

INTERNATIONAL INFORMATION WEEK 1980:

HEALTH EDUCATION BY TELEVISION AND RADIO WORKSHOP

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Communications (PSC) Service in UNICEF

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1. Preamble

More than 10 years ago UNICEF introduced systematic communication support for development programmes benefitting children. PSC is a process within planning, programming, implementation, monitoring and evaluation cycles which lead to or facilitate behavioural change. Social aspects and communication issues are among the most important components in this concept and process.

2. Concept and Process

In UNICEF the concept of PSC combines processes and techniques whose goal is to enable planners, technicians, implementers and communities to:-

- (a) Incorporate educational, social and psychological aspects/components into programmes benefitting children, so that behavioural change and some sort of self-reliance are facilitated by utilising interpersonal approaches, modern and popular cultural media, management communication and information linkages, etc.
- (b) Develop, produce, utilise and evaluate integrated programme support communications.
- (c) Assist project staff and members of the communities to "communicate" on the same wave-length so that both participate fully in the service and development programmes.

- (d) Sensitize Governments in developing countries to the problems and needs of children. PSC?
- (e) Assist Governments develop community-based media to promote and sustain community participation.
- (f) Improve programme communication and information systems and linkages.

3. Programmes

UNICEF's assistance to developing countries in this field includes training, production of training aids, graphic and audio visual materials on the subjects of child health, nutrition, water and sanitation, education, etc.. As UNICEF is now giving greater emphasis to the community participation element in programmes for children and mothers, assistance will go into group and inter-personal communication work and the training of extension workers.

Programmatic assistance specifically focuses on:-

- (a) Strengthening of PSC Services amongst Governments, particularly in the areas of programming, research, training etc., through the recruitment of PSC Officers and orientation of UNICEF and Government staff in the concept, function and practice of PSC. This is resulting in the integration of communication into assisted basic services for children.
- (b) Formulating PSC programmes as integral parts of assisted programmes.
- (c) Assisting Governments as part of the country programming exercise to carry out surveys on communications capabilities and facilities and studies of societal values, goals, etc.. Such surveys and studies are essential for programming community participation

activities and strategies; and formulating systems for improving communication linkages between the communities and field workers.

- (d) Providing advisory and consultancy services to Governments and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) through the PSC network.
- (e) Assisting national or recognized regional training institutions establish social communication courses and integrate them into their curricula.
  - Funding the training of communication trainers' needs for extension workers' schools.
  - Supporting project specific training and orientation programmes for serving field workers in UNICEF-assisted programmes and communication materials production personnel.
- (f) Assisting in the development of appropriate grass-roots PSC technologies, such as solar energy for powering community radio receivers, tape recorders, etc..
- (g) Providing communications equipment for national and sub-national communication units and community centres associated directly or indirectly with basic services for children.

#### 4. Resources

The first field Regional PSC Service was established in India (New Delhi Office) in 1972 followed by Beirut in 1973, Nairobi and New York in 1974, Bangkok and Lima (Area Office) in 1975, Abidjan in 1980.

At present, UNICEF employs seventeen PSC Officers in the developing countries who advise and assist Governments and UNICEF Programme Officers to include a communications component in UNICEF-assisted programmes,

and on the pre-operational research, formulation, implementation and evaluation of the communication sector of the programmes.

A small PSC unit is located at UNICEF Headquarters primarily to co-ordinate and promote the exchange of information and skills between Headquarters and Field Offices and between UNICEF and other agencies involved in PSC in developing countries. The service publishes a quarterly PSC Newsletter.

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