

**SOCIAL MARKETING AND THE
CHILD SURVIVAL AND DEVELOPMENT REVOLUTION**

Notes on a meeting in Communications Division on April 4, 1984

The meeting was called by Tarzie Vittachi to explore whether the principles of Social Marketing (SM) have a role in the Child Survival and Development Revolution (CSDR), especially in its communications component.

Marketing was understood to cover market segmentation, product design, pricing, distribution, promotion, sales effect and profit. We have Social Marketing when the product is a socially important concept or strategy, the market is a beneficiary community, distribution is the use of all channels to that community and sales effect/profit is the impact of our efforts.

It was agreed that the SM approach could be a great facilitator, especially if CSDR needed to be scaled up and improved in performance. SM is really a way of systematising much that UNICEF is already doing in the management of programmes and communications— but fitfully and not always on purpose. It provides a conceptual framework for strengthening the interaction among communications and other programme components and for integrating communications planning in programme planning.

Some specific benefits were seen to be these: it promotes the cost-effective approach and a more uniform/better message quality. Above all, it favours a people-based starting point to our thinking— not questions like, "How should we mount this programme and its communications?" but "What are the needs of this community, therefore, how should we design a programme and communications to meet those needs?"

Almost by definition, SM demands careful consideration and use of the mass media, not only as journalism but as vehicles of emotional persuasion.

To be effectively wielded, it will need specialist professionals. The meeting terminated with the suggestion that the process be started to engage an organisation which would collaborate with us in developing a marketing plan for CSDR.

It was recognised that much work would need to be done to refine the ideas and actions that follow, and set up the right resources of people, structures and money.

1. The Need

CSDR, as an idea and strategy, has received too much attention for UNICEF to risk non-delivery.

Chief among the things that need doing is that we touch, individually, hundreds of millions of minds and hearts because it is there that the "revolution" must take place. People must be helped to see that there are problems they can solve. Latent demand must be revealed and existing demand met; approaching the solution from the supply end has proved to be a faulty strategy.

UNICEF could never do this alone, especially as the need to go national, universal and global is daily more evident and the time-frames are impatient.

SM could be a helpful tool in these external tasks and the internal one of shaping up to tackle them.

2. Meeting the Need (ideas and techniques)

SM must be seen as a way of reading a community's needs with accuracy so that the right package of actions and and its promotion could be developed; so the ideas and supplies required are correctly distributed; so a "pricing" structure is evolved that demands of individuals no more than the time/effort/money/sacrifice they can give, or are motivated to give.

The essence of SM is that it pinpoints and seeks attitudinal and behavioural change, not only informational, or educational effects. This specifies, apart from other things, identifying the resistances and barriers to change; enhancing the value and appeal of the change; and being persistent both in the effort (long-term strategies) and the feedback (research).

Changes in attitude and behaviour are known to be associated with frequency of exposure of our target groups to the message and with high quality expression of message(s) which must work "viscerally".

Other sectors could be involved: the legal (eg enactments that helpfully prohibit, or encourage action in the programme scene), the technological (eg improvements that get around consumer problems), the commercial (eg designing "products" for different socio-economic strata).

To optimise these requirements and opportunities, professional marketing and advertising consultancy is essential. Some know-how in managing these services exists in UNICEF. India and Brazil are cases in point.

In Brazil an advertising agency and related suppliers work with programmes in which UNICEF collaborates. They are remunerated on an out-of-pocket basis. The mass media donates time and space. In this way, a campaign for breastfeeding was run in 1983 worth over a million dollars for which the UNICEF investment was US \$37,000. The mass media component of the programme has gone beyond the desired effect on low-income urban mothers. It has facilitated various other activities with the programme eg training/education/motivation of health professionals and administrators.

It was suggested that Headquarters could, in association with professional consultants/services here, help evolve CSDR marketing and mass media strategies applicable across frontiers in selected areas and countries. Field consultation and approvals would be sought at three different phases of the process: evolution of the brief; of the basic concepts; of the phototypical material.

If an advertising agency is involved, we would expect well-founded strategic recommendations from them, as well as marketing approaches in a comprehensive package including recommendations on mass and interpersonal media.

It was emphasised that UNICEF should, in this case, be a knowledgeable, decisive and demanding "client".

3. Strategic Alliances (Through whom/what?)

All agent and intermediary groups, institutions— official and non-government— churches and voluntary organisations who are in contact with the community are potential allies in our crusade. So are the mass media.

Professionals and professional bodies comprise another important partner.

CSDR needs to draft them all because they are key in the action to "massify" the right attitudes and decisions, as much at top political and administrative levels as in the community.

UNICEF's relationship with these "long arms of change" must be continuing and creative.

In this process of effecting change, we work at international, national and household levels. We have to consider how to link the efforts as well as the effects. The media have a role in this.

Indeed the media, used journalistically as well as an instrument in the marketing/communications plan could be our most important allies in going to scale on CSDR.

4. Caveats

The components of CSDR are aimed at different objectives and envisage different behaviour changes among a variety of groups. No single strategy will work for all of the elements. A flexible package of action is required. A varied media mix is necessary. At the community level, a variety of options should be available as action to meet a variety of situations not always predictable.

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But whatever the detailed programme or objective, our overall goal/not so much of "development" as of IMR reduction needs constantly to be kept in focus.

5. Training, Development, Education

This is a function necessary for internal and external groups.

Within UNICEF may reside the most important marketing quarry of all. A large proportion of individuals comes to programming with experience rooted in supply. They may need a special campaign of exposure of "how-to" in this area.

This apart, programme people in general will need training/education alongside the communicators themselves. The distinction between the converted and unconverted, therefore, the needs to be made among mothers and other external target publics— but within UNICEF as well.

What does SM mean in terms of training and development? A study may be required to provide the answer.

Training/education must also be considered for our strategic allies, including the journalists.

Feedback, Monitoring, Evaluation (Research)

These functions are necessary at all stages of marketing planning and implementation to reduce uncertainty, ensure that what is intended does happen and estimate impact and effects against objectives.

This needs to be done systematically and professionally. Bought services require to be supervised by appropriate in-house skills.



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