

PSC Pamphlet Series No. 1

"WHAT IS PSC?"

A Draft

Nairobi,
January, 1974

UNICEF
PSC UNIT

All modern governments recognize the power of communications. They spend considerable sums on such media as radio and television and go to considerable trouble to publicize political and economic developments. A great deal of this official information work is devoted to "image-building" - persuading citizens in various walks of life that the government has their interests at heart, and is doing a good job. This is an important task: no government can function effectively without the trust of its people. But it is only a small part of the communication job that needs to be done to promote all those projects in various fields and sectors that the success of national development plans depends on. The concept of an information and communications system as a vital and necessary project support ingredient is just beginning to emerge in many developing countries.

Azania is a developing African country with about 90 per cent of its people living in rural areas. Its economy is heavily dependent on agricultural production. The government is worried about the increasing influx of young Standard VII school-leavers into urban areas. These young people hope to find jobs as clerks and office workers, but there is no work for them. What Azania needs is productive workers in rural areas and small towns, not unemployed city drifters.

As part of the Government's next five-year plan, the Ministry of Education works out an ambitious programme of educational reform. Primary education will not only be expanded to cover more children; it will be drastically revised to include, in addition to the "three R's", a number of basic subjects related to village community life. Secondary schooling, now largely academic, will be given a strong vocational bent. "Learning by doing" rather than learning by rote will be emphasized at all levels of instruction.

This identification of target groups is the answer to the question "who?" From this point on, the communications campaign must be as carefully planned as any other part of the project. The Ministry's communications people draw up a checklist:

Where are the various people they want to reach?

What do they want to communicate to each group? In short, what is the message.

How can they go about doing this? This involves the selection of appropriate media.

When should the different parts of the campaign be scheduled? In other words, timing.

The Ministry decided on a multi-media, phased campaign. The Government-controlled media - radio, television and the press - will be enlisted to herald the new education project with full publicity. Radio is the only medium that is really a mass medium in Azania. Television and the press only reach government officials and the more prosperous classes. Hence, television and newspaper material will be pitched at a more intellectual level than material prepared for radio.

The ministry also decides that it needs a variety of different communications aids to reach its specific target groups: a teacher orientation film, slide-sets, pamphlets, and sound-tapes. It also needs trained communicators. Accordingly, communications workshops are scheduled for school supervisors, and plans are made to provide them with portable audio-visual kits. Training courses for personnel at all levels are examined to make sure they include proper orientation sessions.

THE STAGES IN PROJECT SUPPORT COMMUNICATION

Development Project conceived in Sectoral Ministry.

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Communication specialists called in to assist the research appraisal and planning of the project.

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The project is drawn up, with sufficient staff and budgetary support to meet the communication needs of the project.

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As far in advance as possible, the PSC officer or unit established within the project begin detailed work designing and preparing necessary materials.

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Before the project starts, systematic use of communication materials prepares people for change.

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Communication materials, designed for specific groups, are released at each stage of the project.

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The PSC unit monitors the progress of the project, evaluates the relevance of the materials produced, and feeds information from the field back to the Ministry concerned.

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Communication materials are modified and new ones prepared in the light of this information.

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As the project enters the final stages, the PSC unit prepares a round-up evaluation of the effectiveness of the communication materials produced.

UNICEF PSC SERVICES

The UNICEF Regional Office in Nairobi has a small team of communication specialists ready and willing to help in the formulation and execution of communication support programmes. The UNICEF PSC Unit does have its own production facilities for communication materials, but these resources are to back-up and supplement the work of national PSC units. The UNICEF PSC facilities are available to help any UNICEF-assisted project in Eastern Africa.

The services the UNICEF PSC Unit provides are:

1. Programming: UNICEF PSC staff are available for missions to study the communications needs of proposed projects. After making their recommendations they can, if necessary, help in the selection of staff for the implementation of the PSC programme.
2. Production services: The UNICEF PSC Unit exists to make demonstration PSC materials, and is ready to help local PSC units if for one reason or another they are unable to do the work. The Unit has facilities for the production of radio programmes, black and white photos, colour slides, and 16 mm colour films. With the help of consultant graphic artists, the unit assists in the production of pamphlets and posters but these are usually best done locally.
3. Training service: From time to time the PSC Unit organizes workshops and short training courses for PSC workers in the region.
4. Information service: The Unit acts as a clearing house for information on PSC work in the region. A useful library of equipment information and relevant communication publications from around the world is maintained in Nairobi where it is available for consultation.

HOW TO GET IN TOUCH WITH THE UNICEF PSC UNIT

1. Contact your nearest UNICEF representative at the following addresses:

Kenya UNICEF Regional Director,
P.O. Box 44145,
NAIROBI, Kenya.

Tanzania UNICEF Programme Officer,
P.O. Box 4076,
DAR ES SALAAM, Tanzania

Uganda UNICEF Liaison Officer,
P.O. Box 7407,
KAMPALA, Uganda

Zambia) UNICEF Representative,
Malawi) P.O. Box 2810,
Lesotho) LUSAKA,
Swaziland) Zambia
Botswana)

Ethiopia UNICEF Representative,
P.O. Box 1169,
ADDIS ABABA, Ethiopia.

Somalia UNICEF Programme Officer,
c/o UNDP,
P.O. Box 24,
MOGADISCIO, Somalia

Burundi) UNICEF Liaison Officer,
Rwanda) c/o UNDP,
B.P. 1490,
BUJUMBURA, Burundi

Mauritius UNICEF Liaison Officer,
c/o UNDP,
P.O. Box 253,
PORT LOUIS, Mauritius

Madagascar UNICEF Liaison Officer,
c/o Ministry of Education,
P.O. Box 848,
TANANARIVE, Madagascar

Comoro Islands UNICEF Programme Officer,
P.O. Box 44145,
NAIROBI, Kenya

2. Or write direct to: PSC Unit,
Communication and Information Service,
UNICEF,
P.O. Box 44145,
NAIROBI, Kenya



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Notes

**The paper, "PSC Pamphlet Series No 1" was discussed during Part II of the workshop, "General considerations in project support communications"
It draws up an example of the implementation of UNICEF/PSC in an imaginary African country (Azania).**

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