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"Child Survival and Development Revolution. Towards a communication strategy" abridged report of the Social Communication and Marketing Workshop, Nairobi, 10-17 Feb 1985. UNICEF

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Notes

**9 pp
General commentary on the workshop. Outlines its genesis and objectives, and role within UNICEF's policies and programmes.Process was a key factor in development, as was empowering people to help themselves. Participants' expectations and evaluation of workshop; conclusions and recommendations for policy action in the field and at Hc**

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CHILD SURVIVAL AND DEVELOPMENT REVOLUTION

TOWARDS A COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

(Nairobi Workshop Report: Abridged Version)

PREAMBLE

The workshop was born out of the conviction that UNICEF needs to focus more attention to the advocacy and communication elements of the CSDR. These elements of course need to be more finely integrated into our CSDR planning. But they deserve also to be looked at on the strength of their own independent contribution to the CSDR. Based on participants experiences the objective of developing a systematic institutional approach to PC, was thought worth pursuing.

Programme communication is itself an underdeveloped skill among UNICEF staff generally, and it is not the function of specialist communicators to fill the gaps in isolation from other programme components; all development agents must be communicators, and all programmes must redress the imbalance between the material and the behavioural aspects of development which inhibits the marketing of ideas. Underdevelopment is in the minds of the individuals. And that is what UNICEF should strive for, to change it, to help individuals change for their own improvement. There are about 100 CIS officers. This is a small group which, properly coordinated, can be a formidable force that can give a substantive impulse to the CSDR. This workshop contributed to this process of sharing experiences, knowing each other.

Wide consultations were undertaken at headquarters and with regional offices. Messrs. Nyi Nyi, Tarzie Vittachi, John Williams and other high ranking officers were involved from the beginning in deciding upon the workshop objectives, methodology and logistics (see annex one).

About 60 (... Representatives, ... Programme officers, ...Programme Officers, ... Information Officers) from all the regions attended (see annex two). All participants and organisers brought their expectations with them: to meet fellow colleagues, find out about work in other regions, learn and teach, release their frustrations, find out what New York headquarters is up to etc. A happy crowd that lasted happy to the end.

The workshop took seven days, from Sunday to Saturday (see annex three). The participants worked an average of 12 hours, assembled in plenaries, committees, discussion groups, at breakfast, lunch and dinners, trying not to lose precious moments or unique moments in which they were learning and teaching, sharing experiences and thoughts. Not one participant deserted to go shopping or touring beautiful attractive Kenya. The work dynamics developed was tremendous. The outstanding UNICEF case studies such as Nigeria, Mozambique and Brazil were constantly commented on with pride especially as proof that UNICEF also can produce first class communication programme that could be used as models by other UNICEF offices and other international institutions and agencies as well.

What others have done in the field was used as a background to analyse and redesign six country communication programmes through group discussions (see annex five). The zeal put in this action was commendable. It was not thought just as a theoretical exercise, a game to be played to satisfy somebody else, but a genuine effort to formulate communication dimensions so Country Representative, PC and Programme Officers could use the outcome as a guideline to improve their own programming and with it provide a renewed impetus to the CSDR. The participants were planners, real planners for the future of the six countries. Representatives, Programme Officers, and Communications Officers worked as a programming team— the way it should be.

The Results

Many topics and aspects of how to achieve CSDR were touched. Tarzie Vittachi set up the trend and the policies: CSDR programmes are not about poverty, but rather seek to remedy the results of poverty: advocacy can have an impact on poverty itself, but our programmes deal mainly with the fall out, i.e. effects of poverty. This was a controversial statement. Many asked why

not deal with causes? Why can't UNICEF take new themes on Africa, or arms expenditures vs expenditures for children? He further stated that communications is the leading edge of programmes. All Representative,s Programme Officers must become communicators.

Vittachi clarified the use of terminology by indicating that "we should avoid too much emphasis on semantics. We should not get bogged down in works about words. Social Marketing is a term that rubs me the wrong way. I do not like its connotations. I prefer social or programme communication which brings along the skills that have been learnt in the market." Thus a PC definition emerged as follows: "It can be seen as a combination of activities— training, research, evaluation and monitoring, information/promotion, media and interpersonal communications, community organization and mobilization , based on a process of analysis and supported by innovative, humorous and creative techniques to facilitate, encourage, and promote behaviour change." The participants decided that PSC should be called in the future Programme Communication (PC) in future.

Process was embraced by all participants as a key factor for development. We have to create demand by emphasizing process. One essence of development is the empowering of people to help themselves. This is central to the theme of CSDR, where UNICEF seeks to make health the responsibility primarily of the family. This radical change of stance implies fundamental re-education that can only succeed through creative and inspired communication processes. These have often been lacking in UNICEF programming.

Jim Mayrides indicated in his opening speech that PC's have limited opportunities for a career within UNICEF. Few core posts, only one P-5. Hence career advancement difficult. On the contrary, Programme Officers put themselves automatically in the line to be Representatives and a few make it to the Regional Director's level and above. The participants want to express this concern deeply to the management.

Rarely are PC officers seen as part of management. They are called on to solve specific technical problems, but are not part of the countries' planning and programming process. The national PC officers, that have a better experience about their country's reality and how to operate within, do not share the responsibilities for decision-making that the senior officers have.

Rarely do the country offices do situation analysis on communication. Despite the fact that this is a powerful tool for designing a professional communication strategy.

PC Officers profile is uneven. Their background varies profoundly. Rarely do they receive training in programming or other process skills. Similarly most Programme Officers have not received any orientation in PC planning.

Workshop Impact:

Many participants raised the questions.... what will change after the workshop? What will change in the mind of "my Representative"? "I cannot operate well, or go to scale without my Representative fully understanding that I need more support, secretarial services and budgetary needs, to integration into the management team, to be respected as a professional, to have a full voice so that my concerns are listened to." one participant lamented.

"Perhaps this workshop has given me more assurance that we cannot go to scale, or lower the infant mortality rate substantially without empowering parents to do so. And this empowerment comes mainly through communication, information that according to Mr. Vittachi are the leading factors in any programme." another participant concluded.

The concern was voiced for more training i.e. a better introduction/orientation to what UNICEF is, its programmes, particularly CSDR, modus operandi on one side; and the upgrading of skills on the other.

PC Expansion

No doubt that PC can expand a million times in the next years. Many programmes in general have barely touched communication. Just to include the PC component in the ongoing programmes may be a gigantic task and a challenge to the current officers. The advocacy to be done to Representatives, Programme Officers and government counterparts about PC requires a stern and sustained effort as it is the only way to go CSDR and to scale.

A new policy has been established that we can use more consultants to support our efforts. But consultants need to be carefully selected, guidelines set.

Another possibility is that we subcontract entire PC operations within a particular programme with a national or international NGO. This will liberate staff to think and plan; and become more managers of programmes.

National Officers

It is advisable that we have more national PC Officers than international. this has great advantages and some shortcomings. The advantages is that they know their countries, and will do it better. The disadvantages is that their salary scale is so low, that we cannot get the best in many countries, as most earn much more in private corporations. Also, the possibility of national PC officers having a career is somewhat limited, so many of the talented ones prefer to continue at the service of government, because they are in a career track, and have other advantages. UNICEF needs to critically examine current levels of PC staff and work out a mechanism that will enable the offices to attract persons with clout and members of the local PC clique to join UNICEF staff and extend their skills beyond their own sectoral realm.

Workshop Evaluation

Almost half the participants rated the workshop as very good, and felt that objectives had been achieved. High on the list of personal expectations was exchange of experiences among colleagues and strengthening skills list but most felt the workshop could have focussed more on this area. Most participants felt future seminars should have a country/regional mix both UNICEF and government participants and deal with planning and management of technical resources and PC techniques in greater depth. On the whole the workshop confirmed the value and participatory nature of small working groups, the relative usefulness of country presentations (models) and Fraser's models. Most participants read half the materials (see annex five).facilitate the building up or supporting community organizations and infrastructures

which are necessary for the acquisition and utilization of new knowledge and skills necessary for undertaking the provision and sustenance of optimum health care at the family and community levels.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The workshop participants recommended that, in order to apply and institutionalize Programme Communication (PC) as an essential ingredient of the Child Survival and Development Revolution (CSDR) the following actions should received priority:-

1. ## Country Offices should:-

   1.1 promote and ensure greater understanding of PC and its value and place in CSDR related programmes amongst governments, media, NGO and other allies— emphasizing that its impact depends on how early it is involved in the advocacy, programming and implementation processes. Advocacy through demonstration is imperative.

   1.2 ensure that they have adequate capacity by upgrading the skills of P.O, 1.0 and PC staff through training and by locating and using private/commercial or NGO capacities and by strengthening and mobilizing government and community resources.

   1.3 adopt headquarter's generated policy and operational guidelines (see sections 3.1 and 3.2) and adapt them to local environment and programmes.

   1.4 undertake the appraisal of communication resources, technologies and services available as well as social cultural studies to establish a data base for programme formulation, determinants and indicators for monitoring and evaluation for CSDR themes, as part of the situation analysis or update.

   1.5 document programme generation and implementation process for future advocacy and training purposes through the use of modern communication technologies such as video.

1.6 invest in CSDR programme and PC activities that will ensure or

1.7 analyse/audit current programmes to identify opportunities for going to scale and incorporate PC;

1.8 ensure that new programmes incorporate PC plans of action based on strong information base as recommended in 1.4

2. Regional Offices

2.1 The regional directors and PC officers in conjunction with representatives etc. should formulate a strategy for advocating with governments, NGO, bi-and multi-lateral agencies the critical importance of communication amongst other major factors that influence participatory development, knowledge and skills acquisition at the family and community level.

2.2 Regional Advisers including Regional PC and Information Officers should ensure that countries which participated in the workshop and those formulating future country programmes get assistance in looking for opportunities for going to scale and formulating/strengthening PC components.

2.3 Regional offices should identify resources necessary for training and staff and government counterparts and NGO.

2.4 Regional offices should undertake to establish and operate a roster of communication consultants and resources.

2.5 Regional offices should play a leading role in analysing, packaging and disseminating as well as exchanging and facilitating utilization of regional communication and going to scale experience.

2.6 Regional PC skills inventory should be done and circulated to other regions. This is an entry point to technical cooperation amongst various offices.

3. <u>New York</u>

3.1 Senior management should advocate PC throughout the organization by:

   a) removing current structural posts grading and budgetary
       categorisation paradoxes that have to lead the PC function into
       a second class position. Without doing this UNICEF will not be
       able to attract competent persons who are getting scare on the
       market;

   b) issuing a policy directive (EXIR) on PC;

   c) supporting actions which will increase UNICEF capacity and
       competence to deliver PC;

   d) continuously promoting the use of PC as an essential element of
       programmes which calls for professionalism amongst staff
       especially PC and Programme Officers;

   e) strengthening the New York Section to be able to provide
       conceptual guidance, information and experience exchange and
       other support that will promulgate successfully in-country PC
       experiences;

   f) strengthening PC and programming capacity in those countries
       where there is high potential for going to scale.

3.2 The Division of Communications and Information (DCI) in conjunction
    with PDPD, DPFS should issue an operational guidelines (PRO) defining
    PC, outlining organizational changes relating to titles and
    specifying the actions required for programming and implementing
    advocacy and PC as an integral part of UNICEF assisted programmes
    particularly those focussing on CSDR. The said guidelines should
    include a section on monitoring and evaluation.

3.3 DCI, DOP and DMOA, in consultation with the field, should redefine the functions, structural and operational relationships of PC and Information Officers at headquarters, regional and country levels.

3.4 DCI, PDPD and DOP should ensure the intensification or orientation of representatives, programme officers on processes of that will ensure strong PC components of programme, is required. As a starting point, all programming workshops must devote adequate time on PC.

3.5 Skills upgrading of PC and information officers should be undertaken in order to empower them to strategically contribute to programmes; and in identifying and analysing opportunities for advocacy, going to scale and community education as part of demand generation and services utilization within the programming process.

3.6 DCI in conjunction with countries which have gone to scale should produce and disseminate appropriate 'state of the art' training and orientation materials on PC based on field experiences for use by UNICEF, government counterparts and NGOs. Such materials could include video or slide presentations as well as a manual.

3.7 DCI should draw up a well selected and categorised (on the basis of expertise) roster. This draws on regional and country rosters too.

3.8 DCI should create a UNICEF capability, especially at headquarters and regional levels, to identify, mobilize and manage external communication resources, such a media owners, consultants; creative production and media services; marketing and advertising agencies.

3.9 DCI should set up an information exchange service on PC to disseminate field experiences among field offices, NGOs, other agencies and governments on going to scale with special reference to PC.