

PD-AAU-992

48672

TRIP REPORT - NEPAL

Prepared by: Mark W. Lediard
Academy for Educational Development

Dates of In-Country Work:

August 27 - September 2, 1985
September 16 - 25, 1985

Population Communication Services
Population Information Program
The Johns Hopkins University
624 North Broadway
Baltimore, MD 21205
U.S.A.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Mark Lediard of the Academy for Educational Development provided technical assistance to COMMAT, Inc. on the Johns Hopkins University/Population Communication Services (JHU/PCS)-sponsored Nepal Cinema Halls project. Mr. Lediard's trip to Nepal was from August 27 - September 2, 1985 and September 16 - 25, 1985.

The scope of work for this assistance was to:

- review the family planning film spots;
- plan the final editing;
- discuss the pretesting of the spots; and
- resolve administrative problems.

A review of the film spots found that the design of the messages and scripts was based on the results of an audience research study which was supported by the Nepal Contraceptive Retail Sales Company. Discovered in the audience research was a preference for seeing child actors; hence children are used in two of the film spots. Production of seven of the eight spots was completed in May. The quality of the material recorded for these seven spots was excellent. Editing is scheduled to be completed by late-November.

It was agreed that each spot will be pretested in the field with representatives of cinema hall goers from three different regional groups; the Hill, Terai, and specific ethnic populations. Approximately four weeks will be devoted to pretesting each spot with focus groups of eight - ten people from each regional group. Cameras will be taken to the field to permit additional recording as needed during the pretesting.

In budget discussions, an agreement was reached to pay all key project personnel salaries on a "per title" payment basis. A project budget was agreed upon and submitted to JHU/PCS.

VISIT TO NEPAL - AUGUST 27 - SEPTEMBER 2 AND SEPTEMBER 16 25, 1985

The Nepal Cinema Halls project is designed to produce, pretest, distribute and evaluate a series of five three- to five-minute family planning film spots. These spots - produced and pretested on video - are to be transferred to 35mm and 16mm film for distribution both in commercial theaters and throughout the mobile film network of the Government of Nepal (GON) and private exhibitors. The Nepal Contraceptive Retail Sales Company supported an audience research study to determine size, frequency of attendance, socio-economic characteristics, preferences, and other information about the cinema-going public in Nepal. Based on those findings and on data collected from several other studies, messages were designed to promote acceptance of temporary methods of contraception.

Scripts were developed by project staff and reviewed by Johns Hopkins University/Population Communication Services (JHU/PCS). Production of seven out of eight spots was completed in May. The purpose of the consultancy was two-fold: one, to review the spots, plan the final editing, and discuss pretesting; and two, to resolve administrative problems, particularly the absence of an agreed upon project budget.

The quality of the material recorded was excellent. The audience research found that a high percentage of the sample stated a preference for seeing child actors; hence two of the spots feature children. In one spot, a group of children are playing a game with dolls. The game is about marriage; ritual Nepali dance and music establish the scene and the children are engagingly absorbed in the marriage of the dolls. The message emerges when the girl who "plays" the bride raises the question of children. The boy/groom wants many; the "bride" makes (and wins) a compelling, heartfelt argument for just two. The play has a charming quality which is sure to capture the audience. Of particular interest is that one hears the familiar "small family norm" message from the child's perspective. Pretesting of this spot will include careful questioning to see whether an eight-year-old girl is a credible source for such a message.

A second spot featuring a child at the source of the message is in musical form. In about half of the hill districts of Nepal, a traditional troubadour (the "gaine"), earns a living by entertaining villagers at home and in the markets. The "gaines" normally sing traditional folk songs, accompanied by a small, hand-carved fiddle (the "sarangi"). The producers contracted a group of "gaines" to compose and perform a song with family planning themes. The song is called "Bedi and Chameli," names given to young women,

and is targeted at women of approximately 16-22 years of age. Building on previous Nepali efforts to enlist "gaines" in family planning education and promotion, this spot features very poignant lyrics about the disservice done to children by asking them to compete for scarce food and attention in a home with too many children. Again, the message is delivered by a child. The boy - about 10 - is accompanied by an adult chorus. The "gaines" are recorded in a rowboat in "Phewa Taal," a beautiful lake with the Himalayas in the background. We also see them going door-to-door in villages and in the marketplace. It is expected that pretesting will produce useful information on the impact and intelligibility of this folk art approach.

The two spots described above are in the Nepali language, and are targeted at the ±60% who speak Nepali. Two other spots are in the Maithali and Bhojpuri language, aimed at the 30-40% who speak these languages. A third spot is also based on a folk art medium, the "Nautanki," a sort of rural musical comedy format. (As the author of this report must confess to a limited capability to understand Bhojpuri, comments on the messages must await receipt of a written translation.)

Other spots had different approaches. One features a medical doctor explaining various methods to a young couple; another is a series of straightforward testimonial from various people; a third is a celebrity testimonial by an athlete who endorses vasectomy (the only spot on surgical methods). Pretesting will be used to determine which five of the eight spots are most effective.

Having reviewed all the material shot for the spots, I discussed two major areas with the producers: the editing of the spots and the pretesting methodology. It is expected that editing will be completed by mid- to late-November, after which about four weeks will be taken for pretesting. Cameras will be taken to the field to permit additional recording as needed. Depending upon the feedback from pretesting, final editing of the spots will be complete by mid to late January, after which the consultant will return to Kathmandu for final review of the spots prior to transfer to film. At that time, arrangements for distribution and evaluation will be made.

Regarding the pretesting, it was agreed that each spot would be seen by at least three focus groups of eight to ten persons. These groups would be composed of representative cinema hall goers from the three different regional groupings: Hill, Terai, and specific ethnic populations. The pretesting would have three main purposes: to determine the information understood and retained, to help select the preferred five spots and to assess qualitatively whether the viewers liked and felt persuaded by what they saw. The spots all end with local tag information describing where to get contraceptives in

their area. The evaluation is expected to collect service statistic information on acceptors who recall seeing the spots and attribute their acceptance in any way to the spots.

The administrative portion of the assignment consisted primarily of reaching agreement on a budget acceptable to JHU/PCS and COMMAT, Ltd., the sub-grantee. The budget, agreed to in 1984, had been modified after the start of the project, and had never been finalized. The budget is now agreed upon and will govern expenditures for the remainder of the project. Budget confusion centered around salaries for the project staff. What was agreed to was a "per title" pay structure for all key personnel. These fees are now provided for in the budget.

In addition to working with COMMAT, I met with, among others, the FP/MCH project chief, Dr. T. B. Khatri; the chief of the USAID Health and Family Planning office, Dr. David Calder; the UNFPA/Nepal staff and temporary representative, Ms. Imelda Henkin; and the general manager of the Nepal Contraceptive Retail Sales Company, Mr. Hem Hamal. Short notes on these meetings follow:

1. Dr. Khatri:
 - o is interested in future JHU/PCS project development;
 - o is aware tht PCS funding possibilities will not be known until early 1986;
 - o would like JHU/PCS assistance in developing programming for Nepal Television, due to begin broadcasting in 1986; and
 - o intends to continue supporting the Cinema Halls project by providing equipment and release of manpower in accordance with the project workplan.
2. Dr. Calder:
 - o is of the opinion that promotion of and support to Nepal Cinema Halls project and temporary methods are of the utmost importance in the national program;
 - o may be interested in JHU/PCS future assistance in testing the development of a new Nepali term for family planning which is not associated with sterilization;
 - o believes that the bilateral project has sufficient resources to support the national program without requiring much in the way of centrally-funded projects; and
 - o was briefed on the status of the Cinema Halls Project.

3. Mr. Hamal:

- o is planning to train and orient traditional medical practitioners to distribute ORS packets and selected contraceptives; and
- o plans to develop this program without direct donor assistance; Nepal Contraceptive Retail Sales Company has sufficient project funds for the activity in its regular budget.

I expect to return to Nepal in January, 1986 to review the pretesting report, review the final spots, oversee distribution plans and develop the evaluation design and subcontract.

LIST OF CONTACTS

NEPAL

Dr. Tara Budhadur Khatri
Project Chief
Family Planning and Maternal Child Health (FP/MCH) Project
IEC Division
Post Box 820
Kathmandu, Nepal
Tel. No.: 2-12733
2-13705

Dr. David Calder
PDIS
USAID/Nepal
Kathmandu, Nepal
Tel. No.: 211144
21423

(via pouch)
Kathmandu (ID)
Department of State
Washington, DC 20520

Ms. Imelda Henkins
United Nations Fund for
Population Activities (UNFPA)
220 East 42nd Street
18th Floor
New York, NY 10017
(212) 850-5866

(until January 2, 1986)
Deputy Representative and
Sr. Advisor on Population
UNFPA
P.O. Box 107
Kathmandu, Nepal
(office) 21644
(hotel) 2-16388/16467 Room 501

Hem B. Hamal
General Manager
Nepal Contraceptive Retail
Sales (CRS) Company, LTD.
P. O. Box 842
Thamel, Kathmandu, Nepal
Tel. No.: 216424
412080

Yadav Kharel
Director
COMMAT, Inc.
P.O. Box 1618
39 Ram Shah Path
Kathmandu, Nepal
Tel. No.: 414953
212894