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Review Paper

Message, method and messenger – a literature survey and typology for planning strategic advocacy

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ABSTRACT

This review of the literature on the evolution of strategic communications in international development provides a framework for assessing advocacy strategies and tools and reviews the current challenges to influencing local sanitation budgets and expenditures through the use of such tools. Effective advocacy is often necessary to achieving changes in budgetary allocations, and shaping how programs or policies are implemented. However, nongovernmental and community-based organizations rarely tailor their communication to overcome specific implementation barriers, or rigorously evaluate the effectiveness of their messages and strategies. This review first provides a brief overview of how communication goals and methods have evolved and been utilized to change local policymaking, programming and budgetary allocations in developing countries, focusing on water, sanitation, and hygiene. Based on this review, it provides an effective and useful typology of advocacy based on the barriers to policy change. The typology may be used to diagnose the need for and potential of an advocacy and communications strategy. Finally, the review summarizes the current literature on public input into and review of the budgetary process in, the literature on influencing revenue generation, and the opportunities for advocacy and lobbying in both respects in selected sub-Saharan African countries.

Key words | advocacy, communication, municipal budgets, sanitation, WASH

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INTRODUCTION

This paper reviews how communication and advocacy have been used to change local policymaking, programming and budgetary allocations in the developing country context, providing concrete examples from the water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) sector. It builds on the survey to propose a new typology for understanding and planning strategic communications, and provides examples of how advocacy and communications have been used to influence budgetary decisions in selected sub-Saharan African countries. The focus on sub-Saharan countries is particularly useful because, despite international activism and policy changes at central government levels, local government budgets continue to be too low and insufficient for the effective supply of infrastructure or regular provision of services, including water and sanitation. For example, municipal finance data collected by a research team, including the authors, found that local expenditure for sanitation capital or operation and maintenance averaged between 2 and 5% in the three sub-Saharan urban areas of study (Edwards *et al.* 2015).

We propose that a linear view of policymaking in which research recommendations and rational models are readily accepted and implemented by policymakers is unrealistic, and that effective advocacy is necessary to overcome barriers such as information gaps or political apathy. Furthermore, proper identification of implementation barriers results in more effective advocacy tools and targeting. For example, if the barrier is an information gap in understanding finance options, then knowledge transfer tools would be the appropriate course of action. However, if

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policymakers are aware of existing options but choose not to exercise them, advocacy and lobbying strategies and tools would be more appropriate.

The following literature survey is divided into two sections. The first section provides a brief overview of communication goals and methods and how they have evolved in the field of development, classifying them based on the goals and methods used. The second section focuses specifically on communication aimed at changing budgetary policy and allocations in developing countries, and to the extent possible, reflects on the experience of the water and sanitation sector in sub-Saharan Africa. Surveying both ranges of literature provides valuable insights into how to structure effective communication with policymakers and funders responsible for sanitation budgets at the local level. (In 2014–15, the findings of this literature survey were used by local offices of Water and Sanitation for the Urban Poor (WSUP) in Mozambique, Kenya, and Ghana. All three country teams identified situation-specific implementation barriers to tailor their local advocacy strategies to address these barriers. The effectiveness of their approaches has not yet been evaluated.)

PART ONE – COMMUNICATION GOALS AND METHODS

Communication for development takes many forms depending on the goal, audience, message, and medium used. Goals may vary from the simple one-way dissemination of information to community participation and empowerment. Messages can be targeted to the wider public, to a target group, or to just a few key decision-makers. Design, content and audience also vary based on the medium used to relay or share information. We do not intend to cover the conceptual debates around goals or the mechanisms through which communication works, and who it benefits most (Waisbord 2005). Neither do we survey all social science theories that explain how policy change occurs. Instead, our review focuses, more narrowly, on how communication is perceived and used within the context of programs and projects to achieve specific development objectives such as higher budgets for safe water and sanitation. Such communication is referred to as 'strategic' communication. In fact, many communication scholars use the term development communication to mean 'the strategic application of communication technologies and processes to promote social change' (Wilkins 2000). By this definition, for example, both advocacy and lobbying are strategic communication. WaterAid, the world's largest non-governmental organization (NGO) focused solely on water and sanitation, defines advocacy as 'taking action to bring about the change you are seeking' (Bouchane 2011).

For the purpose of our review we divide strategic communication into four categories. Each 'method' of communication serves a primary purpose in the process of seeking larger social change dependent upon the theory of change assumption. Table 1 presents the four methods of strategic communication in conjunction with their respective theory of change assumptions, target audiences, and primary communication tools. In addition, most NGOs carry out at least one of the following 'types' of communication as part of their routine operations.

Table 1 | Theory, method, audience, and tools matrix

Theory of change assumption	Method	Audience	Tools
Information gaps	Information and knowledge transfer	Policymakers, elected officials, community leaders	Communication campaign, media advertising, public address
Weak political will	Advocacy/lobbying	Technocrats, bureaucrats, politicians	Letter writing campaigns, citizen satisfaction surveys, site visits with policymakers
Absence of demand	Social marketing	Civil society, CBOs and community members	Media mobilization, coalition of partners
Power imbalance	Social mobilization and participatory models	Target communities and social networks	Two-way media exchange (radio call-in, etc.), community meetings/forums

Method 1: information and knowledge transfer

Everett Rogers' seminal work on the diffusion of innovation was key to the inclusion of communications and information components in many international development programs and policies (Rogers 1983). In his subsequent analyses of the parallel changes in 'development theory' and 'communications theory' he defines development communication as the 'exchange of information between two or more individuals in which one individual (a change agent) seeks to assist the other individual to achieve a higher socio-economic status by changing his/her behavior. A change agent is an individual who influences clients' decisions to adopt innovations […] An innovation is any idea perceived as new by the intended audience' (Rogers & Steinfatt 1999).

Knowledge transfer to community members

Information and knowledge sharing is a dominant method used by programs that aim to create behavior change among individuals or within households. Our literature search revealed that the majority of rigorously evaluated communication programs focused on behavior change, specifically health-related behavior change such as the adoption of hand-washing, treating drinking water by boiling or chlorinating, etc. While timely information sharing can have a critical impact on certain behaviors, sustained and long-term behavior change can be very difficult to achieve. In addition, behavior change can be difficult and expensive to measure, and information or knowledge-sharing programs may use inaccurate indicators to measure behavior change, greatly overstating the impact of their intervention. Comparing indicators for hand-washing in India, Biran *et al.* (2008) found that there is little agreement between proxy indicators for hand-washing and results from actual observation, which is difficult and expensive to carry out.

The evidence of behavior changing purely as a result of information sharing or knowledge transfer (used here interchangeably) in the water and sanitation sector is inconsistent. Randomized trials of large-scale hand-washing interventions, for example, point to success in increasing knowledge about the need for hand-washing and its impact on health, but no significant improvements in the actual practice of hand-washing (Chase & Do 2012). On the other hand, sharing information about a potential health risk of using arsenic-contaminated water wells has been shown to have a significant and rapid change in behavior, even when that behavior is associated with a significant cost (Madajewicz *et al.* 2007). Public health studies of tobacco control have also pointed to the fact that information that succeeds in conveying a credible risk to human health is more likely to lead to behavior change (Economos *et al.* 2001).

Sophisticated behavior change models take into account the importance of cultural context and value systems, the technology being used, as well as the institutions that perhaps prevent people from changing behavior based on the new knowledge that they have acquired (Dreibelbis *et al.* 2013). Providing people with the facts that they need to make informed choices, some of which are different to the choices that they currently make, is only part of the solution (Economos *et al.* 2001). Development theory and practice now acknowledge that simple 'sender-receiver models of information' (Shannon & Weaver 1949), no matter how sophisticated, do not lead to the widespread adoption of new technologies, do not change deeply rooted belief systems, or do not change culturally accepted practices, even when such changes in behavior can clearly improve health or economic outcomes (WHO/Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council 1998).

Knowledge transfer to policymakers

Knowledge transfer to specific policymakers, especially in government bureaucracies, often takes place in the context of 'capacity building'. Workshops, training, and study tours are all commonly used methods to share knowledge. The goals of such knowledge transfer may range from providing decision-makers with new evidence for agenda setting to providing the tools necessary to carry out the programs to which they have already committed resources. To the extent that capacity building is the primary goal of many donor-funded efforts, knowledge transfer efforts are either overtly stated as program objectives or carried out in support of other, wider, objectives. Based on a systematic review of research literature and primary data collected from research organizations, Lavis *et al.* (2003) provide a useful framework to guide and evaluate research knowledge transfer by asking the following basic questions:

- 'What should be transferred to decision-makers (the message)?'
- 'To whom should research knowledge be transferred (the target audience)?'
- 'By whom should research knowledge be transferred (the messenger)?'
- 'How should research knowledge be transferred (the knowledge transfer process and supporting communications infrastructure)?'
- 'With what effect should research knowledge be transferred (evaluation)?'

While knowledge transfer is a process by which research messages are 'pushed' by the producers of research to the users of research, recent evidence on the active role that research users play has led to a reframing of the process as one of sharing and not merely transferring (Mitton *et al.* 2007). Knowledge transfer and exchange takes place between the producers and users of research, with the primary goal of 'increasing the likelihood that research evidence will be used in policy and practice decisions and to enable researchers to identify practice and policy-relevant research questions' (Mitton *et al.* 2007). According to most current literature, in the best case scenario, the process of knowledge production specifically for changing policy is done interactively with policymakers, and the success of knowledge sharing is also determined jointly by researchers and policymakers. Because communication is seen as a demanding process, researchers argue that it is best to take an interactive and continuous approach (Pollard & Court 2005).

Method 2: advocacy and lobbying

While information and knowledge sharing fall into the domain of education or broadening of options, advocacy falls into the domain on persuasion, which is about narrowing options and motivating decision-makers to choose one among many (Food and Agriculture Organization 2011). Advocacy requires that communication be persuasive enough to sway decisions to be made for or against an issue. Methods, messages, and messengers for advocacy are different from those used in knowledge sharing for behavior change. Decision-makers who have a say in resource allocation and expenditure are the main audience for advocacy messages (Cadiz 2005). In most cases, such decision-makers have positions of authority in the legislative or executive branches of government or in bureaucracies. Successful advocacy can hinge on the creation of a broad network or coalition of support. Such networks bring greater pressure to bear on decision-makers. They also provide the backing needed by decision-makers when they make difficult or controversial choices. The literature on how to conduct advocacy, whether domestic or transnational, is unanimous in identifying the key steps to advocacy; successful advocacy begins with identifying the group of people who must be influenced and then planning the best way to communicate with them. It also points to the need for continuous action, building partnerships and working with the media (Fenton Communications 2009).

Advocacy and lobbying are often used interchangeably, but the literature highlights a subtle difference between the two. While advocacy focuses on a particular social policy of significance, lobbying is generally directed at legislators such as ministers, members of parliament at the national level, or state legislators, and is viewed as a political activity. It seeks to alter or put in place a particular piece of legislation. For example, lobbying would be used to influence a particular part of the formal budget process and change a tax or expenditure policy, while advocacy would make a persuasive case why decision-makers ought to pay attention to the larger problem that the new tax or expenditure would resolve.

Domestic advocacy

The textbook view of policymaking presents a logical and clear process. It begins with problem identification, information gathering and research on potential solutions, sharing knowledge with policymakers, followed by an adoption of the recommendations in the form of a new policy or legislation. The policymaking literature, however, paints a far more complex picture of policymaking, in which the process is far from linear, predictable, or even logical. It involves an array of actors and interest groups, which may or may not be formalized into the process. An adapted version of the Food and Agriculture Organization's (FAO) (2011) depiction of the complex reality for policymaking can be seen in Figure 1, demonstrating the complex reality of the decision-making process.

The advocacy coalition framework (ACF) of policymaking, presented by Sabatier, builds on three main premises from his earlier work:

> '[…] first, that understanding the process of policy change – and the role of policy-oriented learning therein – requires a time perspective of a decade or more. Second, that the most useful way to think about policy change over such a timespan is through a focus on 'policy subsystems,' i.e. the interaction of actors from different institutions interested in policy areas. Third, that public policies (or programs) can be conceptualized in the same manner as belief systems, i.e. as sets of value priorities and causal assumptions about how to realize them.' (Sabatier 1988)

In addition to insights about the length of time that it may take to achieve policy change, and the importance of both anticipated and unanticipated participants in coalitions, ACF also argues that changes in the 'core aspects' of a policy usually occur because of external (non-cognitive) factors such as macroeconomic shocks or dynamic shifts in governing coalitions (Sabatier 1988). In a developing country context, this translates to the need for ongoing communication and advocacy with all stakeholders in the political and policy spheres and a special need for readiness to take advantage of opening 'policy windows.' Such openings could be related to elections, economic shocks, or simply the availability of new and compelling evidence that may change core beliefs. Because it can be difficult to predict when such policy windows will open (aside from regularly scheduled elections, for example), it is critical to seek ways to make ongoing communication a part of the core business of organizations seeking changes in the policymaking process.

In this view of policy change, the role of an advocacy coalition is to provide a body of actionable evidence, marshal public support via the media, civic bodies, or other avenues and be ready to push their agenda when there are 'focusing events' such as crises, disasters, or availability of new, high-profile evidence (Munira & Fritzen 2007).

The World Bank's Water and Sanitation Program's political economic analysis of pro-poor sanitation in four countries highlights that paying special attention to the 'timing, tailoring and sequencing' of support to the sanitation sector can be critical in improving its effectiveness (World Bank 2011). An application of ACF to policy change, with respect to private sector water provision in Ghana, finds that advocacy coalition members are more likely to interact with actors they perceive as sharing their beliefs than those who do not, and that learning within the policy space occurs more readily in a professionalized forum than in an ad hoc one (Ainuson 2009). This finding validates Sabatier's original insight that the core beliefs around which advocacy coalitions work will only be modified if there is a 'shock originating outside the core system' (Sabatier & Jenkins-Smith 1999).

Transnational advocacy

As the interaction between state and non-state actors has grown, transnational advocacy networks have also become important influencers in domestic policy processes. Such networks are similar to advocacy coalitions in that internal

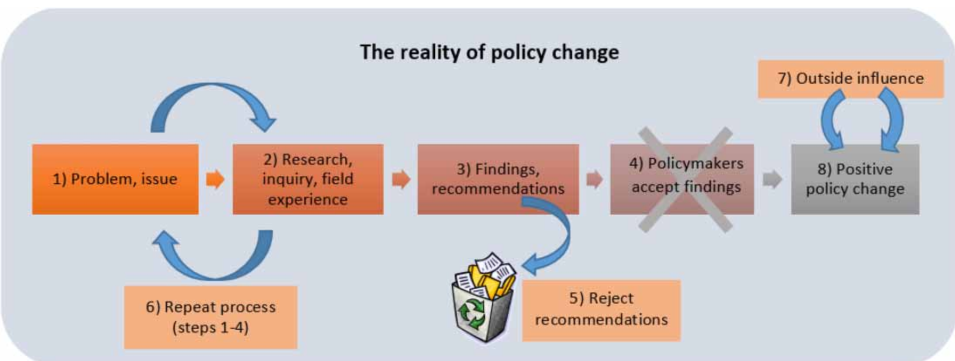

Figure 1 | The policymaking process.

communication is 'voluntary, reciprocal and horizontal' (Keck & Sikkink 1998). Keck and Sikkink point to the important role that transnational advocacy networks now play in promoting causes. International and domestic NGOs play key roles in organizing such networks and pressuring others to join. They provide new ideas and information, and lobby for policy change. Such networks can become influential players in some political contexts.

There is no rigorous evaluation of the effectiveness of such networks or coalitions in raising greater local resources for WASH. One study found that average public expenditure per capita on both water and sanitation rose by over 200% from 2000 to 2008 for 15 sub-Saharan African countries (Van Ginneken *et al.* 2011). The same report clarifies that a large part of the increase in budgets can be attributed to overseas development assistance, and less than 1% of gross domestic product went to water and sanitation in a sample of 15 sub-Saharan countries (Van Ginneken *et al.* 2011). Thus, while transnational advocacy may have led to an increase in overseas development assistance, especially earmarked for water and sanitation, it appears to have had little impact on local budgets. Nevertheless, the WASH sector has seen a proliferation of transnational advocacy networks in the last decade in conjunction with this growth in WASH funding. Examples of such networks include the Global Water Challenge (2014), a transnational advocacy network composed of 36 leading INGOs, foundations, multilaterals, and domestic organizations all committed to addressing water and sanitation issues; Sanitation and Water for All (2014), a coalition with over 90 partners representing seven constituencies such as donors, civil society, and research institutions; and Watershed, 'a strategic partnership designed to strengthen policy and advocacy capacity of civil society globally' (Akvo 2016). The Watershed partnership involves four WASH NGOs and the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Method 3: social marketing

Kotler & Zaltman (1971) introduced the concept of social marketing for planning and implementing social change. They defined social marketing as 'the design, implementation, and control of programs calculated to influence the acceptability of social ideas and involving considerations of product planning, pricing, communication, distribution and marketing research'. While consumer marketing and social marketing have very different goals, the latter uses strategies developed by the former. Kotler and Zaltman adapted the four Ps that form the basis of commercial marketing – Product, Price, Place, and Promotion – into an administrative planning system led by a change agency that would be responsible for the research and planning of the marketing program.

Critical lessons from consumer marketing, such as segmenting the market and understanding consumer preferences, and testing the market and the product, have been incorporated into social marketing. Health programs have used social marketing in the analysis, planning, execution, and evaluation of programs designed to influence the voluntary behavior of target audiences to improve their personal welfare and the welfare of society (Economos *et al.* 2001). The 'P process' used by the Population Communications Service funded by USAID to plan and conduct strategic communication on population and health in over 50 countries, reflected some of the basic tenets of social marketing – audience research, segmentation into identified markets, and establishment of a marketing niche for certain products and services (Piotrow *et al.* 1997).

In recent years, social marketing has become popular in both hygiene improvement and sanitation promotion programs. Sanitation marketing differs from conventional engagement with community members because of its focus on the private sector and view of households as consumers (Pedi *et al.* 2012). Working with the private sector, which uses market research, public relations firms, and advertising agencies, allows public information campaigns to reach greater numbers of people with information about products associated with improved hygiene such as soap or better sanitation such as a household toilet. Private sector collaboration has had two large impacts: first, communication messages are tailored to appeal to consumer preferences, and second, the impact of information campaigns can sometimes be measured through actual sales of products. Sanitation marketing has been pursued aggressively by the World Bank's Water and Sanitation program and by numerous social entrepreneurs in the sector, partly based on evidence that individuals are more likely to invest in sanitation based on preferences for convenience, safety, and status rather than health (Devine & Kullman 2011; Sy *et al.* 2014).

Method 4: social mobilization and participatory models

The participatory paradigm has origins in Paolo Freire's theory of dialogical communication and liberating pedagogy (Freire 1973). Participatory and community-based models of communication place a primacy on altering the root causes of certain behaviors or choices and not on the behavior itself. They thus focus on structural inequalities and power differentials (Morris 2005). They rely on the horizontal spread of ideas and messages/concerns rather than vertical information sharing. Such models do not rely on experts and professionals. Media are used as a means of raising issues that need to be discussed among people, and perhaps to put pressure on decision-makers, and not just as a means of transmission of messages as is the case in social marketing (Waisbord 2000).

Social mobilization approaches to development use participatory communication methods including media advocacy to link multiple stakeholders. While such communication may be critical for communities to come to a common understanding of a problem or to craft a solution, it is not necessarily more democratic or more effective than other social marketing techniques or programs. Because empowerment is one of the main goals of participatory communication and social mobilization, researchers and practitioners point to the difficulty of measuring success within project or funding cycles (Cadiz 2005) or even coming up with measurable indicators that could capture changes in the extent of 'empowerment' (Morris 2005). Social mobilization approaches have also been used as part of participatory governance programs, with the belief that such participation improves 'the efficiency and sustainability of public service delivery, as well as the match between public services and beneficiaries' preferences' (Speer 2012).

SARAR (self-esteem, associative strengths, resourcefulness, action planning, and responsibility) is a participatory methodology used to empower communities to address their own water and sanitation issues by identifying problems, planning, implementing, and monitoring solutions. Communication within SARAR is meant to be democratic and horizontal (Simpson-Hebert *et al.* 1997). Social mobilization methods have been used in the WASH space by the total sanitation campaign, which aims to create behavior change by changing community-wide norms of cleanliness and hygiene. Even so, the total sanitation campaign relies on a mix of communication strategies from knowledge transfer to social marketing to ensure that sanitation behaviors are sustained over time.

In summary, the previous section surveys some of the main ways in which communication is used to change behavior and policy in international development. While it is important to understand the theoretical underpinnings, strengths and weaknesses of all the above approaches, the literature also points to a trend in using a toolbox approach, which combines methods used by social marketing, advocacy, and participatory communication. The toolbox approach recognizes that both 'knowledge transfer' and 'empowerment' can be important goals, and thus seeks to create a hybrid where different tools can be used based on the program implementation context, funding priorities, and needs of communities (Waisbord 2000). The Communication for Social Change approach developed by researchers from Johns Hopkins University, for example, integrates the roles played by an outside catalyst of change, community-based problem solving, and social scientists who want to conduct analyses of the process and its outcomes (Figueroa *et al.* 2002).

In general, most toolbox approaches integrate top-down information sharing with bottom-up message generation; use multiple media and interpersonal communication; and integrate macro policy and political considerations with messages that promote personal behavior change. This literature survey does not summarize sources that provide toolkits for carrying out effective advocacy or lobbying. However, advocacy toolkits, and their relevant guides, are listed below in Table 2 for additional reference.

PART TWO – INFLUENCING BUDGET PRIORITIES AND REVENUE GENERATION

In the peer-reviewed literature, there is little evidence directly linking communications, advocacy or lobbying to increased funding for sanitation at the local (sub-national) level, especially in Africa. Although a number of papers on budgetary reforms, especially at the national level, point to

Table 2 | Advocacy toolkits and guides

Toolkit	Source	Guide	Author
Sanitation Promotion	WHO; WSSCC Working Group on Promotion of Sanitation	'Advocacy for Sanitation'	Sara Wood and Mayling Simpson-Hébert (WHO 1998)
Sanitation Promotion	WHO; WSSCC Working Group on Promotion of Sanitation.	'Mobilizing the Media for Sanitation Promotion'	WHO, Geneva Switzerland (WHO 1998)
Sanitation Promotion	WHO; WSSCC Working Group on Promotion of Sanitation	'Mobilizing Partners for Sanitation Promotion'	Sara Wood and Mayling Simpson-Hébert (WHO 1998)
Communication for Social Change Working Paper Series	Johns Hopkins University Center for Communication Programs	'An Integrated Model for Measuring the Process and Its Outcomes'	Figueroa *et al.* (2002)
Now Hear This	Fenton Communications	'The 9 Laws of Successful Advocacy Communication'	Fenton Communications (2009)
The Advocacy Sourcebook	WaterAid	'Advocacy Toolkit'	O'Connell (2007)
Food Security Communications Toolkit	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	'Communicating with Policymakers'	FAO (2011)
Knowledge Transfer Management Toolkit	Department of General Services; State of California	'KTM Process'	Ratanamany (n.d.)
Speaking of Health	Institute of Medicine of the National Academies	'Findings and Recommendations: Communication Campaigns'	Institute of Medicine (2002)

policies for increased transparency, the budgetary processes in many countries remain quite opaque. To the extent that current published literature focuses on the relationship between taxation and representation, taxation serves as an umbrella term to cover all forms of revenue generation.

In this section, we briefly summarize the current literature on public input into and review of the budgetary process, the literature on influencing revenue generation, and the opportunities and challenges for advocacy and lobbying in both respects in selected African countries.

Public information and input in the budget process

There are many reasons why civil society groups or individuals may not be able or willing to participate in any meaningful way in the budget process. Some are related to the absence of sufficient information and skills, others to structural issues of power and local politics. In most cases, both issues play out simultaneously. Most of the scholarly literature on the topic focuses on Brazil's experience with participatory budgeting (McCowan 2006; Aragones & Sanchez-Pages 2009; Boulding & Wampler 2010). There is evidence that participatory budgeting led to increased investment in access to water and to sewage treatment in some municipalities, notably in Porto Alegre, a 'relatively wealthy municipality, located in one of Brazil's wealthiest States' (Wampler 2007). However, a study of municipal budgets of Brazil's 220 largest cities found that, in general, the average per capita budget was a 'better indicator of changes in HDI (Human Development Index) than the presence of participatory budgeting programs' (Boulding & Wampler 2010). Furthermore, despite the push by international organizations including UN-Habitat and the World Bank, there is no evidence that such methods have had any impact on outcomes at the municipal level in any country in sub-Saharan Africa. Based on their analysis, Boulding & Wampler (2010) conclude that instead of focusing on participatory governance, 'governments should turn their attention to improving revenue collection. This includes modernizing local bureaucracies but also includes developing transparent oversight mechanisms to ensure that resources are spent efficiently and in legal ways.'

An analysis carried out by a consortium of international NGOs working in Mozambique concludes that, at the local level, civil society groups may have very limited ability to meaningfully impact the budget process because the Ministry of Finance may not share information on locally generated revenues, transfers to public companies, private organizations, or entitlement programs. (The Informal Governance Group and Alliance 2015). Thus, there are actually no mechanisms in place to even know how much money is available for community infrastructure or service delivery projects.

On the other hand, in some countries such as Kenya, financial devolution and public financial management reforms have significantly increased budget transparency, but the avenues for citizen participation in how the budget is spent at the local level are still unclear. In 2013, the government of Kenya passed the Community Development Fund (CDF) Act to, in part, improve financial management and curb corruption in the use of funds devolved to the CDF by the national government. According to an independent assessment carried out by the National Taxpayers Association, the provisions regarding citizen participation in the process remain unchanged and there are no requirements to prioritize community needs. Thus, while the Act may have led to increased investment in many communities, the process can be distorted by Members of Parliament selecting the Project Management Committee members who are responsible for implementation and oversight of expenditure (National Taxpayers Association (NTA) Kenya 2013).

A case study of citizen participation in local government planning and management in rural Ghana similarly found that while members of the District Assembly and sub-District councils were required to consult with and prioritize the concerns of community members, they generally failed to do so because there are no clear structures for informing community members how planning and budgeting occur or expenditures are monitored (Ahenkan *et al.* 2013). Media, specifically radio, television, and newspapers, generally disseminate and explain national budget statements to the public after budgets have been prepared and presented, but do not present much information from budget hearings (Aikins 2013).

One of the few peer-reviewed studies of lobbying and advocacy in the national budget process finds that, in Zambia, both interest groups and civil society lobby by submitting their demands in writing to either the budget committee or to various government agencies or departments. Bwalya *et al.* (2011) found that policy demands channeled through departments and agencies have a higher likelihood of success because they may have benefited from technical inputs and support from bureaucrats. Such bureaucrats are responsible for guiding the budget process and making tax and other financial proposals acceptable to politicians. This makes such bureaucrats important targets for lobbying and advocacy (Sabatier 1988). Civil society groups that lack the resources to employ tax specialists and consultants who can help them craft compelling materials to present to either bureaucrats or budgetary committees thus have very limited ability to influence the budget.

Influencing revenue generation

In addition to influencing how spending priorities are established, effective advocacy that highlights the 'fiscal contract' between governments and taxpayers to provide public services can result in increased tax revenue. The literature focuses on the theory of a virtuous cycle or quasi-consensual taxation in which 'citizens understand that they need to pay for services [and that] how states spend their tax money can affect their legitimacy and their "right" to demand revenues from taxpayers' (Brautigam *et al.* 2008). The Tax Justice Network's Kenya report similarly proposes that 'it is through taxation that citizens and the state engage in a bargain process whereby citizens comply with tax demands in return for some form of institutionalized influence over level, form, and usage of tax revenue' (Waris *et al.* 2009).

In Kenya, the Tax Justice Network found that often, 'poor tax payer morale is linked to poor service delivery, while equally the opposite is the case, tax payments increase when tangible benefits are available' (Waris *et al.* 2009). For example, in Freetown, Sierra Leone, improved service delivery and the popularity of the mayor have led to higher rates of tax compliance (Everest-Philips 2008). Following such examples, messages that highlight improved service delivery can be used as advocacy tools to increase revenue generation.

However, as Brautigam *et al.* (2008) note, there is debate over the degree to which payments of taxes can be seen as 'quid pro quo for better services'. One study of the South African Revenue Service reform found that tax compliance was unrelated to a sense of better social services, while another conversely found that South Africans were more likely to pay local service charges if they felt the government was providing services equitably (as cited in Brautigam *et al.* (2008)).

The extent to which a credible virtuous cycle can be established may also be contingent upon funding sources. In Tanzania and Zambia, local governments budgeted significantly more funding for public services when the majority of their revenues came from local taxes as opposed to donor funds or central transfers, which often resulted in less money for services and more for salaries (Brautigam *et al.* 2008). As such, issues related to the funding source are particularly problematic for the sanitation sector. A recent World Bank report on Africa's sanitation infrastructure found that aid from OECD countries is roughly 15% greater than public spending for capital maintenance expenditure and aid is about three times greater than public spending for capital infrastructure (Hall & Lobina 2012). Furthermore, in some cases, advocacy campaigns are targeted towards increasing external financing as opposed to local revenue generation. For example, the Korogocho W Nairobi W campaign advocated for increased donor funding, as their previous appeals to the city council and national governments fell short due to lack of political will and demonstrated taxpayer representation (Waris *et al.* 2009).

Weak demand for budget and tax accountability

A final but critical challenge for creating effective communication and advocacy channels is the simple lack of interest in these issues among the public. Fjelstand and Rakner attribute the low demand for tax accountability and lack of current tax advocacy to an advocacy trilemma: where governments are under increasing pressure to generate more revenues to provide and maintain basic public goods; those in political power and with economic ability do not want to pay taxes, while those without political power are the poor majority who also pay the majority of taxes; and that platforms for expressing the grievances of the population have lost credibility (Waris *et al.* 2009). Efforts made to increase public demand for accountability must be met with corresponding state capacity to respond (Rocha Menocal 2004). By building popular participation and accountability into local governance, local government will ideally become more responsive to citizen desires and more effective in service delivery, thus rebuilding broken linkages in the virtuous cycle and generating greater revenue (Blair 2000).

While there is a great deal of political theory dedicated to why it is so difficult to generate public interest in budgets and rebuild virtuous cycles, for this review it is sufficient to note that many keen observers observe that there is weak 'internal demand' for accountability (Hodges & Tibana 2004; Renzio 2007).

Hodges & Tibana (2004) conclude that, 'Given this reality, as well as the government's heavy dependence on external aid, it is perhaps not surprising that the most important dialogue on budget policy and performance is now external, between the government and donors. […] To some extent donors can act as a "proxy" restraint on the elite in the absence of strong internal checks and balances. Nonetheless, there are limitations to this – and some inherent contradictions. Much more important in the long run will be the development of internal demand for improved budget policy and performance'.

McKie & Van de Walle (2010) found that breakdown in budget transparency and efficiency occurs along all three phases of the budget process: first, in the budget formulation phase where spending priorities are set; second, in the budget execution phase where spending priorities are actualized through the transfer of funds; and, third, in the monitoring and evaluation phase where audits are performed on the effective use of funds. As such, building local demand for budget and expenditure transparency has been a part of advocacy efforts in many social sectors including the water and sanitation sector.

Prominent actors in the WASH sector include ActionAid, WaterAid, IRC, Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council, and UNICEF. The majority of their work appears to focus on national level budgets for water and sanitation, and is funded by international and bilateral donors. WaterAid and Freshwater Action Network (FAN) have been working to increase the capacity of local civil society organizations and networks to participate in dialogues with decision-makers and learn to advocate for pro-poor service delivery (Bouchane 2011). Their work highlights tools such as community and individual scorecards and public expenditure tracking surveys that have been used with some success in Ghana, Kenya, and Uganda to share budget information with communities and hold service providers responsible. However, the sustained use of these tools, in the absence of assistance from WaterAid/FAN and their impact on long-term expenditures is unclear (Bouchane 2011).

CONCLUSION

Although this literature review is by no means exhaustive, it provides a basis on which to categorize and prioritize communications strategies and tools. The survey reveals that the theory and practice of strategic communications have come a long way in understanding the developing country context in which they work, but it is still challenging to meaningfully measure the impact communication programs have on budgetary priorities and expenditures, especially at the local government level. Increasingly sophisticated behavior change, knowledge transfer and social marketing communication can promote individual behavior change, but advocacy for greater transparency or pro-poor budgeting faces deep structural constraints. This by no means suggests that advocacy and lobbying are not worthwhile tools. It does, however, highlight the importance of understanding the context in which advocacy will be carried out and committing to it for the long term in which policy change generally occurs.

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