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"Nairobi Feedback Relative to 'Communication Support to Projects" Memo dd 14 October 1977 with attachments sent by Bjorn Berndtson, Chief, PSC, to Michael Iskander, Africa Section, UNICEF

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Notes

Feedback from Nairobi concerning EXPRO 240, Programme Division's directive to the field, the role of advocacy, the need for follow up on promotional activities; several "communications persons" (proposed job-description attached) are needed who can assist UNICEF Representatives and Govt. staff to reach their target audiences.

Why's and how's of Training-Change-Agents; "Participatory Training for Development" by Kamla Bhasin ONLY COVER PAGE.

"Operational Communications for Planned Social Development. A Frame of Reference" by Bjorn Berndtson,

Print Name of Person Submit Image

Signature of Person Submit

Number of images without cover

SAROJA DOUGLAS

Saroja Douglas

18 pp



UNICEF

UNITED NATIONS CHILDREN'S FUND
FONDS DES NATIONS UNIES POUR L'ENFANCE

INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

TO: Mr. Michel Iskander
Africa Section

DATE: 14/10/77

FROM: Mr. B. Berndtson
Chief, PSC

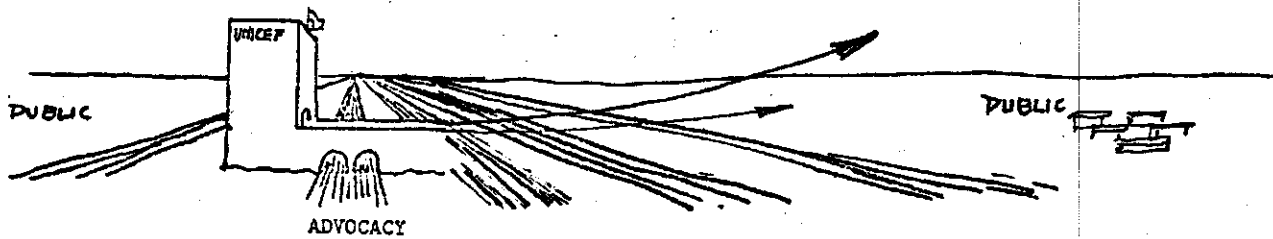
FILE NO.: BB/77/479

SUBJECT: Nairobi Feedback Relative to "Communications Support to Projects"

Strong feedback from the field is suggesting that the Programme Division's directive to the field (Expro 240) on "supportive communications" to government-assisted projects is too limited in scope.

The so-called PSC rationale and its stress on media utilization and the final "reach of audiences" is criticized. This limited scope and the directive is not sufficiently helpful to a UNICEF Representative who is overburdened with several other communications tasks. It is felt that there are many "communications bridges" to build before PSC activities can be supported, and why indeed should a communications specialist be earmarked just for 1/5 of the communications work to be done? It appears that help is sought in external and internal communications, oriented both to public information and operational information.

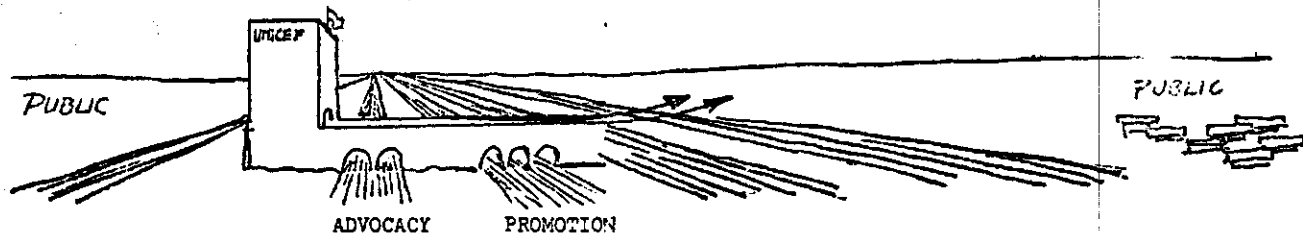
1. The first operational communications to be tackled is felt to be advocacy or the task of "pleading in behalf of children and youth."



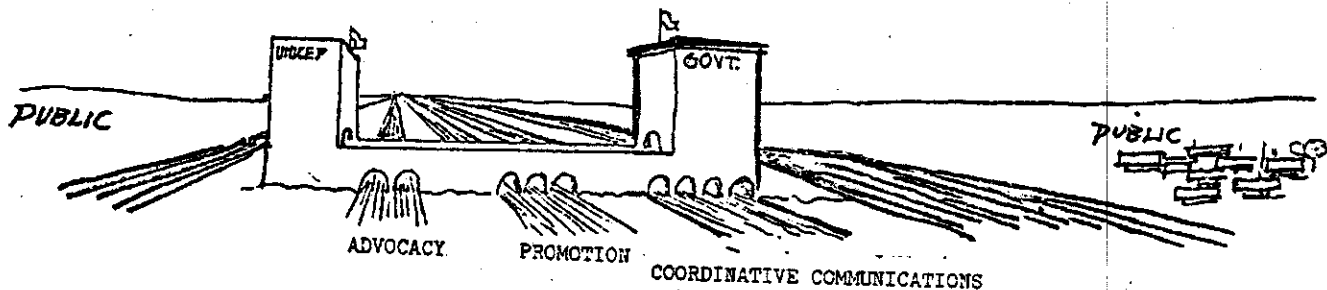
2. The advocacy messages, however, are by definition too general and not specific enough to lead to desired collaboration. Therefore, promotional activities must be undertaken as a second phase. Such specific messages



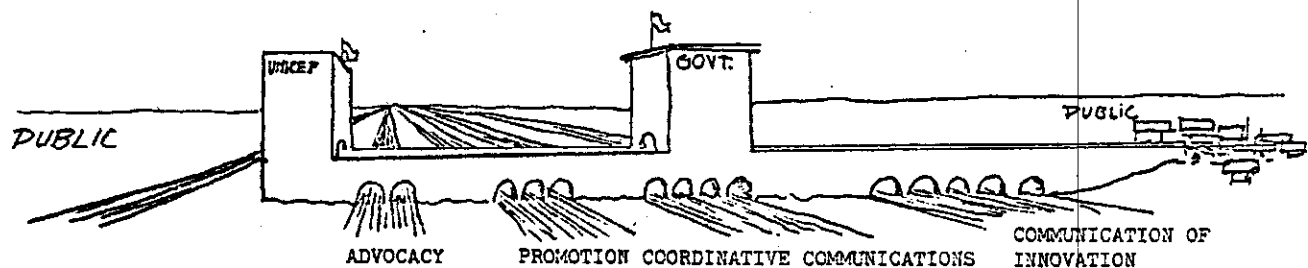
concerning nutrition, basic education, immunization, water, etc. are directed towards national leaders who have a responsibility in these areas and might use UNICEF resources in our innovative way.



3. In a third phase, promotional activities must be followed up by additional valid and reliable documentation on which both parties can base project and programme negotiations. This is done through coordinative communications.

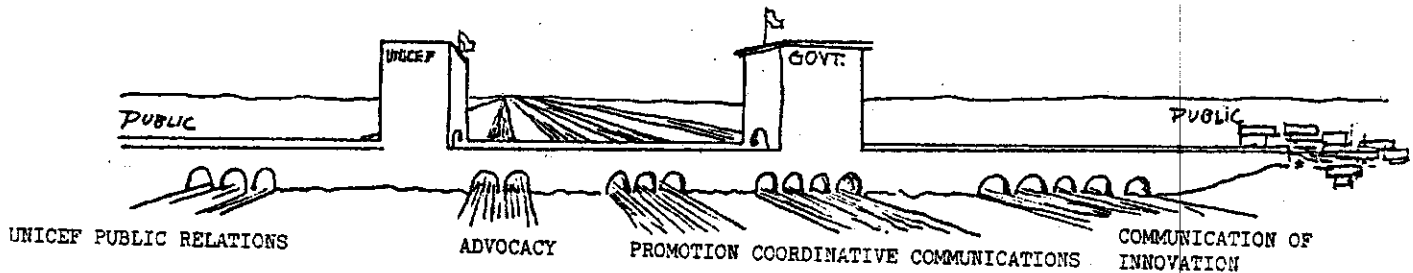


4. When successful, coordinative communications lead to plans of operation which often contain a communication element to make transfer of innovations to target audiences possible. Thus, the fourth phase involves planning and project support communications activities. This is the "PSC" phase.





5. The UNICEF Representative must also concern himself with a fifth type of communication. He has to provide the public with information about UNICEF, both in the country where he works and via Headquarters for international usage. This is over and above the earlier described four phases of operational communications which are part of the Representative's social development work.



A high percentage of UNICEF Representatives consider it important to have one or several "communications persons" on their staff who would not only assist them, but who could also assist the government project staff to reach their target audiences.

... All are quite specific as to what a country "Communications and Information Officer" is expected to do. Find attached a job description which has been worked out with the collaboration of the Representative for Nepal and Bhutan.

Please note that the functional title is not "PSC Officer" but "Communications and Information Officer," which would more adequately cover the total job to be done.

We should, however, not lose track of our final objective: to assist governments in their tasks to bring about social change.

Thus, one of the top priorities is to bring forward appropriate social innovations-- another is to communicate these innovations to the selected target audiences. Such social communications or project support communications priorities must still remain on top of the list and be given needed attention and support.

It is the type of communications or interaction which takes place between a group of villagers and a government official. It is vitally important that UNICEF request



- 4 -

governments to support the training of their change agents, for example in group dynamics. Similarly, strong support should be given to schemes which train village leaders enabling them to participate (communicate) as equal partners in the village development process.

We must not forget that effective community participation is a result of successful communication between two uneven parties who have learned to understand each other's ways and means.

In this connection, may I draw your attention to the recent publication "Participatory Training For Development" by Kamla Bhasin which might be stimulating reading for programme officers who wish to arrange e.g. group dynamics and leadership training courses (see enclosure).

Our communications officers in their various regions could be of increased assistance. Headquarters has put means at the disposal of Regional Directors to bring out these communications aspects during regular staff meetings and through special communications workshops. The East African Region has been particularly active in this respect.

During my recent visit to Nairobi we also discussed a number of issues which relate to communications aspects and which constitute a frame of reference for future discussion and concern.

See attached note "Operational Communications for Planned Social Development, A Frame of Reference."

cc: Mr. J. Ling
Mr. R. Eckert
Mr. Mr. U. Krueger
Mr. T. Glan Davies
Mr. H. Kuloy

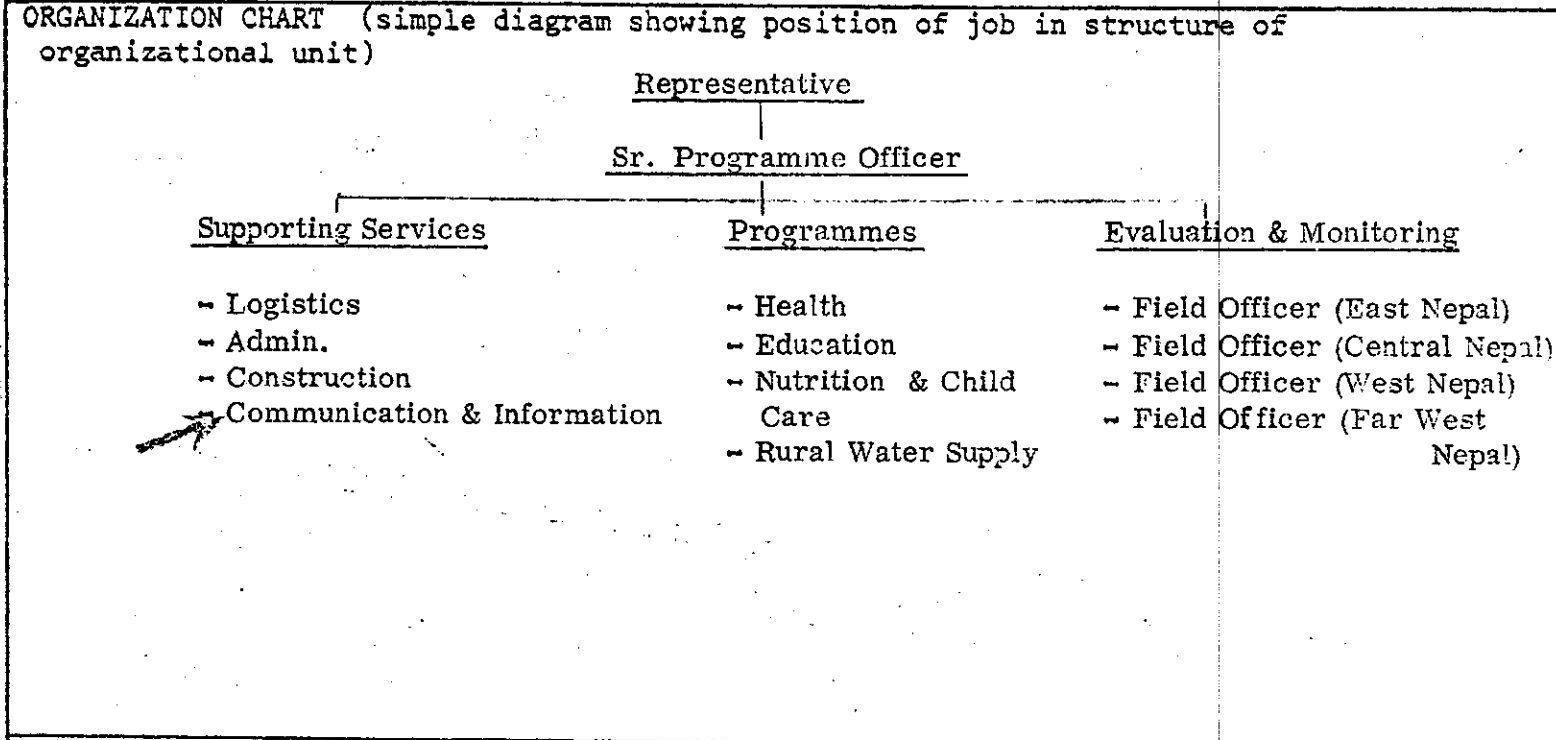
UNICEF JOB DESCRIPTION

<p>JOB TITLE</p> <p>Communications and Information Officer</p>	<p>JOB LEVEL</p> <p>P2 (steps) P3</p>	<p>DATE PREPARED</p> <p>September 1977</p>
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<p>ORGANIZATIONAL UNIT</p> <p>UNICEF Kathmandu (South Central Asia Region)</p>	<p>LOCATION</p> <p>Kathmandu, Nepal</p>
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PURPOSE OF THE JOB

To assist the Representative in his information and communications tasks. (Public information, public relations and operational communications)



MAJOR DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES (please list, if possible, in descending order of importance)

1. Duties
 - 1.1 In general, the Communications and Information Officer will assist the Representative and his staff in matters relative to internal and external communications and information.
2. Special duties: PSC Communications
 - 2.1 Planning
During the planning of health, education, water and other projects, assist the programme staff with the communications components.

MAJOR DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES (continued)

2.2 This entails keeping the communications inventory up to date, informing about changes in the field of equipment and supplies, etc.

2.3 The Communications and Information Officer will assist the Programme Officer in identifying communications problems which may require resolution during the course of a project. He will assist in programming strategies to deal with these problems.

3. Implementation

3.1 During project implementation phases assist with communications training, demonstration, prototype production and distribution. Channels to be utilized include both interpersonal and mass media channels in particular radio, print and film.

3.2 When a plan of operation calls for it, supervise (train, demonstrate and stimulate) and take part in all production phases and distribute or arrange for diffusion of media material.

4. Research

4.1 Assistance with pre-testing and other research tasks as required. For example, new benchmark data may be required. Assistance in monitoring and evaluation is part of the job.

5. Miscellaneous duties

5.1 Upon the request of Government officials, demonstrate and provide expertise in regard to use of innovative media as part of project preparation for example, Super-8, but also simple educational technology based on local resources and suitable for Nepal.

5.2 Assist in testing of equipment as part of UNICEF's effort to standardize global communications hardware and software. Using the UNICEF office's basic stock of communications material, the Communications and Information Officer will do the prototype production ^{using} (both hardware and software) necessary to demonstrate the importance of PSC to those projects which do not incorporate communications systems.

5.3 The Communications and Information Officer will liaise with other UN and bilateral agencies in regard to UNICEF's collaboration and coordination in projects where communications elements exist.

6. Specific duties: operational communications (excluding PSC)

6.1 Advocacy

The Communications and Information Officer will assist the representative in his advocacy task to make the general public and the leadership aware of the needs of children and to help to create a demand for better services and care of children.

6.2 Promotion of specific activities

The Communications and Information Officer will assist the Representative in his efforts to promote action in certain specific areas where the need is prominent. This may include providing national leaders with in depth information concerning problems, opportunities which exist in solving these problems, and informing them about the role UNICEF could play.

6.3 Coordinative communications

The Communications and Information Officer will assist the Representative in his effort to prepare documentation which would lead to negotiations and project preparation *particularly* in the area of PSC.

7. Specific duties: Public Information and Public Relations and fundraising

7.1 Public Information and Public Relations

The Communications and Information Officer will assist the Representative in his duty to inform the public about UNICEF, its global role and its activities in Nepal.

7.2 Fundraising and greeting cards

The Communications and Information Officer will assist the Representative in the sale of greeting cards and in other fundraising activities.

REPORTS TO (Please indicate job to which this position reports and the general nature of the supervision - e.g. "under supervision of the Programme Officer who provides general guidance only on matters affecting policy or of a precedent nature")

Reports to the UNICEF Representative or his designate.

SUPERVISORY RESPONSIBILITY (List all positions by job title which report directly to the position holder. In addition state total number of employees supervised)

None in the UNICEF office; at present, but may assume supervisory responsibility in relation to external production tasks. Should a Junior Professional Officer (sponsored staff) be posted at UNICEF Nepal for the International Year of the Child (IYC), the CIO will assume outline supervisory responsibilities for the JPO.

PERSONAL CONTACTS

A. INTERNAL (Indicate those persons by job title within the organization with whom there is regular contact in order for the job to be accomplished and show degree of contact by marking against each position listed FREQUENT or OCCASIONAL)

UNICEF Representative and all staff - frequent.

B. EXTERNAL (If job involves regular contacts outside the organization please indicate the type, level and frequency of the contacts - show frequency by using FREQUENT or OCCASIONAL)

All national and international officers in work contact with UNICEF. Visiting people; press missions, HQ contacts.

WORKING CONDITIONS (Does the job involve frequent travelling or unusual conditions or is it a normal office-based job)

JOB STATISTICS for finances, budgets or fixed assets (including plant and materials) State approximate \$ value.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS ESSENTIAL TO THIS JOB

Education : University degree, BA or an equivalent diploma providing the necessary general education background for skill training in applied communications.

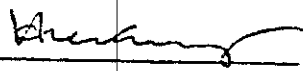
Languages : English, Nepali or Hindi an advantage.

Specialized Training : Courses in communications planning, effect of mass media or equivalent, or or Courses in production for media planning, development of media material (journalism, use of advertising in marketing, public relations), or Courses in media research or equivalent

Experience : Experience in one or more of the following:
- work in a mass media related organization, in an organization involved in adult education or in educational communications and technology,
- in supervision, communications planning, implementation and applied communications research.
- in one of the following media: press (print), radio, television, film and "audio-visual".
- maintenance and some repair of common equipment used in communications work.
- Proven skill in inter-personal communication is necessary since the candidate will interact with a number of national and international officers from all levels.

PREPARED BY: _____
Name

Job Title

APPROVED BY: 
Name

H. K. KULOY
UNICEF Representative

Job Title

Training Change-Agents - Why and How?

All the participants of the RCAP were involved in conducting or assisting in training programmes either for change agents/extension workers or for farmers (including youth and women) in their respective countries. As part of the RCAP, visits were made to organisations having training as their main or atleast one of their activities.

Most of the government and non-government organisations that were visited during the programme provided some kind of pre-service training to their workers. In some cases the training was of a 'non-formal' type, which was carried out on the job in the style of apprenticeship while in other cases there were more formally organised training courses ranging between one to nine months in duration. Generally the scope of these training courses covered the following:-

- the particular organisation's history/philosophy of work and activities;
- the role expected from the trainees after completion of their training;
- the socio-economic conditions of the people and communities with whom they will be working;
- technical skills in agriculture, animal husbandry, poultry, small scale irrigation, etc.
- the necessary administrative tasks required by the organisation.

Some organisations also provided basic courses in conducting social surveys, leadership training and communication programmes.

Regular visits to villages was a part of some of the training programmes. Attempts were made to learn about the village communities, their problems; and the responses and reactions of the trainees themselves to what they saw and felt in the villages.

One of the organisation's visited had religious instruction as a part of the training it offered.

Physical labour (agricultural work) was included in the daily routine of two of the training programmes. (Both these were extra-governmental organisations). The trainees learnt about agriculture as well as engaged themselves in productive labour. Both these courses were held in rural areas, although the institutions were housed at some distance from the local communities. One of these organisations had very simple housing for the trainees and staff; simple but functional huts made out of bamboo. The huts which had been constructed by a group of trainees themselves reflected the spirit of simplicity which was in keeping with the proclaimed ideals of the organisation. This was indeed an inspiring visit for the RCAP participants.

Another organisation had however, built itself rather expensive and 'urban' looking quarters which did not quite suit the rural atmosphere. These buildings made it difficult for others to believe that the organisation was trying to foster simplicity and self-reliance among the village folk. (It soon transpired that large doses of foreign funds for rural development had found their way into these 'unrural' structures!)

A weakness of most training programmes was seen to be the lack of participation of the trainees in planning and running the training. Certain organisations had indeed started using terms like "dialogical and participatory approach" and non-directive" training. But the maximum they did about these concepts was to organise lectures on them; the concepts themselves remained 'academic show-pieces'.

The lecture method was still quite common. The higher the position of the person delivering the lecture the less discussion there was. Out of 'respect' for the speaker no one usually dared to ask questions.

During discussions between the staff and trainees of these organisations and the RCAP participants, it was the bosses who did most of the talking. The trainees and junior staff members only gave their silent affirmations to what their senior colleagues were saying by making appropriate gestures.

It was found that content-wise, most training programmes avoided dealing with vital questions such as the social economic and political power structures in a country or an analysis of the causes of poverty and injustice. Even when such issues were included for discussion, they were handled in a way that succeeded more in camouflaging than presenting the real picture. Such programmes failed to make change agents critically aware of the realities or to enthuse them to be innovative and creative. Whether this 'silence' about these so called 'sensitive' issues was maintained to avoid trouble or whether the organisers of these programmes did not see the need to tackle these issues could not always be ascertained. That this 'silence' fails to prepare change agents for the realities they would face during their work was, however, recognised.

On the basis of the field visits and exchange of experiences and ideas about training, a comparison was made of the different approaches to training; there was reflection on the *need* for training, suitable methodology of training as well as on the contents of training. The following conclusions about training were arrived at:-

-- Training is necessary for change agents.

Qualities like enthusiasm, the desire to do good and other noble/charitable intentions are not enough for making change agents effective in their work. Good intentions and altruism need to be backed up by other skills and knowledge. Before change agents can be in a position to influence the life pattern of local communities, they have to be well versed in local customs, beliefs, the history, geography and also politics of the community or communities they work with.

Sometimes there are very good reasons for what is disparagingly analysed as 'local apathy', 'resistance to change', etc. These local responses to outside ideas must be understood in terms of the local situation and not through terms of reference that are far removed from the 'soil of the people'.

Thus in addition to the technical competence change agents might possess in agriculture, health, village technology, etc., it is equally important that they possess adequate *social skills*. Social skills are concerned with communicating with people and working with them.

The training in *social skills* of change agents is often neglected in training programmes. Even when these skills are included in the training they are handled in an academic rather than in a practical or experiential manner.

It was the training in these 'invisible' *social skills* that was emphasized during the RCAP.

-- Training should be organised in a way which brings out the best in change-agents. The 'trainees' should take part in the running of the training programmes so that they can learn by doing. They should identify their own training needs through an open and intensive exchange of experiences. They should select their own subjects or issues for discussion and decide how, where, when to discuss these issues.

The best way to teach about 'bottom-up planning', people's participation and decentralisation is by practicing these very ideas in a training programme. If training is top-down, rigid, paternalistic, the change agents will learn the same attitudes. To bring out creative and innovative qualities in them, trainees should be given the maximum responsibility possible. A good principle to follow is - "Every one rises up to the expectations of a task he/she is entrusted with".

-- Emphasis should be on dialogue and discussion rather than on lectures.

-- Training should be so structured that maximum use is made of situations and experiences as learning opportunities. The training programme should take the local community as its frame of reference and not be dependent on 'imported' theories.

-- Those who are responsible for organising training programmes for change agents should preferably have had some field level experience themselves. As far as the contents of training are concerned it was felt the emphasis should be on human relations and how to work with people.

-- Structural analysis of the society one lives in and awareness of the interplay of political forces at the local, national and international level should be a part of the training. This should not become an academic exercise imposed from above but evolve out of actual experiences of the participants. The discussions should be flexible and open-ended to enable concrete micro issues to be analysed to their logical conclusion.

-- Training should create respect for and faith in the wisdom of the masses.

-- Since, change agents are required to train others they should also be provided some training in 'training' others.

— It should provide change agents with skills to write about their experiences and ideas. Very little has been recorded about the process of change, about day to day problems and improvised ways of solving problems at field level. Such writing is of fundamental importance for communication between field level workers and decision makers at different levels.

— Community singing should be a part of the training, as it can be an effective means of identification with the people and creation of a community spirit. (The participants were impressed by this aspect of the training in the Motivator Training Centre of the Indonesian Council of Churches).

As far as possible, training programmes should not exclude women, for they need to be especially encouraged to take on the role of change agents. Every society has its own code of conduct for what women must or must not do in the life of the community. But after studying and understanding the role of women in a particular community, they should be brought into the process of change in a way that is locally acceptable. To do this, the role of women change agents can be invaluable. And if women are not stimulated into playing such a role, it can only be at the peril of ushering in lopsided development in which the gap between men and women is further widened.

It is significant that the participants emphasized the importance of training change agents in human relations, community organisation and structural analysis more than training in technical skills like agriculture, animal husbandry, etc. This emphasis was in accordance with the role of change agents as defined by the participants. Change agents had to act as facilitators and enablers. To perform this role they do not necessarily have to be experts in technical areas. After identifying the needs of the community, they can tap the technical expertise available in that area to meet those needs or arrange for the local people (or themselves) to be trained in the required skills.

— It is not necessary for a change agent to be trained as a repository of all relevant skills. There should be an attempt to diversify skills within the community so that the process of change may be internalised to the greatest possible extent. There is always the danger of change agents becoming indispensable on account of their special skills and access to information and resources. These tendencies may only be overcome if the local people are enabled to undergo training that makes them capable of becoming more self-reliant.

— Training should not be carried out in isolation from other development programmes. At least part of it should be conducted at the village level so that whatever is discussed emerges out of a real situation and the participants are able to draw their own conclusions on the basis of the facts around them.

It was realized that the technical training one receives in schools and universities is seldom helpful in village work. One of the participants who underwent a five year training in Nursing writes, "The only training I received before I worked in the rural area was my formal education to get a degree in Nursing. It was a training apart from the reality of the needs of majority of our people. About 90% of the clinical experience are all hospital based and only 10% is devoted to Community Health Nursing. The curriculum lacked the orientation that is necessary for the students to develop the awareness of the problems of our society. Rather, it focused on the problems of individual patients confined in the hospital. It was a training that prepared us to go abroad and work in a sophisticated hospital set-up"

(The same could probably be said for most training programmes which consider training to be merely a transmission of skills and knowledge; are predominantly technical in nature, are often isolated from other development programmes and are administered in a highly centralised manner).

She was so disgusted by the irrelevance of her own education that during one of the informal discussions she said - "At times I feel like suing my Nursing school for wasting 5 precious years of my life as well as for damaging my brain".

Participatory Training For Development

Kamla Bhasin

Report of the Freedom From Hunger Campaign/Action For Development

Regional Change Agents Programme

April - May, 1976

The opinions expressed in this report are those of the participants and the author, and do not in any way represent the views of FAO.

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Appendix III

OPERATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS FOR PLANNED SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
A FRAME OF REFERENCE

BY

BJÖRN BERNDTSON
CHIEF, PSCS
UNICEF, N.Y.

A Frame of Reference for Operational Communications
For Social Development: Ten Issues

1. Planned vs. Spontaneous Development.

Spontaneous Development can be defined as : (1) the haphazard modernization which takes place without the assistance of government services or (2) the ad-hoc type of modernization demanded by transitional communities where the people's needs have crystalized into a plan of action and where government support has been sought and provided with certain degree of success. All societies have such transitional rural communities where some type of demand emerges for a service which is both felt and needed.

Today, spontaneous social development emerging from within communities themselves is considered too slow and does not close the gap between the haves and the have-nots.

UNICEF is therefore concerned with the demand of member nations for assistance in planned development.

The many elements which determine the design of an efficient plan for social development are to be arranged in a variety of configurations and each member country must be considered separately. Only an in-depth study will determine UNICEF's opportunities to assist in any given country and will indicate what kinds of social innovations can be accepted, at what levels they may be introduced and at what pace the inevitable planned communication of knowledge can be expected to proceed.

2. Advocacy as distinct from Promotion.

The mandate given to UNICEF by all member states is to speak up in behalf of children and to proceed to assist in appropriate activities in behalf of needy children, mothers and youth. This assigned long-term advocacy role makes it a duty of UNICEF's Officers all over the world to help to bring to the people of developing nations a better knowledge of the special needs of children and mothers. Advocacy is the beginning and the first step of planned operational communications by UNICEF. It is the start towards planned social development.

As a next step, UNICEF will, as a matter of course, promote action in particularly deserving areas, this time amongst government officers and national leaders. Obviously such a promotional type of communications by UNICEF is in the nature of project preparation or, if the Government choses to participate, it can be a part of a project and, as such, an agreed upon part of a plan of operation. Promotion is a short-term, fairly intensive communication activity. It has a specific goal and is a planned communications activity.

3. Project Support Communications as distinct from Promotion.

Successful promotional activities do result in a behavioral change on the government level. A slide presentation or a publication may encourage national leaders to plan programmes compatible with the UNICEF mandate. At this point inter-organizational communication is strengthened and a foundation is laid for the planning of specific projects. These specific projects are intended to help transfer knowledge of a particular innovation. A plan of operation is decided upon and PSC begins. We have chosen to call this last step of UNICEF involvement in the communication process "Project Support Communications" or PSC because it is the direct application of communications skills in support of social development projects.

4. Funding for Social Development.

Funding is the first and the most basic prerequisite for the implementation of planned national development. It is an administrative and political issue of great sensitivity. The allotment of resources for strengthening social institutions and for facilitating their successful operation is the starting point for programme or project implementation. This step has been preceded by many months of planning, discussions and surveys. In some countries public opinion may have been the primary force behind the decision to fund one or several institutions. In other countries, leaders with insight into a particular aspect of development may have made their voices heard.

5. Popular Participation.

After funding, a second issue to consider during the planning stage of a project is to what degree the Government accepts rural and urban communities as partners in the development process. UNICEF is concerned with the fact that even planned development is often too slow, or even impossible, if a degree of community involvement is not assured. There are, of course, several reasons for this concern. Firstly, there are tremendous potential resources, especially human resources, which are presently underutilized. And secondly, community participation is the only practical way to tailor planned assistance to the needs of the people. Professional change agents with knowledge of local resources and conditions, play a vital role in securing the necessary participation in planning and implementation.

6. Appropriate Technology.

Any attempt to convince people that they should accept an innovation will fail if the innovation itself is not culturally or technologically suitable to the community. Testing and research to find acceptable alternatives to the innovation should have taken place during the project preparation. Obviously, if the proposed modernization is too costly, too sophisticated to be understood, or in any way involves machinery which is impossible to support and maintain, community participation in planning can not even begin, much less succeed.

7. Imported Models.

An underlying cultural and political issue is the difficulty of using or learning from models imported from other developing nations, and especially, from the developed world where the technology is unlikely to be appropriate.

8. Availability of Communications Organizations and Related Networks.

Operational communications can only be as effective as the communications organizations and the existing networks. The quality of advocacy, special promotion, organization communications and direct reach communications in the project area (PSC), will depend on the skill of the personnel, the technology used, the resources they have, and the time given.

UNICEF is concerned with supporting this communications process with the means necessary. Through the PSC services, reinforcement is provided to the aspect which brings helpful messages to the grass roots audiences in a project which we support.

9. Replication of the project.

Another planning issue for UNICEF is this: Can the project be replicated and incorporated into a long-term national programme? In preparing a project, it is important to carefully consider the financial and communications resources available to the national institution preparing the project. Will the institution be able to support the project as part of a large scale government programme?

10. The most debated Issue: Community Priorities and Tactical Support.

Can an innovation which relates to the Basic Service approach be brought into a rural community without upsetting the villager's priorities?

Strongly supported by UNICEF, the Basic Service Approach aims at providing mothers and children with those things which are essential to sustain life and health. Since the Basic Service innovations are found to be among the first priorities in literally every traditional rural community in the developing world, chances are that sufficient interest can be stimulated and planned participation can emerge.