

THE LOAVES AND FISHES
OF RESOURCE MOBILISATION

How \$37,000 were parlayed into a million
dollars of value in Brazil's breastfeeding
Communications

Resource mobilisation is no new topic. What may be new is the way we in UNICEF-Brazil have approached and tackled it in a particular programme situation.

But before the particular, the general issue is probably this: mature analysis of a situation, may identify a problem which deserves a priority response of a specific kind. But it may be that the costs involved are beyond our resources. The first programme reaction to this might be to leave the problem alone, while holding that one's coat must be cut according to one's cloth. This may, of course, be seen as logical if defeatist. So we might decide to do what we can with what we have, knowing that it is less than the necessary. Now, this may be an even worse decision than the first because it might be wasteful. All programmes have what may be termed a "critical mass," which is the minimum weight of intervention below which no results are achieved. A third reaction might be to measure the gap between the resources required and those that we have -- and then attempt to fill it. (Yes, New York and Regional money are possible if a good case can be made. But the real issue is what can be done on the spot, through our own efforts)?

Many examples are quotable from UNICEF work in Brazil. But the one selected here is taken from the field and programme I know best: Communications in the National Breastfeeding Programme.

The most cursory examination of the problem shows that the premature termination of breastfeeding is enormously widespread. Many millions of mothers are concerned, spread over Brazil's vast geographical area. There are numerous target groups to be influenced. It is equally clear that we are concerned not just with information and education but -- since deeply held attitudes and behaviour patterns must be changed -- with persuasion and motivation as well.

Our primary target group is the low income mother. She is difficult to reach because she is surrounded by barriers of bias, misinformation, and negative practice. Yet she must be reached -- and by a standard message with adequate frequency. The attitudinal and behavioural changes that are required are known to be associated with repeated exposure of the target to the planned message.

All this specifies the use of the mass media. Only they could cover the area and numbers required. Only they can reach over the walls isolating the target mother and deliver our message directly, with the required frequency. But the very mention of mass media, used in this way, is frightening. Because it sounds very much like Advertising! The cost of media time and space and of the people who must prepare the materials for the media is high. This apart, it is well known that the mass media need to be used over substantial periods of time, with a certain continuity of effort. This again is expensive.

But then consideration of the problem showed that we were confronted not just with the cost of using the media in this way but, indeed, with the cost of not using them. It was seen that turning away from their use would also lose us time -- not just time in starting up our communications operation, but also time

in covering adequate proportions of our target audience. Then there would be the more subtle loss of what may be termed the "campaign effect" of the mass media: this is the altered communications environment that a campaign can create and the heightened perception that surrounds an issue as a result. This effect, involving large masses of people, can help to legitimise desired action at the individual's level.

There was another consideration. **Television and Radio in Brazil cover lower-income group households and mothers substantially. In the cities, say, of São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, radio covers over 80 percent and 70 percent, respectively, of our target groups; in Recife, 60 percent. TV covers between 50 and 60 percent of the group in these cities.**

Rede Globo, the network that first aired the programme's spots, attracts some 75 percent of evening prime time audiences, when 75 percent of Brazil's TV sets are switched on (1.5 sets per family, on a national average).

Finally, the mass media channels in Brazil are sympathetic to social programmes. But then their response had never been on the scale and of the type now required. How to get that?

The strategy that the programme adopted was to take the loaves and fishes that we had and attempt to parlay them into the numbers required for the masses confronting us.

First, what was the message in our resource mobilising drive? It was a clear-cut appeal to Brazilian national pride. Reduced to its essence (familiar to us all in UNICEF) it linked the future of the country to the condition of today's children. The second ingredient of the message was to profit from the excellence of the UNICEF image with the communications industry. The instrument we used was an audiovisual that had originally been created to

start off the programme. It set forth the problem posed by the premature termination of breastfeeding, outlined the national loss involved (in public health and economic terms), outlined the advantages of breastmilk, detailed the causes of the problem and therefore what needed to be done by who. This audiovisual had triggered the programme and seemed usable with more groups than those first targetted -- the top decision-making and policy-formulating levels in the Ministries of Health and of Social Welfare. The audiovisual was used with advertising agencies, media owners, etc.

Four advertising agencies were seen. All of them were top firms because we believed that it would only be the large and financially stable organisation that could consider the type of skill-donation that we were after. The advertising agency with whom we work, CEBA São Paulo, responded positively directly after a showing of the audiovisual and offered services even before we could bring up the topic of our own limited financial resources.

The relationship with this firm has been extraordinarily happy and productive. In 1983, incidentally, it was voted "Advertising Agency of the Year" by the Brazilian Advertising Federation.

The advertisements and advertising material that CBBA has produced for the programme have been high quality. For what it is worth, they have been awarded several professional prizes for their work.

Perhaps even more important than professional inputs of this kind, was the cooperation we needed of media channels. What the programme obviously required was not small and casual time/space allotted when nothing else was available to fill empty minutes or square centimeters. We needed prime time exposure over Television and Radio, space in the most widely read and, therefore, most expensive publications.

To start with, the audiovisual and UNICEF's relations with TV Globo delivered! The organisation promised free time over a period of two years.

The campaign began in August 1982. In the first ten months of airing, just Rede Globo's GRPs (a measure of campaign weight and reach) were the equivalent of a medium-to-heavy campaign for a national brand of cigarettes. Nearly 80 percent of target group mothers in 15 cities had been exposed: some 6 million target group women each had a mean of 150 opportunities to see the campaign messages.

By mid-1983, Brazil's major TV and radio networks were all running programme material.

The value of just the TV time donated between August 1982 and May 1983 was something over US\$700,000. Radio and press space are not included. Nor are royalties which in the case of the stars performing in the television commercials would have amounted to US\$75,000. Cost of TV, radio and print production plus agency services (at normal market rates) is US\$280,000. The programme paid actual out-of-pocket costs totalling some US\$ 37,000.

The campaign is scheduled to last into 1984.

It is perhaps a shade too early to talk about the results of this campaign. The formal quantitative evaluation of programme effect is scheduled for later this year, or early 1984. However anecdotal straws in the wind suggest that the resources we generated were not in vain.

Doctors handling post-natal and outpatient clinics report more breastfeeding mothers and fewer feeding bottles on view, longer-duration nursing as well. The press, radio and TV are originating

their own material, more and more plentifully, with no prompting by immediate programme action. Actresses and social personalities, once shown with their new-born and a feeding bottle, now appear breastfeeding their babies when the media notice the event. Television recorded the captain of the national women's volleyball team on her reasons for taking her baby along for a match in Buenos Aires: breastfeeding was the main one. A leading manufacturer of lingerie asked for and got permission to feature the campaign theme in their advertising for a new brassiere adapted to the needs of nursing mothers.

Every one of the 26 States in which the programme is running have asked for copies of the mass media material.

The Globo telenovela has also begun to take note of the programme.

The telenovela is enormously powerful among the groups we most want to influence. The very widely watched serial currently on-air, "Louco Amor," ran an episode in which 3 or 4 minutes were devoted to a discussion between a protagonist and an antagonist on the key importance of breastfeeding for extended durations.

What am I in fact saying? I am suggesting:

✓ firstly, that our programme dollar is stretchable, and can be parlayed into more;

✓ secondly, that it is important to be confident of this and plan accordingly (this is not without its risks, but calculated risks are often sensible);

✓ thirdly, that a certain entrepreneurship may be unavoidable -- before the donors began to appear, the Breastfeeding Programme

invested in the production of mass media material which, at the time and against the funds then available, amounted to a hefty risk;



fourthly, that it is vital to be concrete and specific; resources must be sought for a particular action, within a particular programme; a specific type and level of contribution should be requested in kind, or money (in our case, we had already produced the material, which helped);

fifthly, that the action line must be clear and we must have a clear-cut role for those whom we happen to contact; we should not "leave it to you gentlemen to decide how you could help;"

sixthly, that it is vital to identify within an organization just who should be addressed, in what way and when;

seventhly, that we probably need to design the right message for each different audience -- messages that are all versions of the same basic platform;

eighthly, that it is important to "tend" our donors -- that is, we must feed them a service of information on how the programme is going, how their contribution is being used and with what effect; indeed, we should attempt to reward their efforts in whatever way is elegant and feasible: in our case, we had a prominent sculptor create a bronze award "for services in the cause of children" which we presented to the Head of Rede Globo, the Head of our Advertising Agency and the Head of INAN, the National Food and Nutrition Institute of the Ministry of Health which coordinates the Breastfeeding Programme; but first it went to the President of Brazil.

In a word, then, it is vital to select and then apply an agreed strategy as to target group, message and media to be used.

In 1984, we propose to address the following:

1. "The Two Brazils" -- in general, this would be the South of Brazil and the more affluent sectors of society everywhere. There might even be a chance of starting up Development Education within Brazil. Private industry and commerce, whom we have not addressed adequately so far (there already are private corporations and Chambers of Commerce that are working in some fields of social action). Within this sector we must include certain non-governmental organisations and GCO channels.
2. The media are an important cachê of resources -- conventional media, as well as the unconventional media like, for instance, house organs (which reach an audience of two million in Brazil), the publications of Ministries, Secretariats and other government agencies, etc.
3. "Associações de Classe" (professional bodies of doctors, professionals, scientists and trades unions) are also a useful source of donation to our sort of work.
4. Finally, of course, government organisations and agencies themselves.

The message will continue to be the kind that worked for us in the National Breastfeeding Programme: a mix of the appeals of the Brazilian Child and of the UNICEF image.

Specific products and instruments will be necessary. But perhaps most important is the incorporation into Country Strategy of resource mobilisation in a more planned way -- and the excitement of the chase, even in Brazil's worst economic phase in 20 years.

Gerson da Cunha
September 1983



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