

INVITATION
Seminar 4 May 2010

Communicating for Social Change

- Lessons learnt from public health

Seminar organized jointly by Glocal NOMAD, Danish AIDSNet, ADRA and ENRECA.

Venue: University of Copenhagen, Fiolstræde 4-6, 1st floor ('Metro 8'), Copenhagen

Introduction

A critical academic debate has in recent years been growing as to the possibilities and limitations of communication interventions in the health sector. The critique has addressed several issues: shortcomings in the understanding of health as too biomedical; but equally important - a critique of the limitations in the way health communication practitioners conceive of communication as too instrumental and with too limited a focus on individual behaviour change, not taking the complexity of the health challenges into consideration in communication interventions. These debates have led to a fundamental rethinking of the theory and practice of health communication. This comes simultaneously with the proliferation of public and academic attention to public health and to the need of health communication as a central discipline in public health, and consequently as a scientific field. Thus, at the heart of this debate lies the tension between theory and practice in health communication.

The discussions of strengths and weaknesses in health communication have to a large extent been tied to the fight against HIV and AIDS. In response to the complexity of the HIV and AIDS problem, communication responses have increasingly focused on the structural determinants of health, and thus communication for social change has emerged and grown as an approach to health challenges in general and HIV and AIDS in particular. A growing number of scholars have in recent years contributed in innovative ways to the production of new knowledge, gaining new insights into the complexity of the communication challenge surrounding HIV and AIDS but also beyond this theme specificity. A growing range of health related topics, such as polio, tuberculosis, malaria, alcoholism, domestic violence, disaster management and conflict resolution have been engaging in innovative (health) communication practices and analyses. Some of these experiences are those we wish to focus upon with this seminar.

It is in this context this seminar invites you to discuss some of these innovations. We wish to present this recent knowledge production and relate the generated insights to the challenges of health communication practitioners in NGOs, in bilateral programmes and in international agencies. Additionally, while having both practitioners and academics share their experiences, the seminar will also connect these discussions to a policy debate and to a debate about how to improve and qualify the role of health communication in the work of international development cooperation. Therefore, Danida is invited to participate in the closing panel debate.

Program

Morning: Opening Lectures

- 8.30** **Arrival, registration and coffee**
- 9.00** **Welcome** by Glocal NOMAD and ADRA
- 9.30** **Pushing the Boundaries of Health Communication: Trends and Challenges**
Rafael Obregon, Associate Professor, Ohio University, USA.
- 10.15** **Innovative approaches to community development: combining mass media with grassroots organisation**
Thuli Shongwe, Soul City, South Africa.
- 11.00** **Coffee Break**
- 11.15** **Health Communication: from individual behaviour change to civil society development and participatory governance**
Thomas Tufte, Professor, Roskilde University.
- 12.00** **Poster Session**
- 13.00** **Lunch**

Afternoon: Presentations of innovative health communication experiences

- 16.00** **Panel Debate: Danida, AIDSNet, Enreca Health –Danish Research Network for International Health**

Registration: Participants are requested to register at www.glocalnomad.net
Registration Deadline: 25 April, 2010.

Call for Posters and Papers for Presentation: All interested persons are invited to create a poster based on their own research or work experience in the field of health communication. Selected posters will be displayed during the seminar poster session. Printing assistance will be provided by **Enreca Health –Danish Research Network for International Health** if required.

We are also inviting papers related to communication for social change in the public health arena for presentation in the afternoon session of the seminar. Participants wishing to discuss their practice-based research are also invited to present work in progress as well as completed projects.

Please send a one page abstract of your poster or presentation paper idea by the 15th of April to nikita@ruc.dk at Roskilde University.
For any queries please email nikita@ruc.dk