

PROGRAMMER'S GUIDE FOR SUPPORT COMMUNICATIONS WITHIN UNICEF-ASSISTED PROJECTS

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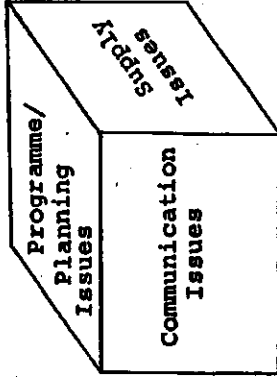
INTRODUCTION

"Support Communication is a process within the planning, programming and implementation cycles to facilitate behavioral change" *and management communication systems.*

Support communication is a programming matter. Therefore, this guideline has been produced to assist programme officers to identify:

- . . . where support communications are needed.
- . . . how to implement support communication elements.

At each stage of the programme planning process there are a variety of <sup>communication</sup> issues which need to be considered. Social communication issues are among the most important components. If we visualize the programming process as a cube we can see how these activities are integrated:



Support communication is an integral part of the programming process emphasizing the social aspects which will lead to behavioral change within target groups.

Working from PRO-25, relevant issues have been identified which need to be considered if UNICEF-assisted projects are to bring about the behavioral changes required to meet a project's objectives. These are the socio/psychological considerations, community value systems and perceptions of problems; indigenous mechanisms for dealing with problems.

At various stages of programming, certain issues are given more emphasis than others. At one point "Statements about Courses of Action", a detailed paper about Support Communication Issues, will have to be written.

It would be a mistake to feel that the use of social or support communications within projects will be a panacea to "cure" all a programme's difficulties. However, oftentimes these communication aspects are overlooked as well as the behavioral and socio/psychological aspects. By using the processes of developing support communication, it is hoped that these aspects can be given equal weight to all other programming issues.

Of course, a programmer may wish to call upon the services of a PSC Officer to assist in this effort. Or call upon other professionals in the social communication field.

Even if such services are available, a programme officer should be aware of eight important issues in programming for support communication by way of general background. These are:

1. That an intervention project planned together with a target group in response to a need stated by them will have a much better chance of being adopted than one planned by "experts" for target groups. It is essential to meet and dialogue with groups to identify their needs and to their projects which will help to solve the problems.
2. That research must be done first about a target group. Once the characteristics are known, messages can be adjusted to suit languages, customs, location, communication behaviour and patterns, where the group is located on the adoption curve, etc.
3. That pretesting of all media should be done with members of the target group. This will clear up misunderstanding, prevent cultural "faux pas", and reflect the tastes of the target group.
4. That appropriate media/indigenous media - at any rate media the target group feels comfortable with and is not distracted by - should be used. Members of the target group should be consulted as to what media they would prefer to have used.
5. That local influentials need to be identified, enlisted and trained as advisers, implementors, motivators before communication inputs begin. Further, special face-to-face motivation should be planned specifically for these influentials before mass media inputs begin.
6. That all necessary members of a government bureaucracy be informed about innovative programmes before they begin. Officials should be consulted at all states of planning and thoroughly trained and (hopefully) motivated in methods for carrying out the programmes, as well.

7. That all supplies must be in place before your messages begin; or all resources mentioned in your messages must be easily available locally. If not, the credibility of your project and your organization is jeopardized.
8. That the functions of the mass media are limited for the majority of the population. That is mass media (generally) do three things: (1) create awareness; (2) create a climate for change; (3) give information. The media themselves rarely are instrumental in changing hard held attitudes and traditional behaviors, except among innovators and early adopters.

In changing hard held attitudes and traditional behaviors, it is best to use face-to-face communication either through the use of:

- (a) well-motivated field workers and extension agents (health, agriculture, family planning, community development) or
- (b) "satisfied acceptors" members of a target group who have adopted a new intervention; are happy with it; are convinced that it is worthwhile and who are willing to speak to their friends and neighbours about it.

Well-motivated field workers and extension agents (health, agriculture, family planning, community development) are an important channel for face-to-face communication.

The programme officer has to be aware of the advantages and disadvantages of the use of face-to-face communication as well as of the various media. This information is available from Headquarters or the UNICEF various regional offices.

What the result will be is a series of well-tested and integrated activities and media, working in concert, whose chief function will be to change the behavior of target groups.

Guy B. Scandlen/4 March 1960

- (a) description of child problems
- current levels of the problem; services available to remedy it; gap between problem and services.
- project current levels of problem into the future.
- review expenditures in the sector: Government; external resources, UNICEF.
- mechanisms for financing service development.
- (b) analyse implementation of current policies and programmes.
- analyse planning environment
- analyse administrative environment
- analyse political environment (social? environment - GBS)
- analyse the financial situation and prospects.

PROGRAMMING STEPS  
INFORMATION COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

PSC INPUTS TO

INFORMATION COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

Note: The types of information here are not listed in any order of priority, nor is it necessary to collect all this information. Determine the importance by asking: "What will I do with this information? How will I use it?" Then make your decision. One of the functions of this information will be to determine the social feasibility of the programme and projects.

- A. Develop methods of explaining to communities why information and data are important and how they will be needed.
- B. Design activities to prepare communities for being studied by outsiders.
- C. Design methods and activities to involve the community in the process of information and data collection.
- D. Assist in designing research instruments and in pretesting the instruments.
- E. Develop methods to include children as resources for collecting information within their own communities.
- F. Assist in identifying types of information needed including:
  - . about communication processes within organizations and communities (who speaks to who about what).
  - . channels for new ideas into communities.
  - . media habits (including preference for folk media)
  - . attitudes toward and use of existing services and possible future ones.
  - . important values and living patterns of the community affecting their behaviour.
  - . perceptions of current problems by organizations and communities.
  - . communication technology, resources and services;
  - . meeting places, gathering places, extension workers, influentials in communities.
  - . distribution systems.
  - . training facilities, curricula
  - . communication, institutional structures.
- G. Design systems of presenting data in easily comprehensible, "human" terms.
- H. Disseminate, promote, communicate data and information.

- (a) quantifiable terms
- (b) specifies geographic location
- (c) projects current levels into future.
- (d) relationship to expressed national priorities  
between
- (e) specifies gap / supporting services  
(training, management, logistics, transport,  
supervision) and magnitude of specific problems.
- (f) specifies gap between existing services and  
the magnitude of the problem.
- (g) specifies gap between existing resources for  
service development and operation and the magnitude  
of the specific problem.
- (h) mentions studies, surveys other sources of  
information used to assess problems.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Note: The outline for the Problem Statement in PRO-25 does not include any description of behavioral aspects of given problems. That is: Socio/psychological considerations dealing with a problem; a community's value system and perception of the problems, indigenous mechanisms for dealing with it. Therefore these are included under PSC Inputs.

- A. Identify degree of community involvement and specify gaps in regard to the problems identified.
- B. Assist in identifying target groups involved in the problem. (Not only groups most affected, but all groups with relationships/influence on the most affected groups).
- C. Help clarify perceptions of problems at all levels of society and government. (Who said it's a problem? the people? the Government? UNICEF?)
- D. Help identify the communication aspects of the problem.



STATEMENT OF OBJECTIVES

- (a) outcome level expressed in terms of problem reduction strategies.
- (b) service level, usually stated in terms of coverage/number of beneficiaries
- (c) quantifiable terms
- (d) time frame
- (e) target groups
- (f) geographical area
- (g) consistent with problem statement.

## STATEMENT OF OBJECTIVES

Note: It is sometimes difficult to distinguish between the many kinds of objectives involved in formulating programmes. Basically communication elements planned in a project are concerned with two kinds of objectives:

- behavioral ones: what people are supposed to do to show they have accepted an intervention.
- Operational ones: what activities will bring about that behavior.

For example: "to grease and tighten the movable parts of a handpump" is a behavioral objective

"to train handpump caretakers" is the activity. It is an operational (or strategic) objective

By distinguishing between these two kinds of objectives our monitoring and evaluation tasks are made easier and we know what to monitor and what to evaluate. For example, when all the training is completed we know we have accomplished the operational objective. We do not know if we have accomplished the behavioral objective. Only after we have observed (monitored) handpump caretakers regularly greasing and tightening the movable parts of the handpump can we say we have accomplished the behavioral objective.

- A. Identify and formulate behavioral objectives (there may be many) for each target group.
- B. Identify and formulate operational objectives (there may be several) for each behavioral objective.
- C. Assist in designing methods for showing how to formulate behavioral and operational objectives.
- D. Assist in designing activities for communities to be able to set behavioral and operational objectives.

STATEMENTS ABOUT COURSES OF ACTION: ACTIVITIES

- (a) broadly specify the technical activities to be undertaken.
- (b) specify broadly the organizational or administrative structure for carrying out actions.
- (c) specify generally the schedule of implementation for each course of action. (Sequence and speed)
- (d) specify the estimated budget for specific courses of action.
- (e) specify the financing sources and mechanism for each course of action.
- (f) specify actions aimed at developing evaluative activities. (project appraisals, monitoring, retrospective evaluations.)

STATEMENTS ABOUT COURSES OF ACTION: ACTIVITIES

Note: It is at this stage that a separate paper, a "Communication Plan", will be prepared detailing the communication aspects of either one intervention or of all the interventions, projects, which comprise the total country programme. This will highlight the communication side of the cube.

The communication plan will detail all the activities proposed to bring about the defined behavioral objectives and should follow the following format.

- I. Situational Analysis (behavioral, communication problems)
- II. Programme's, Project's, Problem Reduction and Strategic Objectives
- III. Definition of All Target Groups
- IV. Specification of Priority Messages
- V. Specification of Proposed Activities and Strategies (may include, for example
  - . all community level activities by extension workers
  - . training at all levels
  - . use of localized media (traditional, "appropriate")
  - . use of "mass" media
  - . use of "satisfied acceptors", model households, etc.
  - . materials, methods, approaches
  - . message design)
- VI. Plan for Pretesting Software (activities and media)
- VII. Specification of Equipment and Supplies
- VIII. Identification of Resources, Institutions for Production, Training, Distribution
- IX. Plans for Monitoring
- X. Plans for Evaluation and Revision
- XI. Budgetary Implications

STATEMENTS ABOUT FEASIBILITY OF PROPOSED COURSES OF ACTION

(Constraints Analysis)

(a) operational feasibility (e.g. analysis of capabilities to get things produced, delivered, working);

(b) institutional feasibility (e.g. analysis of training, supervisory, construction, maintenance capacities);

(c) administrative feasibility (e.g. analysis of strengths and weaknesses in respect of the division of responsibilities; co-ordination, procedures);

(d) resource feasibility (e.g. analysis of the extent to which manpower, supplies and equipment, re-current or capital funds required for the programme will be available).

PSC INPUTS

FEASIBILITY, CONSTRAINTS ANALYSIS

Note: Feasibility considerations are informally kept in mind at each step of the programme planning process as one asks, "to what extent is my plan possible". However, at this step we want to formally review all the elements of our plan from the behavioral, social communication aspects.

These are the elements which will have to be considered at this point:

- . community level feasibility (to what extent are the programmes/projects meeting stated needs?)
- . cultural taboos (do our interventions clash with cultural taboos?)
- . social values (do our interventions agree with social values)
- . cultural patterns (do our interventions fit into cultural patterns and what adjustments will be required of the community).
- . social interaction patterns (has our intervention built upon these patterns?)
- . religion (to what extent are we reinforcing deeply held religious beliefs)
- . attitudes towards media (are we using community-oriented and accepted media for our channels into the community?)

From field manual

IMPLEMENTATION

PSC INPUTS

IMPLEMENTATION

1. Message design, curriculum development
2. Pretest communication activities, equipment, supplies and media
3. Revise materials and activities
4. Produce materials and media
5. Begin training, face-to-face activities
6. Use media and materials
7. Deliver equipment and supplies
8. Refine methodologies.



From field manual

MONITORING

## PSC INPUTS

1. Observations of attention given to communication inputs
2. Monitoring of operational objectives such as
  - . training
  - . community-based activities
  - . use of satisfied acceptors
  - . reaction of target groups whether media community-oriented inputs are being produced and implemented as scheduled (e.g. are training materials distributed, are radio programmes being broadcast; are folk media troupes performing, etc.).
  - . reaction of target groups to mass media
  - . first hand observations during field visits, third party informal reports, formally commissioned studies, participatory, community-generated activities
3. Monitoring of behavioral objectives such as
  - . mothers preparing and feeding food to children
  - . mothers preparing and feeding ORS to children
  - . use of water for household purposes
  - . use of latrines
4. Designing of methods to measure changes in
  - . knowledge about interventions
  - . feelings about (attitudes) interventions
  - . behaviours, practice of the intervention (are people using, doing it? To what extent?)  
at all levels: planners, officials, bureaucracy, communities.
5. Trace and encourage communication flow within management at all levels as well as feed-back from communities.
6. Evaluate the suitability and methods of adapting technologies and equipment needed for the projects and programmes.

From field manual

EVALUATION

## EVALUATION

Note: There are several current sources from which evaluations can be formulated: programme statistics, Annual Reports, country reviews, for example. There seems to be growing interest in the development of social indicators and statistical profiles, all of which serve to bring a "people" oriented, humanness to UNICEF efforts. Here are additional inputs which support communication can bring.

1. Assist in establishing behaviorally-oriented social indicators based upon behavioral objectives specified previously.
2. Assist in developing methodologies to assess changes in attitudes and behaviors.
3. Assist in analyzing information from monitoring activities to serve as inputs to evaluations.
4. Assist in presentation of data which is easily comprehensible.
5. Assist in working out clear "humanized" evaluation reports.
6. Assist in dissemination of evaluation findings and facilitation of discussion forums.



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**These appear to be UNICEF PSC Officers from various field offices who participated in the PSC meeting in Bangkok 18-26 February 1980.**

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20