculiar way. This abstract manifestation called personality is known as the psychological make up of a person. Personality can be experienced as negative when people live under stress or when they find themselves in a strange environment (e.g. migrants experiencing city life as a different and stressful environment). The psychological make up of people will influence their participation and the extent to which they will be prepared to assume responsibility. The psychological make-up also requires a certain slant towards information for it to be acceptable.

In terms of the communication environment for "catchment and forum appropriate communication implementation plans" it is worth noting the following issues that might affect the communication environment.

> ➢ While the public mood towards water management is not negative, there is however strong criticism around the issues of sustainability of water services, payment for water, the lack of progress on sanitation delivery, the constant pollution problems, inequity in access and distribution, as well as the inability to implement legislation.

> ➢ The recent implementation of the government's policy of free basic water has also brought a renewed focus on the activities of DWAF. There are stakeholders who have a negative reaction to the new National Water Act. Several stakeholders benefited substantially from the previous water act that ignored principles such as equity, efficiency and sustainability. The new act also introduced the concept of devolution of decision-making and governance to the lowest level. This approach could easily be perceived as a threat to existing roles and responsibilities of structures at local level, in particular in rural areas. The requirement of the act that all relevant stakeholders must be involved in decision-making processes in the catchment area could further create tensions amongst stakeholders because some of them will feel threatened.

➢ This communications environment portrays these different feelings towards central aspects because it is influenced by the diversity of the target audiences that will be part of IWRM. We have largely uneducated rural black communities, poor access to water services and other resources, functioning under the jurisdiction of traditional authorities. Generally these communities are mostly illiterate and have been excluded from decision-making processes in the past. Therefore they find it difficult to participate meaningfully. In these cases communication will have to concentrate and bring about capacity building and active participation of all the relevant stakeholders. Persuasive communication strategies would have to be adopted to bring about change in the attitudes, beliefs, values and behaviour.

➢ In the urban areas there are two main stakeholders. The first are the urban white suburban communities, which are relatively, well off and who were advantaged by the old dispensation. In most cases these stakeholders have been in positions of power, have high levels of education and literacy, and have access to services including water services. Black stakeholders in urban areas are more advantaged than their rural counterparts, but are certainly less advantaged than the white urbanites.

➢ Participation of these diverse stakeholder groupings can become extremely difficult to manage. It is through communication that conflict and the gaps caused by diversity will have to be addressed. For this reason an effective communication strategy is of importance and needs to be implemented within the catchment relevant situation or communication environment.

➢ It is clear that the environment is tremendously complex and consists of a number of different specific environments containing different political, social, cultural, economic and psychological realities. This complexity makes it very important to know the environment in detail, to know the role players, the situations and the potential conflicts that exist or could arise. Through communication a seemingly unworkable situation must be made to work, a potentially explosive situation must be defused and the diversity of stakeholders must be utilised in a positive manner to the advantage of IWRM in general and a "Catchment Management Strategy" in particular.

1.2.1.6   *Principles for a good communication strategy*

From what we have learnt thus far we can say that the following principles should form a basis for identifying a communication environment:

➢ Communication is an essential managerial function and tool in a varied and complex environment.
➢ The communication strategy should be used to accomplish things collectively through participative problem solving and decision-making processes.
➢ There is a firm commitment to a transparent and effective relationship with all stakeholders and affected communities.
➢ Accountability to the people in a water catchment area is a key element of a communication strategy.
➢ There is a commitment to empowering target audiences.
➢ The communication strategy must be seen at all times as part of a wider departmental and governmental strategy.

1.2.2   ESTABLISH LINKAGES WITH STAKEHOLDERS

1.2.2.1   *Stakeholders and their participation*

In identifying the communication environment, the role players or stakeholders active in that environment will firstly be identified. Stakeholders could include representatives from all three tiers of government, political leaders, traditional authorities, community-based organisations, forums, committees, members of the general public and so forth. Participation of and linkages with the various stakeholder groupings formed, as part of the IWRM strategy, will be of the utmost importance.

A word of warning is that no stakeholder should ever be overlooked. It will lead to a stakeholder not being involved and therefore not contributing their unique point of view. At worst it can lead to great animosity because it will be felt as if the stakeholder was ignored wilfully.

We must also remember that when identifying stakeholders all the environmental aspects come into play. Our communication with a stakeholder will therefore be viewed through political, social, cultural and other viewpoints. Preferences as to a political party or an economically specific target or gender will all be scrutinised by the general public and complaints about favouritism will be made. The fact that these allegations will be made is of less importance than them ever being substantiated. Water relevant matters have political, social, economic and even cultural meaning and repercussions. It is quite a formidable task to steer clear of the pitfalls in this regard and it will happen often that you will have to plot your way out of these pitfalls.

1.2.2.2   *Motivating the establishment of linkages between stakeholders*

Once stakeholders have been identified, effective linkages must be created to ensure their participation. These linkages are created by communication on a regular basis. The type of communication and the contents of the message cannot be a free for all. It must be specific according to the needs and situation of each stakeholder group. This means that 'information needs identification exercise' would have to be conducted. The participants to this must be the stakeholders themselves and they must give voice to their informational needs. The linkages to be established will then enable the sharing of that information. Such a needs identification exercise can be done through discussions or community surveys. A very helpful tool is Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA), a research methodology promoting local participation, which will be discussed at a later stage.

It is therefore important to establish what message should be communicated to the stakeholders. Stakeholders will participate if they are assured that their activity will meet the important components of their needs. Therefore, in order to promote interest in a matter and in the structures associated with it, the dissemination of information relative to the needs and requirements of people is important. Further, the information must be of a motivational character. In other words one should know what makes the stakeholders "tick".

Motivational communication tries to create a change of behaviour through an awareness of the needs, insufficient means, poverty, as well as the correction of the negative situation.

It is important that the receiver of a motivational message should realise that something can be done about the less than satisfactory situation that exists. The receiver must also realise that his/her participation is necessary to accomplish the change.

Motivational communication must be understood. The language should therefore be at a comprehensible level. Effective and appropriate information sharing will create the necessary linkages that will hopefully lead to higher levels of participation and commitment.

Linkages are more than mere communication activities. While they are forged through communication and quite often kept alive through communication, they are more than just that. They are structures that must be created and formalised. A linkage can consist of a loose organisation with one meeting per month, or it can be a partnership in sharing information on the Internet. Linkages can consist of focus groups for catchment relevant institutions, which are not necessarily part of the institutions, but interact with them in various ways.

The important aspect in this case is that some linkage structure must exist and be used. This linkage structure must also fit the situation, in other words, it must conform to the criterion of appropriateness. Communication between these linkage structures should be effective and the best possible flow of information should be achieved by adapting messages to meet the different needs and expectations.

1.2.3   IDENTIFY THE COMMUNICATION CHALLENGES

Every aspect of life has its own peculiar communication challenges. Think of the communication challenges of a soccer coach or a schoolteacher. The same goes for the catchment relevant situation. We have already identified a few challenges, but there are more problems, some general and some specific. Challenges identified include:

❖   To communicate the fact that positioning integrated water resources management has one of the most important programmes aimed at promoting equity, efficiency, and sustainability of water resources.

❖   To ensure coherence among the three spheres of government in its approach to integrated water resources management.

❖   To position IWRM as a symbol of integrated rural development and urban renewal.

❖   To assist stakeholders and communities in understanding the intention of IWRM by means of

➢   An awareness campaign, which will educate and empower them to support and manage it.

➢   Information needs identification exercise with their full participation.

➢   The forging of linkages between stakeholders.

➢   The maintenance of the linkages between the stakeholders.

❖   To consult stakeholders concerning the impact of IWRM and thereby eliciting their views and concerns through the various communication linkages that exist.

❖   To devise effective communication products, tools and processes.

❖   To maintain the communication tools and processes.

1.2.4   IDENTIFY COMMUNICATION REQUIREMENTS

To overcome the obstacles experienced during any communication process and to ensure achievement, responsibility, recognition and growth through communication, and to meet certain basic communication requirements. In terms of IWRM the following general communication requirements are worth noting:

- ❖ Communicate the advantages of implementing IWRM as it could lead to a sustainability of water resources that would result in growth and development.

- ❖ Stress the desired actions needed from the various stakeholders to successfully implement IWRM.

- ❖ Ensure that the linkages between the stakeholders are kept and that there is a sufficient communication flow between the stakeholders resulting in effective cooperation.

- ❖ Effective communication should eliminate sources of misunderstandings between the various stakeholders. The messages relayed should present facts in an unbiased manner by ignoring negative influences from the political, social and cultural environment.

In communicating the above messages, the following basic principles could also be taken into account to ensure that the participants are motivated and actively participate in the process:

- ❖ Provide stakeholders with information beyond what is applicable to their immediate situation, to ensure that they do not just tend to focus on their individual problems and issues e.g. communicate the "wider" concept of IWRM in an understandable way.

- ❖ Divide stakeholders into "self-managing" teams to assist in determining what information should be communicated. The stakeholders would be able to provide you with important information about the various stakeholder groupings and their needs, which will assist in determining an appropriate communication strategy.

- ❖ Allow for feedback from the stakeholders so that the communication message can be adapted where necessary.

1.2.5   ANALYSE COMMUNICATION MESSAGES AND PRIORITIES

An analysis of the communication environment and the challenges that the communication strategy must concentrate on, have priority. An agreement amongst stakeholders will determine the agenda. The current agenda of 'creating a better life for all' could be continued. This means that DWAF will ensure that decisive action will be taken to create a better life for all. This message is far wider than water management but at the same time it brings water nearer to rural development and urban renewal. In this way IWRM is equated with development in general. There can hardly be a more positive agenda than this.

The key themes envisaged cover three important aspects, which are:

- ❖ The role of government, not only as far as water resources management is concerned, but regarding the broader developmental aspect.

- ❖ The role of the community in water resources management and the positive results this will bring.

- ❖ The key position of IWRM.

In more detail these themes are as follows:

- ❖ All three spheres of government are forging partnerships with communities to act decisively in order to improve their lives.
- ❖ Community participation is a key to equity, efficiency and sustainability of water resources.
- ❖ IWRM is the key to socio-economic development in rural and urban areas.

There are many messages that could be communicated and there is more than one addressee of these messages and it will be your task to identify them. A few are mentioned below:

- ❖ To the government:

    - ➢ Good governance is imperative for sustainable growth and equity;

    - ➢ Government should work efficiently for a better life for all;

    - ➢ Cooperative government is at the same time developmental government; and

    - ➢ It is government's task to empower IWRM through a continuous review of their policies.

- ❖ To communities/stakeholders:

    - ➢ Participation of communities is necessary to bring about change;

    - ➢ IWRM is a vehicle to develop communities in more aspects than only water.

    - ➢ The importance of cooperation for a better life for all.

    - ➢ IWRM must ensure equity, efficiency and sustainability.

    - ➢ The responsibilities and obligations as part of participation.

    - ➢ The close relationship between participation and empowerment.

- ❖ To decision-makers:

    - ➢ IWRM needs leadership. It cannot exist of its own accord;

    - ➢ IWRM supports equity, efficiency and sustainability;

    - ➢ IWRM is crucial for socio-economic development; and

    - ➢ Decision-making should become a community activity.

If we look at these themes and messages the extent of IWRM becomes clear. Firstly, It is much broader than only water resources management and secondly, it includes more than only water resources managers. This fact is not yet communicated sufficiently, simply because the messages are not yet focused on the above themes and therefore the messages are more basic than is envisaged in this unit.

1.2.6 IDENTIFY TARGET AUDIENCES

Target audiences may differ. A lay audience (e.g. community members) might not be experts in the IWRM field and it would be necessary to provide them with more background about the process and explanation of technical terms.   A mixed audience would be the most difficult to communicate with. It is therefore important to segment the target audiences according to the nature and type of information that they require so as to have a positive impact on the process. Although there is a need to communicate with the general public, emphasis should be placed on specific stakeholders who are key to the success of the project. These might vary from catchment to catchment and therefore you must identify further key targets. The following target audiences are considered important:

- ❖ National government, departments dealing with environmental affairs, water affairs, forestry, agriculture, and land affairs.
- ❖ Provincial government.
- ❖ Local government.
- ❖ Traditional leaders.
- ❖ Local government associations.
- ❖ Water management institutions.
- ❖ The industry and business sectors.
- ❖ Non-governmental organisations; international, national and local.
- ❖ Community based organisations of which there are large numbers in rural and urban areas. They include women's clubs, youth clubs, ratepayers' associations, farmers' cooperatives, burial societies and sports clubs. There are also the more formal organisations such as clinic and school committees.
- ❖ The formal and informal agricultural sector with associations, cooperatives and unions.
- ❖ The forestry sector.
- ❖ Para-statals.
- ❖ Media, including the written media such as newspapers and electronic media such as the radio, television and the Internet.
- ❖ Political organisations, but never one of a specific orientation only. Always as many organisations representing as broad a spectrum as possible.

Once these target audiences have been identified, they can be included in the communication implementation plans and thus become part of the whole communication structure for IWRM.

1.2.7 IDENTIFY, DEVELOP AND UTILISE COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

1.2.7.1 *Typical communication channels*

Communication channels utilised can play a huge role in the successful distribution of information. Careful consideration should be given to the best channels to be used, but the characteristics of the audience, such as education levels, economic status, age, gender, residency and so forth, would also be a determining factor. The following communication channels are regularly used to spread information:

➤ The public meeting are good for handing out information, but can be big and unruly, especially if an action group represents specific perceptions, or where there exist conflicting viewpoints amongst the attendants.

➤ Mass media, especially the radio and television, and rural TV (television sets in public places like shops where videos are played on a continuous basis) are effective communication channels. "Taxi tapes", based on the same principle as rural TV have also proofed successful. The value of the radio as communication medium has again been noted due to its practical use and target range. A further benefit is the fact that there are numerous radio stations available broadcasting in different languages. Brochures, posters, pamphlets as well as motorcars with loudspeakers could also be used. In terms of the brochures, posters and pamphlets, the literacy levels and visual aptitude or the target audience would play a definite role in the successful utilisation of these mass media channels.

➤ There is also semi-mass media through which many people can be reached, but where their presence is by invitation. Meetings by invitation, workshops and bi-lateral discussions would fall under this category. This is definitely an excellent way to convey information to fairly large groups of people, and, very importantly, to get their immediate reaction to it.

➤ Institutions - About eighty percent of all households are represented on the school grounds, therefore the school can be a very good place to deliver information. Many women visit the clinics, which makes for a good place for information distribution.

➤ Less formal organisations - church services and prayer meetings take place regularly and can be used to provide information to those present and to ask them to spread the information further. The same goes for women's clubs, youth clubs, sport clubs and choirs. The problem with these institutions as vehicles for information is primarily that they are not specifically interested in the information and might therefore not act on it or spread it further. Secondary, because the information is not their prime concern, they may not interpret the message in the right way, and spread a wrong message to the community.

➤ Finally, there are specific interest groups such as a water committee committed to water information, a clinic committee committed to health, a farmers' union aimed at agriculture. One is tempted to think that these organisations are too small to spread a message effectively, but it must be remember that they are the groups that believe in the message and have a passion for it.

It is important to realise that all channels have their own values. . The secret is to choose the right channel for the message and the target audience. One would not approach councillors of the local authority by handing out pamphlets to their children at school. One would not start communication with a group of mothers by arranging bi-lateral discussions with them. Another point of importance is that communication channels must be developed. At first, they would not necessarily be ready and right for the kind of message that you want to convey. Therefore they must be developed so that they would become better conveyers of the information.

1.2.7.2 *Multi-media approach*

With the diverse nature of the target audiences in mind any communication programme will have to be innovative and include a multi-media approach where a number of communication channels should be used to create the most effective communication.

Any community is serviced by a number of information channels. An ordinary community will have, for example, teachers who will bring a specific kind of information to the school children; health personnel who will provide information on health, sanitation and nutrition; a public or school library with a librarian offering general information to all who want to benefit from it; representatives of service units such as roads, public service, parks and traffic with very specific, sometimes technical information; and political representatives with political information. We can add the mass media such as newspapers, the radio and television and personal channels consisting of friends and family. All of these existing information channels in a community should be reviewed in determining which could assist in spreading information the best way possible.

One should also note that all communication reaching a community is not 'raw' information. Different types of information exist, which could also be utilised, namely:

> ➢ **Interpreted information**. In other words, someone has already interpreted the raw information and the interpretation is now disseminated. Most educational information falls in this category.

> ➢ Information can also be of an **interpretative nature**. In other words, the information explains or interprets something, for example, information on why service fees must be paid.

> ➢ Information can also be of a **motivational nature** where the receiver is called upon to do something or support something.

> ➢ **Political information** is usually of this nature where the objective of information usually is to ask for support.

> ➢ An example of **persuasive communication** is an advertisement that aims at a positive reaction in buying or doing something. Information disseminated through a campaign also has this objective. Examples are the information on AIDS, anti-tobacco information and the campaign against crime.

Community activists and facilitators are interested in **motivational communication**. It is necessary to convey certain types of information in order to ensure the success of the mobilisation. Motivational information should not only speak to the minds of people, but also to their hearts. The needs, attitudes and beliefs of people should thus be taken into account to ensure that people organise themselves to obtain certain objectives (e.g. sustainability of water resources or adequate sanitation facilities). Three sets of information are necessary to achieve this, namely:

> ➢ The one set is information about organisation. Mobilisation and facilitation are targeted at getting people to organise themselves. They must therefore know how to organise successfully and thus they need specific information.

> ➢ The second set is about the management of projects. People must be organised for a specific objective, namely to start projects that will address their problems and/or needs. They must therefore know how to run or manage projects.

> ➢ The final set of information is of a professional nature. It depends on the type of project that is launched. If the project is launched to address the sanitation problem, the information will be on sanitation, if they want to improve their homes, naturally the information will specifically address that issue, and so forth.

Information channels are very important and without them communities will be isolated. However, it is very important that information channels are connected to vibrant and trustworthy information sources. Just as a tap can only give water as long as it is connected to a reservoir, community facilitators and mobilisers can give information only if they are connected to the source of information.

1.2.7.3   *Information problems*

We live in the information age. We can literally get a mass of information by pressing one button. Yet, many poor communities are so isolated that they are starved of information. This isolation from information is an important cause of communities' disempowerment because without the relevant information they cannot become part of the modern world and they cannot fulfil their obligations as autonomous entities. Two things can go wrong with a water source. It can be polluted and it can dry up. The same can happen to an information source, although it differs from the case of water, information can also become dated. It is therefore very important to make sure of the following:

> ➢ That the information is not polluted. People need information to be able to govern them-selves and free themselves from the chains of poverty. A lot of information directed to communities contains very little useful information on how to govern and how to fight poverty. Unfortunately the information is 'polluted' with political rhetoric, with and with emotional banalities on self-help. This type of information and the way it is given to people raises expectations. Eventually people become bitterly disappointed and apathetic towards all efforts to help them address their problems.

> ➢ That the information does not dry up. Communities struggling against poverty need information on an ongoing basis. Their fight for freedom against poverty is drawn out and therefore their facilitators must ensure that the information will be forthcoming for an extended period. They must make sure that the information reservoirs are full and vibrant and that they will supply the necessary information for a long time to come. At the same time they must ensure that the information channels are open and sturdy so as to convey the information for as long as it is supplied.

> ➢ That the information is fresh. Outdated information is just as bad as no information at all. Science and technology progresses so fast that the danger exists of outdated information. Facilitators and mobilisers of communities can never be satisfied with what they know and with the information they have. They must always look for the latest verified information and provide it to the communities.

1.2.8   EXERCISE

EXERCISE 3

Divide into four groups. Within each group, discuss the aspects indicated below. On reaching consensus, formulate the group viewpoint in writing. Choose a representative to give feedback to the plenary session. Please address the following tasks.

1) Formulate a communication plan with respect to the placing of a new water point in a community. The following aspects should be taken into consideration:

   ➢   The political environment (i.e. which political leaders or groupings need to be consulted with regard to the new water point?)

   ➢   Social environment (who is the target of the communication plan?)

   ➢   Cultural environment (what are the traditions of the people?)

   ➢   Economic environment (what are the different economic layers within the community?)

   ➢   Psychological environment (how receptive will the community be to the communication plan?)

2) Identify the possible stakeholders in the placement of a new water point within a community.

3) Identify the communication challenges that may be experienced with respect to this communication plan.

4) List the communication requirements for the communication plan.

5) How can the communication plan address the message 'creating a better life for all'?

6) Which communication channels would be most useful for the communication plan?

1.2.9   DEVELOP MECHANISMS TO INTERPRET RELEVANT INFORMATION AND PROVIDE APPROPRIATE FEEDBACK TO COMMUNITIES

> *The purpose of this unit is to provide you with the skills to establish reliable sources of information, and to identify and use existing channels of communication to distribute information to the relevant communities. It will also enable you to create further communication channels where they do not exist. In a similar vein, this unit will enable you to gather feedback from the respective communities on a variety of aspects. In practice, this will enable you to interpret water and other related legislation for the community and provide feedback to the community on aspects such as the availability of resources, management aspects as well as financial awareness.*

1.2.9.1   *Ensure Reliable Resources For Information, Identify Existing Communication Channels For Information Dissemination, And Create Further Channels Where There Is A Need*

1.2.9.2   *Information Source*

We have said earlier that information distribution can only be successful if there is a reliable source of information that can be tapped. This is the bridgehead of the information dissemination structure. If this part is not functional the rest of the structure cannot operate successfully. There are a number of important aspects regarding the availability of information sources that must be mentioned.

➢ The first is that it is always available. You never know when you need information and it is not only embarrassing, but also a waste of time if information is not available.

➢ The second is that the information is ordered and interpreted. Raw, information has much less value and frequently it cannot be used or, if used, can be interpreted the wrong way. Raw information also has the tendency to be bulky so that a situation of information overload can occur.

➢ The third is that there is information on a number of topics and of a varied nature. Our sub unit 5.1 wants us to interpret water and other related legislation. This is a professional's task. We cannot do it properly. Our source of information must have a professional interpretation of the various laws and this must be ready for use. Our sub unit 6.1 wants us to give feedback on management and financial matters. Again, we are not really trained to provide this information. We need some professional interpretation and explained in layman's terms.

➢ The fourth is that the information is not polluted. Information gets muddled up with politicians' agendas. The facts might therefore be twisted to suit the needs of specific people and not those that are directly affected. Polluted information can raise a lot of expectations leaving people de-motivated and demoralised.

➢ The fifth is that the information does not dry up. A source may have insufficient information on certain topics and nothing on others. They have very little use.

➢ Finally, the information must be fresh (recent). Outdated information is just as bad as no information at all. Imagine a source with interpretations of water related legislation that has been repealed!

If you were satisfied with the information source, the next step would be to investigate the communication channels that can be used.

1.2.9.3   *Communication Channels*

There are a few things about channels that we should consider.

➢ Channels should not be top heavy. The longer the chain of command, the longer it takes for information to reach its destination. The bigger the structure, the slower information flows through it and the more communication barriers it has to overcome. So, big structures have a double disadvantage.

➢ Channels should be without obstructions. Obstructions block the flow of information. A good example of such an obstruction is a government office with a notice board, but with no light near it. The daytime personnel have full access to the information, but the nighttime personnel cannot read the notices.

➢ Communication should not have too many channels or offices through which it must go. The tendency exists that each office receiving the information and passing it on to the next office, adds an own interpretation to the information or only sends a summary of the information forward or adds and subtracts to the original message so that the meaning changes. This could also lead to delays, as the information needs to be "processed" at the one end first before it can be passed on to the next.

➢ Channels should have specific destinations. You do not want the information to just disappear in the sand at the end of the line. Someone must receive the message and use it.

The golden rule is to use as many sources of information as necessary. Some of the information is for general consumption while others are for selected groups and structures. That already necessitates different sources. So, different channels have different purposes. This means that we can create further channels of information flow. The provisions, however, is that it must be needed. There is not much sense in creating new channels when existing ones are under-utilised, except of course if they are underused specifically because they are inappropriate for the task. It is better, and cheaper, to try and fix existing channels, though bad, than to create new ones. If there are appropriate existing forums or committees that could be used to distribute information or to include in the process, these should be utilised to the full.

In any case, the whole matter of information channels should be tackled in an orderly fashion. To begin with a communication audit is advisable before anything is done to improve or create new channels. A thorough audit will show poorly operating, or channels that are inappropriate or without specific functions. It will show where channels are top heavy, where there are too many stations and will identify obstacles that can be removed.

After such an audit, it will be logical and quite simple to correct communication channels, either by fixing, replacing or creating new ones.

In creating new communication channels the following aspects should be taken into account:

> The communication channels should be set up in such a way so that the common goals, for which it was created, could easily be reached.

> An atmosphere of trust should be created so that the best possible transparent communication process can take place.

> Those forming part of the channels must have the necessary skills or be trained in the creation and delivery of messages.

> The flow of communication between the channels must be managed.

1.2.9.4 *Communication Audit*

An information or communication audit can be limited in scope and function, or can be all encompassing. Ideally it will check, evaluate and analyse the following:

> The sources of information and their relevance (freshness, access, spectrum).

> The channels (origins, lengths, destinations).

> The stations or offices in a channel (number, necessity, obligations and responsibilities regarding information).

> The functional aspects, such as the following questions:

- Who uses the sources?

- How regularly are the sources used?

- What information is put into the channel?

- Is information addressed to a destination?

- What happens to information in the channels?

- What happens to information at the destination?

- Is there any feedback?

- How is the feedback handled?

1.2.10   SUPPLY INFORMATION FOR DISSEMINATION AND GATHER FEEDBACK

1.2.10.1   *Dissemination of Information*

Thus far we have dealt with the structures for information dissemination. Now we must attend to the function of dissemination. We already know that information must be fresh, unpolluted, reliable, appropriate and interpretative. All that remains to be said is that information cannot be disseminated in a haphazard way. It is not a matter of relaying information from the receiver. Our information dissemination will be systemised, and more than one system will be in operation. The nature, content and purpose of information differ so vastly that different systems will have to be used. Some information is of a general nature, i.e. information on organization or on motivation. Other information is for the consumption of a selected group of people or one individual. It seems that within a catchment relevant situation it should be established what information destinations exist and for what purposes information is passed on. Only when this is known can systems for information dissemination be devised and put into operation. Those responsible for the dissemination of the information must therefore analyse the needs of the audience and adapt the communication style accordingly.

It is clear that there is a further item to the information dissemination system. That is the feedback or reaction on initial information.

1.2.10.2   *Feedback*

There must be a structure for feedback. Remember, we have said earlier that information cannot be one directional. We spoke of the value of a communication network. Now we see that some channel must be created to carry feedback. This channel must conform to the same criteria of communication channels to the community. Channels should not be too long, and they should be obstruction free. They should not have too many stations and they should have a specific and final destination.

Feedback is not given for the interest of it. The source of the information becomes the receiver of it and must do something with it, the purpose of further information dissemination. This points to a cyclical system of continuous information dissemination. When systems for information distribution are being devised, the feedback function must also be included so that the initial informal and haphazard information dissemination can become systemised and formalised.

We might have created the idea that information always originate at some official source and is always targeted at the community and that feedback originates in the community and is always addressed to the official source that has begun the process. However, we must realise that information can originate at the community. A message can be sent from the community to some official destination and then the feedback will come from the official destination back to the community. In fact, it would be a very positive sign if this direction of communication and feedback would be used more and more because it indicates that the communities are taking initiative and are becoming empowered to take ownership.

Feedback plays an important role in the communication process as it provides the sender with information on how the message was interpreted. Feedback is not always oral or written, by can also take the form of behaviour change or a lack of behaviour change. If the feedback is not "positive" in terms of the message created, you should change your communication process (different channels or messages) to achieve the desired results.

1.2.11   EXERCISES

EXERCISE 4

1) In a plenary discussion, propose methods of identifying information sources. Share past experiences with each other. Make suggestions on how to determine whether the sources are reliable or not.

2) The entire group should form a circle. The facilitator will give a message to one person in a low tone of voice. This message should be passed around the circle in a whisper until it reaches the last person who should announce it to the group. The final message should be compared with the initial message given to the first person by the facilitator.

3) Use this as the basis for a plenary discussion on communication channels.

4) Break into four groups, each group should discuss the following aspects and give feedback to the plenary session.

   ➢   Propose mechanisms for the improvement of existing communication channels and the creation of new ones.

   ➢   Propose a mechanism for the dissemination of information.

   ➢   Propose a mechanism for gathering feedback.

5) In the plenary session, discuss why is it useful to have a cyclical information process, including dissemination and feedback?

1.2.12 PREPARING AND DISSEMINATION OF RELEVANT INFORMATION

On completion of this unit you should be able to prepare and disseminate appropriate information disseminate the relevant information in such a fashion that it will be appropriate and comprehensible to the recipient stakeholders, including the media, schools and other appropriate organisations and groups.

1.2.12.1 PREPARE INFORMATION FOR DISSEMINATION IN SUCH A WAY THAT IT WILL BE APPROPRIATE AND COMPREHENSIBLE TO THE COMMUNITY

We have looked at the structures for information dissemination and at the function of information distribution. Now we must attend to the form in which information can and must be cast. But, interestingly enough, we start at the source again. First we want to ensure that our source of information is still reliable. That means that the information with which we are going to work is fresh, unpolluted, correct, and interpreted. Only when we are satisfied with the calibre of information originating from the source, can we process into the form and format that we want.

The form and format of the information package will determine how much information we will supply. The target audience and the purpose of the information will determine what information to emphasise, what to include, and what to exclude altogether. The target audience and the purpose will also determine the style in which we will present the information, and will also have an influence on what information we will supply.

You can provide different amounts of information in different formats. You can use important information in a brochure, while only the most important information can be used on a poster. In a report to a workshop or an information piece to the members of a committee you can use so much more information.

A brochure to school children will use a different style from a brochure to adults and the contents may be different because information that may be of importance for adults such as the price of water, may not be useful for school children. The vehicle of information will always influence style. A poster and brochure must be eye catching, and must be flamboyant while a report to an institution will be much more sober in style and language.

Finally, the purpose of the information will also determine in what form and in what style it will be presented. A document explaining what IWRM is to a committee of the local government will look different and have a different content from a motivational pamphlet to the general public to get their support for IWRM.

A hint to take to heart: Proof read everything that you write before it leaves you. Do not entrust that task to anybody, because they can only do a part of that job. Proof read your own work to save you from embarrassment.

The important criteria are that the information must be understandable to the target audience - remember the important barrier of understanding to successful communication. In the second place the information must be appropriate and by this we mean that it should serve its purpose and should not be offensive.

After you have spent time and effort on acquiring information, you do not want to see it falter before it reaches its destination. We are back at the communication channels that are proof of how important they are. Your information can be the best in the world, your format can be very appropriate and your style can be eye catching, but if the information does not reach its proper target, everything would be wasted.

After your labours you do not want to see the information lying somewhere on a desk for two weeks. You also do not want to see the information changed by someone else, quite possibly under your name! Finally, you want the information to go to the right target. School children's pamphlets landing at the local government offices and vice versa would not serve your purpose and would be embarrassing. So, always keep an eye on the communication channels when you must use them. Make sure that they carry your message to its destination quickly and efficiently.

To assist you in your task we include a couple of pointers on different channels to be used in disseminating information. You would have to decide which channel would be the most appropriate to target your audience.

Channel	Strong points	Weak points
Newspapers	Target a large and wide audience. Costs are relatively low. Illustrations and explanations can be given.	Audience has to be literate. Audience is of a general nature. The life of the newspaper is short and some of the audience might fail to spot the information.
Magazines	Printing and quality is of a high standard. Colours play an important role. A selected audience can be reached. Excellent use of illustrations.	Costs are high.
Radio	Illiterate and very wide audience can be reached. People can listen to the radio while doing other things. Useful for less wealthy audience. Less expensive than newspapers and magazines. Wide range of stations and vernacular languages are used. Advertisements and songs can be used.	Exposure life is short. Message must be brief or a lengthy talk should be developed. No illustrations are possible. The listener cannot refer back to the message.
Television	Most popular and versatile. Viewer cannot really ignore the message. Wide coverage is achieved.	Very expensive. General audience is reached. A lot of planning is required. Viewers cannot refer back to the message.

Channel	Strong points	Weak points
Pamphlets, Brochures and handouts	Personal and selective – easy to reach your target audience. Messages can be prepared for specific audiences. Relatively inexpensive. Illustrations, maps etc. can be used.	Literate audience necessary. Could be ignored by readers and be seen as "junk mail". Must be simple and clear, and attractively laid out.
Posters and billboards	Illiterate audience could be reached. Relatively inexpensive.	Effectiveness relies on visual aptitude of audience. Legibility and layout is important. Message must be brief.
Meetings, workshops and discussions	Target large or specific audiences Direct feedback provided.	Must be well planned. Could become unmanageable. Timing of the session is important to ensure attendance.

1.2.13 EXERCISES

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EXERCISE 5

This exercise is aimed at the preparation of information for dissemination so that it will be appropriate and comprehensible to a specific target group.

Divide into three groups. Each group will address one of the issues below:

Group	Target group	Issue
A	A school	Awareness of water conservation.
B	A women's group	Sanitation.
C	A Municipal council	Payment for water services.

1) Choose from the following the most appropriate channel, or combinations of channels for the dissemination of information to your target group. Please motivate your choice.

➢ A newspaper

➢ A magazine

➢ Radio

➢ Television

➢ Pamphlets, brochures or handouts.

➢ Posters or billboards

➢ Meetings, workshops or discussions.

2) List what you think the information content should be.

3) Each group must present their findings to the plenary session.

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1.3 CONFLICT RESOLUTION PROCESSES

The purpose of this unit is to provide you with the skills to identify potential conflict causing situations, how to avoid them, and how to resolve conflict, where it emerges. At the end of this module, you should be able to identify and use the appropriate conflict avoidance and resolution mechanism where necessary. You should be able to inform the stakeholders in your area of potential conflict and capacitate them with mechanisms to address it. You should be able to develop an appropriate strategy to manage the conflict potential in your area.

1.3.1 IDENTIFY CONFLICT CAUSING SITUATIONS

Conflict must be pre-empted and the best way to go about that is to be well prepared. One way of preparation is to identify conflict-causing situations. Check whether any of the following situations are present in your area.

1.3.1.1 *Unclear boundaries*

There is a need to ensure that stakeholders participate in the forum on the basis of clear mandates with a specific role and place. Overlapping or unclear role definitions tend to cause distrust and may lead to misunderstanding, friction and eventually conflict.

1.3.1.2 *Clashing interests*

Within the context of catchment relevant institutions it is virtually guaranteed that there will be a pre-existing perception among groups of stakeholders that their interests clash directly with the interests of one or more other groups. This may be exacerbated by the fact that all interests of all parties cannot be served at the same time. In addition a stakeholder group may deem that their interests are not regarded as important or that mechanisms to promote integrated water resources management place a significantly heavier burden on them than on other stakeholder groups. If the potential for conflict in this situation is identified in time, good communication can go a long way in preventing conflict.

1.3.1.3 *Clashing personalities*

Members of institutions can have conflicting personalities and values. In addition, each may have a support base within the institution. Where such persons are dominant, dogmatic or even aggressive conflict may develop that can spread far beyond the confines of two conflicting persons. It is a good thing to keep an eye on them and to keep them away from one another as far as possible.

1.3.1.4 *Dependency situation*

If one role player is dependent on another in order to play its role, it is obvious that the potential for conflict exists. This is especially true of horizontal dependency. This also goes for institutions. If, for example, one committee cannot do its work before another committee has made funds available for it, the potential for conflict is present.

1.3.1.5 Need for consensus

Ironically, in a situation where consensus must be obtained before action can be taken, there is marked potential for stalemates, power plays and conflict especially if the institutional management is weak and if communication is poor. The lesson to be learnt is where a system of consensus decision-making is in place, a well-organised management system must also be in place and communication must be good.

1.3.1.6 Misunderstanding

Misunderstanding is a direct result of poor communication. Misunderstanding leads to a situation where each party regards the other's motives as suspect. It is natural for distrust to grow between the parties and for episodes of confrontation to surface from time to time. Each new confrontation makes communication more difficult and thus more prone for further misunderstanding.

1.3.1.7 Unresolved prior conflicts

The potential exists that one or more groups of stakeholders that are drawn into the process have experienced prior conflict that is unresolved. As there is a natural tendency among people to minimise conflict, it is very tempting to try and pretend that the conflict does not exist and hope that matters will resolve themselves in time. Unfortunately this seldom happens and it would be necessary to facilitate a solution. Unresolved conflict has the tendency to resurface at inopportune times leading to escalating frustration and anger between most, if not all stakeholders. Conflict resolution becomes extremely difficult in such a situation as a result of its historic base as well as the fact that the parties involved either do not see a solution or do not want it. Attempts to resolve such conflict may need to be taken back to the organisations being represented by stakeholders with the request that the issue be addressed or that different representatives be appointed.

1.3.1.8 Group dynamics that could lead to conflict

It is important to realise that conflict should not be avoided at all costs; in fact, some conflict is good for an organisation. We are, however, concerned about personal, destructive and spreading conflict. Conflict is healthy when it is non-abusive and comes in the form of competition. An avoidance of all conflict at all costs can lead to 'group thinking' that develops as a result of a feeling among the members that they do not want to upset the harmony and oneness of a group.

The ups and downs of a group, the active and the relaxing elements in the life of a group, and the differing and sometimes clashing personalities that you have discerned, are all normal parts of a group dynamics. The important thing is to understand the dynamics in order to work with a group successfully. It is also important to define and stay aware of the role of communication in this dynamism. We tend to think that group activities should go smoothly, that harmony must exist at all times and that everything must be done in agreement. That is not how a group normally works.

On the contrary, if group members always agree on everything and always work in harmony with one another, we would have reason to be concerned because the group may be experiencing 'group thinking'. This is detrimental to the health and well being of the group. In such a situation members do not contribute their individual ideas, perhaps because they are not encouraged to do so. The other reason is simply that the more a group develops mutual trust and a sense of togetherness, the less individual members are inclined to 'rock the boat'.

People do not want to disagree on anything because they are worried that it will harm the feeling of oneness. Further, as a group grows together it develops a common set of beliefs. Anyone who challenges that set of beliefs may be regarded as a rebel and disrupter.

We can understand this trend in groups, but while it is good for the group cohesion, it makes a group less inventive and innovative and that group looses the energy, wisdom, enterprise and uniqueness of the individual. A group must always investigate itself, seeking better ways of doing things, and looking for alternatives that may work better. Challenges must always be present in order to produce synergy.

Knowledge of conflict avoidance pre-supposes understanding of group activities and dynamics that are informed by group psychology. Originally a group of people come together with different psychological backgrounds, outputs, and psychological operations. One of the main characteristics of a group is that, in time, it develops a group psychology. Members of a group tend to develop similar psychological processes, at least while they are together. They tend to feel happy and sad about the same things and certain situations tend to bring about the same reaction from them. However, this does not mean that individual members loose their personal psychological makeup. It simply means that the individual psyches move nearer to each other and form a harmonious entity in the group relations. Again, while this is a natural process and while it is good to get a group to function properly, it can carry the danger of 'group thinking' and it can stifle synergy.

1.3.2   DEVELOP CONFLICT AVOIDING MECHANISMS

1.3.2.1   *Preventing Conflict (Pro-Active approaches)*

If possible, we do not want to resolve conflict. We would prefer it to never happen and therefore we must look at avoiding conflict situations. We have in the previous sub-unit already looked at potential causes of conflict and have said that one should try and avoid those situations. This can be done by:

❖ Identifying potential clashing interests within an institution. Based on an evaluation of mandates, areas of activity, interest and needs of stakeholders, it is possible and desirable to identify stakeholders who will have clashing interests, to identify these interests and to manage the whole situation. In other words, the situation with its potential for conflict cannot be avoided, but it can be managed so that conflict does not occur.

❖ Identifying potential clashing personalities. Clashing personality types can make management of an institution particularly difficult and can impact severely on reaching consensus. Destructive conflict can often be avoided by depersonalising points of disagreement. In addition, one can try to limit the areas where the people with the clashing personalities would have to work together, if possible.

❖ Setting clear mandates for stakeholders so that there are no unclear boundaries. Each role player should have its place and roles should be clearly demarcated. One can also employ role players in areas or forums with which they are familiar. This would then avoid a situation where the role players are unsure of their mandates resulting in no implementation and leaving others to do the work.

❖ Improving communication skills among stakeholders so that opportunities for misunderstanding are minimised. The better the communication, the less misunderstandings there will be and the less misunderstanding there is, the less conflict will erupt.

❖ Organising the activities of different role players in such a fashion that dependency on one another is as little as possible. This can be done with good programming and strategising and will definitely diminish the potential for conflict.

1.3.2.2   Setting Guidelines

Apart from trying to remove the obvious potential for conflict, there are three more things that could be done. They are:

❖ Setting clear 'Rules of Order'.

It is advisable to have a standard set of agreed upon rules of conduct for meetings and discussions. These may include 'rules of good manners' and 'rules of conflict avoidance'. While a goal-directed facilitative approach is most productive within an institutional context, it is essential that stakeholders agree and adhere to very clear rules and boundaries. In this way the individual will be safeguarded against personal abuse and violent conflict. Apart from the fact that it will diminish the potential for conflict, it will also give individuals and even groups greater confidence to participate in the activities.

❖ Identifying potentially high conflict situations in advance.

One very seldom experiences sudden and unexpected conflict. There is always a smouldering fuse that, if unattended, will reach the powder keg with devastating results. Knowing the stakeholders and the situation allows identifying potential conflict well in advance and to avoid or manage such situations. In these cases it is essential that good communication prevail to defuse as much of the situation as possible.

❖ Encouraging and promoting tolerance in a potential conflict situation.

The message must be loud and clear that IWRM is bigger than any of us, and that we should be prepared to take a small step backwards without wanting to retaliate.

1.3.2.3   Developing a strategic action plan

To effectively deal with conflict one should understand why conflict and aggression occurs. This aspect has been dealt with in previous sections. Although it is easier said than done, the best way to manage conflict is to avoid it in the first place. The across the board awareness of the potential danger and destructiveness of conflict, however, will prompt an effort at a conflict management strategy.

What do we mean by a strategy? A strategy is usually a plan, often the result of a policy that is based on a certain vision and mission. It is about doing things. Where a policy states the intent, a strategy tries to realise, in practice, the intent of the policy. A strategy indicates what structures should be used; which of those should be newly created and what should be used from the current stock. A strategy is also interested in action, what should happen in these structures? Who should be responsible for what? One of the most important aspects of a strategy is that it provides a sequence; what will come first, second and last, and what must be in place before a next step can be taken.

From the strategy, implementation plans will be drawn up; plans that would put the strategy into practice. There will be plans for creating structures, for communicating with stakeholders, for identifying and setting up communication channels, for arranging workshops and other face-to-face communication, and for devising information. All these plans will consist of a task, how the task is to be done, who will be responsible for the task, and when the task should begin and end. Added to this is a budget detail for every plan and the funds obtained for the projects.

If the plans are carried out there will eventually be a structure as well as a contingency plan in place for identifying potential conflict, avoiding conflict situations and resolving and managing conflict if necessary.

There are various strategies that we can take note of, though not suited for our situation and also not conforming to the principles of IWRM. They are:

❖ Force. Conflict can be managed through force where one party has the means and inclination to win regardless of whether the other party loses.

❖ Withdrawal. An approach to conflict management suited to those parties whose desire to avoid confrontation outweighs the goals they are trying to achieve.

❖ Accommodation. There are occasions when one party in a conflict situation values a strong and continuous relationship with one or more of the other parties above the attainment of its own specific goals.

❖ Compromise. Whilst it sounds positive, compromise in a negotiation situation means that at least one of the parties perceives that it had to give up something. In other words, this has a minimum win-lose outcome.

You will agree that the previous strategy options are not really acceptable for the catchment relevant situation. Although processes of consensus building sometimes contain elements of compromise within the final agreement, there are some key differences between the two approaches. Consensus building explicitly sets out to avoid trade-offs altogether, seeking instead to achieve a 'win-win' outcome.

Certain elements of a conflict management process would be:

❖ Initial conflict analysis. This entails the mapping of existing conflicts and predicting the nature and extent of potential conflicts and then prioritising them. This initial analysis creates a basis for the design of a subsequent process of stakeholder dialogue.

❖ Participatory conflict analysis. The outputs of the initial analysis form the basis of a process to involve stakeholders in a dialogue to identify and evaluate existing and potential conflict. This subsequent analysis is a means to develop trust and understanding between the conflicting parties and verify the accuracy of the results generated as part of the initial conflict analysis. The dialogue may take many weeks or months and may be based on one-on-one interviews or may be undertaken in groups.

1.3.3   EXERCISES

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EXERCISE 6

You are living in a village, a part of which is close as a reservoir. This part has had free water and sanitation services for many years. The other part of the village is located on the slopes of a hill, and has never had any water or sanitation services. They get their water from the nearby river, which flows down the opposite side of the hill.

One day the Officials from Water Affairs declared that a project would be launched to provide water and sanitation services to the whole village. The existing service network would be upgraded, and a new network created for those people on the hillside. The whole community would, however, have to pay for the new services.

The community was in uproar!

Break into three groups. The first group represents the people that always had free water and sanitation. The second group represents the section on the slopes of the hill. The third group represents the poorest of the poor that cannot afford to pay for water or sanitation.

Each group should write down their core viewpoints and the issues they feel strongly about. They should then develop their own conflict avoiding mechanisms and use the problem-solving model for "win-win" solutions as the basis for their negotiation framework. Write down the negotiation framework. The three groups will then role-play the formal negotiations, using the ABC principles of negotiation to address their needs. It will be expected of the three groups to develop an integrated viewpoint on the project that will ensure general community consensus.

Three observers (which will be identified by the facilitator beforehand) will join the facilitator to evaluate the proceedings and give feedback on their findings.

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1.3.4 IDENTIFY AND USE CONFLICT RESOLUTION APPROACHES

Conflict should be managed through a process of honest and open negotiation. Open negotiation means that all role players are allowed to engage in a continuous communication process regarding their needs, the needs of the institution and decisions made within the institution or by management.

1.3.4.1 *The basic principles of negotiation*

Conflict resolution is best done through negotiation where a win-win outcome is sought. To achieve this following the "ABC" (basic principles) of negotiation and conflict resolution are of great importance:

Aim for a specific result. Negotiation that does not aim for a specific, concrete result will struggle and discussions will tend to go round and round without moving in a specific direction. This means that merely talking about a disagreement will not achieve much. To facilitate discussions to come to a conclusion that will satisfy all, you should determine what the negotiations would be about. These objectives refer to what you and the other party would like to achieve with the negotiations.

Be positive. If one wants negotiation to move forward towards a decisive conclusion, one must be positive. It serves no purpose to dwell on the negative aspects. Criticising the other party for not seeing things the way you do, will never achieve an outcome.

Concentrate (see, hear, feel) on sensory data. In a negotiation situation all the barriers to communication that can possibly exist are present. To compound the situation communication does not only take place through the spoken word. One must therefore be wide awake to both verbal and non-verbal communication as to identify all the possible barriers, remove them in time and react to positive and negative reactions from the other parties.

Dovetail desires. Dovetailing is the opposite of manipulating. Dovetailing desired outcomes ensures your integrity because it shows respect for the other parties' integrity. While you cannot decide on the outcome for the other parties, you can aid them in attaining what they desire. You are therefore bringing the separate needs of the parties nearer to each other, in a specific way. Dovetailing is the intelligent way to ensure your own outcomes.

Entertain long and short-term objectives. Negotiation is not only to bring harmony to the present. A win-win solution is also necessary for the long-term; otherwise you will soon have to gather around the negotiation table again.

Find rapport as soon as possible. It is the most important ingredient of negotiation. Without it negotiation can never be positive. Rapport is present when you experience a level of comfort and a sense of shared understanding. Only when rapport is present can you proceed towards the outcome. So the first objective is to establish rapport. Once rapport has been established, it will develop and grow as the negotiation progresses.

Get as much information as you can on the other parties and their positions so that you know with whom and with what you are dealing. You would need to know their objectives, their needs and even their personalities. If possible, it would be useful to determine their value system, financial position, previous negotiation behaviour and personal objectives.

Have extra alternative options ready if your options are not accepted or if the situation changes so that your options are no longer applicable.

Identify and keep outside influences in mind. This usually constitutes in the form of pressure from outside, either to come to an agreement or not to sacrifice certain interests.

Join the other party if they make suggestions or state viewpoints with which you agree. The whole objective is to move nearer to each other, so if consensus or common ground is found, acknowledge it.

Know exactly what your manoeuvrability is. Know how far you can go and what you can sacrifice. This helps you to be sure of yourself and makes a good impression on the other parties.

Leave space in which you can move. In other words, do not move all you can the first time. If other parties are not satisfied, you cannot move any further or you may move so far the first time that there is very little for you to win and little for the other parties to forfeit.

Make sure that you are negotiating with someone who has decision-making powers, at least on the same level as you.

Never be insulting or accusing. This will create distance between you and the other parties instead of bringing you closer and it will also lead to accusations from the other parties. All this will delay a solution and may even jeopardise a real solution.

Obtain an agreement from the other parties on the basis for negotiation.

Prepare yourself properly by deciding on what you want the outcome to be with a best-case scenario (Ideal outcome) and a worst-case scenario (the minimum that you will settle for).

Qualify your points of view and suggestions. State the reason for a proposal before you make it. The other parties must know your intent and, if your qualification is water tight, it will be easier to accept your point of view.

Remain flexible as to the schedule. Negotiation is per definition flexible and hard lines do not work in such a situation.

Stand on your principles by all means, but make sure that they are in fact principles and not unnecessary rigid values.

Think carefully about all that is said. Take time out if you need to think about some new option. Rather spend time to think about things than to rush in only to go back on your word later.

Untie the knots. That means things must be straightened out. Arguments must be clear, facts must be on the table and verified, issues of the different parties must be clear. Negotiations cannot continue if the agenda is in a muddle.

Validate (confirm your understanding of) any proposal the other party makes before analysing and criticising it.

Work towards consensus. It is no use to try and keep your original position. That is not negotiation. Try to stay as near to your original position as possible (best case scenario), but use the space between that and what you can settle for (worst case scenario).

Expect differences. There may in some cases be other parties who may be foreign to you or just unknown. Remember, though, that they are human beings with the same emotions and fears as you; with the same belief in their position as you have in yours; having the same sense of being right as you have.

"**Y**es" is a better word than "No" in negotiation, but let your "yes" be yes and your "no" be no. In other words, be objective and trustworthy.

Zoom in on the problem from the beginning and do all you can to solve it.

1.3.4.2 *A problem solving model for "win-win" solutions*

Problem solving is related to negotiation and it is a way of addressing conflict and establishing peace and goodwill. It involves an effort to find a mutually acceptable agreement, in other words a "win-win" solution. There are many problem-solving mechanisms; some involve joint problem solving in which parties work together to try to find a mutually acceptable alternative. While the parties can work on their-own and confront each other with their options later, experience has taught that joint problem solving is a useful way of obtaining a "win-win" agreement that tends to last longer. It surely is the best and therefore the preferred approach in catchment relevant institutions.

A simple model for problem solving consists of the following steps:

1) Problem definition

   Once you have perceived a problem, the next logical step is to define it. This is the phase where boundaries must be set around the problem. What is part of the problem and what is not? The problem must therefore be described – who, what, where, when and how. The importance of a definition is that it synchronises all the opinions about the problem so that all participants will describe the problem in the same way. It also determines the range of acceptable alternatives. One should, however, be careful that the problem is not defined in terms of the alternative. This is done when the problem is framed as the lack of 'something,' the 'something' being the alternative, e.g. peace or tranquillity.

2) Problem analysis

   In the analysis phase the objective is to break the problem down into component parts and to examine how they fit together. This is how you learn more about the problem. Participants should think about the questions that need to be answered in order to build a complete and detailed picture of the problem. Any problem can be broken down into smaller sub problems until it becomes manageable. This exercise is very important if a problem is complex. As the problem is defined and analysed it is usually found to consist of a number of sub-problems.

3) Thinking of alternatives

   Now that the problem has been looked at from all angles the first positive phase can start. It is important that participants should come forward with creative ideas during this phase. Brainstorming is one of the best ways to be creative and original.

Part of this phase is to set criteria for alternatives. This is usually not done in a formal exercise. Reactions to ideas about alternatives will invariably contain criteria and if they do not, such criteria must be provided. 'That is not a practical idea because …'. 'That is an excellent idea because …'. It is not permissible to only say that an idea is good or bad. The reasons for saying so (the criteria for alternatives) must also be given.

When thinking of alternatives, past experience is also valid. After all, it is not necessary to reinvent the wheel. ' So and so had the same problem and they did…' 'Remember when we last had a similar problem, we did…' 'Last time that we had this problem we tried to … but it didn't work'.

Any one or all of the sub problems identified during the problem analysis phase can now be placed on the agenda. Remember that we have not yet come to the planning phase where we will have to be more focused. We are still not talking of what we are going to do. We are simply suggesting alternatives to the situation, as it exists now. During this exercise participants must learn how to work with other people's ideas and to admit that their own ideas are not necessarily correct or the best.

4) Decision-making

During the previous phase possible alternatives would have already been screened. Some would have remained on the table and some would have been discarded. During this phase a choice must be made between those that remained. Decision-making is thus a making of a choice or choices. In order to do so, the consequences of each choice must be considered. This is an extremely important and necessary exercise and the people must realise why it is done. 'If we decide to do it this way, we will have to…' 'If we decide on this or that option, just remember that this or that will happen'. 'This alternative will mean that…' It is not necessary for a single alternative to be chosen. In certain situations two or more alternatives can be considered or there can be a plan A, and a plan B. The important thing is that there must be consensus about the decision, and so, a bit of negotiation may be necessary. In fact, if this whole process is followed, nothing but consensus can be the end result. It is when problem solving is rushed into, instead of a well-thought out exercise that voting must be done to see which alternative carries a majority.

5) Planning

The alternative has now been chosen. During the planning phase it must be decided how the desired result will be obtained. Planning is task oriented. Action must be taken in order to eradicate the problem. Planning decides what is to be done, when it is to be done, how it is to be done, and who is to do it.

1.3.5 IDENTIFYING, MONITORING AND RESPONDING TO CONFLICT

1.3.5.1 Capacity building

This means that stakeholders should be informed about situations causing conflict, mechanisms to avoid it and conflict resolution approaches (the contents of the last three sub units). But 'informed' is perhaps the wrong word, for it is clear that the informing should take place through capacity building. Capacity building is quite often equated with formal training, but it implies more than that. It may be formal training, but capacity building can also take place in other ways.

Another aspect to consider is that it is not only the leadership of catchment relevant institutions who should know about conflict resolution. All stakeholders should be made aware of the danger and destructiveness of conflict and all stakeholders should know something about the resolution or management of conflict. It would be good if there was a general realisation that conflict can shipwreck the whole effort before it has started. Every single stakeholder should be on his or her toes to prevent conflict from exploding. It should be the responsibility of every individual member and therefore of the body corporate to keep conflict at bay.

1.3.5.2   *Forms of capacity building*

Capacity building can take various forms. We can start with those that seem to be the easiest way, with the least effort, but it may fall short of real capacity building. In this regard we can mention information that is printed and distributed among the stakeholders. This can be in the form of a **pamphlet,** a **study section** or a **supplement** to a set time. While it may be easy to compile such a document, it is obvious that it might not work as well as is necessary. Many stakeholders may choose not to read it for various reasons, including a lack of time or a lack of interest. Many stakeholders may read it without really understanding it or may read it only to forget the contents within a day or two. We have stated above that it may be easy to compile, but would it really be easy? It is a fairly complex and cluttered subject and one would have to decide what to include and what not and how to phrase certain aspects to be comprehensible. One would have to decide on the pitch, the length and the objectivity of such a document. In the end it is not certain whether the stakeholders will appreciate such a document.

As we have seen before, the better options for capacity building would be face-to-face situations such as workshops, meetings and bi-lateral discussions. Another face-to-face situation is also the training environment. In these situations poor understanding of the content of the message can be sorted out immediately. More importantly, misunderstanding can also be identified and corrected. Something that is difficult to do in documents is to tie the message to future practice. While you hope that the message in a document will have practical results, you can achieve more than hope in a face-to-face situation; you can make sure that it happens.

1.3.5.3   *Ways to combat conflict*

Herewith some pointers that could assist in combating conflict in face-to-fact situations (workshops, meetings and discussions):

> ➢ Declare a break, adjourn and meet again when the parties have had a time to unwind.

> ➢ During the break, try and find alternatives that could break the deadlock in the talks and that would turn the discussion into a more positive one.

> ➢ Identify a common enemy that could unite the opposing parties. Note that this common enemy does not need to be another person.

> ➢ One party should invite the other party to put themselves in their shoes, looking at the issue from the other's perspective.

> ➢ Create alternatives that allow mutual gains and that satisfy some needs of each participant in the discussion.

➢ Allow angry individuals to "blow off steam". This will cause them to feel better and lessen the chances of them raising the same issue in an aggressive way.

➢ Empathy and humour could release tensions, but be careful not to attack individuals or make someone look foolish.

➢ Avoid a "snowball" effect when conflict intensifies. In other words, make sure that other issues do not become part of the conflict.