

Communication as a Strategic Approach

- A prime objective of communication and dissemination is to share knowledge, findings, ideas and research outcomes. This is entirely deserving. Sometimes there is much analysis and evidence that for lack of a commensurate effort in communication does not get out to a large community. Those are opportunities wasted. Forcing ourselves to communicate moreover helps us to be clear and have a coherent story to tell.

What Strategic communication can do

- 1** Create a place in the world. By sharing what we know and present it in a clear manner we become a visible part of a larger community of persons and organizations.
- 2** Do redistributive justice to truth. Much of what is in the news follows set patterns and mind-sets. By sharing what we know, we can give space to those that do not have a voice anymore and show the world as a bigger place. Diversity matters
- 3** Create a coalition of like-minded persons and organisations. By communicating as a broad alliance and not as individual organizations, we all position ourselves as champions for the ideas within the alliance.
- 4** Encourage our selves to be open and clear. By focussing on having to communicate we encourage make ourselves to be more clear and take a position. This is better.

- Communication at the same time is more than sharing. It is a strategic approach that serves several other goals. We should be aware of those other goals and use communication as such.

- The beauty of present day is that there are so many tools that can help us to present our case. We live in a time of fast learning but also need to make sure that whatever we say is backed up by evidence and not casual or superficial.

Important do's

- 1** Create jointness: communicate through joint statements, under many logos and names, have strategic contributions and quotes (for instance in prefaces or joint statements).
- 2** Visualize in images or in clear words – this makes a hidden world tangible and achievable.
- 3** Focus on solutions not on problems– once we know the solutions our responsibility and willingness to act increases.
- 4** Use power writing and power communication: do not shy away from the confidence of what we know – avoid hiding behind professional doubt, dissonance and call for more research, but tell at least what we know.