

PSC Paper No. 10

A Simulated Project Support Communications Study

Prepared for the UNESCO seminar on "Communication
Support for Development Programmes" held in
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The District of Milimani

"A case study prepared by Alastair Matheson,
Public Information Officer, UNICEF, Nairobi"

The District of Milimani could be anywhere in East Africa, or in Central Africa. It is a fertile, productive area in well-watered hill country, situated high above the arid plains which surround it. Its population is fairly dense, but there is no main concentration of people except that most farms are on the higher areas or immediately beneath the slopes. The surrounding plains are sparsely populated and there is little cultivation there because of the aridity of the soil.

The people of Milimani are hard-working, ambitious and, as many other parts of Africa, many of the men work at better-paid jobs in the cities some distance from their homes. Many people depend on the money which they are sent regularly by the breadwinners. Agriculture is the mainstay of the economy and the crops are mainly subsistence, but there is a significant trade in the export of vegetables and fruit to the larger towns far afield. Some coffee is grown, but it is not a great earner of revenue, except to some of the larger farmers. Attempts are being made to improve the strain of livestock and develop animal husbandry as an alternative source of income for some people. Food crops grown are mainly maize, beans, sweet potatoes, and there is some sugar cane.

The district has an energetic team of Government officers anxious to see living standards improve, and they are each doing their job conscientiously and to the best of their abilities. Many are anxious to see local farmers apply more modern techniques, especially in farming, so that they can improve their incomes and thus contribute towards raising living standards.

The district has no local newspaper and as it is far from the capital, it does not rate very highly as "news value" in the national papers. As in most other parts of Africa, however, radio is listened to in many homes and market places. Although there is a local vernacular, the people speak and read good Ki-swahili, and most of the young people have a knowledge of English as well.

There is an Information Officer stationed in the district who has an Information van which tours this and the neighbouring district giving regular film shows and the opportunity is also taken to use the van as a medium for publicising campaigns which various departments run from time to time.

Recently, as part of a contribution from a European country, a very modern and well-equipped Farmers' Training Centre was opened a few miles from the District headquarters. However, there has been quite a problem in getting competent farmers to come to this centre to learn about more modern farming methods, and most of the young men who are interested in applying for admission have no land of their own on which to farm.

Despite their interest in development work, the Government officials have noticed recently that the people in many parts of Milimani District have shown signs of apathy, and meetings have been poorly attended.

Some officers who have taken the trouble to try and establish the root causes have found, on questioning some of the local people, that one complaint running through all the conversations is that many people are confused by conflicting advice they receive from Government officers.

"What type of conflicting advice?", the Commissioner asks one of them, during a meeting.

"I can quote to you two I heard today", says the Agricultural officer. "When I was telling one man to keep all his rubbish to use as compost, he told me that only the other day he had been warned by the Health Inspector he must burn all the rubbish, otherwise he would be helping to breed germs and spread disease".

"Down in the low country, where the people lack protein, I was trying to get people started on building fish ponds to breed tilapia, as a good and cheap source of protein. But then one of them said they had been warned that any surface water left stagnant is dangerous because it can breed mosquitoes and so spread malaria".

Such conflicting advice seems to be one of the things which have not only tended to confuse the people of Milimani, but has also made them unresponsive to advice from official quarters. It has also tended to make people stay away from meetings, as they are called out too often to attend barazas, often having to walk long distances.

The time for drastic re-thinking on the part of the Government officials, and the various organizations concerned with development in its many forms, came when one meeting which was called, was very poorly attended and many people walked off in the middle of the talks given by the Agriculture Officer.

This made other development or "change agents" working in the district rather apprehensive about the campaigns which they had been planning, and so a meeting was called to review and discuss the whole position in Milimani. The decision was taken to integrate the work of the various departments and non-Government organizations at work in the district so that a properly co-ordinated campaign could be mounted and the officials and other "change agents" could work effectively as a team to try instil a new spirit in the people of Milimani.

The need to enlist public support has become critical recently following government decision to construct a local feeder road which will link a hitherto inaccessible area with desirable new markets. The administration is anxious to have the road built on a self-help basis using a large local labour force which will be expected to give its services voluntarily. There is general enthusiasm for the project, with farmers welcoming the prospect of having their produce taken to more profitable markets; however there is some resistance from amongst the elders who fear that the road might open up the area to influences which could lead to a break-down of traditional society and they are aware that the new road may also tend to syphon off some of the younger people to the big towns.

The road is a priority item in the Government's development plan.

Further Information about Milimani

The Milimani district has a population of approximately 200,000 of whom half are children. The largest town in the district has a population of 50,000 persons.

There are 4 secondary schools and 50 primary schools in the district. The literacy rate is roughly the African average: men 25%; women 15%. Adult literacy classes are popular with women of the district who attend in greater numbers and more consistently than men.

There is no electrification of the area although there are plans to connect Milimani with the national grid. There are power generating plants at the Agricultural Training Centre, the 4 Secondary Schools and at the District Hospital. The lack of electrification is a major problem and it is hoped that government funds will be made available to overcome it.

There are few private cars in the district except those owned by traders. There is a good bus service and this is augmented by traders' lorries. Movement in the district is severely restricted in the rainy season.

Radio ownership is roughly one receiver per fifteen persons.

Newspapers and news-sheets are available in both English (mostly pictorials) and Kiswahili; the circulation ratio being approximately one newspaper per 200 persons (English) and one newspaper per 50 persons (Kiswahili).

The UNESCO Seminar

The Seminar was held in the School of Journalism, University of Nairobi, on the 4 - 15 December 1972. The following pages are a transcript and summary of the work done and ideas suggested by the participants during the seminar. This gives many ideas and shows the results that can be gained by a systematic approach to communication support for development programmes.

The seminar set up 4 study groups to examine and make recommendations on a multi-media Communications Campaign to be carried out among the people of Milimani to dispel apathy and generate more interest in development and on a Communications Support Campaign to instil in field workers the need for greater co-ordination in their work.

The Milimani Case Study

The Seminar was expected to recommend:

1. A multi-media communications campaign to be carried out among the people of Milimani to dispel apathy and generate more interest in development.
2. A communications support campaign to instil in field workers the need for greater co-ordination in their work.

As a basis for these recommendations the Seminar divided into four study groups to examine specific questions in detail and to develop practical solutions.

Working Group 1

What role can the Ministry of Information play to bring about co-ordination at all levels between the various departments and agencies?

What positive steps can the Ministry of Information take to raise the priority given to communications in government thinking?

Working Group 2

Since co-ordination of the work of field workers may be resisted at their departmental headquarters, what can the Group propose to overcome such resistance?

Working Group 3

What specific inputs can be expected from Print Media in the campaign?

The Group should indicate in some detail the channels it would favour using and it should sketch components of a campaign.

Working Group 4

What specific inputs can be expected from Broadcasting and film in the campaign?

The Group should indicate in some detail the channels it would favour using and it should sketch components of the campaign.

Participants' Summary

Milimani is one of the many East and Central Africa areas which need development. It could be anywhere in East or Central Africa.

Milimani could be summarized as follows:

ITS POTENTIAL: Is fertile, well watered, fairly densely populated, hard working ambitious population. Agriculture mainstay of economy.

ACHIEVEMENTS SO FAR: Some export of vegetables and fruits to towns. Some coffee by large farmers. Attempts being made to improve livestock for economy. Government Officers available for advice. Radio available in many homes and market places. People read vernacular, Kiswahili and some English. Well equipped Farmers Training Centre, 4 Secondary schools, 50 Primary schools, Literacy classes popular with women. Good Bus Service and lorry transport. News papers and news sheets available.

DEVELOPMENTAL FACILITIES EXISTING: Presence of large town. Presence of a team of Government Officers. Radio listening. Information Officer with Information Van for publicity. A centrally placed Training Centre. Secondary & Primary schools. Good public bus service and lorries available.

PROBLEMS AND HANDICAPS: Lower surrounding areas are arid. Many ambitious people moving to cities. Many people depending on money earned from towns. No local news paper. Far away from capital, rates low in news value, farmers not attending FTC, young people attending courses have no land. People showing apathy and not attending meetings, low literacy rate, no electricity, roads bad during wet weather.

CAUSES OF APATHY AND DISINTEREST: Agriculture mainly subsistence, limited sources of income, no farms for the young people, conflicting advices from government officers. People called too often to attend meetings where they walk long distances.

ACTION TAKEN TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM: A meeting called of departmental and non-departmental Officers. The meeting discussed and decided to co-ordinate the government and non-government work. A co-ordinated campaign to be mounted in team work to install a new spirit in the people, public support to be listed.

FIRST DEVELOPMENT PROJECT TO BE TACKLED: A road linking the area with markets. People will be asked to assist on self help basis. Farmers welcome the idea - for marketing purposes, some elders resist for fear of town influence to the youth. The Government development plan gives priority to the project.

Group I Report:

Group I was to make recommendations on what role can the Ministry of Information play to bring about Co-ordination at all levels between the various departments and agencies and what positive steps can the Ministry of Information take to raise the priority given to Communications in Government thinking. The group made the following observations and recommendations.

Having closely examined the situation of Milimani district, the working Group No. 1 has identified the following problems:-

1. Lack of co-ordination among the Ministries of Administration, Agriculture, Health, Community Development, Co-operatives, Veterinary, Education and Information.
2. Lack of involvement on the part of local leaders and their people on the one hand, and with government Ministries on the other.

As a result the group has identified the following needs:

- (i) Resettlement and Irrigation.
- (ii) Extension work towards modern farming.
- (iii) Introduction of radio programmes.
- (iv) Use of newspapers to supplement radio programmes.
- (v) Introduction of functional literacy classes.
- (vi) Organisation of women groups particularly on nutrition, home economics and sanitation.
- (vii) Campaign to educate and motivate the people on the need of the new road.

Therefore the group recommended the following:

1. The District Information Officer should immediately initiate a meeting, through the District Commissioner, at which all district heads of departments, will discuss a line of action for implementing the development programme.
2. In order to ensure that everybody in the district is involved in the programme another meeting be convened at which government heads of departments, councillors, other political leaders, religious leaders, chiefs and other prominent people will meet to consider the line of action.
3. The district team should launch a campaign to educate and mobilise the Milimani people and involve them in implementing the programme.

4. The District Information Officer should at this juncture, give publicity on radio, press and in interpersonal communication in projecting government thinking to the public.
5. A publicity follow-up be made through the use of posters, supplements, radio programmes and other audio-visual aids.

Group II Report:

We feel that the problem of clearing out resistance from departmental headquarters with regard to accepting co-ordination of their field workers could be solved in the following categories;

- a) District Commissioner (Chairman)
- b) All heads of Government departments at District level
- c) Members of District Council (assuming there is one)
- d) Members of National Assembly from the District
- e) All District heads of non-Government bodies in that District.
- f) Traditional leaders e.g. Chiefs.

The task of this committee should, among others, be to co-ordinate all development programmes in the District as well as publicity.

In addition to the District Development Committee the group suggests that a National Development Committee be formed. This Committee should be responsible for the co-ordination of all National Development programmes and should have executive powers to formulate policy regarding these programmes. It is therefore recommended that this should consist of:

- a) A Minister for Economic Planning (if such Ministry exists) to be Chairman
- b) Permanent Secretaries of all Ministries in the Country.
- c) Executive heads of Semi-Governmental bodies.

We recommend that the District Development Committee should be responsible to the National Development Committee. Therefore the decision that was taken at meeting to integrate the work of various departments and non-Government organizations at work in the District should be reported to the National Development bodies.

It is recommended that the National Development Committee after reviewing the whole situation in Milimani should formulate a policy which should require all heads of Government and non-Government organizations to have their services co-ordinated at all levels. We feel that such a policy will spell out any resistance from any head of department because in the first place it comes from the executive body, secondly the District Development Committee took part in the whole proceeding that led to the passing out of the resolutions regarding the integration of the work of various departments in the district.

It is finally recommended that after the National Development Committee's decision the District Development Committee publicise and launch campaigns in all available media in local vernacular until successful results are achieved.

Group III Report:

Group 3 was asked to make recommendation on what specific inputs can be expected from print media in the Campaign and to indicate in some detail the channels it would favour using and sketch components of the campaign.

The group made the following report:

PUBLICITY CAMPAIGN IN MILIMANI DISTRICT

Target: To dispel apathy and generate more interest in development and assure the success of the road building campaign and other projects.

Strategy: The problem in Milimani District seems to have arisen because of lack of co-ordination among field workers in their work.

The first step the Print Media would take would be to write an editorial comment on the unfortunate state of affairs in Milimani, highlighting the damage it has had on development and stressing the need for greater co-ordination.

Planning Stage: The Print Media representatives should be involved from the very beginning of the campaign by getting invited to attend and to participate in the planning of the campaign. All Minutes of each meeting should be made available to the Press. The Information Officer should be involved in the planning and execution of the Campaign, by making the necessary arrangements for press coverage.

Execution:

1. FEATURE articles by specialist writers are to be written about the people of the District of Milimani highlighting their progressive character and how the proposed road will help them in their progress. Emphasis will be on self-help and this will be supported by pictures taken elsewhere, perhaps in a neighbouring district, showing people at work on road construction and how the road is serving them in transporting their produce and in travelling to other places.
2. The feature articles and pictures will be published in special supplements in national newspapers and in News-sheets circulating in the area - Milimani.
3. In addition, pamphlets in local vernacular will be printed at a cheap printing press to be installed at the Agricultural Training Centre in the District.

4. Posters with appropriate slogans and illustrative pictures and drawings would be printed and the production cost would be off-set by advertisements on them, carefully selected to promote the objects of the campaign.
5. All activities of field workers are to be covered and handouts prepared for distribution in all public meeting places including the Farmers' Training Centre, Schools, Administrative Centres.

Distribution: All public transport - lorries and buses are to be used to carry printed material and to advertise by displaying POSTERS promoting the campaign. School children and women attending adult literacy class to assist in delivering home all literature given free.

Language: All material to be written and published in English with translations in Kiswahili. A limited number to be published in the vernacular language and distributed free to selected change agents who can be relied upon to spread the message to other people in their locality.

Launching & Timing: The campaign should be launched at the beginning of the dry season and should be stepped up through to harvesting and marketing of crops. It should be launched at the same time by all media and field workers.

Message: The conflicting information given in the past should be corrected and all false propaganda should be refuted to allay fear and to instil confidence in the proposed project and a sense of trust in information given by field staff who should all be involved in the launching of the campaign.

Change Agents: All teachers in Adult Literacy Classes and all Schools should devote some time and make printed matter available for their students to read, and to discuss with them the objectives of the campaign. They should make sure that all questions are fully answered and everything explained to the satisfaction of everyone present.

Feedback: Immediate feedback obtained through the above sessions should be communicated to organisers of the Campaign. Interviews of personalities in the area and field-workers would be published to ensure two-way flow of information.

Review & Follow-up: There will be a periodic review of the progress of the campaign through interviews published in the form of news and feature articles every month. The pamphlets would be published every two months.

Competition: Quiz and Essay competitions would be used to sustain interest in the campaign and to provide feedback, on the success of the campaign. There would be follow-up articles after the campaign, perhaps some two or three months later, to find out whether the campaign has been successful.

Group IV Report:

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Our Task:

1. To dispel apathy in development
2. To generate interest in development
3. To mount a campaign which will ensure coordination among the field workers.

Milimani Physical Resources:

1. Mainly agricultural
2. Adequate water supply
3. Hill country
4. Dense population - 200,000, $\frac{1}{2}$ of them children

Human Resources:

1. Population - 200,000, $\frac{1}{2}$ of them children
2. Hardworking and ambitious
3. Many men go to cities for better paid jobs, but send the money home to support their families.
4. Many Milimani relatives and families depend on money sent by men from cities.
5. Most young people have a good knowledge of English
6. Majority speak and read Kiswahili
7. There is a local vernacular

Activities:

- Significant trade in vegetables and fruits to cities
2. There is coffee, but earning not as much
 3. They mainly grow maize, beans, potatoes and some sugar cane
 4. Communal Radio listening
 5. Farmers Training Centre with facilities available

Facilities Available:

1. Good bus service
2. Seasonal roads only
3. Few cars (private)
4. There is a District Hospital
5. Four Secondary Schools and 50 primary Schools
6. Literacy classes mainly attended by women
7. Electricity
8. Availability of Mobile Film vans
9. Power Plants at the Farmers' Training Centre and at the Secondary Schools
10. Farmers Training Centre

Available Communications:

1. Radio is the best potential - ownership is very high (one per 25 persons)
2. Newspapers and news-sheets are available, but national reporters reject the area.
3. Road to city not in good condition
4. Barazas, but inconvenient due to long distances
5. No local newspaper

Negative Observations:

1. Unwillingness among the old people
2. Young people (though interested to attend Farmers' Classes) have no land.
3. Health and Agriculture departments lack coordination
4. There is little response to government activities

Positive Observations:

1. Government is willing to help
2. Government proposes a self-help road project
3. Government plans to bring electricity
4. There is a general interest in the road project.

Practical Solutions:

We recommend, therefore:

1. Organised Radio listening group coordinating specifically Agriculture and Health programmes.
2. Films to be utilised on health and agriculture programmes
3. Films to be used regularly in schools, market places and the Training Centre; including relevant information on development
4. Organised Adult literacy classes
5. ~~Trained~~ field workers should be used to conduct radio programmes and field sessions (which should be organised from headquarters to avoid confusion)
6. Regular interpersonal visits to old farmers are essential
7. Demonstrations are essential
8. Practical field days should be held for exchange of ideas
9. Old farmers must be incorporated in Radio programmes e.g. Farm Forum programmes are essential
10. The self-help road project to be explained by way of face to face discussions and Radio discussions.
11. The people must be involved in the planning stage of these programmes
12. Young people must be allocated suitable land
13. Organised development and social activities should be held at the Farmers' Training Centre.
14. National newspapers and local news-sheets should include Milimani projects. (We do not recommend a local newspaper)
15. Regional Station for piping material from Milimani prepared and recorded in Milimani studios to the national main stream for transmission to the whole country.

SPECIFIC PROGRAMMES

(Proposed by Group 4)

1. National Programmes - Radio

- (a) Farm Forum
- (b) Quiz Programmes
- (c) "Soap Opera" Series
- (d) Drama
- (e) Old Folks - stories, recollections etc.
- (f) Request Programmes - Music

Note: The above existing Radio Programmes on a National Level should and must include material from participants of Milimani.

2. Local Radio Contribution:

We propose a Regional Station which consists of a small transmitter with reasonable studio facilities which will pipe locally recorded programme material into the National Network.

Discussions

The group 2- recommendations were discussed at length. Some people felt that the group should have recommended the setting up of a National development Committee. The group replied that recommendations were made on the assumption that a National Committee existed and its Co-ordination was being looked into by Group 1. It was also suggested that the district Information Officer be Secretary and not Chairman of the district information Sub-Committee.

The Seminar made some Comments on the Group 3's report such as some Vernacular publications be initiated. Other comments were made by the Seminar.

Fear of some young people going to the towns, may be exaggerated since they come back with needed money. An example of where a road has succeeded should be taken and a feature story be made for Milimani people to read and listen to. People have walked through bush to go to towns and would therefore not likely resent road construction.

Group 3 recommendations were commended.

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Some of the comments made by the Seminar on the Group 4 report included:

The involvement of the local people extensively was highly commended. The raising of the farmers' status through radio would be useful, it was suggested. The group replied that farm forums, drama etc. would achieve the same objectives. Exchange visit between farms and field days and overseas tours by farmers was also suggested.

Print Campaign at National level similar to radio instead of a local level was thought to be more effective.

Finally a point was raised that points on the Milimani case were contradictory and too theoretical and that the groups should be commended for their efforts to make concrete recommendations.

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Notes

PSC paper No 10. A case study prepared by Alastair Matheson, Information Officer, UNICEF, Nairobi, for the UNESCO seminar on "Communications Support for Development Programmes" held in Nairobi 4-15 December 1972.

The case study centres on Millimani District, as being typical of Eastern and Central Africa, with fertile land, well watered, densely but evenly populated ... The case study includes statistical information on the district, and gives recommendations for possible development projects.

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