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NEPAL: FOLLOW-UP VISIT ON PROPOSED PROJECTS

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Executive Summary

A brief stopover by Cynthia Green and Mark Lediard to finalize arrangements for two projects funded by JHU/PCS was extended in order to resolve some administrative issues associated with the "Film Spots for Cinema Halls" project and to schedule a technical assistance visit planned for mid-April. As a result of extensive discussions with the various agencies working in family planning communication, agreement was reached that the "Film Spots" project would be implemented by COMMAT, an advertising agency that has worked extensively in contraceptive social marketing programs in Nepal. The shifting of the project from the Family Planning Association of Nepal to COMMAT will not alter the original plan, which called for Mr. Yadav Kharel, the Executive Director of COMMAT, to be the coordinator and production specialist of the "Film Spots" project.

The initiation of the "Print Materials" project was delayed by about two weeks in order for the necessary approvals from the Ministry of Health to be obtained. This delay did not affect the overall implementation of the project, since the technical assistance visit by JHU/PCS representatives was scheduled for late April and significant progress in materials preparation was achieved during this visit.

One unexpected benefit of this visit was that the leaders of the key Nepali agencies working in family planning communication held lengthy discussions regarding each agency's scope of work and areas of interest. The JHU/PCS team believes that these discussions were productive and should lead to improved coordination among these agencies.

List of Abbreviations

- AED** - Academy for Educational Development
- CRS** - Contraceptive Retail Sales
- FPAN** - Family Planning Association of Nepal
- FP/MCH** - Family Planning/Maternal and Child Health
- HMG** - His Majesty's Government
- IPPF** - International Planned Parenthood Federation
- JHU/PCS** - Johns Hopkins University/Population Communication Services
- MOH** - Ministry of Health
- NCP** - National Commission on Population
- UNFPA** - United Nations Fund for Population Activities

Introduction

Cynthia Green, PCS Project Director, and Mark Lediard, Director of Health and Population Programs, AED, arrived in Nepal on the 17th of March to begin what was originally planned as three days of meetings with various population/family planning agencies and representatives to finalize arrangements for two projects to be funded by JHU/PCS. Dr. Van der Vlugt, Chief, Health and Population Division, USAID/Nepal, was away on leave during our visit. In his absence, Mr. Hem Hamal, General Manager of the Nepal Contraceptive Retail Sales Company, took the initiative to schedule all of our meetings, including the hosting of a dinner with the principals of Family Planning/Maternal and Child Health Project (FP/MCH), the National Commission on Population (NCP), and the Family Planning Association of Nepal (FPAN).

Print Materials Project

The "Print Materials" project was discussed with Dr. Tara Bahadur Khatri, Chief of the Family Planning/Maternal and Child Health (FP/MCH), project and Ms. Maya Shrestha, Acting Chief of the IEC division, FP/MCH. Dr. Khatri agreed to the proposed itinerary of the JHU/PCS representatives (Zimmerman and Wittet) and stated his intention to secure approval from the Ministry of Health (MOH) to formally sign the project document prior to our departure. Although he was unable to do this during our visit, he confirmed in a later telephone conversation and telex that the project had been signed and that the consultants could proceed as scheduled. After discussions with representatives of the United Nations Fund for Population Activities in Nepal, the visit of the JHU/PCS representatives to provide assistance in print materials development was scheduled for late April in order to coincide with the travel schedule of key FP/MCH staff members and to follow a materials development workshop being conducted by a staff member of Development Training and Communication Planning, under UNFPA auspices.

Film Spots for Cinema Halls Project

The discussions on the "Film Spots for Cinema Halls" project were more problematic. A "courtesy" copy of the project document which PCS had sent to the International Planned Parenthood Federation in London reached the FPAN

before the AID Mission had been able to circulate it to Nepal. This unexpected transmission of the document from IPPF to the FPAN before FPAN had received it created some consternation. One major problem was that the services of the proposed production coordinator, Mr. Yadav Kharel, could not be paid for if FPAN were the recipient agency, as Mr. Kharel is a volunteer and honorary officer, who is not entitled to be compensated for his services to FPAN. Given the need for a production coordinator of Mr. Kharel's background to be seriously committed to the activity, alternative institutional arrangements were then discussed for the remainder of the visit. In order to reach a satisfactory conclusion so that the project could move forward, Mark Lediard was asked to extend his visit for an additional few days, until the 25th. Cynthia Green departed for India on March 20, as previously planned.

The outcome of the extensive deliberations which followed was a plan in which the National Commission on Population (NCP) would become the recipient agency for the JHU/PCS project and subcontract the production activities to COMMAT, Inc., the advertising agency of which Mr. Kharel is the director. However, following the departure of the JHU/PCS team from Nepal the NCP communicated in telephone conversations and the attached letter (see Appendix B) that it was not feasible administratively to flow the funds through the NCP. The NCP requested instead that COMMAT, Inc. become the recipient agency. The project document has now been revised to reflect that change.

COMMAT was brought into existence in 1979 in response to a need that Westinghouse Corporation programmers had for a "Full Service Advertising and Marketing Agency" to assist in development of promotional activities for the contraceptive retail sales project in Nepal. Its original staffing pattern was a core of three professionals, the Executive Director, Mr. Yadav Kharel, an account executive and an administrative officer. Mr. Kharel, the coordinator of the JHU/PCS project, has had considerable experience and training in both film production and family planning/ IEC. In addition to the core staff, COMMAT has made extensive use of consultants for services ranging from artwork and layout to conceptual design and overall communications/marketing planning. Its consultants have included some of the more talented HMG officials in the communication field.

Another important capability that COMMAT has developed since its inception in 1979 was message strategy research. For example, in preparing for the production of posters, stickers, and other literature and pictorial materials COMMAT conducted an investigation into what motivates men to adopt family planning. As the principal finding was that the education of children was the main motivation for a father, family planning materials were developed which appealed to the public on that theme. COMMAT has demonstrated capability through its performance under the Westinghouse subcontract to conduct all activities from message strategy research and design through execution and production.

Another objective of the visit was to conduct a test in a Nepali theater of the quality of the 35 mm. film transfer of sample video material shot in Nepal. Dr. Khatri, Mr. Kharel, Mr. Hamal and Mr. Prabhat Rana of the FPAN viewed the three-minute test print. The results were satisfactory. Though not quite as sharp as film, it was the opinion of the JHU/PCS representatives that the quality was adequate for the project needs. Mr. Kharel and Dr. Khatri both requested that another test print be done, this time with sound and a wide variety of camera shots to provide technical guidance on which types of shooting situations produced the best results in the transfer process. Another test has now been done and will be shown to project personnel prior to beginning production.

While it is true that video transferred to 35 mm. film is not as crisp as original film would be, the context in which the material is to be shown and the absence of Nepali language films must be borne in mind. The feature films shown in Nepal are almost entirely old prints of Hindi-language movies. While Hindi is similar to Nepali, only a small percentage of movie-goers are able to understand it. The trade-off in visual quality (a loss of perhaps 20-25%) seems well worth the investment when one considers that: a) there is no capability for educational film production in Nepal; and b) the cost of producing 35 mm. film is easily ten times greater than the video-to-film transfer process. Furthermore, pretesting and revision of filmed material are far less feasible than with video.

The JHU/PCS team also met with Messrs. Bishwambher Pyakuryal and Diwaker Chand of the Narayan Oriental Research Centre to discuss the objectives and design of the audience research study to be conducted prior to production of the

video spots. After lengthy consultations, the study design was formulated. Mr. Hem Hamal of the CRS Company reiterated his commitment to fund the study prior to initiation of the JHU/PCS-funded project with COMMAT.

Conclusions and Recommendations

During the JHU/PCS team's visit, all of the key agencies working in family planning communication--the FP/MCH Project, NCP, CRS Company, FPAN and COMMAT--participated in lengthy discussions regarding each agency's scope of work and areas of interest. The JHU/PCS team believes that these discussions were productive and should lead to improved coordination among these agencies.

Leaders of these agencies all expressed keen interest in both projects to be funded by JHU/PCS. Their interest and enthusiasm bode well for the successful implementation of the projects.

The JHU/PCS team recommends that:

- o JHU/PCS monitor the progress of these two projects closely and schedule regular visits as often as possible;
- o JHU/PCS encourage continued collaboration and coordination among the key Nepali agencies working in family planning communication;
- o JHU/PCS schedule technical assistance visits in close consultation with the relevant Nepali agencies in order to avoid conflicts with travel and other commitments; and
- o JHU/PCS ensure that relevant project documents are provided to prospective recipient agencies well in advance of projected project start dates.

List of Contacts

1. Nepal Family Planning/MCH Project

Dr. Tara Bahadur Khatri, Project Chief
Dr. Kokila Vaidya, Deputy Project Chief
Ms. Maya Shrestha, Acting Chief, IEC Division
Mr. Hari Bandi Kshatri, IEC Division
Mr. Kiran Pant, Information Officer
Mr. Mukunda Raj Baidya, Audio Visual Officer

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2. USAID

Ms. Barbara Spaid, Health Officer

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Kalamati, Kathmandu
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3. National Commission on Population (NCP)

Dr. Prakash Upreti, Secretary and Chairman of IEC Task Force
(home tel: 216092)
Ms. Pancha Kumari Manadhar, Family Planning Advisor
Dr. Pitambar Sharma, Chief, Program Development & Coordination Division

Singha Darbar
P.O. Box 1118
Kathmandu, Nepal
Tel: 216523

4. Family Planning Association of Nepal (FPAN)

Mr. Yadav Kharel, General Secretary
Mr. Shanker Shah, Executive Director
Mr. Prabhat Rana, IEC Division Chief
Dr. Badre Raj Pande, Vice President

Lekhnath Marg
P.O. Box 486
Kathmandu, Nepal
Tel: 213107, 215497, 215554, 215961

5. Nepal CRS Company Pvt. Ltd.

Mr. Hem Hamal, General Manager
Mr. Subarna J. Thapa, Assistant General Manager
Mr. Ranjan Poudyal, Communication Manager

6. UNFPA

Mr. Michael Heyn, Representative
Mr. D.B. Lama, Program Officer

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Kathmandu, Nepal
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7. John Snow, Inc.

Dr. Mel Thorne, Project Chief

8. Development Oriented Research Center

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9. Narayan Oriental Research Centre

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His Majesty's Government

National Commission on Population Secretariat

Singha Durbar
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Date ... 13 June, 1984 ...

Ref. No. 1402.2.2.1/1990

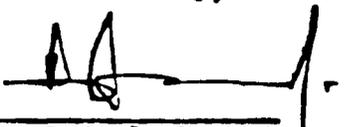
Mr. Mark Lediard
Population Information Programme
The Johns Hopkins University
624 North Broadway
Baltimore, Maryland 21205
U.S.A.

Dear Mark :

Thank you for your phone call of last week. As I indicated in my letter of May 4, 1984, our current fiscal year is coming to an end of July 15. We have made no provisions, budgetary or programmatic, for a film project during the next fiscal year. As such, we cannot receive any fund for that purpose in our budget. For these reason, I would again like to request you to forward the funds directly to our contractor, Commat Inc.

Thank you for your assistance again.

Sincerely,



Dr. Bedh P. Upreti
Secretary

cc : Mr. Yadav Kharel
Commat Inc.