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# CONSULTANT REPORT SERIES



International Nutrition Communication Service

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**INTERNATIONAL NUTRITION COMMUNICATION SERVICE**

**CONSULTANT REPORT SERIES**

**CAMEROON**

— July 27 - August 10, 1983 —

**Report on the National Seminar-Workshop on  
Mass Media and Health held in Yaounde,  
Cameroon.**

by

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## INTRODUCTION

Since 1981, the International Nutrition Communication Service (INCS) has been helping the Ministry of Health in Cameroon develop a national program to utilize the mass media to promote improved nutrition behaviors. INCS consultants Ron Parlato and Joanne Leslie visited Cameroon in August 1981 and recommended a long term project design and implementation strategy. INCS consultant Frans Lenglet's assignment was to train nutrition and health educators from various Cameroon government and non-government agencies in techniques of mass media message design and materials production. As a result of Lenglet's workshop, Cameroon, with funding support from the Organization of Petroleum Export Countries (OPEC) should now be in a good position to more actively utilize its mass media institutions to promote improved nutrition behavior. The next step is for the Ministry of Health to develop a systematic approach to a mass media campaign that will attempt to deal with the nutrition related problems of vulnerable low-income target groups in various regions of the country.

Ron Israel  
Director, INCS

September 1983

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## Background and Scope of Work

The Mass Media and Health Project of the Health Education Service, Ministry of Public Health, received some planning assistance in August 1981 from Joanne Leslie and Ron Parlato. They recommended a three-phase process: Phase I consisted of the preparation of basic health documents, Phase II the development of a detailed educational strategy, and Phase III a national workshop. Their report recommended a total of 12 to 16 weeks of technical assistance for Phases II and III.

When the Ministry of Health requested technical assistance in July of 1983, it was assumed it would be for Phase II of the project, with the following work plan: (1) developing a health/nutrition mass media communications strategy in collaboration with MOH Health/Nutrition Education Services; (2) specifically detailing a 12-month work plan for radio, including the number and type of radio programs to be produced, their sequence, timing, and scheduling; and (3) planning an agenda for a mass media seminar for regional health educators and radio producers that would provide participants with practical training in radio spot and program production.

Instead, the three-week consultancy, which is the topic of this report, was to provide assistance for Phase III, the national workshop. The Scope of Work for the consultancy was:

1. To assist with a national workshop for approximately 30 participants to develop their skills in message design and materials (mass media) production; and
2. To help plan specific follow-up activities to the workshop.

### I. The National Workshop

The consultant sponsored by INCS was to be the chief facilitator at the workshop. Unfortunately, due to the cancellation of the consultant originally scheduled for the workshop and the limited availability of this consultant, the workshop had been shortened from three to two weeks, and the consultant could not arrive until just before the workshop. Therefore, he could not assist in arranging the agenda or in preparing any training materials.

The workshop was national and focused on the use of mass media (in particular radio and newspapers) for health/nutrition education. It was organized by the Health Education Service, Directorate of Preventive Medicine, Ministry of Public Health.

The basic working document for the workshop was completed in Phase I of the project and listed the 14 most serious health/nutrition problems and diseases in the country. Each problem or disease is analyzed by four criteria: incidence and socioeconomic and geographical distribution; possible causes; implications for individuals and society; and possible solutions.

The question at the outset of the workshop was what had happened to Phase II of the project plan? The subsequent activity after Phase I was the workshop. Was Phase II forgotten, or was the order for Phases II and III being reversed?

The idea most planners had was that Phases II and III could be combined. A plan for one year of activities for a mass media health education campaign could be combined with a training in mass media production techniques. However, this was not the case. A two-week workshop was not enough time for both; also, they are two separate activities; the planning activity being one which requires individual attention and close consultation with people at the local level. Therefore, it is hoped that the national workshop provided participants with the concepts, skills, and motivation that will allow them to return to their provinces and make a realistic, local plan. Once these plans are made and some activities underway, local workshops can be held to evaluate what has been done and make plans for a 12-month mass media program.

II. Report on the Workshop on Mass Media and Health, Yaounde, July 27-August 10, 1983

Financed by OPEC funds, the National Seminar-Workshop on Mass Media and Health took place at the Red Cross Building in Yaounde from Wednesday, July 27, until Wednesday, August 10, 1983. The workshop was attended by 40 participants, representing the national and provincial services of the Ministry of Public Health (20 national,

7 provincial), the Ministry of Agriculture (2, Information Service), the Ministry of Youth and Sports (2, A/V Service), the Ministry of Information and Culture (3, one Anglophone and one Francophone radio producer, one newspaper journalist), the Ministry of Education (2), the Ministry of Social Affairs (2), and the Red Cross (2). The workshop was officially opened and closed by the Minister of Public Health in the presence of the Minister of Information and Culture. A detailed and extensive official report of the workshop is presently being prepared by the Health Education Service, which organized the workshop. Some excerpts from this report are included in the present document.

A. Objectives and Program

"With respect to the health and nutritional problems of Cameroon, and the need to inform and educate the Cameroonian population about these problems, the Cameroon Government would like to:

- "● maximize the use of mass media, in particular radio and press, for reaching a large part of the population,
- reinforce and increase health education activities, through a close collaboration and coordination between the various services involved in popular information and education,
- improve mass media educational activities with respect to design, production, supervision and evaluation.

"The goal of the workshop is to improve the educational approach using mass media and to maximize the use of these means of information and education in order to inform and educate the Cameroonian population about health, so that it can take its responsibilities in its own hands and participate more effectively in our national primary health care programs.

"At the end of the workshop, the participants should be able to:

- "● analyze health and nutrition problems, to determine priorities for an educational intervention;

- "● determine the social groups most affected by specific health problems and determine their level of knowledge, attitudes, and practices vis à vis these problems;
- plan the use of mass media, particularly radio and press, in educational interventions, taking into account the strengths and weaknesses of the media, their functions, the characteristics of the target groups, and the educational objectives;
- operate and use a tape recorder;
- prepare and conduct radio and newspaper interviews;
- analyze and select information for designing educational messages for radio spots, interviews, documentaries, magazines, and other radio and newspaper formats;
- prepare and pretest message and educational program prototypes;
- make recommendations for national and regional health education activities using mass media."

The program of the workshop is attached as Appendix A. As can be seen in the program, after initial plenary sessions for introducing a number of concepts and basic methodologies, the bulk of the workshop was spent working in four subgroups. Each of the subgroups selected one particular health problem (infant diarrhea, intestinal worms, malaria, potable water) as an "application" area for its problem analysis, target group analysis, objective setting, and message design.

At the point where each subgroup began to work on prototype materials, even smaller groups were formed. During this period it would have been ideal to provide each of the small groups with individualized guidance, but because there were not enough facilitators and the two national facilitators also had administrative responsibilities, it was difficult to provide systematic guidance and support.

Despite these problems each of the four subgroups produced a number of prototypes of spots, dramas, slogans, and interviews for radio, and interviews and articles for newspapers about its chosen health problem. The scripts of these prototypes together with all

other working documents and handouts (see Appendix B) will be included in the overall workshop report, to be published by the Health Education Service.

## B. Discussion

The following sections are taken from the official workshop report:

### 1. Success and Constraints

"There can be no doubt that the workshop achieved its objectives. However, the level at which the objectives were attained leaves something to be desired. It is, for example, clear that the major stages of an educational or communication campaign--message design and message pretest--did not get the attention they deserve. It would have been desirable if the various subgroups could have spent more time on a content analysis of each message in relationship to the educational objectives and target groups concerned. Time constraints in combination with the rather large number of participants precluded systematic guidance in the process of message design."

### 2. Follow-Up and Implementation

"It is clear, and the exhibits at the end of the workshop testified to this, that the participants achieved a thorough understanding of the process of designing and conducting an educational campaign. It remains to be seen how they are going to use the newly acquired concepts and skills. Some participants expressed doubt about the effective utilization of these skills and suggested that more of their superiors should have been exposed to the guiding working ideas. Others saw barriers to implementation in the chronic lack of transport, funds, manpower, and equipment. There are, however, some hopeful signs that the necessary political, administrative, and material support for systematic educational campaigns might materialize. The presence of both the Minister of Information and Culture and the Minister of Public Health at the opening and closing of the workshop

... for future cooperation and collaboration. In addition, the Minister of Public Health in his closing speech emphasized that the Government would seriously study the workshop recommendations (attached as Appendix C). These call for collaboration and coordination of all services and agencies concerned about health education for the population at large."

"The Health Education Service will carry out a follow-up survey among the participants between three and six months after the national workshop. It will distribute questionnaires to establish the degree to which the participants have been able to put into practice what they learned during the national workshop."

### 3. Provincial Workshops

"The national workshop was not an end in itself. It was supposed to lay the groundwork for future provincial workshops, which will design concrete health education campaigns and will produce concrete media products using the methodology 'taught' in the national workshop. The provincial workshops will be different from the national workshop in terms of set-up, organization, and objectives. They will be organized with a particular health theme in mind. This health theme will be closely connected to the health priorities in the province. The workshops' first objective should be the production of concrete and usable media and educational products, such as radio programs and newspaper articles dealing with one or more aspects of the chosen health theme. Because of its production oriented character, the number of participants should be restricted to a maximum of 15 persons, who--once the workshop is over--will be instrumental in implementing the educational campaign designed before or during the workshop. The workshop should last for three weeks, and should be held in a relatively secluded location, where participants will not be distracted by the daily problems of transport, shopping, social contacts, and daily work. It must be realized that such a set-up will be more costly than the set-up of the national workshop, during which no provisions for participants' feeding and lodging had been made. In order to use the available workshop time efficiently, it is recommended that the necessary materials be prepared sufficiently well in advance of

the start of the workshop. Therefore, it would be desirable for the consultant whose technical assistance would be required to arrive at least one month prior to the date of the provincial workshop. Because the workshop will deal with a real campaign, it will be necessary to have funds available for transport, daily allowances, and other items connected with doing field research and field work for the duration of the workshop and also for the duration of the campaign. It would not make much sense to start a campaign that needs to be abandoned in midflight because funds have run out, transportation is withdrawn, and daily allowances cannot be paid.

"Four provincial workshops will be planned in Buea for North-West and South-West Provinces; in Bafoussam for Littoral and Western Provinces; in Bertoua for Eastern and Central-South Provinces; and in Garoua for Northern Province."

### C. Conclusions

"Despite some limitations the workshop was a success. However, in order to bear fruit, the various institutions involved--in particular the Ministry of Public Health and the Ministry of Information and Culture--should provide the necessary political, administrative, and material support and encouragement for putting the things learned into practice.

"The recommendations formulated by the workshop participants clearly express their concern and desire that a concerted effort be made towards systematic health campaigns for the population at large. It is hoped that the study that will be made of these recommendations will produce concrete results, which will facilitate the planning and conducting of mass health educational campaigns.

"The momentum created by the national workshop can be maintained by making an immediate start with the planning of the four provincial workshops, which will lead to four provincial education campaigns on a health theme of provincial importance. It is recommended that the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) provide technical and financial support for these provincial workshops. The OPEC funds, from which up until now all Media and Health activities have been

financed, will be insufficient for covering the costs of four intensive provincial workshops of three weeks' duration each.

"One of the lessons of the national workshops was that research before, during, and after an educational campaign is absolutely indispensable. Therefore, a start should be made with designing a research program and research capability, which should initially focus on a health (education) problem or theme of national importance (for example, infant diarrhea and oral rehydration)."

### III. Observations, Conclusions, and Recommendations

1. As stated earlier, the project phases (II and III) recommended in the Leslie/Parlato report of August 1981 seem to have been reversed (i.e., the national workshop [Phase II] took place before the more theoretical strategy planning [Phase II]). It must be stressed that although on paper it looks as though Phase II has been omitted, the activities described for the phase are crucial to the project's success and need to be integrated with future activities.

2. The national workshop was not an applied workshop but a hypothetical, "dry run" of the methodology that could be used to develop and test a mass media health campaign. Therefore, the provincial workshops should be about how the methodology is applied to a real program and will be critical for the success of the activity. AID/Yaounde should work closely with the Health Education Service to ensure that the follow-up activities described in the National Seminar Report, are carried out. This will mean stimulating the provinces chosen for the workshops to work out ideas for a realistic health education campaign. If no campaign is being developed, the provincial workshops will, again, be theoretical exercises.

3. Because Phase II has not been omitted, the technical assistance scheduled for that phase in the Leslie/Parlato report should not be overlooked. What amounts to approximately 17 weeks more of technical assistance for Phase II should be used for assisting the Health Education Service in organizing and conducting the provincial seminars and possibly preparing the provincial campaigns. It is absolutely

necessary that any consultant or team of consultants be available for a period of six to eight weeks, beginning a couple of weeks before the start of the workshop. Thus, the consultant(s) will be able to assist in the necessary preparation of the workshop and will have a significant impact on its agenda and proceedings.

4. The Leslie/Parlato report recommends USAID support for the research component of the Mass Media and Health Project. This recommendation is repeated here. It is noted that such support should lead to the strengthening of the research capacity of the Ministry of Public Health in general and of the Health Education Service in particular. This support might also be connected to strengthening the capacity of the Human Sciences Institute (Institut des Sciences Humaines) and its Social Science Research Center (Centre de Recherches en Sciences Sociales [CRESS]). Either USAID/Yaounde or future consultant missions should draft a proposal for the scope of this research support. In this context an extra effort should be made to disseminate all the findings on health and nutrition in Cameroon gathered through USAID's International Nutrition Communication Service.

5. One of the constraints that will be faced by implementors of the health campaigns is the lack of technical facilities, equipment for visual and audio production, and vehicles. Some of this equipment should have been installed under the Practical Training in Health Education Project. The equipment recommended in the Leslie/Parlato report will be needed but should not be purchased until the facilities for the equipment are ready.

6. During the development of the project all goals and expectations should be kept at a realistic level. Although well staffed, the Health Education Service suffers from a chronic lack of resources (transportation, equipment, and facilities). As with most health education programs, management skills are not well developed and the Service's freedom of action is restricted by the bureaucracy of the Ministry of Public Health. Support to the program should continue as the activities and campaigns are developed with the Leslie/Parlato report and this one serving as guides.

APPENDIX A

PROGRAM, WORKSHOP ON MASS MEDIA AND HEALTH,  
YAOUNDE, JULY 27 - AUGUST 10, 1983

APPENDIX A

PROGRAM \* WORKSHOP ON MASS MEDIA AND HEALTH \*

YAOUNDE, 27 JULY - 10 AUGUST, 1983 \*

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Wednesday 27 July:

Registration of the participants

Opening speech by the Minister of Public Health in the presence of the Minister of Information & Culture and other invited guests

Plenary: Program outline; distribution of handouts; formation of work groups

Plenary: Planning an educational action

Work groups: Study of priority health problems

Thursday 28 July:

Work groups (cont'd): Study of priority health problems

Plenary: Introduction to the basic communication model

Plenary: Audience/target group centered planning; Introduction to KAP elements - Knowledge, Attitudes, Practices

Work groups: Determining target groups for each health problem

Friday 29 July:

Work groups (cont'd): Determining target groups

Plenary: Audience profiles

Plenary: Formulation of educational objectives

Work groups: Educational objectives for each health problem

Saturday 30 July:

Work groups (cont'd): Educational objectives

Plenary: Educational objectives

- Monday 1 August: Plenary: Introduction to different mass media  
Plenary (cont'd): Mass media  
Work groups: Strengths and weaknesses of different media, in particular radio and press
- Tuesday 2 August: Plenary: The strengths and weaknesses of radio and newspapers in Cameroon  
Plenary: Different radio and press formats  
Work groups: Selection of media and formats, taking already determined educational objectives
- Wednesday 3 August: Visit to the Hopital Central  
Visit to the SOPECAM (publisher of the Cameroun Tribune)  
Visit to the National Radio
- Thursday 4 August: Visits to villages (Obout, Dganguen, and Messeng), primary health posts and community health projects in the Mefou District
- Friday 5 August: Work groups: analysis of information during Thursday visits  
Plenary: The importance of field research  
Work groups (cont'd): Selection of media and formats
- Saturday 6 August: Work groups: Writing of scripts for radio programmes and press articles
- Monday 8 August: Plenary: Introduction to pre-testing of educational messages  
Work groups: Design of pre-test questionnaire  
Work groups: production of first version of radio programmes and press articles

Tuesday 9 August:

Plenary: Discussing pre-test designs

Work groups: Pre-testing and production of radio and press materials

Wednesday 10 August:

Work groups (cont'd): materials production

Plenary: Final evaluation by participants

Work groups: Preparing exhibits

Closing ceremony: Delivery of workshop report; presentation of workshop recommendations; vote of thanks by participants; closing speech by the Minister of Public Health in the presence of the Minister of Information & Culture and other invited guests

Visit of the exhibits

Cocktail

APPENDIX B

HANDOUTS DISTRIBUTED BY CONSULTANT

HANDOUTS DISTRIBUTED BY CONSULTANT

1. D. Solomon Frameworks for Message Formation: What to put in the Message

(excerpt from the Report of the Message Design Workshop,  
Institute for Communication Research, Stanford University,  
August 1979)

2. E. de Fossard Radio Formats Offer Choices, in: Development  
Communication Report, No. 42, June 1983:14.

3. E. de Fossard Radio Instructional Programs: Some Practical  
Guidelines for Scriptwriters and Planners,  
in: Development Communication Report, No. 35,  
Sept. 1981: 6-7.

Note: These materials were translated in French for use by the  
Francophone participants.

APPENDIX C

RECOMMENDATIONS BY WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS

## APPENDIX C

### RECOMMENDATIONS BY WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS

- Considering Government's health option "Health for All by the Year 2000" for the well-being of our people;
- Considering that our people's health is a condition for the socio-economic development of our country;
- Considering the primordial role of communication by mass media for the success of health programs in general and primary health care in particular;
- Considering the importance of multi-sectoral collaboration for reaching the objectives of our health policies;
- Considering health education an efficient means for promoting popular participation in identifying and solving health problems;
- Considering the means and resources necessary for mass media utilization;
- The participants attending the Seminar-Workshop on Mass Media and Health, gathered in Yaounde from 27 July to 10 August 1983,

### THANK:

- The Cameroonian Government, the Red Cross, US-AID and OPEC to have made available all the resources necessary for the successful proceedings of the seminar-workshop on Mass Media and Health;
- The facilitators for their most appreciated availability, patience and dedication;

### RECOMMEND:

- Continued research on ever so efficient strategies for attaining our objective of "Health for All by the Year 2000";
  - Mobilisation of all national sectors for a more intensive and more effective collaboration;
  - Creation of district level Health Education Units;
  - A strongly increased role of the mass media in the implementation of health programs;
  - Integration of mass media communication techniques in the programs of health training institutions;
  - A strongly increased 'responsabilization' of the administrative, political, traditional and religious authorities for an effective popular conscientization on the importance of health programs;
  - Mobilization of the resources required for a greater use of mass media in a constant effort of improving the health of our people;
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- The utilization of mass media for supporting concrete actions, without which there cannot be any popular motivation;
- Holding similar seminars on provincial and district level;
- Creation of an interministerial committee of the different services that use the mass media for informing and educating the people in the areas of health and socio-economic development.

APPENDIX D

LIST OF WORKING CONTACTS

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Mrs. R. Anyangwe	Health Education Service, Ministry of Public Health
Mrs. I. Gandji	Health Education Service, Ministry of Public Health
Mr. S. Handleman	Human Resources Development Officer, USAID/Yaounde
Mr. E. Joe	Chief, Health Education Service, Ministry of Public Health (principal workshop organizer)
Dr. G. Kesseng	Assistant Director, Preventive Medicine and Public Hygiene, Ministry of Public Health
Dr. P. C. Mafiamba	Director, Preventive Medicine and Public Hygiene, Ministry of Public Health
Mr. R. Martin	Health, Nutrition and Population Officer, USAID/Yaounde
Mr. E. Ndjikeu	Deputy Chief, Health Education Service, Ministry of Public Health (workshop organizer)
Mr. G. Tedjou	Health Education Service, Ministry of Public Health
Mr. B. Wilder	Acting Director, USAID/Yaounde