

**The Fogo Process : Development Support Communications  
In Canada & The Developing World**

**By**

**Tony Williamson**

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in  
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Tony Williamson

Director  
Don Snowden Centre for Development Support Communications  
Memorial University of Newfoundland  
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Introduction

In 1967, as part of Canada's "War on Poverty", The Challenge for Change Programme of the National Film Board of Canada, sent renowned film maker, Colin Low, and a film unit to Newfoundland to make a documentary on rural poverty. He teamed up with Don Snowden, then Director of the Extension Service of Memorial University of Newfoundland. Snowden had been angered by a report of the Economic Council of Canada which described poverty from the point of view of an urban central Canadian, and which did not take any cognisance of the life-style and perceptions of rural Canadians. It was his idea to make a series of films in Newfoundland, through the Extension Service, to expose this bias and to show Canadians that the real poverty in places like rural Newfoundland was the poverty of information, of isolation from decision making, of lack of organization.<sup>1</sup> When he learned that Challenge for Change intended to make a film or films on rural poverty in Newfoundland, and that they had selected Colin Low, he was delighted, because he had been a long time admirer of Low.

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<sup>1</sup>See Wendy Quarry in *Interaction*, Vol. 2, Number 3, 1984.

Upon meeting him, he knew he was the right person in the right place at the right time.

Together they explored the province, in search of an appropriate case study. They decided upon Fogo Island, a small island in Notre Dame Bay, off the northeast coast of Newfoundland, on which there were ten communities with a total population of about 5000 people. Like many rural areas of Newfoundland at that time, the Islanders were being encouraged to resettle to "growth areas", and redevelopment of the island did not appear likely. Fogo offered a microcosm of many rural areas in Newfoundland. Moreover, the Extension Service had Fred Earle, a fieldworker engaged in community development and adult education on the island. From the area, he was respected and trusted by everybody. It looked like a perfect choice, and Colin Low came to Fogo for the summer, recruited some local students to apprentice with his film crew, and, with the help of Fred Earle, started interviewing and filming Fogo Islanders.

Fogo Island and rural Newfoundland twenty years ago presented a social environment so different from today, that it is difficult to imagine the context in which the film project took place, but it is important to know the context, because it set the stage for a communications process that has come to be known around the world.

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In the 1960's, the majority of rural "outports" were not accessible by road. Many lacked electricity, phones, television, newspapers and even reliable radio reception. With a long colonial history, Newfoundland had only become a province of Canada in 1949. The province inherited and maintained a highly centralized government and municipal or local government only existed in the larger regional centres. A sense of isolation was exacerbated by the fact that over 50% of the rural population, composed in the main of descendants from pioneer settlers from Ireland and west England, in over 1000 outports were functionally illiterate. In these little outports authority was vested in the local merchants and clergymen, who acted as brokers in purveying information to and from the centre of decision-making in St. John's, the capital of Newfoundland. The paternalism of Church, State, and Commerce, helped convince unschooled outport people that what knowledge they had was of little value. They equated knowledge with "learning" and considered themselves ignorant, despite a whole range of skills which had been passed on and accumulated for generations.

The Extension Service of Memorial University had only three fieldworkers in 1967. They were experienced men from rural Newfoundland, who were pioneering in a process of community education known as participatory development. The fieldworkers lived in the communities and shared the lives and aspirations of

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the people. Thus they established a pattern of mutual trust and growth. This kind of Extension work was unique among Canadian Universities.

The teamwork of Colin Low and Fred Earle forged a process which gave new dimension to the fledgling Challenge for Change Programme and to the Extension Service. Because it started on Fogo Island, it has come to be known as the Fogo Process.

### Fogo Island

Instead of producing a single social documentary on the theme of rural poverty, Low produced a series of unscripted "modules", some 28 of them, which depicted Fogo Islanders talking about a range of concerns and interests; the fishery, location of a high school, producer co-operatives, ship building, the role of women, local government, the merchants, resettlement, etc. As well, modules showed the children playing with home made toys and games, a wedding, stepdancing, a house party, story telling and singing. The joys and strengths of Fogo Society as well as the problems and fears of the people were represented. The modules focussed on ordinary people and personalities rather than on issues. What emerged in the totality of the modules was a holistic view of life on Fogo Island as perceived by the people themselves. They were the subjects in the modules instead of the objects of a scriptwriter's perceptions. These film modules and

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the way in which they were used in the context of participatory development is what has come to be known as the Fogo Process.

In the autumn of 1967, after the 16mm black and white films had been developed and rough cut into modules at the National Film Board, they were brought back to Fogo Island and shown to the people at a series of community screenings. At each meeting the NFB utilization officer or the Extension fieldworker, using the films as a catalyst, led a discussion on a development issue of concern to Fogo Islanders. The modular nature of the body of films facilitated utilization, because each screening could include material that was most appropriate or of most interest to each specific community or the specific group gathered at the meeting

A number of reactions and responses, not specifically related to the subject matter of the films, took place, which, at the time were not anticipated. People viewing themselves or their friends and relatives for the first time saw themselves in a new light, as others might see them. Many saw, for the first time that they in fact had knowledge, skills, strengths, and a lifestyle which were of value, and which, moreover they and their friends were expressing articulately. As Andrew Brett, of Shoal Bay said in one module:

"We don't got to be afraid of them things anymore. What we know we got to let people know that we know it and getting out and doing something...By that they'll know what we can do...Lets let people know what we are

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capable of doing and what we know. Otherwise we'll never be known."<sup>2</sup>

Individuals seeing themselves in the films and Fogo Islanders as a whole, experienced an increase in self confidence, not only in the value of their own lives, but in their power to express themselves and to do something about it.

In this reinforcement process, many also saw that as islanders, they were divided one against another, community against community. Suddenly they saw that as Fogo Islanders, they were one community, and that if they pulled together for the common good of the island, they stood a better chance for development. Thus, the films became a catalyst for consensus building.

Finally, with the new-found confidence and consensus, and with the aid of the Memorial University Extension fieldworker and rural development agents of the provincial government, the films also acted as a catalyst for action. In meetings, people not only saw they shared common interests but they started to create strategies for action.

It is tempting to say that the films, in themselves, fostered all of these things and to draw linear relationships between the films and subsequent action and development; but it

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<sup>2</sup>Andrew Brett at Shoal Bay, 1967, 16 mm B & W film (13 minutes), Educational Technology Division, School of Continuing Studies, Memorial University of Newfoundland, St. John's, Nfld.

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would be incorrect to do so. The Fogo Process, as it started to emerge from the original filming and screenings on Fogo Island, was critically linked to a sustained programme of community development efforts of the university and government. Although the attention Fogo Island received (the "Hawthorne Effect") from the filming and screenings, undoubtedly helped to accelerate developments on the Island, a passive viewing of the films in isolation from any constructive discussions and follow-up planning meetings, would have created no more than a passing moment of excitement and interest at best.

Another element of the Fogo Process as it emerged, was the screening of the films for Cabinet Ministers in the Government of Newfoundland & Labrador. At the time, the President of Memorial University feared that criticisms of government in some of the modules, would cause political problems for Memorial University. However, the Cabinet Ministers who saw the films, reacted favorably and constructively. Cabinet Ministers even responded on film. More important, the Government became convinced that there were development alternatives for Fogo Island, rather than resettlement. It entered into a partnership with the people of Fogo, one forged with at least some impetus from the films.

It is important to remember that the Fogo Process emerged as it did largely because of the isolation, lack of electronic communications, and inaccessibility to the centralized decision

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makers. It was the widespread prevalence of these conditions which led the Extension Service of Memorial University to incorporate the Fogo Process in its community development programme elsewhere in rural Newfoundland and Labrador.

### Port au Choix

With support from the Donner Canadian Foundation, and training from the National Film Board, the Extension Service established a full-fledged 16mm film production crew and facility. Its central mandate was to assist the fieldworkers of the Extension Service in applying the Fogo Process to their community development work.

The first area selected after Fogo Island was the Northern Peninsula of Newfoundland, at Port au Choix, where George Billard was the Extension field representative, working with the newly founded Northern Regional Development Association (NRDA). Here, Billard and the film unit made a series of film modules, focussing on economic development, resettlement, and the needs and aspirations of the youth. The former Post Mistress, Olga Spence, provided a sweeping and eloquent history of social and economic conditions in the area in a 28 minute vignette titled, "The Past, the Present, and the Future". The poetry of her language and imagery has been seen and applauded from Newfoundland to Alaska, from Guyana to India.

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Screenings and workshops took place with the members of the community, with the membership of NRDA, and with youth groups in particular.

A new dimension was added to the Fogo Process at this time. "Approval Screenings" were initiated with the individuals who were interviewed or who spoke in the films. They were given the right to suggest cuts or to add inserts and to approve in general the distribution of the module which they were featured in. This was recognized as a critically important refinement of the process, because individuals can be so easily hurt by the use of film in which they discussed politically or socially sensitive issues, an event which happens not infrequently with the Broadcast Media. The assurance of editing control at the outset, plus the involvement of the crew in the social life of the area, and the continuing presence of the Extension worker, helps to maintain a trust relationship, which, in the end, obviates the necessity of any editing once the modules reach the approval screening stage.

The original Fogo Films focussed on personalities and impressions. In many cases editing was minimal. Many of the films also were about ordinary people, rather than deliberately chosen key people. In the Port au Choix project, these elements were present also, but because the Project was the endeavour of the Extension Service with a mandate to educate rather than to

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make films as in the case of the NFB, considerable focus was also given to presenting hard information, particularly in regard to the objectives and organizational requirements of NRDA, which was just getting started. In effect, an element of peer teaching had been incorporated into the Fogo Process and this remained important ever after.

### Labrador

In 1969, a cameraman and soundman from the film unit joined the author on the Southern Coast of Labrador, travelling in a 28 foot boat, from village to village, in the third application of the Fogo Process. The Labrador coast at this time was the most neglected, the poorest, and the most isolated region in northern Canada. In the previous year, the author, the Extension fieldworker for Labrador, had already conducted an extensive screening of the original Fogo films in conjunction with community meetings and planning sessions for development activities. "These films show real people, just like us", said Labrador viewers, "and we know what they know", they added. Again, as in the case of Port au Choix, peer teaching emerged as an important component of the Fogo Process.

One of the Labrador film modules was about West Bay, a small community of 6 families, totally reliant upon a merchant from the village of Cartwright. They received credit from the merchant and

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in return they sold their fish to him on "open credit". "Squaring up" in the autumn, in this infamous "truck system", money never changed hands. The summer of the filming was the first time there was a school at West Bay. Not one adult there could read or write. "Do you ever get cash from the Merchant", asked the interviewer. "No, he will just wrinkle up his nose and ask what do you want it for", was the reply.

Because of the isolation, it took a year to get the films back to West Bay for approval screenings and discussions. Reasonably portable video equipment was becoming available in 1970, and the edited Labrador films had been transferred to video for playback. For screenings in communities like West Bay, the crew also had to bring along a small generator. The people of West Bay were quite surprised but delighted to see the crew return, and they were astounded to see themselves on film.

The module about the Merchant, frightened them, because they feared that their credit would be cut off in the coming winter. It was the only time the Extension Service was asked not to use an entire film module, a request which was honored until the Merchant passed away, at which time permission was given to use it.

Using the Labrador film modules at community meetings in 1970, the author discovered another aspect of the Fogo Process

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which had not been anticipated. People in the small outports and villages of Newfoundland and Labrador, as in many small rural societies, were reluctant to confront each other directly on controversial issues or on any matter which might require a rejection or negative response. Yet, individuals, who spoke about controversial issues on film, were perfectly willing to allow them to be viewed by their adversaries and to attend the same viewing, following which the opposing parties would discuss the content of the film. Somehow, the film or video de-identified the speaker, removed the inherent threat of confrontation, and enabled a dialogue which might otherwise never have taken place. Hence, the Fogo Process also opened up new lines of communication and contributed significantly to conflict resolution. This aspect of the Fogo Process was of central importance when it was transferred to community development efforts in developing countries.

### Video White Paper

In 1970, a new dimension was added to the Fogo Process, when the Department of Communications in Ottawa and the Bell Telephone Company of Canada gave the Extension Service a contract to assess communication needs on the Labrador Coast. In effect, this was a continuation for the author of the filming process begun the previous summer; this time, however, video instead of

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16mm film was used for recording as well as playback. The interviews were as wide ranging as ever, but communication concerns were injected into the interviews, so that later, in the editing process, a 45 minute videotape presentation could be assembled, to compliment a written report, also produced by the author, which would be submitted jointly to the Department of Communications and Bell Telephone of Canada.

The report and video were presented in Ottawa in October, to Eric Kierans, then Minister of Communications, and his Deputy Minister and Assistant Deputy Ministers. Officials of Bell Telephone also attended as well as Don Jamieson, Minister of Transport at the time and MP from Newfoundland. Bell Telephone was putting in a new dial phone communications system on the Labrador Coast, and in the process was insisting on the removal of the old radio-telephones of the Marconi system, which were set up for telegraphic purposes, but which were also being used as an informal network by the people to report on location of ships, ice, or fish, and to report on movement of people, bad weather, disasters, etc. After watching Labrador people describe the use of the Marconi system and its social importance to them and their offer to maintain the system themselves, Eric Kierans asked Bell Telephone to change its policy, because the functions of the two systems were obviously different and not in competition with each other. Bell Telephone agreed. Both Kierans and Jamieson were

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impressed with the insights which the video gave them, and both returned the next day to speak on video to individuals in Labrador about their concerns and how helpful the process had been because they could not visit all the remote places such as the scattered fishing stations in Labrador.

### Film or Video?

The shift from 16mm film to video evidenced some clear advantages. The equipment was cheaper and the costly professional crew was no longer essential. More important, one could immediately play back what had been shot, providing the opportunity for reshooting and for people to have input in the editing from the original material. At the same time it intensifies the process. Video does not allow the same distancing as film, which is not necessarily a good thing.

One dramatic example of the difference between video and film took place at a meeting and election in a small outpost in Newfoundland. The whole meeting was video-taped by the Extension worker, with the permission of those attending. As it turned out, a number of people at the meeting had been drinking and several individuals dominated and manipulated the proceedings. Following the election of the Community Council, the video was screened for all the participants. It proved to be a very effective large mirror, allowing them to see themselves in a

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detached and objective way. Without having to be told, individuals recognized that modified behaviour was essential if real development were to occur. A majority of those present requested that the election be rerun, and another meeting was agreed upon for the following day, which ended in entirely different but, in the view of the community, more rational results.

By 1970, all of the fieldworkers of the Extension Service were to be equipped with portable video production and playback equipment. Thereafter, video was used by each fieldworker in the Fogo Process and in response to their own environment and according to their own ability to incorporate the approach into their work.

The 16mm film unit continued to produce broadcast information programmes for fishermen. It's next involvement in the Fogo Process was at the end of the 1970's, when off shore gas and oil was becoming an economic and social issue in Newfoundland. The crew went to Scotland, the Shetland Islands, and Norway, again in partnership with the NFB, to produce film modules on successes and failures in the north sea and the inter-relation of fish and oil interests. Back in Newfoundland, these were screened extensively throughout the province, both on film and on video, for public discussion, seminars, and workshops. In this case, the use of film overcame the problem of differing

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international video standards and formats, and also made available high quality 16mm colour prints for broadcast and wide distribution through the NFB network.

Both film and video have their strengths, weaknesses and purposes. The Extension Service found that the costs associated with film making and the necessity of using a professional crew, imposed a discipline on the process and created a mystique which energized the involvement of individuals and communities in a film project. Video, on the other hand, was more democratic. One could place the equipment in the hands of untrained people and teach them in a short time to use it. There was, however, the danger of shooting for the sake of shooting, of producing an abundance of poor quality and poorly planned material, which contributed nothing to the educational or development goals.

Both film and video have different impacts when they are shown, and therefore the decision of what medium to shoot must be predicated upon the use to which the material will be put. The experience of the Extension Service has been that film is particularly effective for large audiences, for conveying impressions and changing attitudes. Video is best for small groups, where hard content can be frozen or singled out in discussion.

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### The Kaminuriak Project<sup>3</sup>

Throughout the 1970's, the Extension Service of Memorial University continued to use film and video in its participatory development efforts. Much of this effort was part of the routine work of the field representatives, while other efforts were accomplished through major funded projects in development support communications, such as the Oil & Gas Project in the North Sea, the Fisheries Co-operative Education Project on the north coast of Labrador, or the Community Learning Centres Project throughout the province.

One of the most carefully planned and well executed projects representing the successful application of the Fogo Process, took place in the central arctic of Canada, in a district known as the Keewatin. It was designed and implemented by Don Snowden and Paul MacLeod in response to an initiative of a federal civil servant who saw the Fogo Process as a means to resolve the conflict and hostility which existed between the Inuit hunters of the Keewatin on the one hand, and the biologists and management officials of the government on the other.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>Kaminuriak is the Inuit (Eskimo) word identifying a caribou herd in the central arctic barrenlands of Canada. Caribou are a type of wild reindeer which occur in large herds numbering hundreds of thousands in some cases.

<sup>4</sup>This project is written up by Don Snowden, Paul MacLeod and Lorne Kusugak as a Case Study in the publication of the Dag Hammarskjold Foundation, **Methods and Media in Community Participation**, in Press.

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Once the feasibility of the project had been determined, some fundamental principles were agreed to by all parties. These were:

- " 1. That full access would be given to both parties to the use of media employed in the project.
2. That both parties would undertake to view all videotapes, and to discuss them.
3. That those on videotape would speak in the language of their choice and that all tapes would be available in both languages.
4. That both "communities" - those of the Inuit and those of biologists and game managers - would select the persons would appear on videotape.
5. That videotaping would be done where those on tape were most comfortable - in offices, homes, on the land, at work and so on.
6. That editing rights were vested solely in those who appeared on videotape - and not in Inuit organizations or with senior government officials."<sup>5</sup>

A project coordinator was chosen with the approval of both the inter-governmental committee on caribou (representing the game managers) and the Inuit Cultural Institute (based at the village of Eskimo Point and representing the Inuit). He was Lorne Kusugak, a young radio broadcaster well known throughout the Keewatin. Each Inuit community also had a person designated as responsible for the project in its community. A training programme took place to prepare the interviewers and production crews (both Inuit and non-Inuit).

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<sup>5</sup>Snowden et. al., *ibid.*

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Once the videotapes of the users and managers of the caribou herd had been rough edited and approvals for utilization of them by the participants obtained, the project coordinator "versioned" them into the second language (videotapes have two sound tracks). A total of 33 videotapes were produced, representing an enormous spectrum of opinions and views concerning the Kaminuriak caribou herd and the relationship of people to it. They demonstrated that in fact both sides of the dispute had much to learn from each other and that there were not inflexible nor rigidly held views about the subject.

Distribution and screening of the videotapes involved critical decision making and careful animation. A distribution coordinator was appointed, who worked closely with village representatives and game managers in ensuring that a fair balance of views be represented in the screenings, where it was not practical to screen all of the videotapes. Intense screenings and discussions took place in homes, schools, community halls, offices, and at social gatherings.

A gradual attitude change took place. Both Inuit and game managers realized that they could learn from each other, that an enlarging of the caribou management committee, to include the Inuit hunters, would be of mutual benefit.

"The videotapes had clearly indicated the desire and willingness of the Keewatin Inuit to be involved as responsible partners in the decision-making process, and there were other signs that the situation of open

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confrontation which had prevailed was significantly diluted...it was decided to (create) a policy advisory Board which, along with senior game management personnel and other involved civil servants, would include representation of native groups from each jurisdiction where there was vital interest in northern caribou...Since then the Keewatin Inuit and other original Canadians have participated in this unique and constructive advisory group"<sup>6</sup>

With the resolution of the management crisis, the videotape series is now used in schools in both the north and the south as a rich source of traditional Inuit knowledge and modern scientific information. The Inuit Broadcasting Corporation also show it to other Inuit communities via satellite.

As in all cases where the Fogo Process has been used, the social animator has been the critical element in the utilization of films and videotapes as a development support communication tool. The media alone does not bring about social change. In the case of the Kaminuriak project, the Fogo Process assisted in...

"...replacing emotion with logic, speaking with listening, rhetoric with considered thinking and ignorance and lack of concern with understanding and caring. In the process both sides retained their sense of dignity; nobody lost and everybody was a winner."<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>Snowden et. al., *ibid.*

<sup>7</sup>Snowden et. al., *ibid.*

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### International Applications

The Fogo Process has been applied in other countries since its inception, first in poor regions of the United States of America and secondly in the developing world. Lessons learned in the U.S. confirmed that the process works best in pockets of isolation, where the people have little access to information and where they have not been inundated by mass media. In Alaska it worked well in an experimental programme whose purpose was to increase the participation of rural Alaskans in the governmental decision-making process using film and video as organizational tools.<sup>8</sup> It did not work particularly well in poor counties in the southern States, where interaction with the Media and officials had engendered a certain amount of cynicism.

The author did experience a dramatic illustration of the ability of the Fogo Process to remove the inherent threat from confrontation and to allow for dialogue which would not ordinarily occur. In this instance, poor blacks in Mississippi, recipients of the Food Stamp Programme, criticised its administration on video in a manner they would have been incapable of doing directly to the (white & middle class) administrators. With the author as animator, a group viewing between the two adversaries was organized where both watched on

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<sup>8</sup>see Kennedy, *Beyond Advocacy*, 1984, for a description and analysis of the Fogo Process in association with a project called "Skyriver" in Alaska.

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video the critical views being expressed by each other. Their ensued a somewhat tense but constructive discussion following the viewing, despite skepticism over the possibility of any material benefits from the Project (White House Conference on Food Nutrition & Health, 1969).

Valuable lessons have also been learned through development support communication projects in south Asia. In the early 1980's, Snowden and MacLeod, with support from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), introduced the Fogo Process to the community Extension workers of the National Dairy Research Institute (NDRI) in Karnal India. The project focussed on a village called Taprana.<sup>9</sup> Few of the villagers could read or write. Video was an ideal way, for example, to demonstrate new technology, to teach primary health care and to explain the functioning of co-operatives. The villagers saw concrete benefits and were impressed with the fact that they actually had experience of value which they could teach through video, to other villages.

The sustainability of this process, however, often depends upon the continuity within the Institutional base which fosters it. When the senior administration changes, or an individual

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<sup>9</sup>Snowden, another case study in **Methods and Media in Community Participation**. See also the film, **Eyes See, Ears Hear**, available from Canadian Film makers Distribution Centre, 67A Portland Street, Toronto, Ontario M5V 2M9.

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with vision leaves, too often process oriented projects are dropped in favour of those which can meet tangible targets or show measurable outputs in relation to inputs. So much of community development in the sense of human resource development is difficult to measure because it comes about through attitude change, or an enhanced sense of confidence which is reflected only indirectly through subsequent action.

Another difficulty in applying the Fogo Process in a participatory developmental model, is that often the Institutional base is itself highly stratified, rigid, and non-participatory. This has posed a particular problem with Agricultural Extension Departments in universities or governments, which desire to better the farmers through the transfer of technology, but fail in their objectives because they do not know how to build on the strengths of the farmers in the first instance.

Don Snowden died unexpectedly in India while he was working with a new organization called the National Council for Developmental Communications. Memorial University established the Don Snowden Centre for Development Support Communications to continue his vision and efforts in the developing world. The first new project of the Centre, was undertaken in Ramghat, a small mountain village in western Nepal. Paul MacLeod, in conjunction with the Nepalese staff of Worldview International

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Foundation (WIF..an International, Norwegian funded NGO) trained ten women to use portable half inch video production and playback equipment for their fieldwork as educators in a government sponsored women's rural development project. An anthropologist told the project team that it would never work because the women were "visually illiterate" as well as unable to read or write. Such views notwithstanding, the women quickly learned to competently plan and produce videos. It gave these remote villagers a new freedom to communicate. They zoomed in enthusiastically on the potential for video, turning to the really important issues in their lives. They quickly created their own agenda, carrying their videotapes on legal advocacy for women, on traditional medicine, on simple systems for gathering and storing drinking water, etc, and showed them on their battery-powered field monitors to friends and neighbors. The mirror effect of video also had a powerful impact on the women. One of the trainees was distressed by her manner of speaking and changed it accordingly, while another was so impressed with her knowledge and power to express that she gained new confidence and emerged as a leader of the group.

This project was run entirely by the Nepalese. The animator, or community worker was a local person, trained as an anthropologist. He was respected and loved by the people with whom he worked. He and the technical crew of WIF-Nepal, worked

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as a team with the women of Ramghat. Paul MacLeod performed as a trainer of trainers, primarily providing conceptual advice regarding the Fogo Process, offering technical advice when it was sought, and adding moral support to the whole enterprise.

### Conclusions

It is becoming generally recognized among the richer nations that in the poorer nations, sustained and self-reliant development can only come about by building upon the strengths of the society which undertakes it. So often development efforts have foundered because the people who are supposedly to be developed have not been involved in the process from the beginning. In recognition of this, many of the NGO's in developing countries are turning to a process known as Participatory Action Research in their efforts to empower people to create their own improvements according to their own aspirations.

Development support communications can be a powerful tool in the above objectives. Often this term is interpreted to mean communications in support of development devised by some expert for the good of some client group. It implies that poor people themselves do not know what is good for them or are too ignorant to help themselves. The practice of development support communications in this instance is to convince a group that

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a development plan devised by some unknown experts is good for them.

Practitioners of the Fogo Process, on the other hand, see development support communications as a tool in participatory action research or participatory development. Although the Fogo Process has concentrated upon film and video, other media such as popular theatre or puppetry can be utilized in the same way. All can be powerful means for involving people in a process which enhances self-awareness, self-confidence, and self-empowerment through objective reflection, consensus, community action, structural change and participation in development which improves the quality of life for those who engage in it.

Don Snowden believed that "if people are given the right tools and shown how to use them they can help themselves better than anyone else can, will make wiser decisions for themselves than others can make for them, and make important contributions to society in so doing."<sup>10</sup> The Fogo Process is one of those tools. If practiced sensitively, responsibly, and effectively, it can be a potent and positive force in improving the human condition.

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<sup>10</sup>Iglauer, p.65, in *development dialogue*, 1984:1-2.

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