

**Report of the VBDC communication workshop on
“Effective communication of research
for development”**

Ouagadougou, 27-28 March 2012



Workshop report prepared by Ewen Le Borgne (ILRI / NBDC, workshop facilitator)

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Summary

Communication is important for all basin development challenges, including the Volta BDC. There is much communication going on in the Volta basin already – more than project leaders might even admit themselves – yet there is a strong need for joined up communication between the Volta projects and beyond.

This workshop aimed at developing an integrated communication approach with project-specific action and monitoring plans. The workshop did not achieve to tackle monitoring of communication in depth but led to rich discussions and touched upon crucial challenges and opportunities.

The apparent disconnect between Burkina Faso and Ghana, between Volta project teams and between communication and other areas of the work, as well as the multiplication of tools and platforms can all be improved significantly with a few activities outlined in this report:

- A proactive role of V5 to clarify, coordinate, seek inputs and stories and tease out materials out of this work – with the active support from other Volta project (and leaders);
- A thorough review of all communication platforms and channels in use in VBDC and clarification about the key platforms that all VBDC staff are supposed to know and use;
- Connecting the wikis across all the projects to ensure communication flows;
- Clarification on the positioning of VBDC with regards to copyrights issues, bilingual management and roles and responsibilities of everyone in communication work;
- Some ground work to convince other project leaders of the importance of communication for VBDC as a whole – as a matter that actually enhances, amplifies and simplifies their ongoing work;
- **Every Volta project has a draft operational communication plan**, which can be improved upon, based on the feedback received in the workshop.

Communication is everybody's business, now is the time to join the dots.

Background information and expected learning outcomes

The Volta Basin Development Challenge (VBDC) has been ongoing for over a year and the five different projects are well ahead with the research they are conducting on various aspects of rainwater and small reservoir management in the Volta basin. The pressure to disseminate and share the results of this multi-faceted research agenda and the related need to coordinate internal flows of information and knowledge so as to achieve integrated results are pushing for more and better communication in the basin program.

The workshop that took place on 27 and 28 March 2012 on the premises of the Volta Basin Authority (VBA) brought together representatives from each Volta project and aimed at the following learning outcomes (for participants):

- Be able to present, discuss and select appropriate communication tools, channels and products for use for identified target groups at different stages of their project implementation
- Agree on an innovative strategy and operational plan for bilingual communication in the VBDC including who does what and when between research projects and coordination and change project
- Be able to monitor the communication activities in their projects
- Have a plan on project level communication activities for implementation

The workshop followed an interactive and flexible process jointly designed by Olufunke Cofie (VBDC leader), Mahamoudou Sawadogo (VBDC communication officer specialist) and Ewen Le Borgne (knowledge sharing and communication specialist at the International Livestock Research Institute in Addis Ababa, working on the Nile Basin Development Challenge, facilitator).

This workshop report introduces the process followed, key insights around several areas of communication, recommended actions and some appendixes for further information.

Process followed

The workshop followed the agenda proposed (see appendix 1) but was adjusted along the way to reflect the needs, pacing and aspirations of the participants.

The following sessions took place:

- An **introduction** of the workshop to review the program and participants expectations;



- A **basic discussion** about what participants understand as the functions that communication fulfills;
- A **collective review of VBDC communication**: the positive aspects of communication in VBDC and of aspects that need improvement within each Volta project, in VBDC as a whole and with other elements of the Challenge Programme for Water and Food (CPWF);
- A **presentation** depicting a wide range of communication functions, activities, lessons from the past, an extensive example from the Nile BDC and some implications for VBDC communication;
- A brief introduction of the **VBDC draft communication strategy** and of the operational communication plans prepared by the V5 team based on the documents of each Volta project;
- Some **individual project work** on the operational plans, to unpack those plans and specify activities for the next few months, identifying what communication activities and outputs are on-going, planned, about or around what content, who will implement them by when and what support is required from whom;
- A **review of the communication tools and channels available in the VBDC** – where participants were invited to mention how familiar they are with it, what they like or would change about each platform and what needs they may have;
- A **discussion about how to ensure that VBDC communication functions in an integrated way**, to ‘work as one VBDC’.
- A short **discussion about how to convey the results of this workshop** to project teams and leaders.
- A **conclusion, evaluation and closing**.

Insights and issues

The workshop featured several good discussions that revealed crucial insights about communication challenges and opportunities in VBDC around the following areas: A) The perception of communication by VBDC staff, B) The current situation with communication, C) Tools and platforms in use D) Achieving an integrated VBDC and E) the link with the broader CPWF (see box below)

A) The perception of communication by VBDC staff

Communication is everyone’s business but it would help all to clarify how each performs their part of the communication work (without adding extra work) and how to join up all these inputs.

Communication seems to be perceived as a specific set of activities that no Volta project (aside from V5) considers as one of its activities. As a result, any request to work on communication activities might be perceived as an invitation to add yet another task on top of main project activities and is thus considered a burden. This is a valid concern that needs to be taken into account.

Yet, the graph below shows that **any interaction with partners and other stakeholder, any activity engaging, collaborating, sharing knowledge and information with others is part of communication**. Disseminating information, public awareness and all support functions (in lighter shade on the

graph) are more likely to be executed by communication specialists (aside from 'documenting' which researchers themselves perform on a regular basis), but everyone has a role to play in communication.

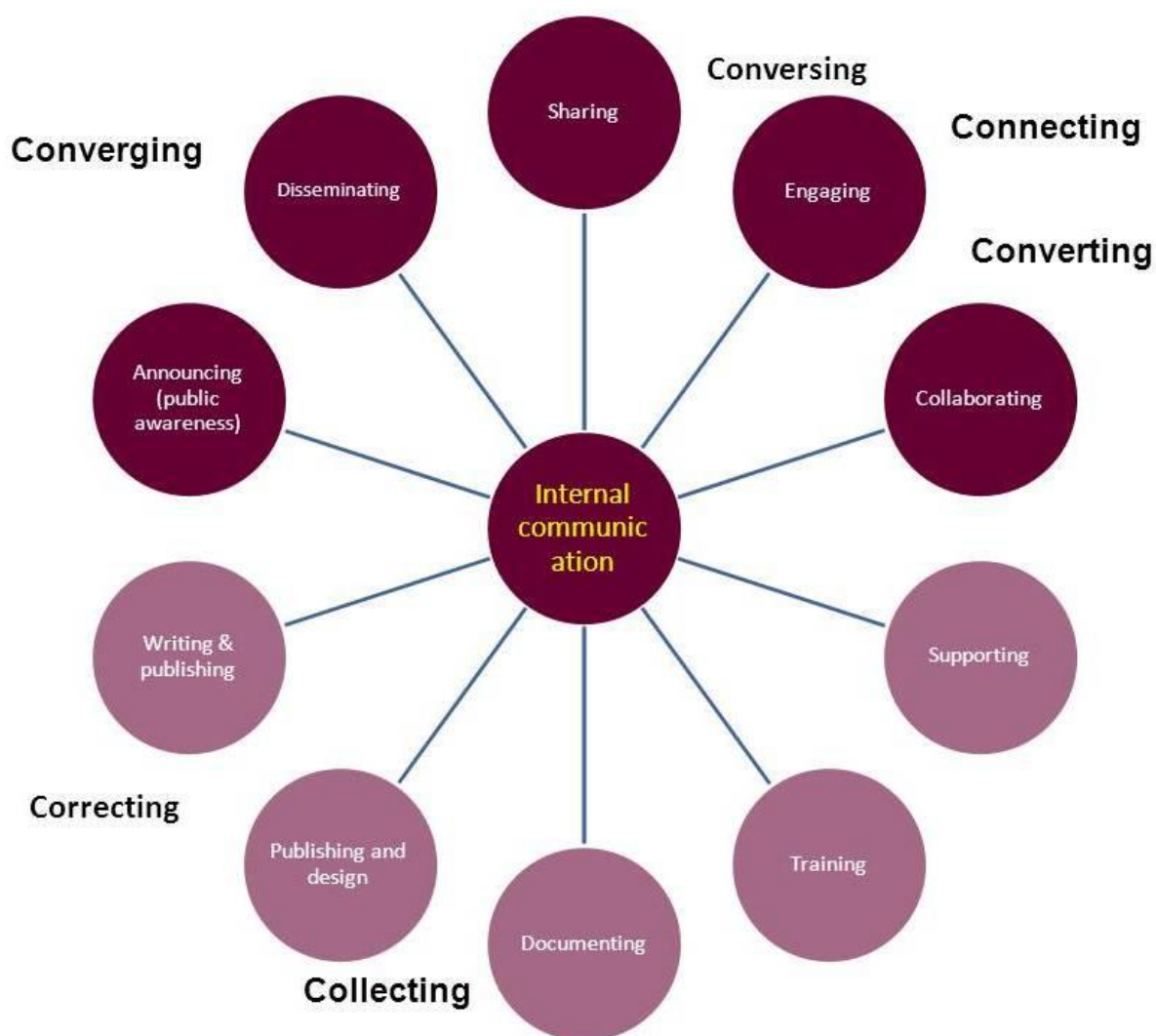


Figure 1 The communication functions - everyone is involved in communication!

The definition of communication (*comms*) functions needs to be specified to all VBDC staff so that they understand that they contribute to communication activities (and should also support the identification of 'good content', questions, insights and stories that V5 can help tease out and package). Obviously the packaging, layout work, editing and targeted dissemination of some (not all) communication materials is primarily the task of V5.

The workshop helped raise this important issue and outline the complementarity and overlap of different people in the VBDC communication strategy.

B) The current situation with communication in VBDC

- There is indeed a lot of communication happening (without calling it so) in each Volta project;
- Each project has been (understandably) concentrating on their own dynamics and comms activities rather than looking at integration or linkage with other Volta projects;
- More joined-up communication needs to happen across V projects and regions (Burkina Faso / Ghana), as well as further integration of channels used across VBDC.

One collective exercise led to shaping up the following table highlighting some **strengths and weaknesses** in the communication of each Volta project and of VBDC and CPWF as a whole.

	Positive aspects	Points for improvement
V1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participatory GIS data collection involving (excited) participants - Consultative (participatory) meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Different people coming to the consultative meetings - Translating science into accessible language - Internal communication in V1
V2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Good innovation platform (IP) dynamics, initiated with farmers and reaching full scale - Internal communication improving across partners in each country - Some communication products (e.g. videos etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Language issues (French-English) - Occasionally, not presenting the project so well at multi-stakeholder meetings because of the absence of the experts - Lack of appropriate communication tools and products to communicate with IP people
V3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Launch events (leaving a symbol in the community for for data collection) - Stakeholder interaction at the community level - Understanding of the link between communication and OLM - Integrating the 4 PhD research in the project by ensuring different expertise in the PhD committees - Engaging project team members on the wiki - End users involvement in pilot studies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Arguably the V3 wiki needs to move to the VBDC - It is difficult to document certain processes (e.g. community's demand such as solving the problems of macrophytes in the Boura reservoir, or dealing with problems of mosquitoes associated with SR) - Log in required to access the project wiki (for non V3 people) - Developing a good work plan on communications for the upcoming stakeholder workshop
V4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The V4 wiki and Dropbox works well - Focus on different workshops and steps - A flexible stakeholder matrix and strategic plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Interaction between the two sites (BF-GH) and the related language issue
V5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A wiki housing all information - The website in English and French - Dissemination materials (flyers, project profiles, posters, press releases) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not so relevant information on the wiki (e.g. out-of-date V3 information) - The wiki is not used much - Too much information sent by V5 - Agenda and planning (time-wise)
VBDC as a whole	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project leader monthly meetings - Monthly VBDC updates sent out with links to the wiki - Involvement of V5 in other V projects - Involvement of everyone in multi- 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Knowing what's happening across V-projects - A common calendar? - Integration across projects? - The need to recognize that we have to open up across projects

	stakeholder processes (MSPs)	- Collecting updates from each project (partly done in monthly meetings)
CPWF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The website - The e-newsletter - Being active in different contexts - Topic working groups (TWGs) - The IFWF3 Forum in Jo'burg 2011 to interact with each other. - The peer assists in comms4uptake 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What is happening with the topic working groups is unclear (an idea: have each researcher in one TWG) - Under documentation of phase 1 - We are not taking advantage of the work in different context (more translation etc.)

C) Tools and channels in use

There are many channels in use in VBDC/CPWF – many of them are not known to VBDC staff, let alone what they can do.

It is not very clear for VBDC staff what platforms they should be using and what to do with the concurrent wikis and websites (some of them are not known to the V-project members themselves).

Overview, guidance and potentially training would be appreciated from V5 by other V projects to make optimal use of these tools and channels.

In particular the absence of a *conversation* tool deserves attention.

The VBDC Update is seen as the main information channel across Volta projects at the moment.

The following table was compiled collectively:

Tool	I know Nothing at all <----->Everything	I like	I would change	I need
Newsletter (i.e VBDC Update, now to be linked to the website)	←-----x-----x-x---x-x-x---xx→	That it is sent by emails with links to the wiki Gives updates on events and research outputs <i>Arguably the best link with other tools</i>	See 'Google Calendar' suggestion	
Website (VBDC)	←-----x-----xxxx---x---x→	User friendly		URL?
Wiki (VBDC)	←-----x-----x-x-x-----xx→	User friendly I like the VBDC wiki	Try to make people use it? (keep it updated, inform and train people to use it) Integrate or take V2-3-4 wikis to VBDC wiki	URL?
Google calendar (on wiki)	←x-----x-x---x-----xx→		Invite people to visit the wiki from the calendar Link with newsletter for future events	
Contact database (on)	←x---x-----x-----x---xx→		Link across wikis	Contact profiles (<i>hard but try</i>)

wiki)				it)
Photo database (on wiki)	←---x---x--x--x-----x-x→	The pictorial overview of past events		Issue of copyrights should be investigated
CG space (CPWF) database	←xxx-----x-----xx→	I like CG spaces		
Knowledge tree (for internal docs – CPWF)	←xxxx-----x-----x→			
Slideshare (CPWF)	←x--xx-----x-x-xx→	I like Slideshare		
Yammer (CPWF)	←-----x-x-x-x---xx→	Sharing of updates	What about intellectual property?	A VBDC-specific Yammer
Facebook (CPWF)	←x-xxxx-----x→			
Flickr (CPWF)	←x-x--x-----x--x-----→			CPWF login credentials (Mahamoudou to contact M. Victor)
V2 wiki	←x-xx-----xx---→	Sharing of documents		
V3 wiki	←-x-xx-----x—x-x--→	Sharing of documents		
V3 website	←xxxx---x-----x-----x--→			
V4 wiki	←x--x--x--x-----x-x---x→	Sharing of documents	Dynamise it by having a weekly email on what was posted	

From that overview:

- Clearly the most famous tools for most are: the VBDC Update (arguably the best information channel of all), the website, wiki, CPWF Slideshare and CPWF Yammer network. This does not mean to say that they are used – but they are familiar to the participants;
- Clearly there's a need to explain all VBDC staff what is happening with the Volta project wikis;
- Facebook, Knowledge tree and CG Space are not well known but that is fine since they do not need to work with it or input it – they should however be mapped on the tool overview.

D) Achieving an integrated VBDC

A fully integrated VBDC has some way to go.

However it can be significantly improved through a few improvements:

- **A more proactive and involved V5 (in other V activities),**
- **A regular check on communication activities/outputs/events in the monthly project leaders' meeting - with inputs from other project leaders,**
- **Summarizing key activities in reports,**
- **A survey about communication / sharing tools could also help.**

A very good discussion (depicted in the image below) at the end of the workshop revealed that communication inside each V-project can in itself prove a major challenge and need to be sorted out to allow effective cross-project communication.

, The following activities could contribute to achieving integrated communication accorss the VBDC:

- In project leader (PL) meetings, reviewing what is going on in each V project in terms of: planned (and published) reports and outputs (to collect, if need be repackage, and disseminate them); identifying stories that can be teased out by V5 from each V project; listing upcoming events and missions to include them in the VBDC calendar;
- In individual Volta project team meetings, reviewing also the outputs planned and produced and needs for support – to share those with V5 (at the PL meeting or otherwise);
- Using RSS feeds to promote information from various wikis and pull it to the main wiki – although this is pending on the openness of individual project wikis (if they are restricted to members, RSS feeds do not work);
- At V5 level, have a proactive participation at V activities, exchange with other Volta project staff and promoting the work happening there;
- Using project activity reporting by adding a 'summary' part on the template (including objectives etc.) so that everyone can easily follow the activity without having to read a lengthy report – and be able to re-use this content for e.g. the website, newsletter etc.
- Make the Google calendar viewable by all (but only with Mahamoudou to update it), explain how to access it (via bookmarks, integrated with Outlook etc.);
- Prepare a survey to assess the need for a conversation space (a la Yammer) and about other communication platforms too, to assess the degree of familiarity of VBDC staff with current tools and their needs for specific communication work and channels.



Figure 2 How to achieve an integrated VBDC?**Recommended actions**

The workshop has unearthed various issues and ways forward – in relation with the major hurdles that seem to emerge ahead:

- The ***insufficient internal communication*** to find out about what is happening across the various Volta projects;
- The ***difficulty to bring together Burkina Faso and Ghana perspectives*** and teams due to issues of language, different cultural and institutional contexts, research perspectives etc.;
- The ***multiplicity of tools***, lack of awareness about and integration between them;
- The wariness of project leaders (and teams) about ***communication work, perceived as a burden*** – which needs prime addressing.

These challenges are all the more important that there is pressure from the donor to deliver integrated research across all basin projects and from the wider CGIAR to show the ‘science’ of our work.

The link with CPWF

The workshop focused on VBDC communication activities but also dealt with the wider interaction with the rest of the Challenge Program Water and Food in passing.

The main outcome is that apart from V5 and the Basin leader’s interactions with CPWF, there is rather limited contact with CPWF for the rest of VBDC. The staffs seem to appreciate the outputs and channels available at CPWF level, although not every tool is known to VBDC staff.

One main vehicle for further integration with other parts of the CPWF could be the topic working groups and there is an idea of a TWG on participation submitted from the VBDC, though budget issues seem to make it unlikely that new groups will emerge and current TWG activities are also not clearly communicated with the rest of CPWF.

There is however already some useful discussion going on around issues of participation between VBDC and NBDC (through the involvement of Kathryn Snyder in both BDCs) – though it is not clear what discussion is going on.

There is a wish for strong documentation of phase 2

Box 1 The link VBDC-CPWF**How to move forward?**

- **Convincing about the value of communication** – *One first step to go forward*

Before communication can hope to improve anything, the whole VBDC team needs to realize its importance. a number of ways and messages for V5 and other project participants to convinced about the value of communication in VBDC:

- “Communication is not a bad word – it makes your work easier” (show examples to do so);
- Put things into practice quickly to show the value of communication;
- Make people understand that they already *DO* communication;
- Get a testimony of well-communicating scientists (e.g. Christophe Lepage of V4) about the value of communication;
- Organise peer-assist cases about VBDC comms challenges to get feedback and ideas;
- Celebrate successes of communication;
- Participate to other Volta activities and report about it from a V5 / VBDC perspective;

- Engage, engage, engage! Get close to scientists and discuss all these matters and others as often as possible to build trust, understand each other's perspective and bridge the gaps;
- Do a short video about e.g. upcoming V4 event to show to others;
- The workshop participants are also expected to advocate for the importance of communication to their team members.

The facilitator's additional comments about this:

- Encourage and recognize their good communication work;
- *Mention communication on a regular basis as part of their work (make it a habit for all to realize that communication pervades VBDC work);*
- *Document and share upcoming results, outputs, events (on wiki, calendar, website) etc. to show the value of having that information at hand;*
- *Perhaps a blog post explaining the VBDC communication approach, together with an interview, would help inform everyone in VBDC and CPWF about it.*

In addition, here are the clusters of activities that could help improve communication within VBDC drastically:

- **Collecting information / content – Getting quality stories and outputs out!**
 - o During the PL meetings, V5 should map the events and missions, upcoming or released outputs, signals about interesting stories or other matter for publication/dissemination (so that Mahamoudou can chase these signals and package information for the website, newsletter etc.) but also their communication problems (which e.g. could be used for the monthly CPWF peer-assists) and requests for communication support;
 - o The Google calendar should thus be made open for all and Mahamoudou should update this calendar regularly, on the basis of inputs from other team members. If need be, Mahamoudou should explain how to access the calendar (via bookmarks, integrated with Outlook etc.);
 - o The content that is developed by the different Volta projects should be captured and re-used for various outlets (newsletter, VBDC website, CPWF website etc.);
 - o RSS feeds should be used more extensively (after opening wikis) to ensure a more dynamic flow of content throughout the VBDC;
 - o V5 should organize access to all wikis for all VBDC team members; this however depends on the openness of project teams to their wikis
 - o VBDC should consistently populate various channels with content: Google calendar, CPWF Slideshare, newsletter etc.
 - o The (activity) reports' template should be developed to feature a summary section that helps understand the content of the report quickly and allows re-using for the website, newsletter etc. this should be discussed and approved at the PLs meeting
 - o The V5 team should actively participate to other Volta project activities and document ongoing processes (and quickly provide feedback about this) to project teams.

- **Conversation: *the key to cross-project and cross-culture integration?***
 - The PL meetings are the main mechanisms to share knowledge and converse among VBDC. Whenever a VBDC team member is travelling to another VBDC setting, ad hoc meetings should take place to ensure conversations are taking place (and hopefully a very light documentation of the exchange);
 - The importance of bringing VBDC people together and reinforcing their familiarity and trust is clearly demonstrated. Due attention should be put into preparing the few face-to-face activities that bring together team members (such as science meetings) by e.g. including good conversations;
 - Perhaps the PL meetings could alternatively address ongoing activities (one month) and then focus on specific cross-project themes and questions (every other month) to ensure quality conversations are taking place across the basin.
 - Topic working groups need to be discussed with the wider CPWF to see how they can strengthen conversation and cooperation across (among others) individual Volta projects – their status and activities are unclear as of now;
 - The case of starting a conversation and sharing tool (such as Yammer, but not limited to it e.g. Facebook, email discussion group etc.) is open for debate. See more about this on tools above.
- **Communication tools and platforms – *Where it's all happening***
 - A tool survey exploring familiarity, use, appreciated features, areas for improvement and other needs) should be set up to establish the most pressing needs among the team;
 - There is a clear call to prepare an overview of the tools – what they are (and their URL), what they help with, how people can find out more, who they should contact and what people can do with it (including contributing to developing these tools and their content). The tool survey could help prepare this overview, emphasizing the top three tools that all VBDC staff members should be aware of;
 - The wikis: A discussion (in the PL meeting) has to take place to see how to integrate all the wikis in a way or another (by moving the contents, using RSS feeds or adding links) to the VBDC overall wiki;
 - Yammer (or a similar platform) is a point in case since there is no 'conversation' tool in the current array of tools. A Yammer network could be tried out and at minimum the need for such a platform should be investigated in the tool survey;
 - The case of the picture gallery tool needs to be questioned too – there are concurrent platforms (Flickr and Picasa) which might *feel* a little strange.
- **Principles of work**
 - Perhaps in the communication strategy, there is a need to define the VBDC policy regarding copyrights issues on pictures and videos. A small disclaimer could help with this. The use of a Creative Commons license could also help – a broader discussion about the open access of information could also take place within the team;

- Similarly, regarding bilingual communication, some guidelines need to be specified so that everyone in VBDC knows what to expect with communication in the two main languages of the project;
- The role and responsibilities of V5 acting on its own behalf or as VBDC coordinating body should be clearly delineated – some activities are V5 communication activities and others are VBDC support activities.

- **Action planning** – *Each project has a role to play*

From the action plan that each project presented...

- **V1**: are really focusing on two target groups in their outcome pathways but need to focus further on other VBDC researchers and to specify what they will share on the different communication tools;
- **V2**: highlighted many communication activities planned but primarily towards the end of the project – this needs to be supported by intermediary activities e.g. documenting the project. On the operational plan, there is need for distinction between the target audiences, this should be updated;
- **V4**: Have a very good plan but need to specify what they will do to integrate with other projects and need to beef up their activities to reinforce interactions between Burkina Faso and Ghana;
- **V5**: Presented the best operational plan but need to specify the content / messages / stories they will focus on.

- **Monitoring** – *How do we know we are making a difference?*

- Relevant recommendations –once adopted – will be integrated in the relevant operational comms plan for each project;
- There was no discussion on the monitoring of communication during the workshop – this needs to be looked into soon to see if the outcome logic model holds true.
- Monitoring of communication is a longer term area that will require some work and could be developed together with other CPWF basin challenges – ILRI is working on this at the moment;

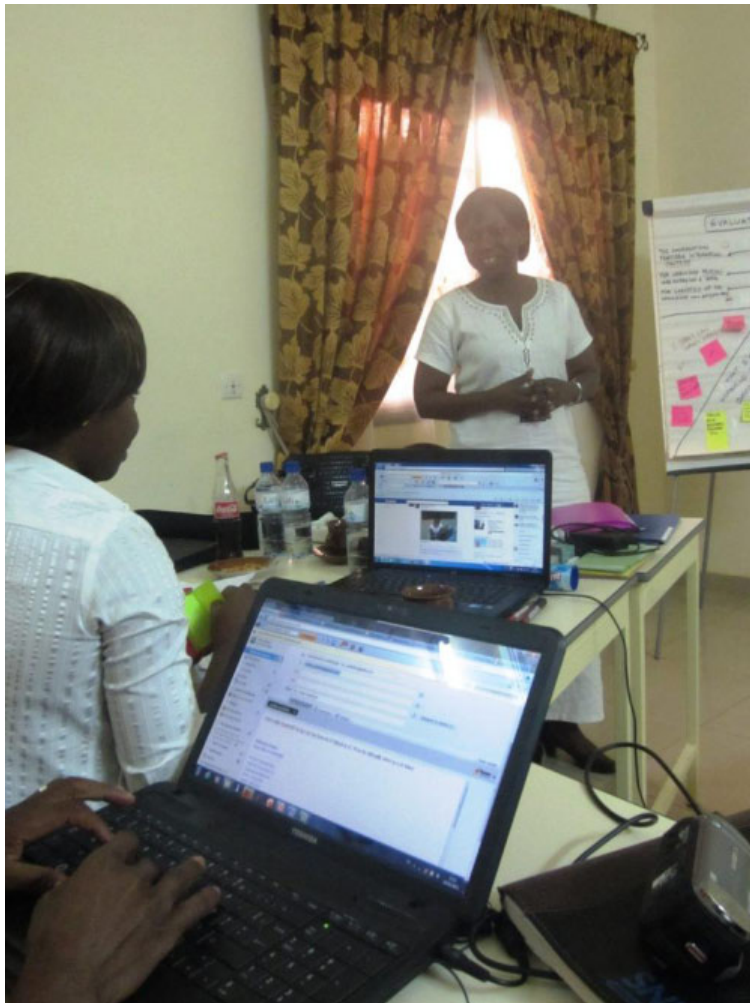


Figure 3 Funke closing the workshop

Evaluation of the workshop

The participants were invited to provide feedback on the process, content and logistics of the workshop, as well as to the sessions and items they particularly liked, didn't like so much, or the questions that they still have.

Integration (bilingual and across projects) remains a concern. The workshop seemed successful and has unlocked a lot of issues. The real challenge is however starting now with the implementation of the suggested

activities.

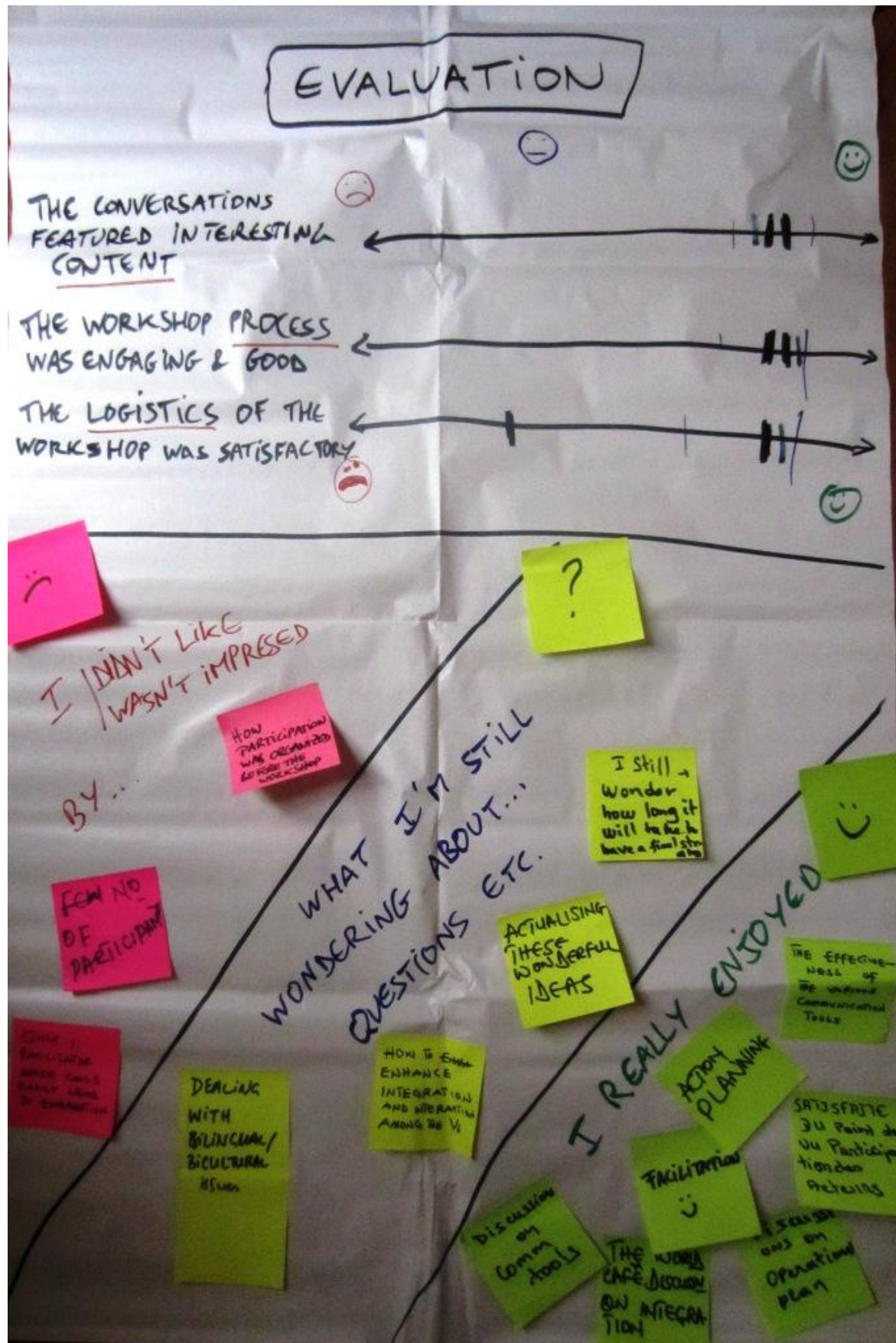


Figure 4 The evaluation of the workshop

Appendixes

- Agenda and expected learning outcomes
- List of participants
- List of outputs (and links)

Agenda and expected learning outcomes

This training workshop is aimed at staff involved in communications in each VBDC project. The workshop will introduce the participants to strategic communication principles that can be integrated into on-going research. It will include how to document the results, processes and outcomes of research using various tools and channels for identified target groups at different levels, and in ways that engage the audience and influence key decisions and change. Furthermore, participants will look at information that is already available in the projects and plan how best to communicate it in line with projects' OLMs. They will discuss project level communication efforts and how the coordination and change project can better support the research projects.

Expected Learning Outcomes

At the end of the workshop, the participants will:

- Be able to present, discuss and select appropriate communication tools, channels and products for use for identified target groups at different stages of their project implementation
- Agree on an innovative strategy and operational plan for bilingual communication in the VBDC including who does what and when between research projects and coordination and change project
- Be able to monitor the communication activities in their projects
- Have a plan on project level communication activities for implementation

Proposed agenda and sessions

	(1) Tuesday 27 “diagnostics and insights from current practice”	(2) Wednesday 28 “ideas and actions for integrated outcomes”
(A) First morning slot (08.30-10.30)	Introduction & diagnostics <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduction, agenda, expectations 2. What should communication in VBDC be all about 3. Diagnostics about CPWF/VBDC so far <p><i>Learning outcome(s): Participants know about the workshop program and objectives, they form an idea of what communication should entail and provide an initial diagnosis about communication work in VBDC against that ideal</i></p>	Creating an integrated, conversant VBDC <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Integration across Volta projects / V5 coordination and internal communication 2. Integration with other basins and global level <p><i>Learning outcome(s): A picture is formed about how communication can reinforce all parts of the VBDC and CPWF.</i></p>
10.30-11.00	Coffee break	Coffee break
(B) Second morning slot (11.00-13.00)	Communication basics and VBDC plans <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What Communications 	Action planning <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Per Volta project 2. Small peer review

	<p>entails / the NBDC case</p> <p>2. Outcome-focused communications and OLM, current VBDC communication strategy and plans</p> <p><i>Learning outcome(s): Participants hear about other experiences of communication and the bigger picture and are aware of the VBDC communication strategy, OLM and operational communication plans.</i></p>	<p>3. Short presentation</p> <p><i>Learning outcome(s): Some action plans are developed and strengthened by each other to explain in practice how participants will work on the operational plans and they inform each other about their own plans.</i></p>
13.00-14.00	Lunch	Lunch
(C) First afternoon slot (14.00-15.30)	<p>Reviewing current work in each project</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review Volta project plans 2. Peer review <p><i>Learning outcome(s): Participants are aware of the details of communication plans for their project, have shared initial feedback about it and hear about other plans.</i></p>	<p>Monitoring our work and other issues</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensuring we follow OLM 2. Monitoring our priorities (from previous action planning session) 3. Open space slot for any other issue <p><i>Learning outcome(s): It is clear to all how the operational plans will contribute to inform the OLM and impact pathways and how other activities suggested will be monitored.</i> <i>Any other important issue raised by participants is discussed and cleared up.</i></p>
15.30-16.00	Coffee break	Coffee break
(D) Second afternoon slot (16.00-17.00)	<p>The platforms and channels at our disposal</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Internal communication: wiki, discussion groups etc. 2. External communication: website, workshops etc. <p><i>Learning outcome(s): Participants are all aware of the communication platforms and channels used in VBDC, both internally and externally.</i></p>	<p>Conclusions and wrap-up</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Conclusions and commitments 2. Evaluation of the workshop 3. Closure <p><i>Learning outcome(s): Everyone is reminded of the commitments from everyone else. Participants provide their feedback on the workshop to improve similar workshop processes and results over time.</i></p>

List of participants

1. Amoakwah Emmanuel (V1)
2. Dare William's (V4)
3. Cecchi Philippe (V3)
4. Bidimbouja Sodjinamanou (VBA)
5. Sawadogo Mahamoudou (V5)
6. Cofie Olufunke (V5)
7. Le Borgne Ewen (ILRI, facilitator)
8. Dindane Adjara (VBA/CPWF)
9. Douxchamps Sabine (V2)

List of outputs

- Presentation by Ewen Le Borgne (on the ILRI [SlideShare](#))
- A selection of pictures from the workshop (on the [CPWF FlickrR](#))
- A [blog post](#) about the workshop (in French) on the VBDC website and its [English version](#) on the CPWF website.
- Operational plan V1
- Operational plan V2
- Operational plan V4
- Operational plan V5

Operational plan V1

Project V 1					
Target audience: VBDC Researchers					
What will happen (Activity)	About what (content, questions etc.)	How (channels etc.)	By who	When	Support needed
Meetings involving researchers on V1 project	Comparison of success stories between Gh and BF.	Skype, Face-to-Face interaction,	V1 Team	April, 2012 ??	
Share tools and database online	Success stories, as well as biophysical, economic, social and institutional factors that contributed to the success of the intervention in given locations.	Wiki, Yammer websites	V1 Team	???	Mahamoudou
Capitalise and contribute to v5	On success stories and the likelihood that, a given intervention will be successful in given locations taking into account, the factors listed above.	Email, Wiki, Yammer websites	V1 Team and SEI	June, 2012 ??	V 5

Project V 1

Target audience: Donors and Investors

What will happen (Activity)	About what (content, questions etc.)	How (channels etc.)	By who	When	Support needed
Awareness creation on rain water management	Ag water management interventions	Consultative workshop	Dr. Mathias and Emmanuel	???	
Share and develop model and database	Ag water management interventions	Consultative meeting	V1 Team	May, 2012	
Share and develop modelling tool and data	How the Bayesia n model works	Workshop	V1 Team	June, 2012	

Operational plan V2

Project V2

Target audience:

What will happen (Activity)	About what (content, questions etc.)	How (channels etc.)	By who	When	Support needed
Results from IP process	Efficiency of IPs in increasing benefits from VCs by bringing actors together	Scientific papers , conferences and briefs for decision makers	ILRI	End of project	
"	"	Reports and briefs	SNV	End of project	
"	"	Grand public?		End of project	
"	Institutional analysis	?	IWMI	End of project	
Results from Learning alliance	Knowledge sharing	Reports and policy briefs	ILRI	End of project	

Project V2

Target audience:

What will happen (Activity)	About what (content, questions etc.)	How (channels etc.)	By who	When	Support needed
Results from ecosystem services work	Assessment of ESS in the Volta, ESS awareness and policies, recommendations for adaptation/mitigation	Scientific publication, conferences, policy briefs, brochures for extensionists and farmers (?)	IWMI/ILRI	End of project or end of additional project if funded	Publication of brochures
Results from scenarios and storylines	Scenarios and storylines for the Volta	Report?	Fred et al.	After VBDC science workshop	Communication/ cross basin meetings
Results from Learning from the past	Evolution of agric water management in rainfed crop-livestock syst of the Volta Basin	Research paper and scientific publication	IWMI/ILRI/SEI	Now	Done

Project V2

Target audience:

What will happen (Activity)	About what (content, questions etc.)	How (channels etc.)	By who	When	Support needed
Results from Action Research	Integrated management between crop, livestock and water Awareness	Scientific papers, reports, conferences, brochures for farmers and extensionists	INERA/ARI	End of project	Publication of brochures + additional funds for 2 nd year?
"	Water productivity and mngmt in crop-livestock systems	Scientific papers, conferences Policy briefs?	IWMI/ILRI	End of project	
"	Modelling of farming systems	Model? Tools?	Wageningen/IWMI/ILRI?	End of project	
Results from HH survey	?	Report	INERA/ARI IWMI/ILRI	Now	

Operational plan V4

Project V4

Target audience: V4 Researchers

What will happen (Activity)	About what (content, questions etc.)	How (channels etc.)	By who	When	Support needed
Model conception and implementation	Link biophysical with social and management issues	Email exchange, face to face interaction, phone call, meeting to prepare MSW, training, MAS and RPG	V4 Team researchers	Before MSW2 (cf LC)	
Report meetings and discussion	Process monitoring	Email exchange, face to face interaction, phone call, meeting to prepare MSW, training, Conference presentations, scientific papers	V4 Team (Researchers+ PAGIRE+ WVBB)	Continuously (in each occasion) (>2/month)	Share information with others VI researchers Find ways to increase the interactions between the PAGIRE and the WVBB

Project V4

Target audience: Policy makers (Nat->Provincial)

What will happen (Activity)	About what (content, questions etc.)	How (channels etc.)	By who	When	Support needed
Report meetings and discussion	Process monitoring	Email exchange, face to face interaction, phone call	V4 Team (Researchers+ PAGIRE+ WVBB)	Continuously (in each occasion) (>2/month)	Develop pagers of the events Find a way to keep awareness of V4 issues
Field studies	Analysis of knowledge and social networks Analysis on specific issues arising in the MSW2	Interviews and observations	V4 Team	After next MSW in Ghana	way to link with V3 local interviews
PM participating to Visionary Workshops	Update our strategy plan	Email exchange, face to face interaction or collective meeting	V4 team + visionary teams	Before next MSW	
Informal discussions	Process of IWRM implementation	Email exchange, face to face interaction	V4 team	Continuously (in each occasion)	VBDC calendar on the future events on IWRM

Project V4

Target audience: Basin Institutions

What will happen (Activity)	About what (content, questions etc.)	How (channels etc.)	By who	When	Support needed
Visionary Workshop	Update our strategy plan	Email exchange, face to face interaction or collective meeting	V4 team + visionary teams	Before next MSW	
Informal discussions	Process of IWRM implementation	Email exchange, face to face interaction	V4 team	Continuously (in each occasion)	VBDC calendar on the future events on IWRM
Insert Mouhoun Agency platform on IWRM	Diffuse V4 results	Participation to	V4 team	In each occasion	

Project V4

Target audience: Local Communities

What will happen (Activity)	About what (content, questions etc.)	How (channels etc.)	By who	When	Support needed
Field studies	Analysis of knowledge and social networks Analysis on specific issues arising in the MSW2 (Health and gender issues in Ghana?)	Interviews and observations	MSc Students, WD	After next MSW in Ghana	link with V3

Project V4

Target audience: Local Communities

What will happen (Activity)	About what (content, questions etc.)	How (channels etc.)	By who	When	Support needed
Multilevel Stakeholders Workshop	<p>Gh: how to make emerge a watershed consciousness?</p> <p>MSW2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Restitute the information of the MSW1, •validate the model design with these info., •run first scenarios. <p>BF: How to make the CLE operational?</p> <p>MSW2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Restitute the information of the MSW1, • use RPG to identify a common stake , the main actors and institutions, the first action, the activities of the CLE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •presentation s, of last results (ppt, video) •MAS & RPG •Fields interviews with MSW1 participants 	V4 team	<p>28/05 – 08/06/12</p> <p>October 12</p>	<p>To give video support (create the restitution film, and register the MSW) (V5)</p> <p>Develop pagers of the events (to disseminate to participants and Visionary team)</p> <p>Find a way to keep awareness of V4 issues</p>

Operational plan V5

Project V5

Target audience: VBDC Researchers

What will happen (Activity)	About what (content, questions etc.)	How (channels etc.)	By who	When	Support needed
1. Maintain functional collaborative spaces for sharing research activities	Sharing information /Knowledge on VBDC research activities in order to have feedbacks	Wiki; Website; Yammer	Mahamoudou	Daily (2009-2013)	Updates information from project teams (V1 to V5)
2. Have virtual meetings involving projects to exchange information and share views	Sharing information /Knowledge on VBDC research activities	Email; Skype;	Project Leaders and teams	Monthly	Inputs from project leaders/teams (V1 to V5)
3. Disseminate research outputs (posters; scientific papers, project briefs, presentations, videos, pictures...)	Research results Progress on achievements;	website ; Wiki Slideshare; Knowledge tree; institutional networks; scientific journals	Mahamoudou, Funke, Karen	Monthly/ /Annually/ Ad hoc	Outputs from project teams (V1 to V5)
4. Have physical meetings between project teams; (a) frequent meetings as often as possible; (b) quarterly country – based VBDC team	Allow project teams to have "physical contacts" and interact on core	Face-to-face interaction	Funke	(a) occasionally;(b) quarterly (c) annually;	Collaboration from the other Vs

Project V5

Target audience: Policy - makers

What will happen (Activity)	About what (content, questions etc.)	How (channels etc.)	By who	When	Support needed
1. Organise national consultative forums on agricultural water	Strengthen links between VBDC research and national policy makers	Face –to- face interaction; workshops	Funke, Mahamoudou, Karen, Andah	Six -monthly	Inputs from projects teams (V1 to V5)
Get involved in national multi stakeholder platforms (e.g. Learning Group on WRM in BF) in BF and Ghana	Sharing information /Knowledge on VBDC research activities ; facilitating uptake of research results	Face –to- face interaction; field visits; project briefs; presentations	Karen, Mahamoudou	Quarterly	Inputs from projects teams (V1 to V5)
Hold consultations with VBA and GWP platforms	Contribute research results in deepening knowledge on water resources in the Volta Basin; the elaboration of the Water Charter;	Representation and presentations at their platforms; face –to- face interaction for the development of the water charter	Funke, Charles, Dam	Annually	Inputs from projects teams (V1 to V5)

Project V5

Target audience: Donors

What will happen (Activity)	About what (content, questions etc.)	How (channels etc.)	By who	When	Support needed
Informal meetings with donors (African Union, UEMOA, ECOWAS, SIDA) to keep them informed about VBDC research progress	Exploring funding opportunities	Presentations ; face –to- face interaction; project briefs	Funke, Mahamoudou, Karen	Occasionally	Inputs from projects teams (V1 to V5)