INFORMATION NOTE

A meeting of Support Communication and Programme Officers from the EAP region was held 18-26 February 1980 at the Regional Office in Bangkok in response to a need expressed by the Regional Services Meeting, September 1979. The meeting benefitted from the participation of the Chief of PSC from UNICEF Headquarters as well as the PSC Officer from UNICEF Nepal.

The chief objectives of the meeting were:

1. To exchange country experiences

2. To discuss appropriate, low cost, "community-oriented" media

3. To discuss the use of commercial resources

4. To discuss the co-ordination of support communication within the UNICEF country programming process

5. To discuss training needs in support communication of both officers within UNICEF as well as their Government counterparts.

Included with this Note are the results of these discussion, including a draft Programmer's Guide and a draft trainer's guideline of PSC Training Materials.

Readers are invited to comment (which implies offering concrete and implementable solutions to issues commented upon) and communicate these either to the undersigned or to any of the participants listed at the end of the Note.

Guy B. Scandlen/5 March 1980

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"LOW" COST-APPROPRIATE-COMMUNITY-ORIENTED MEDIA

The following points were made during this discussion:

1. That low, medium and high costs are very relative terms and must be considered in relation to other factors such as:

   • behavioral objectives of each medium and the media used together

   • initial and continuing cost, e.g. a "low-cost" traditional media troupe may represent very high continuing costs; a "high" initial and continuing cost may have a large reach, e.g. a "low" cost medium may be rejected because it does not represent a status medium. Some cultures prefer to be reached through status media.

   • target group's perceptions of the credibility of a medium

   • appropriateness (advantage/disadvantage) of the medium in relation to the message and the intervention (some societies may reject a traditional medium being used to tell about a "modern" intervention, for example)

   Therefore economic, financial feasibility may be only one key consideration in the cost aspect. The economic feasibility should be considered as synonymous to cost effectiveness.

2. The phrase "low cost media" is frequently associated with traditional, folk media and people's participation and involvement in media usage. It is a sensitive area and one which must be carefully considered in terms of an intervention's political environment. The question of who calls the media "low" cost may be an important one.

3. With technological advancements, "low" cost has begun to accommodate more and more non-traditional, modern media. For example, the Red Ant at DTCP: a Honda or Suzuki cc 125 motorcycle equiped with a Honda 300 watt generator, a sound system, a film strip projector or a Super 8m.m. sound camera

4. Perhaps a better term is "community-oriented" media. This implies that the media have been chosen according to the community's needs and may be community-based, but not exclusively so. It does not exclude the possibility (and real probability, given UNICEF assistance procedures) that media from outsied the community will have to be used.

5. A brief and non-exhaustive list of media to be experimented with for information and behavioral change purposes follows.

"Folk" forms:

- Debating; dialogue through rhyme/music
- Shadow plays
- Morality plays
- Traditional bards.
- All levels of drama (classical, traveling improvised popular, etc.)

Gathering places:

- local goods stores
- yearly fairs
- public dances
- cockfighting arenars
- weekly markets
- boxing, horse racing studia
- bus, train terminals
- monestaries, mosques, churches
- community centres
- newspaper reading centres
- cinehalls
- health centres

People:

- Priests, monks, Iman, religous leaders
- indigenous healers, midwives, medicine men
- local political leaders
- matrimonial counselors
- vendors
- rickshaw drivers

Community-Oriented Media and Channels:

- Mother's classes and other local, sectoral clubs
- Community drama improvised around one given topic
- Childrens' games
- Flexiflans
- Flannelgraphs
- Lollipuppets
- Sanddrawings
- Scroll forms, narratives ("village T.V.")
- Home visits
- Satisfied Acceptors
- Rural Tapistry
- Folk Journalism
- Comic Books
- Cassette Drama
- Toys; Toy making; "mental" feeding

<u>Others</u>:

- Radio
- Use of video for:

    - giving information and establishing dialogue
    - waiting rooms of health centres
    - recording changes over-time in self-monitoring
    - pretesting film ideas.

IMPLICATIONS OF USING PRIVATE SECTOR

Note: There may be two general uses of commercial firms as communication resources. The first is in efforts to advocate for children in general. Here presumably the objective is to bring a number of issues to the attention of the general public - especially opinion leaders and decision makers - to be followed up by personal contact by those officials most concerned with meeting the needs of children, including representatives from UNICEF. This is usually an information-stage function. The objectives of such efforts would be retention and recall of information, and messages and media should be tested for those objectives.

The second use would be communication within projects where the ultimate objective is behavioral change on the part of target groups. Here one must plan to use commercial resources in concert with and in support of face-to-face communication efforts. The ultimate objective is to bring about behavioral changes. This may be far more costly than general advocacy and as such has important budgetary implications.

Apart from that the Regional PSC Meeting discussed nine considerations which have direct bearing on the use of commercial resources.

1. Cost

Advertising agencies are generally very high cost. However, non-advertising agencies with a communications unit may be used at a lower cost. Generally, advertising agencies figure costing for four services:

(a) Executive Time (or creative talent)--An agency may price (or cost) staff input expenses by the hour (representatives at the Asian Advertising Congress stated that this was the most common practice). This executive will also draw upon the agency's accumulated experience in terms of research into colours, media attention data, cultural taboos, etc.

(b) Prototype Development -- The agency will make a first (draft) copy of your medium (or several media) and test it to see if it meets the stated behavior objectives. They may field test it among a randomly selected sample of your target groups (costing about

US$ 25.00 per respondent) in which case you sacrifice probing qualitative information for quantitative,generalizable information. They may test it with focus groups of 10 people for more thorough, explorative qualitative information, in which case your cost is less.

(c) Media Production -- An agency will definitely charge much more for production than a Government can negotiate or produce something. Or if UNICEF - with a good deal of production experience - undertakes to negotiate the production. An agency will charge a substantial fee for being the middleman here.

(d) Media Time -- Agencies charge brokerage fees for placing advertisements in the media. Whether or not you make use of this service depends on:

    i. If individuals can approach the media directly.

    ii. If Government programmes can demand free or reduced cost media time/space.

    iii. Whether you can afford any payment of media rates.

2. Efficiency Level

Generally one should consider time needed for output. Usually the private sector is more efficient than a comparable Government agency but you need to consider if this higher level is needed for your work and if it is replicable by a comparable Government agency.

3. Replicability

When using private sector the standards, procedures and staffing should not be too much higher than the Government could, with assistance, achieve itself. When using the private sector, efforts should be made to develop the Government capabilities.

4. Organizational Setting

Very often commercial firms are organized in such a way as to make maximum use of a very few people. The demands on these people are very high as is their renumeration. Frequently, this is not the same as in Government which has serious implications for replicability.

5. Nature of Needs

When the Government sector cannot respond to urgent needs the private sector should be used. Small or extra large jobs may be more easily done by private sector.

6. Quality of Services

Government standards should be used as a guide in determining quality. (See Cost and Replicability)

7. Government Acceptability/Sanition

Relationship between Government and private sector should be scrutinized.

8. Expertise

See Cost and Replicability

9. Copyright

Care should be taken to assure that ownership of materials/service and final output are controlled by the Government.

Generally, you save executive time(and,therefore, expenses) by having a very precise description of who your target groups are, what behaviors you expect of them after receiving your messages, and exactly what you want to say (how you say it, the creativity, is the agency's responsibility.) It is also possible to cut costs by hiring individuals working for agencies on a private basis. However, one advantage of an agency or an advertising unit is their experience in testing of messages and use of focus groups, etc. When you contract with an agency you should estimate pretesting costs, as well.

If you are hiring a marketing firm to do research for you, one advantage of an established, experienced firm is that they have an ongoing infrastructure which can easily absorb the demands of your research. A smaller, newer organization will frequently need to hire and train field staff (enumerators, supervisers, etc.), look for computer facilities (programmers, key punch operators, etc.) and other support staff. Of course, a newer firm may wish to use your research as a vehicle for establishing itself and therefore charge substantially less for its services.

It should be noted that both advertising and market research firms stated at the Eleventh Asian Advertising Congress (November, 1978) that they were unsure of what "fair" prices were especially in terms of "social" research.

TRAINING IN SUPPORT COMMUNICATION FOR

UNICEF PERSONNEL

Programme Officers

1. To be able to understand the function of communication in society and to apply this in relation to UNICEF-assisted interventions.

2. To be able to understand the role of communication in the process of social change and to apply this to UNICEF-assisted interventions.

3. To understand and be able to plan methodologies and techniques of communication to achieve behavioral objectives of target groups within UNICEF-assisted programmes and projects.

4. To be able to identify the availability of local and international resources for support communication purposes.

5. To be able to successfully use the PSC Programmer's Guide.

Support Communication Officers

1. To be able to understand, recall and apply development issues with concepts of social planning.

2. To be able to programme for UNICEF-assisted efforts.

3. To be able to understand the function of communication in society and to apply this in relation to UNICEF-assisted interventions.

4. To be able to understand the role of communication in the process of social change and to apply this to UNICEF-assisted interventions.

5. To understand and be able to plan methodologies and techniques of communication to achieve behavioral objectives of target groups within UNICEF-assisted programmes and projects.

6. To be able to identify the availability of local and international resources for support communication purposes.

7. To be able to successfully use the PSC Programmer's
    Guide.

8. To know how to budget for support communications.

9. To acquire management skills in support communications.

It was noted that the EAPRO PSC Training Modules cover
most of these general needs with the exception of three areas:

-   Pretesting (Roger Tangara and Cynthia Reader will
    work on this)

-   Management for Communication Inputs

-   Budgeting for Communication Inputs (Revy Tuluhungwa
    will work on these areas from Headquarters).

Community Participation

It was stated that there is a definite role for support communication in the process of community participation. Definitions of participation differ by culture and experience. For example: is it only payment by communities for a "service" rendered by someone else; is it a process of training communities and strengthening local institutions? If the Government is not included, is it participation?

Other questions were considered: what about the landless what are their "rights" in communities? The landless are not always the most poor, they may be salaried? What access to power do these people have. Does the process of participation subvert present political systems? What role does UNICEF have in the creation of political will and self-confidence in most vulnerable groups? How does UNICEF balance its relationship to Governments and Non-Governmental organizations.

What are the implications for support communications?

1. To advocate participation as a strategy and approach.

2. Explore traditional/indigenous/current ways of community participation and build upon these.

3. Develop appropriate community-oriented training methodologies in community organization, problem identification, needs assessments, project planning, identification of resources, project implementation.

4. Emphasize community-oriented media.

5. Identify and support lateral communication and information systems within communities.

It was felt that there was no need at the moment for a meeting of project level (field) personnel to identify communalities of experience to be developed into a manual on participation. This requires submersion of the field level to see how participation operates, to talk with people doing it, to analyze it from direct conversations.

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Notes

11 pp.
Brief report on salient aspects of the meeting (Low-cost community-oriented media, implications of using private sector, training in support communication for UNICEF personnel, community participation). A fuller report on this meeting appears in CF-RAI-USAA-PD-GEN-000276.

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