

COMMUNICATION FOR DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL MOVEMENTS IN NETWORKED SOCIETY

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Abstract

The present article reviews the theoretical and institutional definitions of Communication for Development, its validity and appropriateness for contemporary communication models. From this perspective a review and case analysis of Communication for Development in Latin America in the last decades was carried out. The participative communication model seems to have more relevance for the emergence of new technologies and virtual social networks. In regards to this new media scenario, a historical reflection on the facts of communication for development in Latin America was carried out.

Keywords

Communication for Development, Social Movements, Models of Communication for Development, Latin America, Participative Communication, Social Networks.

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“The culture of networked society... is a process by which conscious social actors from different origins provide others with their resources and beliefs, hoping to receive the same in return and even more: the coexistence in a diverse world that ends our ancestral fears of the other.” Manuel Castells (1999)

Networked society (Castells, 2006) imposes new paradigms to begin thinking about different models of communication for development. What Castells calls *informationalism* is erected as a paradigm that openly contrasts with “traditional” and still valid models of communication characterized by their verticality, like the diffusionist model (Rogers, 1993), despite their reformulations. The contemporary scenario marked by the emergence of social information networks challenges the definitions and institutional political positions that arise from the World Bank and from numerous communication policies defended by national governments, promoting communication for development and its relationship to a more “modernizing” tendency.

The current socio-technological scenario demands the redefining of citizen participation and political participation. The emerging networked society paradigm demands a revision of development models, political models and communication models towards the participative inclusion of citizens in decision making and in the self-production of development communication.

Because of some reports made by the World Bank (Inagaki, 2007) and from numerous local and global social movements that are summarized in this article, you can observe a tendency towards the application of a participative communication model (Mody, 1991) as well as the emergence of practices more closely related to deliberative democracy in regards to reflection and actions that build more just and equal social environments, without forgetting the present digital gap conditions in Latin America.

In this article we associate the concept of Communication for Development with the Social Movements in the Network, given their conceptual identification and their kind of behavior on the network. This involves questioning the traditional concept of Communication for Development. A brief reflection will be made on the use of the social network Facebook and how the denomination *communication for development* appears in it with the goal of briefly exploring the present use of this concept in the heart of this social network and its social implications.

Theory

As Servaes (1999) has exposed, communication for development has been denominated by *three paradigms and two models*. The paradigms of development help us to understand the conceptualization of and the political position of governmental and non-governmental actors facing the problem of development. Communication models go hand in hand with the development paradigms and mark positions, many times contrary positions, about how to formulate and execute communication policies, media management, media action and structure as well as communication strategies to achieve social development.

In summary, the three paradigms of development described by Servaes (1999) are the following:

- The modernization paradigm (1945-1965)
- The dependency paradigm (1968-1980)
- The multiplicity or other development paradigm (1980-2004)

The paradigms include diverse logics and policies for development. The first involves a practically mechanical transfer of the North American model (capitalism, technology, market economics) as development policy incorporated by “underdeveloped” countries or “developing” countries as Latin American countries have been classified. This model has been sustained and articulated through international organizations like the International Monetary Fund, the Interamerican Bank and the World Bank.

The dependence paradigm promotes a criticism of the modernization paradigm, encouraging a reflection based on the necessity of greater autonomy for developing countries, from an endogenous perspective, and under the argument that rich countries are rich thanks to the fact that they get their wealth from the poor countries. Because of this, Dependence Theory was formulated (Gonder Frank, 1969; Sunkel, Barán, Dos Santos, 1970, cited in Servaes, 1999), which played an important role in the New World Order of Information and Communication (NOMIC), tied to the New International Economic Order of non-aligned countries (Cuba, China and Chile in 1970). Criticism towards this paradigm fundamentally lies in the idea that it is harder and harder on the contemporary world stage to be totally independent and autonomous.

The paradigm of multiplicity or other development is a concept articulated by the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation, which defends the idea that the distinction between Center and Periphery has been diluted and that a new concept that emphasizes cultural identity and multidimensionality is necessary. With this comes the opening of the possibility to envision “another communication,” with a horizontal, inclusive, multicultural and participative character.

Aside from this, the models of communication for development (Servaes, 1999) are the following.

- The diffusionist model (Rogers, 1986; Shannon and Weaver, Lasswell, Hofland, Newcomb, Schramm, Westley and Malean, Berlo, and White.)
- The participative model (Freire, 1970; International Commission for the Study of Communication Problems, 1980; Xavier Institute, 1980; Lozare, 1994; Mowlana and Wilson, 1987). The model acquires denominations like: "Participatory approach", Pedagogía de la liberación (Freire, 1970), Putting the Last First (Chambers, 1993), Other Development (Melkote, 1991; Jacobson, 1994), Empowerment Approach (Friedman, 1992), Desarrollo Autónomo (Carmen, 1996), among others cited in Inagaki (2007).

The diffusionist model formulated by Rogers clearly corresponds to the logic of the modernization paradigm where technological transfer is identified with development. This model is currently put forward in communication policies for development, advocated by the World Bank, and for a long time dominant in Latin America.

It is worth asking if the diffusionist model is being transferred to the emerging networked society in the application of vertical communication policies that respond to the logic of technological transfer as a synonym of development from a media-centered and determinist perspective. This focus is criticized by Dependency Theorists as a form of “cultural neo-colonization” or as a form of maintaining the economic and cultural structures of dependence.

In the case of Mexico, communication policy in the instrumentation of Communication and Information Technologies (TICs) still seems to respond to the diffusionist model when we see examples questioned, like the educative assistance multimedia project for primary school children, *Enciclomedia* (2003, <http://www.enciclomedia.edu.mx/index.html>).

From another angle, the participative/other development model seems to gain meaning when faced with the emerging networked society. This model emphasizes the following principles: (1) the beneficiaries participate in one or in all the stages of the communication project, (2) horizontal instead of vertical communication, (3) trust and mutual understanding instead of persuasion, (4) programs on a local level instead of a national level, (5) local knowledge, (6) equal roles for participants and specialists in development instead of foreign directors, (7) communication processes instead of result evaluations, (8) communication in order to articulate profoundly entrenched relationships (Inagaki, 2007).

In regards to public communication policy, in Latin America a “modernizing” paradigm accompanied by a diffusionist model of communication for development still seems to dominate. This is added to a late neoliberal policy model, a vertical model of communication based on media concentration where communication and information are articulated in the logic of market economics, and where the social responsibility of the large media corporations is far from responding to the developmental needs of Latin American societies. All of this happens under the light of legislation that favors large media monopolies that do not foment media plurality and the defense of the citizen’s right to information.

Despite the many limitations produced by the digital gap, the authoritative traditions of political regimes, the lack of democracy and individual guarantees of life and freedom of expression, Latin American societies see an open horizon with the paradigm of networked societies, with visions of increasing the levels of participation and collective construction in social, political and cultural development.

World Bank and WFP: Concepts

Let us return to the concept of communication for development that the World Bank and the WFP (World Food Program of the United Nations) put forward. Following is the World Bank’s definition of this concept:

Communication for development is the integration of communication strategies in development projects. Strategic communication is an efficient tool that can contribute to achieving the objectives and the sustainability of the results of development projects. Informing, educating or elevating the level of awareness are necessary ingredients of communication, but are not

sufficient to make people change their practices and behaviors established over a long period of time. Strategic communication tries to achieve a change in behavior and make sustainable development attainable (World Bank, 2006).

This clearly is a diffusionist definition with a vertical orientation and a marked persuasive intention: “that people change their practices and behaviors,” a vision far from logical and the participative possibilities that the networked society implies.

Here is the definition from the WFP:

Effective communication consists in spreading information to specific parts of the public, to listen to their needs and concerns and responding appropriately. Whether they are discussing a particular project or a program of greater reform—from health, education or rural development to development in the private sector, or financial or judicial reform—the idea is to build the greatest consensus possible, improving the degree of public understanding and promoting an informed dialogue between all parties involved. (FAO, 2010)

In this definition we still see paternalistic characteristics even though it does put more emphasis in the actions on macro and micro levels as well as the necessity to “listen” and “build the greatest consensus possible” through “dialogue.”

But we do not find a clear enunciation in either of the definitions in regards to the comprehension of communication for development as a continuous process, with a participative character that establishes the bases for the promotion of a far reaching, self-managed project that meets local needs, or even where there is the clear establishment of the equal positions between participative beneficiaries and the international organization. Neither do we see a clear desire to implement the TICs and the informational networks for human development in the communication strategies.

Networked Society

Castells (2006) defines networked society as an informational paradigm that is similar to the industrial revolution in regards to its historical impact. The author emphasizes the social character of the informational paradigm, different from the concept of information society or

from knowledge, understood as technological extrapolations of the industrial society related to western culture and modernization.

For Castells, the informational paradigm of the networked society opens the possibility of breaking the domination of the global power network programs thanks to the emergence of a network of interactive cultures that are united by the common belief in the value of sharing use (Castells, 2006, p. 73).

Castells (1999) notes: “A networked society is that whose social structure is composed of networks empowered by information technologies and of microelectronic based communication. Social structure is understood as those human organizational agreements in relation to production, consumption, reproduction, experience and power, expressed through the culture’s meaningful codified communication.”

The keywords to understand the networked society are citizen participation, inclusion, collaboration, complementary, reciprocal learning, socialization, sharing, integration and cultural dialogue (Castells, 1999; Himanen, 2002).

In this sense, the culture of a society on the global network is “a culture of protocols that allow for communication between different cultures not necessarily on the basis of shared values, but on sharing the value of communication” (Castells, 1999, p. 69). In summary, it is a participative culture united under the common belief in the power of networks and the “synergy obtained by giving and receiving.”

The organizational potential of networks resides in three of its principle characteristics: flexibility (reconfiguration that meets a changing environment), adaptability (capacity to alter its size) and ability to survive (they do not possess a center, but multiple nodes and points of connection) (Castells, 1999, p. 30).

Here are three other characteristics of the informational paradigm of networked society which make it different than traditional media systems and increase its participation potential for social development:

- Its auto-expansive capacity for processing and for communication in terms of volume, complexity and velocity;

- Its capacity for recombination based on digitalization and on recurring communication;
- Its flexibility for distribution through interactive and digital networks (Castells, 1999, p. 34).

Here is a synthetic outline of some of these characteristics of the informational networks which describe their qualities and allow us to understand better its scope:

Attributes	Characteristics
Flexibility	Woven by the actors that constitute them Permanent Construction-deconstruction
Horizontality	Decentralized, without heirarchy
Interconnection	Multidirectional flows of information
Articulation	Makes collective actions possible
Multiplication	Fosters isolated and diverse forces
Exchange	Based on shared values

León, O., Burch S., Tamayo E. (2001). *Movimientos sociales en la red*, ALAI. Retrieved 22 April, 2009, from <http://alainet.org/publica/msred/> / info@alainet.org

Communication for Development and Social Movements in Networked Society

Literature on communication for development is beginning to incorporate the concepts of social information networks in the comprehension of their strategies and projects. However, the

concept of networked society associated with communication movements for social change is a concept that goes beyond the scope of communication for development.

Communication for development and social movements for global justice are phenomena of communication in linked social networks. The potential of transformation by using the networks exists. However, we do not find institutionally supported projects that are making use of and taking advantage of the informational networks to carry out clearly identified communication for development projects.

Communication for development in Latin America is a concept created in early 1950 and spearheaded by a few vanguard thinkers like Luis Ramiro Beltrán, Juan Díaz Bordenave, Daniel Prieto and Mario Kaplún and later by a few others like Francisco Gutiérrez, Leobardo Jiménez, José Marquez de Mello, Jesus Martín Barbero, Pasquali, Manuel Clavelo, Frank Gerace, Paulo Freire, Samuel Mushkin, Hernando Bernal, Joao Boscopinto, María Cristina Matta, Nestor García Canclini, Eliseo Verón, all of whom have promoted democratic communication and its close relationship to culture.

In 2006, Luis Ramiro Beltrán recognized the importance of technology and information associated with globalization and the need of revising concepts from 1970 about communication for development for one simple reason: "... because the situation that we denounced in the 70s in regards to communication and development policies not only has not improved a bit since then, but because economically it has gotten brutally worse, as well as in communication and culture" (Iniciativa de Comunicación, 2006).

Therefore, the concept of Communication for Development acquires a new dimension in networked society. And it is necessary to revise the conceptual and strategic methodology. Currently, social movements for resistance and social change are also identified on the networked society stage, communication for development.

In the context of networked society "the processes of power building must see themselves from two perspectives: on one hand, the acquisition of power and its imposition; on the other, resistance to power in the name of interests, values and excluded or underrepresented projects in the network programs. ...The dynamics of domination as well as the dynamics of resistance are

based on the formation of networks and on the attack and defense strategies through networks” (Castells, 1999, p. 65).

From this perspective, communication for development movements and projects share the stage with networked society and its resources of participation in the communication process.

The networked society provides communication services for the development of a technological series of participative tools used for disseminating and creating information that begins to have a presence in diverse social resistance movements: all of the logical interaction in Web 2.0, social networks (Facebook, YouTube, Hi5, Twitter, youare, delicious, etc), wikis, e-mail address lists, blogs, open coded software, contents and public domain software, even the Creative Commons initiatives (Michael Carroll, Molly Shaffer Van Houveling, Lawrence Lessig, <http://creativecommons.org/>).

The movements for global social justice and communication projects for the development in informational societies possess three characteristic aspects (Juris, 2006, p. 420-422):

- Social justice movements are global-local in real time through transnational, institutional and extra-institutional networks where the activists are considered members of the movement.
- Global justice movements are informational, symbolic theatrical communication and global network communication in a horizontal process of direct democracy.
- Global justice movements are organized within flexible and decentralized networks composed of a wide variety of network structures that include more hierarchical “circular” models, intermediate “wheel” formations and more decentralized “multi-channeled” configurations (Kapferer, 1973, p. 87, cited by Juris, 2006, p. 422).

As Castells notes (2001, p. 55), the activists, agents of change, “programmers” and “connections” in networked society are characterized by the practice of the following principles present in the “cultural logic of the networks” (1) the construction of ties and horizontal connections between diverse autonomous elements, (2) the free and open circulation of information, (3) collaboration through a decentralized coordination and decision making through direct democracy, (4) the practice of self-directed and self-managed networks.

Case Analysis and Interpretation

Social Movements in Networks: Cases

Numerous studies are beginning to articulate theories and analysis of social movements that find support for achieving their goals in the network. We will analyze a summary of the social movements on networks documented by León (2001), Castells (2006) and Juris (2006) with the objective of knowing if these movements incorporate the interactive and socializing tools that make informational societies and Web 2.0 possible. These cases are set up as examples of a tendency, and in no case is this an exhaustive summary. However, they are suggestive of a tendency and precursors to a future for communication oriented towards human development in networked society:

- The first reference is the *Zapatista movement* (begun in Chiapas, México, January 1, 1994), due to the use of activist strategies in global informational networks <http://enlacezapatista.ezln.org.mx/>
- *The Battle in Seattle*, 30 November 1999 against the World trade Organization (WTO) through the Independent Media Center (or Indymedia)
- *People's Global Action* (PGA) <http://www.nadir.org/nadir/initiativ/agp/en/>
- *Direct Action Network* (DAN) in North America *International Movement for the Democratic Control of Financial*
- *Markets* (ATTAC) <http://www.attac.org/spip.php?article3>
- *Vía Campesina* http://www.viacampesina.org/main_sp/
- *Foro Social Mundial* http://www.forumsocialmundial.org.br/main.php?id_menu=4&cd_language=4
- *Movimiento de los Sin Tierra* (Brasil) <http://www.movimientos.org/cloc/mst-br/>
- *Granjeros del Estado de Karnakatka* (India, Karnataka State Farmers Association)

- *Movimiento de Resistencia Global (MRG)*
<http://www.nodo50.org/praga00/manifiesto.htm>
- *Red de Ciudadanos por la Abolición de la Deuda Externa (RECADE)*
<http://www.rcade.org/>
- *ANAMURI - Asociación Nacional de Mujeres Rurales e Indígenas (Chile)*
<http://www.anamuri.cl/noticias/Noticias.htm>
- *Asociación para el Progreso de las Comunicaciones (APC)*
<http://www.apc.org/es>
- *ATC - Asociación de Trabajadores del Campo (Nicaragua)*
<http://www.movimientos.org/cloc/atc-ni/>
- *CLOC - Coordinadora Latinoamericana de Organizaciones del Campo*
<http://www.movimientos.org/cloc/>
- *CONAIE - Confederación de Nacionalidades Indígenas del Ecuador*
<http://www.conaie.org/>
- *CONIC - Coordinadora Nacional Indígena y Campesina (Guatemala)*
<http://www.cnoc.org.gt/conic.html>
- *CWMS - Comunidad Web de Movimientos Sociales* <http://www.movimientos.org/>
- *FCOC - Frente Continental de Organizaciones Comunes*
<http://www.movimientos.org/fcoc/>
- *Marcha Mundial por la Paz y la No Violencia*
<http://www.theworldmarch.org/index.php?lang=esp>

Analysis of the previous internet sites, classified as “social movements in networks” by the authors (León, 2001 and Juril, 2006), indicates that they are exclusively informational sites with Web 1.0 resources and therefore they serve as points to articulate actions with an exclusively informational character. None of them incorporates Web 2.0 tools that provide the possibility of

interaction between the activists and the site or establishing a deliberative dialogue between activists or visitors to the site.

For this reason, we can say that these sites and the social movements that they represent are shored up by other strategies of action and communication such as e-mail lists, bulletins and calls to meetings at specific places and times. They are on-line social movements, but their activity on digital platforms is not interactive. Neither do they show links to social network websites like Facebook, YouTube, Hi5, Twitter, blogs or any others.

Only the global justice movement *World March for Peace and Non-Violence* has nearly 90 groups from all over the world on Facebook, some of them with more than 14,000 members and 31 links to other related sites within Facebook and outside it. This is a notable example of how informational social networks can promote collective movements, discussion and deliberative debate on-line.

We still cannot talk about these active social movements being on-line movements; to do that, they would have to incorporate the resources of Web 2.0 in their pages and create strategies for participation, action, dialogue, debate and horizontal interaction among its members.

Global social movements are beginning to be explained by theorists of the New Social Movements. This theory characterizes informational social movements as organizing themselves in global-local informational networks that are flexible, disperse, horizontal and at the same time decentralized, segmented, reticulated and not hierarchical (Cohen, 1995; Gerlach, 2001: in Juris, 2006).

Communication for development in Facebook

Facebook (www.facebook.com) is a social network website created by Mark Zuckerberg in February of 2004. Facebook brings together the qualities of networked societies described by Castells (2006). According to the site, it has more than 500 million users and is number four on the list of world's most visited websites according to www.facebook.com/press/info.php?factsheet

In 2008 versions in French, German and Spanish were launched. The same year, Barack Obama, during the presidential campaigns in the United States, opened a page on Facebook which reached more than 6 million people.¹

The example of Obama's Facebook page indicates that the site already has uses that go beyond its original goals of searching for friends. Currently, a growing number of social movements are articulated with the help of this social network such as the political use of a network that lets you incorporate all the qualities of the previously described networks.

However, we still see a low activity in regards to social movements and even less in regards to projects for communication development. In a search for "comunicación para el desarrollo" we found a series of 500 sites that deal with communication and development, but not all of them with the same social orientation. For example, the website *DevComm* is a business related company that uses the abbreviation of the *World Bank* to refer to Development Communication which evidently leads to a terminological and conceptual confusion.

Analysis of sites about "Comunicación para el desarrollo" in Facebook returns only three groups dedicated to the topic:

- *Comunicambio - Comunicación para el desarrollo*, a group from Perú, with 443 members.
- *Comunicación para la gobernabilidad y el desarrollo humano*, with various related press and communication groups and 170 members.
- *Comunicación y desarrollo sostenible*, created in Cusco, Perú, with 75 members.

The search in English for "Communication for Development" was not more successful. All to the contrary, we meagerly found sites of very small groups that had between 24 and 14 members related to academia or workshops that have a reduced activity. Perhaps the only good result in the search was the appearance of sites that incorporate the concepts "Tecnologías de la Información y la Comunicación para el Desarrollo".

However, it is important to point out that the group *I Support Africa Green University*, in Siaya, Kenya, has more than 7,400 members and diverse groups related to the creation of communication tools for development with an educational focus in Kenya.

Equally noteworthy is the group *African Portal For Information Technology*, with 3,208 members, created by diverse coordinators from various multidisciplinary and international organizations and universities from all over the world. The group's goal is to promote information technologies for socio-economic development in Africa. The group also has an informative website: <http://www.apfit.org/>.

We can see a limited number of groups working explicitly on Communication for Development themes in Facebook, which opens the possibility of evaluating and updating the concept as well as reflecting on what other forms it acquires in the era of networked societies.

The question that comes up, besides asking about the concept of "Communication for Development" being current, is if the Web 2.0 tools, like Facebook, can help foment human development. Frederick Noronha (2009) expresses this in other terms with a very pertinent question: *Can social networks do something about poverty?*

Steve Eskow, cited by Noronha (2009), provides a critical vision: "If we talk about using Web 2.0 tools to influence directly in the lives of the poor, the response is 'no' [the poor are not using Web 2.0]. It could be noted that those interested in working with poverty would do better if, first, they worked on the 'situation' instead of 'technology.'"

However, we are beginning to see the appearance of some indicators of Web 2.0 use, like Facebook, for the eradication of poverty, such as the group of Karen in Birmania that helps refugees. Other cases in Facebook are the groups that promote the "fight against global poverty" and announce a donation of a dollar for each person that signs up; another group is dedicated to World Poverty Day (October 17) with the objective of reaching 1 million members. In 2008 YouTube, in collaboration with non-profit organizations, made a call for members of its social network to promote the petitioning of world leaders to comply with the commitments to economic assistance promised to poor countries (Noronha, 2009).

In India, initiatives are being created in networks for development assistance like Kiva (<http://www.kiva.org>), a system of loans and credits between individuals on the Internet; or MicroPlace (a site created by eBay, <https://www.microplace.com>, to invest in improving income sources and avoid charity); RangDe.org (a site that links small entrepreneurs with investors); dhanaX (social loans, <http://www.dhanax.com>); Drishteehaat (fair trade, <http://www.drishteehaat.com/>) (Noronha, 2009).

These are other good examples: Librarian Chick, a collection of links to free educational resources (<http://librarianchick.pbwiki.com/>); Overstock.com (the largest employer in Afghanistan, <http://www.highbeam.com>); Earth Treasury, digital processing of text books; Business Fights Poverty (professional network for the fight against poverty through business, <http://businessfightspovetry.ning.com/>); the living laboratory by Siyakhula, experimental network developed by the University of Fort Hare and the University of Rhodes in the former Transkei, from the point of view of practical use of TICs as an incentive for development (<http://www.dwesa.org/>) (Noronha, 2009).

Sites like Facebook and YouTube using groups and virtual communities seminally promote the use of social networks to encourage projects for human development and the fight against poverty. This pertinent reflection is opened on whether or not the groups and most unfortunate zones have access to Web 2.0, if the digital gap is a real impediment in implementing communication for development projects, and if the networked society tools and their socio-technological dynamics can really make a difference in decreasing poverty in the 21st century.

Conclusions

The development paradigms with a modernizing character and dependence prevail in Latin American societies in the 21st century. However, new possibilities for a change in the development paradigm are opening up along the lines of a participative communication paradigm change in networked society.

Networked society and its informational paradigm draw new horizons towards the creation of strategies and forms of interactive, decentralized, reticulated and horizontal communication with a greater impulse towards deliberative democracy.

Social movements for global justice have grown thanks to networked society communication tools throughout the world. However, many of these movements still lack the Web 2.0 structures that allow for the realization of activism and more constant and participative social interaction that would make them authentically global/virtual within that very informational social network.

The concept of Communication for Development demands a reflection and an appraisal of its current validity with respects to the Web 2.0 scenario and the informational social networks in networked society. In social networks like Facebook there is a weaker presence of this concept and of groups that contemplate them.

An increase has been observed in the use of social networks like Facebook, YouTube and others like Kiva to promote projects and strategies for development support and the fight against poverty. The effectiveness of the social networks in the promotion of communication for development and the fight against poverty projects is still uncertain.

The micro-projects model for communication for development or development support is a tendency in networked society. What Edward Cherlin points out is still a dream: “I propose creating a network of networks that puts a billion children, friends and families in contact—almost all the poor of the world and a majority of the rich. They can work on educational, social, business and other networks. I will leave this decision to them” (Noronha, 2009).

It is necessary to review the agenda of ethical development, promoted by the Millennium Development Goals, above all in the field of reducing the digital gap. Here are other themes of the agenda that promote communication for development in networked society in Latin America: (1) guaranteeing the right to information and communication, (2) legislation to eradicate the media concentration model and guaranteeing access to TICs, and with that promoting a more plural, alternative, diverse and participative model, (3) legislation to guarantee and strengthen public democratic media with a focus on social responsibility, (4) promoting the use of open coded software and the resources of public domain.

The keyword when we speak about networked society is participation. Participation in networked society involves thinking about a more equal, sustainable, horizontal, united, decentralized, democratic and open society in which communication and informational social networks let networks themselves live more inclusively, collaboratively and justly.

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¹ Obama's page on Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/home.php?-/barackobama?ref=fb>, retrieved 22 April 2009.