

Communicating Climate Change

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What do Jamaican's know about Climate change?

- 2005 KAP study done by the Jamaica Metereological Office:
- general feeling of complacency and indifference towards climate change and its effects
- Lack of preparedness for disastrous situations – very little home insurance
- Knowledge of certain climate change terms



What do Jamaican's know about Climate change?

- strong to moderate interest in climate change
- Most persons (60.9 %) strongly agreed with the statement that the Government should play a stronger role in addressing the impacts of climate change on communities
- A clear trend is seen where people feel that climate change is less important to their own communities than to the country in general



What do Jamaican's know about Climate change?

- Suggestions made by respondents on *lessening weather impacts*, at the individual, community, and country level:
- (16.5 %) at the personal level was properly disposing of waste and stopping the burning of garbage.
 - As a community, the responses were similar with the proper disposal of garbage (21.5 %), and increased environmental awareness (15.7 %) being the most popular responses.
 - The most popular suggestions on what Government could do were for them to mount a major public education campaign (18.1 %).



Media Use

- 48.3% of all respondents reported only occasional exposure to stories that dealt with climate change
- (91.7%) responded yes when asked whether they would like to read, listen to or watch more stories that deal with climate change
- The most common source of information on climate change for all of the categories, with the exception of the media, was television (96.6%).



Media use

- 38.7 % of respondents in the children category, reported the school as a main source of information on climate change
- The most popular methods chosen for transmitting information about climate change were television and radio



Private Sector

- 73 % of the companies felt that they had a role to play in addressing the possible effects of climate change on the country.
- The strengths of current measures being taken were highlighted as follows: they are environmentally safe; the company building is safer for staff; increased energy conservation; reduced costs; better disaster preparedness; reduction of waste and pollutants; and increased level of awareness among employees.
- The main and only weakness identified was that these practices are expensive and difficult to maintain



Private sector

- Just over a half of companies responded that they did not include climate change issues in their annual budgets or their business plans
- Only 8.2 % of companies indicated that they were in any way involved in the development of government policy on climate change



Public Sector

- Only 53.5 % of the entities reported that they had members of staff who were responsible for climate change issues
- Some 26.7 % of the respondents were not able to say if their organization was involved in any aspect of adaptation to climate change
- Just over 46 % of the respondents indicated that presently there was collaboration among the ministries, departments and agencies on climate change issues



Public Sector

- The following were put forward as suggestions on how various public sector agencies could be integrated to address climate change issues.
- Close monitoring of programmes,
- Collaboration - Ministry & agencies
- Evaluations of current environmental strategies,
- Collaboration at national level on measures to combat climate change,
- Having regular meetings,
- Dissemination of information on climate change, and
- Budgeting for the implementation of climate change measures.



What does the Jamaican media say about Climate Change?

- 2005 Panos London Policy brief:
- **Low coverage:** Jamaican journalists rated the level of coverage of climate change issues in the local and national media as low. Issues such as crime, poverty and violence are given higher priority
- - **Lack of resources:** The director of a nationwide news network said journalists – ‘don’t have the resources of rich countries and we are busy trying to cover issues of crime and poverty.’
- **Little impact:** One freelance journalist said that the quality is fair to good but ‘there is no impact because of the lack of quantity



The message and its challenges

- Climate change refers to a change in the general climate, caused by an alteration in the composition of the global atmosphere. These changes can either occur naturally or as a result of the human activity
- A part of the problem surrounding communicating climate change is the raging debate of whether it is actually occurring or not.



The message and its challenges

- More droughts
- More floods
- More landslides
- More sea-level rise
- More coral damage
- More, and more intense hurricanes
- More dengue and water-borne illnesses
- Greater and increasing uncertainty
- Health concerns – dehydration, food poisoning, diarrhea, asthma, etc.
- Interrupted oil supply – increased gas prices
- Anarchy – ex. looting, rape



Alternative communication channels

- Some avenues that bear exploration are:
- Using the arts (poetry, drama, popular music) to get clearly identified messages out.
- community level: using newsletters, public service announcements, exhibitions
- policy level: feeding community outputs to this level to encourage a more participatory model of policy development



Quick example

- Panos Mocho Oral Testimony Project
- *“...when I was a young girl...you would know which month we would have rain, which month would be dry, so as a farmer you could prepare what you are going to plant. But things are different now, everything has changed. The rainy month turned to drought, the dry month turned rainy, in the hot month a storm is blowing. Everything has changed.”*
- Hazelyn, female, farmer and housewife, Mocho, Jamaica



Panos Mocho OT project

- Over a two year period the following has been produced from the project:
- Bimonthly Mocho Update Newsletter
- Book called Voices from Mocho
- Youth Journalist group: Public Service Announcements
- Roving community exhibition



Products

Basic First aid/search and rescue techniques



Local voices, global choices

- Partnered with the Red Cross to help with training on vulnerability assessments and hazard mapping, basic first aid and search and rescue.
- The outputs from the project we have used to reach audiences at the community, national, regional and international levels – for eg. The Mocho policy brief was displayed at the global United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change meeting in Nairobi, Kenya last year



Regional Initiatives

- 1. The Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre, which is the home of the Mainstreaming Adaptation to Climate Change project
<http://caribbeanclimate.bz/news.php>
- 2. PRECIS (Providing Regional Climates for Impacts Studies)
- 3. Commonwealth Foundation has also been working in the Caribbean with Organisations such as Caribbean Natural Resource Institute (CANARI) and Panos Caribbean
- 4. UWI Climate Studies Group, Global Environment Facility Small Grants Programme and the United Nations Environment Programme



Recommendations from the KAP study

- need for more effort to be made to get the message as to the *raison d'être* for many of the common place Government interventions across to the wider public in general and to the media in particular.
- The tendency to pass the buck to someone else is a real issue that will have to be overcome in any efforts to get the general public to start behaving in a more environmentally responsible manner.
- The schools are ideal for starting this process of awareness and responsible environmental usage and thus should be used more for climate change education.
- That the programme of public awareness on climate change be launched as a stand alone programme in the first place but be institutionalized into an overall environmental awareness Plan.



Recommendations from the media brief

- sensitisation seminars for editors on climate change issues
- specialised training to enhance the understanding by media personnel of climate change
- scientists and policy-makers must break down the jargon used in issues relating to climate change
- There should be a deliberate effort to present people centred climate change stories
- Information sources, such as websites need to be reliable with easy access
- Creation of a public general awareness on climate change issues



Recommendations from the media brief

- An image bank should be incorporated into websites that enables journalists to download and use images in stories on climate change. This will help combat low literacy levels in some countries
- Policy makers should invest in public media initiatives that will provide space and resources for journalists who want to cover key environmental issues.
- All stakeholders need to engage the interest of journalists
- There should be constant interaction between the people who have the information, the media and those affected.
- Policy makers should make available financial resources for capacity-building programmes for journalists
- The media see a role for themselves in engaging in climate change debates and should be encouraged to do so



Communication Channels

- Newsletters
- Web-site with all key stakeholders included
- Chat rooms/user groups
- Awards programme at country and regional levels
- KAP at country level
- Train-the-Trainer Workshops
- Media partnerships
- Presentations to Cabinets/Technocrats and financial sector
- Community-at-risk interventions



Conclusion

- the dialogue between all involved has to be continued until we have an informed populace that can make responsible choices regarding climate change
- If not, what kind of world will we be leaving for our children and grandchildren?



End!

- Thanks for your attention.

