Workshops for the Construction of a Communication Strategy from a Multidimensional Approach

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Abstract: Based on the planning of activities proposed by the regional project with a territorial approach (PRET)") "Contributions for the sustainable development of the geographic zone Central and Eastern Valley of the province of Catamarca" from INTA; and as part of the line "Strategic Communication", workshops were held with the aim of reflecting on communication actions in the territory covered by the project. For the construction of the communication strategy, workshops were held to reflect on the scope of communication. The first was held in November 2013, the second during 2014 and the last in 2016. The systematization of the workshops was planned in two stages. The initial one referred to the work as an instance of interaction of knowledge and, the second stage, to the socialization of what had been worked on up to that moment. Unforeseen actions were generated from the workshops, but they arose from the recognition of the staff towards the communication team. This factor involved organizing other meetings with topics that the same people considered necessary to address, such as conflict resolution, work stress, teamwork, which required specialists in the subject. In the territory, the work demanded different times. The interaction was promoting and strengthening intersubjective and interinstitutional links working towards a common goal or project. Communication was a key factor. Finally, it should be noted that beyond recognizing the need to address communication from a multidimensional approach, doubt and uncertainty, as well as the deepening of the subject, were aspects that were strongly present in the workshops, for those of us who went on this complex journey. It also presents us with a great challenge to continue rethinking and reflecting on our daily work from strategic communication.

Keywords: Strategic Communication, Systematization, Collective Construction

1. Introduction

Following the initiative to generate and implement regional projects with a territorial approach (PRET) of the National Institute of Agricultural Technology (INTA), in the province of Catamarca [11], three projects were formulated in order to optimize the mode of intervention of the institution and develop new strategies for the renewal of the rural sector. One of them - in which the strategic communication methodology was implemented - was the project: "Contributions for the sustainable development of the Central Valley and East Valley geographic area of the province of Catamarca" [12]. The objective of the project was to optimize the mode of intervention of the institution through the adoption of strategies with a territorial approach and complex systems that contribute to the sustainable development of the Central Valley and east of the province of Catamarca [13].

To fulfill this objective, the strategy was to address four basic axes of work: Articulation and management; Natural resources and environmental management; Safety food and value added; and Generation, evaluation and participatory management of appropriate technologies [14].

The geographic area of intervention of the project included the departments of: Capital, Valle Viejo, Fray Mamerto Esquiú, Ambato, Paclín, Ancasti, Capayán, Santa Rosa, El Alto and La Paz.

The intervention strategy of the projects focused on territorial development with complex systems approach, articulating, integrating and complementing capabilities and institutional (human resources and facilities) and extra-institutional competencies [15].

The territorial approach proposes new challenges in research, extension and transfer practices. It was required the creation of interdisciplinary teams to understand and intervene in the complex reality of the territory. Participation of territorial key actors was necessary to enhance the innovation process where strategic communication becomes a driving factor in its development [1].

Workshops were held to reflect on institutional communication actions in the territory covered by the project as a strategic communication issue.

In order to build the communication strategy, the workshops were part of a process that required several instances of reflection among the participants.

The first took place in November 2013, and the last one in 2016. The gap between the last workshops was due to issues of agenda and resources financial constraints that restricted their continuity and periodicity. Discontinuity brought the loss of some apprenticeships; however, participants committed themselves to building the strategy by making contributions enriching for subsequent implementation.

We grouped the workshops that were carried out for the construction of a two-step strategy. The first relates to the work done in the workshops as an instance of interaction of knowledge and the second as socialization of what has been worked up to that point moment [2].

2. First Part: Diffusion vs. Strategic Communication

Under the name "Introduction to the strategic communication", the workshop held in 2013 was attended by 59 professionals and technicians from the Agricultural Experimental Station (EEA) Catamarca. With this space, it was sought to promote displacements towards a strategic view of communication for which it was necessary to realize how we think, we live and we feel. It was associated with a diffusionist trajectory in the institution highlighted the importance of reconfiguring intersubjective linkages from the sociocultural encounter. That is, to put in tension the conception of communication understood as dissemination, from the point of view of a large part of the institution's staff, to understand it from a multidimensional and complex approach.

2.1. Scientific Background of Strategic Communication

This first meeting was characterized by bringing together notions that constitutes scientific background of strategic communication such as complexity, time as temporality, context, transdiscipline, knowledge and action. From them, we pretend approach the meta-perspective of strategic communication in order to deploy concepts inherent in it. In this regard, the PRET line of work took the methodology of strategic communication as an innovative communication proposal for the strengthening of the working groups.

The first moment of the workshop was characterized by the called "disaster dynamic". The main objective was to deconstruct ourselves to start the workshop, questioning us from actions such as dancing, singing, whistling, jumping, etc. The interesting thing about the dynamics was being able to move without a previous instruction other than to carry out the action, some did it jointly, others alone, others in groups and thus different movements and interactions emerged spontaneously.

It was sought to transcend the reductionism that predominates in communication activities as a result of recognizing the hegemony of the informational dimension. Various dynamics were built with the participants to energize and drive the methodological proposal [3].

2.2. Communicational Rationality Marks

In the second workshop, held in 2014 (attended by 49 people), we carried out one of the first steps of this methodology, which consisted in recognizing the predominant dimension of communication activities at INTA, taking into account the characteristics of each dimension. Based on this, the participants considered that INTA: "It is characterized by a strong presence of the informational dimension" [4]. More than communicating, it would be spreading. There may be many reasons why this is the case, but "INTA is traditionally characterized by using these types of models, vertical and unidirectional". "We believe it is necessary that it have more characteristics of the different dimensions, that tend more towards the sociocultural that is more participatory and that there is greater articulation. The sociocultural dimension is more related to strategic communication. Also enhance the interactional dimension but more at the group level, smaller at the level of activities. We believe that this occurs when there are more common interests".

"The ideological dimension is the one that has the most weight, although we think it was the news. There is a drop in line that responds to a determined institutional ideology" [5].

Different points of view are heard; they are all right. We don't see that one predominates over the others. While we can say that there was always a tendency towards but as we are in a process of change, we see characteristics of all three.

What we agreed is that we need to address a sociocultural dimension". "The INTA is an institution that has as its main characteristic the articulation, has advice local councils, regional councils that articulate actors". "They are spaces for communication and meeting, which are not recognized". "There is a predominance at the institutional level of the informative. At the level of group work there is a predominance of the interactive". we also saw that in the Extension part there are characteristics of the sociocultural,

while at the hierarchical level the ideological predominates. Now that we move towards a sociocultural dimension is a very big challenge, to move from the informative dimension to the sociocultural one".

We note that most participants recognize the presence of all dimensions of communication at different levels of activity, "there are spaces where the interactive dimension is present, such as in local councils where there is articulation and sharing of what the actors do". But, it is acknowledged that the logic of operation of these spaces is only informative. That is, "the counselors come to hear what INTA has to inform, they do not come to contribute, to exchange, or to generate proposals. It can be seen that there are very few councils where an articulated work is observed."

For other participants, the meetings of the Research Area do not predominate the informative because they seek to promote agreement through the interactive dimension. We observe the presence of the different dimensions of the communication of fragmented way. That is why to approach communication from complexity is the sociocultural dimension needs to be strengthened at institutional level, rather than viewed in a sectoral way. Likewise, this fragmentation leads us to showing the complexity of communication and we are seeing different aspects from where to look at the institution.

In addition, the problematic situation with regard to communication activities is characterized by detecting: linearity of communication, disconnection or disarticulation between areas or working groups, primacy of discipline, focused intervention projects in quantifiable publications, development of communicative products from needs techniques, superimposition of institutional visibility on the content to be communicated and other communication actions. However, this instrumental and productivity vision of the paradoxically, motorized an opportunity for change and transformation for transcend the information dimension to the strategic perspective of communication. That is, to channel communication as an open process into organizational dynamics and permanent sense.

It should be clarified that the informational predominance of communication is associated with an institutional tradition focused on institutional visibility that underlies a way of intervening in the territories.

3. Second Part: Construction of the Communication Strategy

The third workshop, held in 2016, was attended by 54 people. Activities focused on constructing the communicative problem as well as identifying the dimensions that make it up. That is, the construction of the Communication Technical Version (VTC) [6]. The acknowledged problem was: "Lack of articulation and strategic vision among local actors to contribute to development".

3.1. Construction of Sociocultural Matrices

The next step in building the methodology was to develop

the solution tree of solutions to the problems raised. Matrices were grouped taking into account of their mode of linkage, their logic of operation and their collective trajectories in relation to the problem. To characterize them, the information produced in Strategic Communication Workshops, the PRET Progress Assessment Workshop, the PRET monitoring, extended management team meeting and external evaluation carried out in 2009. It was a construction generated by the gaze of different actors in relation to each matrix (those who decide, those who research, those who carry out, those who administer and manage, those who communicate, those who educate, those who accompany and those who produce) [7].

Those who decide: Involves the councilors of the regional center, municipalities, directors of the Ministries of the province, Undersecretary of Family Agriculture, SENASA, Directors of INTA, Rural Society, Agrarian Federation, CREA, National University of Catamarca. In this matrix, the modality of the link with the problem is centered on an ideological dimension where interests and power relations predominate. The territory is seen as a space of power that hinders joint construction and strategic vision. On the other hand, it brings together actors who have decision-making power and who are for being linked to a one-dimensional vision of communication. For this group of actors, communication is associated with quantifiable products and with the quantity of information published in the media. For this reason, communication activities focus on the informational dimension of communication that underlies a diffusionist institutional tradition. The people who are part of this matrix, recognize the predominance of this dimension and it is considered important to strengthen the institutional visibility and hierarchy (protagonism) in the media. In addition, the existing channels of communication within each agency should be strengthened. The most consumed communication media are: NOA Productivo (agro-productive supplement of El Ancasti newspaper), Radios with area of greater scope such as: Valle Viejo, Ancasti, Unión; radios of less frequency with departmental scope; Digital newspapers such as: Catamarca Actual, Catamarca Rural, El Esquiú digital, El Ancasti and La Unión digital. On television, programmes such as: Land TV Field. Meeting spaces are periodic meetings, institutional workshops and interpersonal communication. The modality of the link with the informative dimension is high in contrast to other dimensions of communication. Therefore, communication as process appears disconnected from communication actions.

Those who investigate: Includes researchers from INTA, INTI, UNCA, CONICET. The production of knowledge through research is sometimes fragmented (they are part of a more complex research process) if the research objective is considered. As a consequence, what is produced is appropriate, but it is not always appropriable since it depends on the type of research. Communication between them is done through emails, interpersonal contact, meetings, workshops, social networks. They exhibit their work in congresses, seminars, scientific magazines and institutional publications (INTA Editions: brochures, booklets, technical reports, magazines).

The most consumed communication media are: printed and digital newspapers, local television programs (Tierra Campo TV) and radio programs, digital libraries. There are few joint investigations between the agents of the institutions. The modality of the link with the problem (scarce articulation and strategic vision between the actors of the territory to contribute to development) has an impact on the need to make publications in response to institutional requirements, intended to a greater extent to the scientific community, that is to say peers. There is a deficit of publications for the territory (language according to the audience and the needs demanded). Personal communication with the Catamarca-La Rioja Regional Council, September 2016.

Those who carry out outreach tasks: Church, Primary Health Care, Zone Agronomists, Province Penitentiary Service, Extension Agents, municipalities. It brings together professionals and technicians who work in technical-productive advice and support to the producers of the territory. The arrival to him is made through the requirements and demands of the different institutions. The most widely used means of communication are interpersonal contacts, the web, television, radio and graphic media.

Some of the communication activities are disconnected from the productive reality and that of the producer himself. For this reason, the modality of the link with the problem lies in a disarticulation with the communication processes and in the lack of articulated work that leads to the overlapping of activities. In this matrix the work in the territory is carried out with different methodologies and with different interests, causing the lack of shared meeting points to hinder joint / integrated work in the territory. There is a lack of systematization (recovery of knowledge) of experiences to evaluate what exists in the territory, measure the impact of intervention in the processes to generate future actions to follow based on what has been previously produced. The consequence of the lack of systematization is the duplication of works and resources destined to the intervention in the same subject.

Those who educate: Different Level Schools, Agricultural School (agro-technical schools and Agricultural Educational Centers) and Extension Agents. They form capacities, and they accompany the teaching-learning process. It is a more directed, more linear, traditional training in the sense of transmission of knowledge. The link modality is more related to the transfer of knowledge than to the joint construction of learning in which the previous knowledge of the different actors in the territory is considered. There is little recognition of the previous baggage of the one with whom it interacts. With this scenario, context is not taken into account. The interest of the educator is reduced to the fulfillment of institutional formalities.

Communication occurs in a linear manner. The interaction is differential and distanced, asymmetric, since knowledge is held by the one who educates and trains. The media that are consumed are local FM, Radio Valle Viejo, Diario El Ancasti, La Unión and the Web pages are visited to a lesser extent (connectivity problems).

Those who accompany: Agrarian Federation, Neighborhood Centers, CLA, Neighborhood Participation Headquarters, Producers Association, Technical groups, INTA. They are constituted as spaces for accompaniment, for the generation of strategies and actions arising from the analysis of the local reality. They are more informative, there is interaction, but they lack continuity in actions. The difficulty is in sustaining that space in time. Sporadic actions are generated which leads to breaks in the interaction. On several occasions the information does not circulate, so the discussions generated in these spaces do not reach all the actors involved directly. Institutional actions are unknown, there are overlapping activities [8].

The communication of this matrix is ideological due to the primacy of interests and the arrest of power in the decisions to be made. An oversized responsibility is attributed to INTA to promote, convene and give continuity to these spaces. There is a lack of clarity in the role of accompaniment of the institutions, which remain anchored as promoters and initiators of these spaces. The empowerment of these spaces by the actors of the territory is lacking [9].

Those who administer and manage: Institutional Administrations, Project Coordinators, National Programs (PRODERI, PROSAP), Management Teams. It refers to those who administer, plan and manage financial-economic and human resources, but there is little coordination and planning between them. In addition, they are the ones who supervise and evaluate the execution of funds. However, two conceptions of execution are distinguished: for the coordinators, execution consists of liquidating funds, while for the administration, execution is based on the effective and efficient use of the resource, in an administrative procedure approved in accordance with current regulations.

Communication between them is interpersonal, via e-mail and by telephone. The problem affects them because the channels frequently used to report on administrative matters sometimes generate misunderstandings and displeasure. Administrative terminology is inherent to the area and it makes it difficult to understand. Administrative processes have different times than those required for actions in the territory. It is well possible to reprogram some activities, these in some cases depend on biological-phenological cycles that cannot be addressed outside of those times. Therefore, activities are prioritized and criticality is established based on these cycles.

Meetings between members of the sector are held from monthly meetings to publicize progress of the activities carried out within INTA, for example. The modality of the link with the problem is associated with a lag of the administrative times with the programmatic times. The flows from the allocation of funds condition the actions.

Those who communicate: media, journalists, institutional communicators and actors of the territory. The media are opinion-makers, they respond to corporate interests and are conditioned for ideological reasons. Communicators respond to the interests of the participating institutions, generally demands for institutional visibility in the media. And also associated with an institutional ideology.

There is a tendency to oversize the figure of the communicator, due to the specialty of their training, without recognizing that each one communicates from their actions. In other words, it is necessary to recognize that we are all communicators and we carry out communication actions from our expertise. There is a lack of clarity in communicational criteria (to whom, for what, how and in what context).

The meeting spaces for communicators are workshops, meetings, trainings and face-to-face interaction. To communicate, media such as e-mails, website, electronic bulletin are used and there is an active relationship with journalists from media such as: newspapers (print and digital), radios and, to a lesser extent, television. The modality of the bond involves aspects related more to the informational and interactional dimension and not so much to sociocultural aspects.

Those who produce: groups the producers who have a direct or indirect relationship with the institutions of the territory. They communicate through interpersonal contacts, e-mail, radio, television, newspapers, magazines, specific bibliography. The communication media used are: NOA Productivo (productive supplement of the El Ancasti newspaper), Radios with a greater provincial scope: Valle Viejo and local FM. Digital newspapers: Catamarca Actual, Catamarca Rural. TV Program: Last Page (channel 10 Cable TV), Tierra Campo TV.

The meeting spaces are in the field of producers, events and exhibitions, talks and field demonstrations. The modality of the link is associated with the fact that the information produced is sometimes inaccessible to the producer because it is too technical or because it does not respond to the needs felt by them. In addition, there is little appropriation of the available technology. For this reason, the problem is associated with communicational processes split off from the productive reality.

3.2. Socialization of the Communication Strategy

Once the strategy was designed, the participants were socialized to make contributions and gain knowledge about how we would proceed communicationally from the PRET. Based on this, from 2016 to mid-2018 the communication actions were oriented according to what was proposed in the VTC. Although not all of them were carried out, some interesting ones were generated that led to promoting displacements in the approach to communication and intersubjective links such as: communication workshops, consolidation of the communication team (although it was promoted by the PRET continues to function within the Experimental Station), formation of a network with the Rural Extension Agencies through the selection of a communicational reference, publications, systematization of experiences, participation in congresses and other instances in the socialization of knowledge. Likewise, as the VTC is posed as something malleable, changing and fluid depending on the context, unforeseen actions were generated but which arose from the recognition of the staff towards the communication team. This factor implied organizing workshops with themes

that the same people considered necessary to address, such as conflict resolution, work stress, teamwork, which required specialists on the subject [10].

In the territory, the work demanded different times. The interaction was promoting and strengthening the links inter-subjective and inter-institutional working towards a common goal or project. The Communication was a key factor.

4. Conclusion

Returning to the question of interaction, in the workshops the question was frequent, how do we meet the other? and in the first instance what we wanted was to recognize the other and their subjectivity. To do this, the beginning was to understand what we are talking about when we talk about strategic communication and therefore we had to know where it started and whose basis was complexity. The objective was to stress, to discuss what was understood by communication. For this reason, we consider that the meetings held were spaces that motorized and enabled participation and the construction of shared knowledge. In turn, the "fear" of losing the specificity was manifested, but it was a fear that could be expected as we are located –traditionally and institutionally- in a paradigm that does not give rise to the unpredictable. Consequently, the path took time, like any process, back and forth, where the first step involved "a change in attitude" to move towards a communicational architecture [16]. Thus, understanding communication as a process, not reduced to information, implied participation and a collective construction. This did not mean banishing dissemination as one of the main communication activities by another, but on the contrary, containing it in the design of the communication strategy as an innovative relationship device. The need for gaze movement was due to the fact that the actions were exercised from a linear closure, leaving aside, for example, sociocultural aspects.

The closure was reflected in the analysis of Marks of Rationality where the activities that were recognized were centralized in the transfer, that is, in the restriction of communication to its informative dimension. Therefore, to address communication from complexity, it was necessary to enhance the other dimensions considered equally important and recognized by the actors in the construction of the VTC, which led us to look at communication from another place and not only from information.

In this way, we can realize that the communication actions undertaken within the framework of the project and proposed in the VTC, promoted certain movements in the approach to communication and in intersubjective links such as: communication workshops, consolidation of the team of communication (although it was promoted from the PRET, it continues to function within the Experimental Station), formation of a network with the Rural Extension Agencies through the selection of a communicational reference, publications, systematization of experiences, participation in congresses and other instances in the socialization of knowledge. Likewise, as the VTC is posed as something

malleable, changing and fluid depending on the context, unforeseen actions were generated but which arose from the recognition of the staff towards the communication team; This implied organizing workshops with themes that the same people considered necessary to address. Such as conflict resolution, work stress, teamwork, among others, which required specialists on the subject.

In this way, from the PRET, the effort made by each of those present in walking this new path was valued, certainly not easy to reconfigure our way of communicating and above all to intervene in the reality of our territories.

Finally, it should be noted that beyond recognizing the need to approach communication from a multidimensional approach, doubt and uncertainty as well as the deepening of the subject were aspects strongly present in the workshops, which for those of us who are aimed at this complex journey also presents us as a great challenge to continue rethinking and reflecting on our daily task from strategic communication.

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