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INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION ADMINISTRATION

Washington, D. C.

ICA WORK IN COMMUNICATIONS MEDIA

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I. Basic Communications Media Problems in the Underdeveloped Areas

The ICA Communications Media program provides technical assistance in the development, production, and use of the means by which knowledge and information are communicated within the cooperating countries to support their social and economic development. This activity must be distinguished from physical communications such as transportation and telecommunications, and from public information about the ICA program. Communications Media activities consist in providing technical assistance for moving technical knowledge and information in all phases of economic and technical cooperation programs.

Basic Problems

Communications between people is a fundamental tool of all phases of nation building, both economic and political. Lack of, or limits on, the ability to move knowledge in a society is one of the characteristics of underdeveloped areas. Every phase of technical and economic cooperation must use communications to advance at all. An acute awareness of the importance of communications and the effective use of communication techniques is one of the prime reasons for communist effectiveness, both in the acceleration of growth in the countries they control and in efforts to subvert those they seek to gain control of.

Economic development sufficiently rapid to create enough hope to convince people in the underdeveloped countries that their basic problems

can be solved within the framework of free democratic institutions requires the involvment of millions of people in the use of new knowledge to change and improve every phase of their life. This can happen only when new technical knowledge and the will to use it are communicated to those millions.

In carrying out their programs for national development the countries with which ICA cooperates need to obtain a greater multiplying effect from their efforts by increasing the communication of technical knowledge at many levels, person to person, in small and large groups, within old and new institutions and communities, and at mass levels throughout the whole country.

There are a number of overriding facts about the communications situation in the underdeveloped countries that deserve special mention.

1. The level of literacy is low. A large percentage of all those of school age and above are illiterate, though the adults among them are responsible for many key decisions in agriculture and other fundamental productive processes.

2. The channels of communication are poorly developed. Only a small percentage of the population, usually considerably under 10% can be reached by news or information through newspapers and magazines. Radio reaches the widest geographical areas, but the distribution of receivers is limited with most rural persons having no access to any kind of receiver. Even with much multiple listening, probably no more than five to ten percent of the population have access to radio.

3. In these societies the "communication load" is many times greater than that in an advanced society with respect to the economic effects to be attained. This point can be vividly illustrated in the field of agriculture. In the United States the average farm size, for all of the farms of the country, is 250 acres. This means that when the communications process convinces one American farmer to change one practice with respect to one crop, that farmer can apply this changed practice to from 50 to 250 acres, depending upon the nature of the agriculture he follows. In South America the average farm size is 25 acres, in the Middle East it is 10 acres, and in the Far East the average farm size is 2 to 5 acres. This means that if a practice change is to be applied to from 50 to 250 acres, it will be necessary to communicate with from 2 to 500 farmers to achieve the same economic effect as communicating with one American farmer.

4. Populations in these societies are still heavily dominated by status and tradition. They are extremely cautious in the acceptance of change. So the difficulty of motivating people to accept change and attempt new solutions to old problems is much more severe than in a more modern economic situation.

II. Rationale for ICA Communications Media Programs

The basic purpose of technical assistance in the Communications Media field is to assist the host government through the development of

institutions, facilities and people in its society to increase the use of the communications processes to multiply and propagate the technical and other information required to support the economic development of the country. In general this is carried out in two major ways:

1. Communications Media projects are conducted in conjunction with various institutions and groups as requested by the host government to develop the channels of communications in the country itself so that it is possible to reach desired audiences with instructional information. In this category of activity, technical assistance is provided in the printing field, radio, films, audiovisual and Communications Media Centers, and in the training of host country personnel in the production and use of effective modern techniques for the presentation of ideas for widespread teaching in school systems and communities.

2. The second major function of the Communications Media program is to assist the United States and national technicians in developing solutions to their immediate teaching and communications problems so as to support directly and immediately cooperative projects and to achieve a high degree of multiplier effect through the use of these methods.

The Communications Media program seeks to pursue a philosophy of "client" relations in carrying out this second support activity with the various subject matter fields, that is roughly parallel to the relations that obtain between a commercial company and its advertising agency, with the important difference that the function of the "advertising agency" is not primarily to provide institutional advertising about the subject matter field but to assist it to use communications effectively in its action programs. Under this philosophy the client is always the final authority on what is to be done, but the "advertising agent" participates and guides in his field of special competence at all levels, from policy formation down to final action. Communications Media Advisors bring to the partnership special knowledge of the audience, the media, channels of distribution, and methods for using special techniques that can make the subject matter people more effective.

Simplicity

1. In ways of Teaching and Communicating

Communications Media advocates the use of pictorial methods of teaching and communicating new ideas with a strong emphasis on simplification to bare essentials in order that knowledge can be moved to mass audiences that are largely illiterate.

2. Simplicity and low cost in equipment

A major goal in all communications activities is to design systems that the cooperating country and its people can take over, support and duplicate with their own resources. ICA therefore constantly works to apply new technology to supply simpler and less expensive types of equipment

and materials that can be produced in the underdeveloped countries at low unit cost. Examples of such development or application includes: (a) Hand roller mimeograph that can be made for $2.50 to $5.00. (b) Low cost flashlight battery powered transistor radio in a large case with a five inch speaker. (c) The sunlight filmstrip projector. (d) The flip book. (e) Silk screen printing for color poster work. (f) Inexpensive duplicating processes.

Willingness to Study and Test Completely New Methods

At the same time we seek to use the simplest possible methods, an effort is also made to look for and be willing to try completely new methods which may hold promise of outstanding results. At present the rationale and economic use of closed and open circuit television is under study for its application to problems in countries with which we cooperate.

It is believe that ICA can greatly increase its effectiveness in raising standards of living and creating hope and a willingness to continue development along lines of political and economic freedom only by becoming much more acutely aware of the necessity of reaching masses of people with productive change. This is being done increasingly. Communications techniques applied to obtaining mass effects is essential to this process.

Fusion of the Academic and the Commerical in Participant Training

In training participants in the various professions and subprofessions the comprise the communications media field a philosophy of seeking to combine the values both of the academic and commerical approaches has been followed. Under this approach special programs have been developed at several places, noteably at Indiana University, with a strong emphasis on carrying into a comprehensive field experience the application of the separate specialized skills taught in the earlier academic part of the program. Already this approach is paying off in more effective performance by participants when they return home.

Centralization vs. Decentralization of Communications Media Activities in a Cooperating Country

The Communications Media Staff believes that the American contribution to the development of effective Communications Media in host countries should be centralized, wherever possible, through the development of national centers that can serve as support, demonstration and training grounds for the development of what may eventually be decentralized services in many branches of the host government. In big ministries such as Agriculture and Health, separate offices concerned with communications and mass teaching may well be developed from the beginning. While the smaller units of government may need to depend on the Communications Media Center. In most countries such complex and advanced media as films, radio and television should be centralized with but a single agency serving all branches of the host government.

Use of Contracts in Communications Media Programs

Communications Media programs are carried out with a core of ICA technicians functioning in some 36 countries, supported by a series of contracts for the provision of special services. These contracts are with individuals, firms, and non-profit organizations as the special circumstances indicate. At present, contracts are in operation for the erection and training of personnel to run four educational film making centers, to provide services to one printing and publication program, to four radio projects, and to one national educational audiovisual program for schools. Three of these contracts are with Syracuse University.

American Universities

Through contractual arrangements for carrying on overseas contracts and programs for the training of foreign participants ICA's Communications Media Program cooperates closely with a number of American Universities.

Syracuse University has been operating film and other audiovisual aid production and training programs for ICA over the past eight years. These contracts have supplied effective services in Libya, Iran, Egypt, and Korea. Under them some 150 films have been produced and a large number of nationals in the countries served have been given extensive in-service training in all of the skills and professions that are involved in film making. The relationship with the University has been highly satisfactory and productive.

University of Boston has been extensively used in training foreign participants in the skills of communications and public relations. Special three-month to one year courses have been developed by the University to meet the needs of students brought from most of the Asian countries under ICA's program. Boston has done an outstanding job of meeting these special needs.

Indiana University in cooperation with ICA has developed a special course in Communications Media Leadership for foreign participants. ICA considers this training one of its outstanding achievements. The program is more fully described in the following section.

University of Southern California and the University of California in Los Angeles have both served as special training centers for film making and other communications skills. In addition individual participants have attended a number of other colleges and universities.

III. Examples of Accomplishments

In the ten years of its operations the Communications Media program has achieved much. Since this activity is associated with and works for all phases of the technical cooperation activity of ICA it is difficult to estimate its part in the general accomplishments of the various subject matter areas. However, the fact that the accomplishment has been considerable is attested by such general facts as follows:

Publications

Communications Media Advisors have assisted subject matter specialists and the various branches of the cooperating governments in more than forty countries in the production of from 2,000 to 2,500 titles of booklets, pamphlets, posters, magazines and other publications each year. The aggregate press run of these publications have totaled from 15 to 20 million copies and have reached from 200 to 250 million people each year. They have appeared in from 75 to 100 languages and have carried technical information in practically every subject matter field.

Silk Screen Printing

This program has introduced the method of silk screen printing into 31 countries where it was not formerly used. With this method the labor of these countries has been used to produce inexpensive posters, wall charts and flipbooks in several colors for training purposes. In Libya for example all schools are now equipped with a growing series of wall charts for teaching such subjects as human physiology, plant and animal structure, and economic geography.

Films

Film production and use have been developed in 20 countries. Training and production programs have resulted in the production of from 75 to 100 educational and training films each year. Many countries have been supplied projection equipment and millions of people have been taught with these films each year.

In addition to these types of general accomplishment there have been many specific cases in the 36 countries and territories where Communications Media programs function, a few of which are described here.

Radio in South Vietnam

ICA's Communications Media assistance to Vietnam has played an important part in binding that country into a viable nation. One important part of this was the supplying of 1,400 village radio listening centers equipped with a power source, a receiver and powerful amplifiers that have added several hundred thousand persons to the audience able to hear Radio Vietnam. Additional transmitters are now being supplied Vietnam to further improve the reach and effectiveness of her internal radio broadcasting network.

Jordan Farm Radio Program

Every morning at 6:15, the farmers and shepherds of Jordan listen to a radio program, broadcast to them from The Hashemite Broadcasting Station in Amman. This first-rate farm extension radio program - WITH THE DAYBREAK - is "their own" because it is they who have made of it a successful two-way system. They ask the questions - Mazen el Kubbaj broadcasts the answers.

That it works, is evidenced by the number of letters - some 300 every week - which Mr. Kubbaj receives from his listeners with problems such as these:

"How do I treat the sickness that makes my cow have a calf before her time?" or,

"What do I do about the insects that make the bark on my orchard trees fall off?"

The advice which Mr. Kubbaj has broadcast for well over a year now, is solid, factual, reliable. He selects from his mail the most urgent letters and takes them to the Ministry of Agriculture. Here the extension people get the facts for him. Often he talks to the subject matter specialists himself.

Much of the success of this extension radio program, however, may be attributed to the broadcaster's own personality and valuable store of knowledge acquired through several years of experience as an Extension Agent in Jerusalem. Mr. Kubbaj's easy radio presentation is shot through with the wisdom of the desert and the villages. There is no "talking down" in language the people cannot understand. From the beginning, the lecture-type script was discarded for the conversational "hi, folks" greeting which comes over the air WITH THE DAYBREAK.

National Media Production Center in the Philippines

The National Media Production Center has been one of the most successful of the centers developed in a number of countries to train personnel and support the communications media needs of the various branches of government. In the Philippines over the past several years the Center has served from 60 to 75 different branches or agencies in the government each year by training personnel, producing films, radio shows, live dramas, or printed material for them as a part of their regular operations. It is now a permanent part of the Philippine Government manned by Filipinos.

Libyan Communications Media Program

The program, which was initiated in 1953-54, has developed continuously until it now serves all of the joint services in agriculture, education, health, and other Government of Libya agencies. The training of Libyans is considered to be its most important function and the production of communications media materials follow.

Approximately 50 young Libyans have been trained in technical and administrative positions - some for a 4 or 5 year period. This means that latent talent has been converted into six silk screen printers, five creative artists, two librarians, five projectionists, four lecturers and two materials demonstration specialists of increasing competence. Offset printing crews have gained skill in material layout, negative and plate-making operations. Film production crews have been trained as script

writers, motion picture cameramen, directors, and film editors. Photo-processing has reached the stage where Libyans from the Communications Media Center are setting up and training others in schools. Seven Libyans have received a year's training in the United States in the field of Communications Media Leadership. Libyans are gradually assuming supervisory and administrative roles with growing responsibilities. Recently, an outstanding young Libyan has been appointed as Director of the Communications Media Center, with complete administrative direction of the Libyan staff. USOM technicians now act entirely in an advisory and training capacity.

There are two principal centers - one in Tripoli and the other in Benghazi. In Sebha in the Fezzan a small distribution and photo-processing center has been established. In the Tripoli and Benghazi Centers excellent photographic laboratories, graphics departments, and efficient plants for simple forms of printing are in operation. Printing skills have reached such a high level that 14 x 17 color posters are being reproduced in large numbers on the offset press. Both Centers have training and demonstration halls and adequate projection facilities. There is a negative file of approximately 8,000. The film library has over 200 titles of films and film strips. Magnetic sound tracks in Arabic are being put on many films produced in other countries. To date, more than 20 motion pictures have been made dealing largely with the development of skills and understanding in health, education, and agriculture, and more are in various stages of production. Mobile units carry motion pictures, filmstrips and exhibits into remote areas where they are used to support planned operations. Comprehensive utilization courses assist in the training of teachers, agriculture and community development works in the use of communications media materials. There is an ever increasing demand for the various services offered by the Center.

Harvest Magazine on Taiwan

"Harvest Magazine" established in 1951 by the Joint Commission for Rural Reconstruction in the Republic of China, is published solely for the benefit of the Chinese Farmer. With a paid circulation of 36,000 subscriptions it is over 70% self-supporting and has a readership estimated at 200,000 rural readers who live in all parts of the Island. The useful farming information it has presented to the farmer has been accurate, practical, and written so that he can understand it.

There is a question and answer section of the magazine that receives about 500 letters per month. The letters are answered in the magazine and directly to the writers.

The format and content of the magazine has steadily improved. Most subscribers keep all issues tied together for constant reference. It has many features including a woman's page, the first to be produced in any Taiwan journal under a "Women's Editor". "Harvest" was also the first magazine to carry advertising. This required much education for both readers and advertisers and is a key part of the magazine's drive toward complete self-support.

About 3,000 copies are distributed free to primary schools, public libraries, farmer's associations, public health units.

By all of these methods "Harvest" has become a significant force in the lives of rural people in Taiwan.

Indiana University Communications Media Leadership Training Program

The fourth class in an 11-month Leadership Training Program is now in attendance at Indiana University. This program is specially tailored to give participants from all over the world a combination of training and experience that will equip them to become leaders in the development of effective communications in their societies.

During the first semester of this program the participants are given systematic and thorough training in the basic skills of graphics, still photography, simple film making, radio and some television. They get work in the psychology of learning, the theory of communications and in the selection and evaluation of audiovisual communications materials. They learn how to do all the basic operations involved in the planning, design and production of the audiovisual communications media.

During the second semester they are divided into teams that work with and for an action organization in a community. They do all the work of planning and carrying out an information education campaign in support of the program of that organization. Through this process they manage all stages of such a campaign putting the skills they learned in the first semester to work under practical conditions. This experience is a field internship in the communications field.

In the past years twelve such field campaigns have been completed including such things as a Better Breakfast Campaign for school children in Indianapolis, two campaigns with the Rural Electrification Cooperative on the advantages of electric welding in farm repair shops, and the use of electricity for space heating, a Vaccination Campaign with a County Health Unit on vaccination of pre-school children for five diseases.

This technique of training is proving to be extremely successful, returning these participants to their home countries well equipped to carry out similar campaigns to move knowledge and generate change with consent in their home countries.

Sunlight Filmstrip Projector

A simple projector made from a one gallon oil tin which uses the sun as its light source has been developed by ICA. It can be produced locally in any part of the world at a cost of $3 to $5. When used with a shadow box for rear projection it provides an image as big and as bright as a television screen whenever and wherever the sun shines. It will project both filmstrips and slides and does not require that the room be darkened.

This inexpensive piece of equipment opens up the use of projected materials as a major new way of improving teaching in rural schools throughout the world.

Special materials such as a course in Biology for 6th grade are under preparation to demonstrate how with projected materials many subjects, particularly science, can be taught in village schools much more effectively with this equipment than has been possible heretofore. Already 250 projectors are being made in Afghanistan, 150 in Iran, and a pilot run in India.

Ecuador Banana Improvement

Audiovisual communications recently played a key role in restoring acceptance of Ecuadorian bananas in United States markets. Once one of the largest exporters, Ecuador's bananas had deteriorated to the point where they were often rejected. This was due to two basic problems: (1) the inroads made by the spread of "Sigatoka", a serious banana disease; and (2) the damage sustained through rough and improper handling of bananas from the small plantations to the ship where they are loaded for export. Bruised spots are not detected in most cases until the stems have reached their destination when discolorations on the ripened skins show up.

After a thorough analysis by banana specialists, the audiovisual technicians of the Extension Division of the Agricultural Servicio, Ministry of Agriculture, accepted the challenge of telling the growers and educating the pickers, truckers, stevedores, anyone in fact who had any part in handling the delicate fruit. Since the greater part of the target audience was illiterate, audiovisual communications had to be relied upon to reach and teach tens of thousands of people.

A film entitled "Banana Handling" was the hub of the teaching campaign and was made in Ecuador with backgrounds familiar to the audience. This film pointed out the right and wrong ways to handle the fruit. These key points were further emphasized in an 8-page extensively illustrated pamphlet "Handling Bananas" which was distributed to the audiences after each showing. In addition, illustrated posters were displayed in fruit company offices, on docks, at paymasters' windows and at the banana collecting points; newspapers carried stories on the campaign written to interest local people.

The success of this education campaign, with its emphasis on audiovisual presentations, was demonstrated some six months later when bananas from Ecuador were for the first time classified as premium fruit in New York and New Orleans. The economic gain to Ecuador from this improvement in quality has amounted to many millions of dollars.