Civic Update

NDI NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTE FOR INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Issue 3,

7/23/97

Welcome to the third issue of the Civic Update!! As you have heard, the Civic Update is a periodic news bulletin designed to exchange information among NDI staff on different aspects of civic programs. Its purpose is to inform staff on civic-related activities and to raise issues confronted by them while working on civic programs.

In the previous updates, "Civic Notes," which followed brief explanations of programs, were used to highlight specific program issues, provide ideas or suggestions for programs, or raise awareness of materials available. The format of this update is different -- it is all one big "Civic Note" -- because it will be the current author's (Kate Kelsch) last update before she departs NDI for her next employment adventure. This third edition focuses on issues that are important to NDI creating and carrying out excellent civic programs:

- INTERNAL COMMUNICATION;
- CIVIC RESOURCES;
- CREATIVITY; and
- EVALUATION.

We hope that it will be helpful. Please send us your comments and suggestions by e-mail at aaron@ndi.org; mail or fax. Thanks!

(This is an internal news update. Please do not distribute it to non-NDI colleagues.)

What's Happening from NDI-Washington, DC On the Civic Front?

INTERNAL COMMUNICATION

Field Offices Can E-Mail Each Other Directly

Do you know which one of your fellow staff members works on a similar program?? Now you do!!! *See the attached "NDI Civic Programs and Contact Info Chart."* It provides you with DC and field staff contact information. This chart will help you reach other staff members working on similar programs. Use each other as resources!!! Who knows, what you are trying to do might have already been attempted. Or, the challenge you are confronting today could have been resolved yesterday in another country.

Within the chart you will find the programs divided according to their current area of primary civic focus. Contact information is

listed for each program respectively. Unfortunately, because of space constraint, it was not possible to list all DC or field staff involved in the programs. Therefore, it seemed most appropriate to list the most senior program managers.

Go for it!! E-mail one of your NDI colleagues. (As you know, everything is subject to change.)

Regular Communication Among DC-Based Staff Supporting Civic Education Programs

In early April, several DC-based civic education program staff members met to discuss how they could better exchange information amongst themselves on the various NDI civic education programs and learn about the work and lessons from the different regions. The group of approximately 10 individuals decided to have an informal discussion once each month.

At the most recent Civic Education Meeting on July 8, the purpose and format of the meetings were further discussed. Participants agreed that the purpose of the meetings is to provide civic education program staff with the opportunity to discuss ideas, challenges and give suggestions regarding their programs. They are also a means for staff to learn more about civic-related themes and an opportunity to develop skills such as how to facilitate a meeting.

In addition to sharing information, one topic will be selected for discussion at each meeting. At the last meeting, Aaron Azelton conducted a session on how to run an effective meeting. This upcoming meeting, scheduled August 5, will be on team building and will be facilitated by Sarah Copley,

program assistant for West Bank Gaza.

CIVIC RESOURCES

Did you know we have thousands of documents and numerous books available on civic advocacy, education, training and many, many more civic-related topics. *See the attached subject index list of the Civic and Political team's civic files.* The headings and sub-headings are thematic and listed in alphabetical order. We encourage you, the NDI staff, to use the civic materials as a reference while developing and working on your programs, and to give us materials to add to the files. New resources have been acquired on the following themes:

A) Subjects Ranging From Advocacy to Candidate Forums from The League of Women Voters include:
- ► "Face to Face -- A Guide to Candidate Debates"
- ► "Guide to Getting Good Media Coverage"
- ► "Making Democracy Work -- Working with the Media to Build Better Communities"

B) Citizenship Action materials from the Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs/Center for Democracy and Citizenship at the University of Minnesota include:
- ► "Building Ownership: A Coach's Guide to Teaching Politics"
- ► "By the People -- An AmeriCorps Citizenship and Service Training Guide"
- ► "Doing Politics: An Owner's Manual for Public Life"

▸ "Making the Rules: A Public Achievement Guidebook for Young People Who Intend to Make a Difference"
▸ "Reinventing Citizenship: The Practice of Public Work"

C) Coalition Building -- Materials from the AHEC, a Massachusetts-based community development group include:

▸ "Building Coalitions that Work: Lessons From the Field"

▸ " From the Ground Up -- A Workbook on Coalition Building & Community Development"
▸ " Monitoring and Evaluation of Coalitions: Lessons from Eight Communities"

CREATIVITY

Charlotte Cerf, recently Mozambique's program director, was in DC on July 11 and discussed her experiences with civic and voter education programs with the NDI staff. Her presentation focused on how to turn creative ideas into a reality through planning and organization. As many of you may know, Charlotte and the Mozambique team introduced a number of written, visual and audio materials that have influenced the design of several NDI programs.

Charlotte's advice on how to come up with creative ideas and make them happen were:

(1) Know Your Target Audience.
The NDI team in Mozambique learned about the people in Mozambique by reading about the country and its culture and meeting regularly with a variety of Mozambicans. Focus groups also allowed for a better and more sensitive understanding of the people. Focus group results revealed such things as the Mozambicans preference for actual photos of other Mozambicans as opposed to comic cartoons, and what certain colors and symbols represented to them. A direct consequence of focus group results was the production of voter education manuals, posters and videos containing the depictions of actual Mozambicans going through the voting process. The continuity of the exact same visuals in the manual, posters and videos allowed for a more unifying message.

(2) Know the Environment that Your Materials are Going to be Used In.
Creating materials such as the kits, also required knowing the environment. Taking into account that the physical setting of the towns was mostly rural meant producing voter simulation materials that were adaptable to the environment. Because trainers would be traveling in buses, trucks or bicycles the kits had to be portable. As a result, the kits were made in the design of a backpack.

(3) Know How Your Target Population Obtains Information and In What Form.
In Mozambique, 80 percent of the population was illiterate and mostly rural. Educating the majority of Mozambicans meant knowing how they, the target population, received most of their information. One of the main mediums in reaching Mozambicans was through the radio with soap operas and game shows. The radio was utilized to convey voting-related concepts. In addition, given the popularity of theater in Mozambique, voting simulation kits were created to allow Mozambicans to practice the voting process. The kits contained, among other materials,

sample ballots, simulated registration cards and diagrams.

(4) Bring Creative People into the Discussion.

Sharing focus group results with Mozambican artists, allowed NDI-Mozambique to hear their creative input on designing a fun and exciting voter education campaign. Most importantly, NDI was able to establish relationships with artists whose talent and contacts proved to be invaluable when creating voter education material. Equally important was communicating focus group results to local groups, particularly because they initially planned to educate the population through text materials and were not considering other mechanisms of teaching. Sharing results of focus groups increased the possibility of consensus with the local groups.

(5) Use Common Sense and Think Things Through.

Charlotte commented on adapting to time constraints. Arriving in April, and the elections scheduled for October, planning and organizing had to be done at a fast pace. Costs, for example, involved using common sense in deciding who to hire. In the NDI-Mozambique program, local people were hired to assemble voter education kits, and to compose and perform voter oriented skits and a theme song. Benefits of local hiring were its low cost and being able to supervise production of voter education materials. In discussing the planning and organizing of the NDI Mozambique program, Charlotte emphasized flexibility, innovation, risk-taking and the use of one's common sense and knowledge as all important factors in evolving an effective and successful program.

EVALUATION

NGO Baselines

As NDI moves toward better evaluation mechanisms, we have realized the importance of knowing where you started so that you can assess your end accomplishments. If you are working with an NGO or several organizations, you need to record the status of the organizations(s) from the beginning of your working relationship. Are we going to help a group carry out civic education? Or, civic advocacy activities? What does the group already know and do? What do we hope to affect and strengthen? At the end of the program, we then ask -- what characteristics of the group have we influenced? We can only answer this and other questions if we understand where the organization was when we started.

The Civic and Political Organization team has several samples NGO baseline assessments available for your review and reference. The Malawi "A Baseline Survey of Democracy and Governance Non-Governmental Organizations in Malawi, June 1996" is comprehensive document and can serve as a resource to you when drafting your own baselines.

Evaluation Resources

In the search to understand evaluation more fully and assist staff in an *ongoing* process of incorporating evaluation into their existing programs, we have collected a number of resources on the topic. They are easy to read and full of helpful information and tips such as:
-       pros and cons of using
        questionnaires;
-       when to use interviews;
-       case studies on measuring

institutional development; and

-     building evaluation into program planning.

Materials include*:*

► "So You Want to Evaluate?," designed to help you build evaluation into program planning.

► "How Can We Do It?," takes evaluation theory and teaches you how to put it into practice.

► "Assessing Development/Global Education Programs: A Planning Model"

► "Participatory Evaluation: A Users Guide"

If you are interested in incorporating evaluation into your program, these are the resources to see. Contact the Cathy Westley of the Strategy and Evaluation Team at ext. 4986 or by e-mail at cathy@ndi.org for more information on these materials.

FAREWELL, FAREWELL (Author's Note)

As mentioned at the beginning of the update, this will be my last (but hopefully not final) Civic Update. As you may have heard by now, I am leaving NDI on July 18 and moving back to Minnesota. My fiancee, Tony Murphy, accepted a job in Minnesota (my home state) and, upon returning, I will start my quest for my next employment adventure.

It has been a pleasure supporting NDI civic programs around the globe. Many truly amazing programs have been put in place and are being carried out. It has been a rewarding opportunity to work with the DC staff as they plan and prepare for civic programs and to link up with the field-civic staff to support and learn from their initiatives. I hope that all of you will

continue the cross regional communication that has begun and take advantage of the attached "NDI Civic Programs and Contact Info" chart.

Produced by Kate Kelsch & Sylvia Panfil

Best wishes to you all! Au revoir!
  Kate Kelsch

P.S. Have a good candidate for the Senior Program Officer for Civic Organization, Education and Advocacy? Forward him/her the *attached job announcement*.