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Notes

6 pp.

The document seems to be a part of a project proposal for a communications component of the Small Farmer Development Project (SFDP). It elaborates the importance of communications, and how one might communicate with farmers in Nepal. A participatory radio programme is foreseen, giving messages of health care, nutrition and other UNICEF concerns. A budget is included project costs from 1982 thru 1986.

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SAROJA DOUGLAS

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PROJECT SUPPORT COMMUNICATIONIntroduction

Among Nepal's many ethnic groups, castes, communities and families, there are a great variety of customs, attitudes and traditions. Communities differ greatly in their ways of adapting to changes in the traditional patterns of village life. In order for development activities to be fully understood by a community, the process must either originate or be created in the minds of the villagers.

Working in groups to overcome economic hardships, those families associated with the Small Farmer Development Project develop their ability to visualise present and future situations — to see where they are, where they want to go and what steps they will take to get there.

Because communication is essential to this process of social development and people's participation in the delivery of services to children, a clear communication plan and a sustained communication effort is anticipated in the design of the proposed project.

This plan will build upon the assistance to be provided by IFAD for basic training courses in planning, communications, book-keeping and agricultural methods. UNICEF will assist in the development of curricula and teaching aids for courses designed for all SF Group Organisers, group leaders and members, as well as ADBN and line department officials. Special emphasis will be placed on communications for group formation, health, education and child care.

It is proposed that UNICEF concentrate on (1) strengthening the linkages of SFDP with health and social services and (2) developing the message design capability of government communication units co-operating with SFDP.

Working with the Group Organizer as a 'change agent', UNICEF will assist groups to understand and appreciate the basic needs of children in the areas of health, nutrition, education, sanitation and water supply. Slowly, at a pace set separately by each group, small farmers and their families will be encouraged to make the connections between food production and child nutrition, between safe water supplies and child health, between poor excreta disposal and diarrhoeal diseases. For this purpose, UNICEF will support group training sessions based on discussions and demonstrations. As they increase their productivity, small farmers, especially those who are women, will have the economic and educational opportunities to provide a better life for their children.

Several major constraints must be overcome to facilitate communication among the small farmers and to provide services they may need.

A recent survey of communication units supported by UNICEF showed that those units are not well linked to the project they serve^{1/}. Their effectiveness is also hampered by enormous physical and educational barriers to communication. Roads are few (4,700km.), often impassable, and are concentrated in the plains in an east-west direction. The majority of Nepal's population live in almost inaccessible hilly areas which can only be reached by many days of walking over difficult terrain. This situation is exacerbated during the monsoon months and when high passes are blocked with snow.

Publications in Nepal have very limited coverage. The circulation of the country's largest newspaper is only 25,000. Literacy is so low (19.3 overall, 3.6% among women) that the printed word can not be relied upon to reach those who need information most of all. Even photographs and drawings are not well understood by many Nepalis who have little or no experience in viewing pictures^{2/}.

One medium which may reach approximately 50% of the population is radio^{3/}. Almost all radio owners listen to the news and the agriculture programme between 7-8 p.m. Typically, five or six farmers gather to listen to those broadcasts together. Reception is adequate, except in parts of the central terai and the far western hills^{4/}. Unfortunately, low-income families such as those of the SFDP are not likely to own a radio. Under the proposed project, established SF groups which have repaid their first few ADB loans will be given a radio to be kept by the group leader and used for group listening. Altogether, 450 to 600 groups are expected to meet the criterion during 1982-86 and will be supplied with a UNICEF radio. They will be expected to supply batteries from the group savings. A survey by USAID has shown that radio batteries are available throughout Nepal at reasonable prices (approximately US \$1.50 for 300 hours playing time)^{5/}.

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- ^{1/} Source: Strengthening Communication and Health Education Services in Nepal - Jason Calhoun, UNICEF Consultant, 1981.
- ^{2/} Source: Communicating with Pictures in Nepal, 1976.
- ^{3/} Source: Report on the Pilot Census, Central Bureau of Statistics, 1980.
- ^{4/} Source: Radio Listening Patterns in Nepal, New ERA, 1974 and Research Report No: 41, Summary Report on Radio Reception in Nepal, USAID, June 1981.
- ^{5/} Source: Research Report No: 21, "Comparison of Costs per hour of Various Brands of Dry Cells for Radio Reception Six Hours per Week in Nepal, USAID, 1980.

Objectives

The Project Support Communications component is fully integrated into the planning, implementation and evaluation phases of the project. The objectives of the component are:

- to facilitate the exchange of experiences among small farmer groups
- to systematically develop training materials for Small Farmers reinforced by radio messages, both of which use change in behaviour as a measure of effectiveness
- to carry out a national child health education campaign targeted to low-income families and based on the characteristics of SF families.

Proposed Project Activities

Travelling Farmer Radio Programme

While farmer-to-farmer exchanges seem to be the most effective means of communication between SFDP groups in Nepal, participatory radio programming can accelerate and extend this exchange. A training course for bee-keepers, for example, includes a visit to a group which has already been trained and which is getting its first honey. Radio interviews with members of each group can bring this experience to a much wider audience.

Through radio, small farmers can share ideas over greater distances and, at the same time, keep local, district, and central officials up to date on group activities and opportunities. In effect, the travelling farmer would supplement the very popular Agriculture and Banking News programmes with local colour and coverage. Reinforcing regular coordinating committee meetings supported by IFAD, a "Travelling Farmer" programme may make it easier for line ministries to plan and support delivery of services.

It is proposed that UNICEF assist the Agriculture Information Section of the Dept. of Agriculture to produce a weekly "Travelling Farmer" programme. The Travelling Farmer will visit and describe the social aspects of various programmes for small farmers in different parts of the country, inviting farmers to enter into a question and answer dialogue with water supply personnel, health officials, etc. as would never be possible in real life.

Radio Drama and Short Messages

Just before the evening news, Radio Nepal will present a 15-minute drama based on the life of a young woman in an SF family. Messages on maternal and child nutrition, improved agricultural techniques, sanitation, family planning, immunisation, etc. will be woven into the radio drama.

The theme of each drama will be reinforced by a child care spot or jingle. A few selected radio spots will be repeated frequently during commercial news time and within other popular programmes such as the Villagers' Programme and the Women's Programme.

Whereas the purpose of the drama is to increase general awareness of public health concepts, the radio spots are intended to encourage change in specific child care practices.

IMPACT STUDY - EXPERIMENTAL DESIGN

- Determine evaluation tool
 - Select sample - test and control
 - Design and test questionnaire
 - Conduct interviews
- Stage I: Baseline Survey
 Data Analysis
 Pre-Test Messages and Begin Broadcasts
- Stage II: After 2 months of broadcast
 Data Analysis
 Revise messages
- Stage III: After 12 months (Stage III)
- Final Data Analysis comparing Stage I and III results

Community profiles and surveys of available foods and existing child care practices will be carried out by a local researcher as part of the Local Planning Studies component. A radio producer will collect material — characters, situations etc. — from these planning study visits. Radio scripts will be prepared by experienced writers at Radio Nepal and produced in its Kathmandu studio.

Message development and scripts will be guided by field research as well as by the Nutrition Cell which will be responsible for co-ordinating with representatives of the Community Health Integration Project, Food Research Laboratory Health Education Section and the Local Development Ministry's Women's Cell and Women's Affairs Training Centres. All these agencies have field workers who will use training materials developed from this research. The Nutrition Cell will receive UNICEF assistance for this project.

After two months of broadcast, the radio child care messages will be tested Stage II with some of the same respondents included in the baseline survey. After one year of broadcast, Stage III of this longitudinal study will be conducted to determine the impact of the radio messages on specific child care practices of the test group and control group families.

Proposed Plan for Child Care Radio Spots

	Stage I	Stage II	Stage III
	Baseline Study	After 2 months of broadcast	After one year of broadcast
Sample Size	400 completed interviews (260 Terai/140 hills)	100 completed interviews	400
Test area	300 (200 Terai 100 hills)	75 completed interviews	300
Control area	100 (50 Terai 50 hills)	25	100
Community Workers (Test Area only)	50	50	50

Qualified respondents are women who are 30 years or younger, or any age and pregnant or any age and mother of a child 12 months or younger.

Design and Development of Printed Training Materials

The SFDP has so far based its communication network on direct, "farmer-to-farmer" exchanges, both within and between groups.

When a group decides to learn more about a particular field — veterinary care, for example — either trainers from the line ministries are brought to the group sites or a group member is chosen to go for special training. The chosen member is expected to bring new knowledge back to the group. Training is well grounded in practical activities, and the trainers claim to learn as much from the farmers as the farmers learn from them. There is a need, however, for printed training materials which can be used in the villages.

UNICEF will assist the Adult Education Division, Ministry of Education to develop printed training materials for the social services sector. UNICEF will also assist the Health Education Section, Department of Health, to design and produce materials especially for water technicians, sanitarians and Community Health Leaders of the SFDP. Assistance will be provided in the form of message design training, local consultancies, paper and other production materials.

Modified cartoons or "fotonovella" booklets will be used for health education and other training. Some of the same characters created for the radio drama will appear in the booklets so that radio programming and extension materials will reinforce one another.

Coverage

The entire communication component of the SFDP is expected to affect some thirty thousand children of UNICEF/IFAD-assisted small farmer families. An additional three million children may be beneficiaries through the long-term effect of the national mass media campaign. In other countries, such as Nicaragua and the Philippines, radio messages alone, without village demonstrations or training materials, have been shown to change specific child care behaviours within two years of frequent broadcasting.

	<u>1982/83</u>	<u>1983/84</u>	<u>1984/85</u>	<u>1985/86</u>	<u>Total</u>
Cost of Radios*	\$6,700	\$3,700	\$3,000	-	\$13,400
Travelling Farmer	\$2,800	\$2,500	\$2,800	\$2,900	\$11,000
Message Design, Revision and Evaluation	\$8,000	\$8,400	\$8,800	\$8,800	\$34,000
Radio Drama and Child Care Spots (Production, revision and broad- cast)	\$9,400	\$10,400	\$11,000	\$12,000	\$42,800
Training Materials Materials Develop- ment and Production (including consultancy 3 months per year for 3 years)	\$10,000	\$12,000	\$14,000	-	\$36,000
	\$36,900	\$37,000	\$39,600	\$23,700	\$137,200

* based on 60% of the 900 SF groups qualifying.