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The report overviews the PSC activities in UNICEF's projects in the West African countries from September 1980 to October 1981. The countries reviewed include, Central African Republic, Burkina Faso (Upper Volta), The Gambia. The report also discusses tapes, articles and photos produced by the WARO Office, and outlines proposed activities planned from the end of 1981 to 1983. The report ends with some recommendations.

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I. Introduction

This paper is the result of the mission to WARO/Abidjan of Dr. Jose C. Manduley, PSC-Officer, NYHQ, during 19-23 October 1981. M.Manduley is responsible for backstopping the PSC field Services for Central and West Africa, the Americas and the Eastern Mediterranean regions at UNICEF Headquarters. The content of the paper attempts to include what has been the impact of PSC in WARO countries since the Regional PSC Unit was set up in Abidjan in September 1980. At the beginning of the mission, M. Manduley met with M. Mwilambwe, Deputy Director,WARO, to explain the reasons for his visit to Abidjan. This meeting was very useful to obtain a general view and exchange of opinions about the role, need and involvement of PSC in current and future regional programmes. Thereafter, intensive discussions were held with Ms. Ute Deseniss, Regional PSC Officer and Ms. Anne-Marie Gaudras, Assistant Information/PSC Officer. These discussions were very useful to brief Dr.Manduley by providing him with inputs on current and future activities and thus informing HQ PSC Unit about the status of PSC programmes in the WARO Region.

II.CREATION OF THE FIRST REGIONAL PSC UNIT IN WARO

Since PSC is regarded as an important element within the UNICEF-assisted projects, in order to fully integrate the basic services and programming process, and to assure community participation, it was decided by the UNICEF's West and Central Africa Regional Office, WARO, to appoint a Regional PSC Officer in September 1980.

III.OVERVIEW OF PSC ACTIVITIES IN WARO COUNTRIES SEPT 1980-1981

a) At the initial stage the R-PSC-Officer concentrated mainly to become familiarized with the UNICEF programme, working methods and the administrative procedures in the WARO Region.

b) Gradually the PSC Unit has become operational in order to provide advisory services to programme officers in order to support their ongoing activities.

c) Some audio-visual media have been produced to support UNICEF activities.
ad a) Initially the WARO Regional Director decided to limit the PSC interventions to a few WARO countries in order to better demonstrate to other countries in the Region the role and usefulness of PSC activities in supporting country programmes.

As a result of the above decision one country from each of the area offices, except Brazzaville area office was selected to initiate and/or expand PSC generated activities. The reason the Brazzaville area was not included, was the upcoming recruitment of a PSC Officer there.

ad b) Subsequently advisory missions were undertaken by the Regional PSC Officer to the Central African Republic, Upper Volta and The Gambia.

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC (CAR)

CAR was chosen as some PSC activities had already been undertaken in the areas of pisciculture, community development, literacy, and EPI. Nevertheless, it was felt necessary by the Regional PSC Officer to advise the concerned Government departments in how to make better use of the existing UNICEF equipment and supplies in order to effect an integrated approach towards rural development.

Therefore a detailed progress report was written by the Regional PSC Officer making specific proposals to the Yaounde Area representative in how to achieve the above objectives.

As follow-up actions by the R-PSC-O it was recommended :

- 1 to hold discussions with relevant governmental officials of the various departments to agree on a concrete coordination work-plan for PSC material production;

-2 to increase the production capacity of the Community Development Department in order for the latter to become the main national resource and material production center;

-3 to explore ways how to make use of such a center as a regional training institute.

UPPER-VOLTA

An identification mission in Upper Volta was undertaken by the Regional PSC-Officer to get familiarized with existing and its future activities, and problems in implementing the latter.

The new UNICEF plan of Operation for 1982-1984, together with UNDP, envisage the setting up of 400 wells and to provide them with pumps. In order to assure ^{the} appropriate use and maintenance of the water, UNICEF makes it mandatory to include a sanitation component. The R-PSC-Officer has already started discussions with the National Centre of Health Education (Centre National d'Education Sanitaire) in view of the upcoming activities.

Another PSC activity which is underway in Upper Volta is the development of a booklet to be used by the operators (manipulateurs) of grinding mills provided by UNICEF to about 60 villages in the Central Eastern and Northern region of the country (Kaya, Koupela, Ouahigouya). After the completion of the study of the existing problem related to the proper functioning of the grinding mill, a final draft on the booklet will be developed in the next few months and is to be pre-tested in the beginning of 1982.

THE GAMBIA

During the period 1980-1983, UNICEF will assist the Community Development Department in setting up 20 rural day-care centres combined with women's training centres. The reason for the linkage of these two types of centres was to provide children with food, health care if necessary, early stimulation and educational facilities, while their mothers will receive training in gardening, health and nutrition education and in some-
generating craft-making

It was thus observed by the R-PSC-Officer that there is a dire need to provide support to the Community Development Assistant (CDA) who is in charge of the two respective centres. Even though the CDA's do receive a two-year training under the Community Development Training Centre, there appears to be a vacuum once they are deployed to the villages to run the day-care and women's training centres. It was suggested to make use of the radio medium as a means to disseminate in-service education/information designed to stimulate the work of the CDA's who are in charge of the day-care centres. In addition, the broadcast would also be geared to reach the children within the age group 4-8 so as to interest them at an early age about their environment, and to stimulate and/or improve their language skills.

However, the current political situation in The Gambia may affect the follow up of the above suggestions and the implementation of the overall UNICEF assistance to the country.

ad c) Some special material production to support/UNICEF programmes were developed by the Regional PSC-Officer.

1) BOOKLETS

A booklet on PHC was developed jointly with the Health Education Department of the Ministry of Health in Ghana, to inform the general

population on the current health situation in the World and in Ghana, making emphasis on the PHC programme as a strategy to overcome the health problems in Ghana.

Also, the earlier mentioned grinding-mill guide-book for proper utilization of the mill is being designed for several countries of the WARO-Region such as : Togo, Niger, Upper Volta and Senegal.

2) TAPES

An audio tape was produced to inform people about the work of the NGO's, "NAAM" and "SIX S", in Upper Volta, as an attempt to stop the rural exodus to neighbouring countries by the youth and by encouraging them to start income generating activities in agriculture. Another tape was produced to explain why UNICEF is concerned about "Appropriate Technology" for the benefit of women, for the use of WARO countries .

3) ARTICLES

An article was written on UNICEF's assistance towards the production of various PSC materials for the pisciculture project in Ivory Coast. One article was also written on the "NAAM" history, activities, objectives and actual working methods in Upper-Volta.

4) PHOTOS/SLIDES

Numerous photos and slides were taken on various UNICEF's projects in the WARO Region. A set of photos was prepared on "Appropriate Technology" to transform cereals into "couscous" for the exhibition of the TECHNO-VOLTA seminar organized by UNICEF in Upper Volta in October 1981.

PROPOSED ACTIVITY PLAN END 1981-83

In line with UNICEF's country approach, WARO's priorities are in child health services, clean water, nutrition education and the promotion of the situation of women.

Therefore, programme support communication activities will attempt to emphasize these efforts in complementing them, as the needs arises with educational/ ^{and} training methods, communication planning and advocacy inputs.

However, it would be appreciated if the PSC intervention would not remain limited to special activities for supporting programmes which are already under way of being executed, but also to become more and more involved in the regular programming process of UNICEF projects and their evaluation in the region.

For the time being, it can be envisaged that the R-PSC-Officer will undertake and be associated mainly with the following activities:

END-1981

- Preparation for the appointment of the PSC-Officer in the Brazzaville Area Office;
- Development of PSC inputs to the Liberian recommendation 1982-85

1982

Production of PSC Material

- Upper-Volta: Pretesting and Finalisation of the grinding mill guide book.
- Niger: Production of PSC Material for the village and school pharmacies, study of the milieu, pretesting, finalisation.
- Upper-Volta: Conception of PSC-Material to support the sanitation campaign.

Workshops

- Benin : workshops on water and sanitation.
- Bangkok: Global PSC/INFO workshop, Elaboration of a case study.
- WARO: Regional staff Conference

Advisory Missions

- Follow-up missions to RCA and The Gambia (?) and others as the needs arise.

Programming

-Development of PSC inputs for UNICEF recommendation.

Evaluation

-Association of the PSC adviser in the process of country programme evaluation

1983

-Development of a reference guide for PSC material production in the WARO region to support UNICEF projects.

-West and Central African workshop for PSC staff and programme officers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

This section on conclusions and recommendations was finalized by Dr. Manduley after discussions with the Regional PSC-Officer and the Assistant Information/PSC Officer at UNICEF WARO, after studying the progress reports by the R-PSC-0 on her several missions, and after perusing over PSC-generated materials which have been produced in the WARO Region and by the Regional PSC Unit in order to support UNICEF programmes.

1. The initial decision to launch PSC programmes in selected WARO countries was certainly very well conceived. Moreover, it is this writer's contention that the R-PSC-Officer has become familiarized with the UNICEF's programmes, operations, and procedures, which would allow to expand assistance on PSC to other countries in the region, as well as to intensify the efforts made on the already generated activities.

For this matter, it is hereby recommended: that the R-PSC-Officer becomes more involved in the planning, implementation and Evaluation of PSC programmes in other countries of the Region in order to better promote the use of PSC into the programming process within UNICEF.

2. The R-PSC-Officer has made use of her missions and contacts in the region to collect existing PSC related material, to identify existing resources and materials productions units which may prove beneficial to be used by other countries in the region.

It is hereby recommended that the R-PSC-Officer continue her efforts in order to gradually set up a regional PSC knowledge network and clearing house of existing resources materials and facilities.

3. There exists a need to increase a better co-ordination between the PSC/NYHQ and R-PSC-Unit/WARO. Recently, a PSC Officer was posted in New York to provide backstopping services to field programmes in Central and West Africa, the Americas and the Eastern Mediterranean. The reason for this was to provide more collaboration and exchange of information in the area of PSC with these regions.

Thus, it is hereby recommended that in the future the PSCS/NYHQ be kept informed of all PSC activities and related programme supports action which originate in the WARO countries. This information and any material produced should be systematically sent to New York. On the other hand, the PSCS/NYHQ would maintain the R-PSC-Unit/WARO informed of relevant PSC global activities which could be of benefit to the region as a whole as well as to provide adequate backstopping services to WARO whenever the need arises.

4. It is already been seen that many of the countries within WARO place much importance on the development of software materials in order to train staff, to inform villagers about the use and maintenance of grinding mills, to train villagers of how to build and maintain fish ponds in a pisciculture project and other relevant programmes.

It is this writer's opinion that the development of software material, either audio and/or visual, ought to be continued as the Regional PSC programme expands.

However, it is hereby recommended that the Regional PSC Officer should be systematically kept informed at all times of regional/country priorities and programme actions taken to ensure proper pre-testing and if possible post-testing of the software materials before producing them at a mass scale.

5. International, bilateral organizations and country national departments, as well as NGO's have for some time been involved in PSC-related programmes and training activities within WARO. It is possible that many of these activities may be of much benefit to the UNICEF PSC programme within WARO.

For this matter, it is hereby recommended that a closer co-operation continue to be made by the R-PSC-Officer with these agencies and organizations in order to avoid duplication of efforts and perhaps to decrease financial expenditures on specific activities which could be achieved on a joint basis.

6. In order to make key PSC documents, background papers, newsletters more useful to the WARO region it is recommended that PSC/S/NYHQ tries by all means to issue them, in addition to English, in French and Portuguese too.