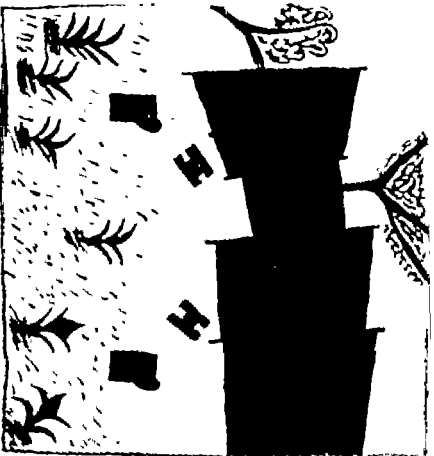


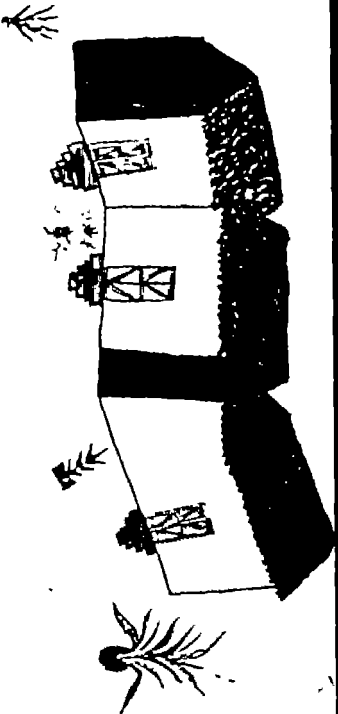
**DEVELOPING
A PICTORIAL
LANGUAGE
An experience
of field testing
in rural Orissa**

**A Guide for
Communicators**

Indh Kumar



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FOREWORD

There is perceptible today, a shift in attitude toward communication among planners and administrators concerned with social change. The shift is small, but significant in its implications for those professionals being enlisted to help mobilize community participation in vital programmes of health, education and economic opportunity. The change is toward an acceptance of communication as a process of exchange between people, rather than as a one way flow of information operating from the top, down.

This human truth should be obvious, particularly in India, where Mahatma Gandhi forged a strategy for freedom based on his precise understanding of communication as that participation which empowers people to control their destinies.

Yet since Independence, attitudes have been overwhelmingly biased toward communication programmes expressed in terms of products and hardware. In this one way flow of information, the 'sender' is wise and powerful and knows what is good for the ignorant and powerless 'receiver'. The two participants never exchange roles, and communication plans travel in one direction only. Small wonder, then, that forty years later we are still struggling with the need to change basic attitudes and behaviours in sectors as vital for survival as drinking water and sanitation.

Attitudes must change if our efforts and investments are to serve a real purpose. It is necessary there be the widest acceptance that the credibility of the communication process rests on the quality of interpersonal exchange at local and individual levels. Everything else – including investments in electronic hardware and media products – must be seen as a support to, not a substitute for, individual, personal understanding.

To achieve such understanding demands a genuine respect for the manner in which people interpret messages from within and outside their world. People must be encouraged to respond with messages of their own, and planners and implementers encouraged to listen. In other words, the ultimate purpose must be to guide

professionals working in sectors of social need toward the creation of communication aids that can help achieve such objectives.

Visual literacy is part of this complex and challenging area of understanding, research and application. Indira Rana's documentation of DANIDA's experience in Orissa is an invaluable guide and support to many who are struggling with these concerns. They can draw strength from the experience in problem solving set out in these pages. Hopefully, this publication will encourage further efforts at providing the base of research and scholarship essential to raising the quality of communication planning in India, and indeed in many other societies faced with similar challenges.



Ashoke Chatterjee
Communications Consultant
Department of Rural Development
Government of India

DEVELOPING A PICTORIAL LANGUAGE: An experience of field testing in rural Orissa

A Guide for Communicators

Irish Rana

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INTRODUCTION

This Guide is aimed primarily at development educators and communicators. The content, however, has an important point to make to those in project management and policy planning.

In recent years people involved in development have begun to realize that a 'top-down' approach is dysfunctional, be it in 'hardware' or in 'software', such as education. Educators have begun to see that what is required is 'participatory education', and efforts are being made to evolve methodologies for involving the recipients in the process of education. However, in the area of communication, aids are always produced by the urban educated for use on rural audiences. This may be necessary in film and audiovisuals for which rural people are not trained, but is also true of illustrated communication aids, which as this Guide demonstrates, is not only unnecessary, but also counter-productive, especially amongst those who do have a pictorial tradition. Illustrations produced by the urban mind are generally neither comprehended nor appreciated by the rural.

This Guide is based on a field survey conducted in rural Orissa, and offers primarily a *methodology* for evolving illustrations which do communicate with people living in rural areas, with a very different world view to those in the urban. The end product of the experiment, the two illustrations on pages 32 and 33 are not a 'final answer' in any way, as the data base is too narrow for such a definitive statement. The survey was only one of several conducted at the same time for a multi-media educational programme, and there was insufficient time as also trained personnel

However, the methodology, process and results will serve to demonstrate to educators and communicators, something of the perceptions, mind sets and innate intelligence of rural people, and how the 'educated' underestimate those who are to 'be educated'. It will say much about attitudes.

This Guide will also demonstrate to managers, policy planners and those who allocate budgets, the need for

further surveys such as this. Much money is spent on pictorial communication aids, both at field levels and at the centre, which do not actually communicate, as illustrations are generally evolved without sufficient awareness of, and respect for, the rural mind. So, the money is largely wasted.

Projects are usually in too much of a hurry to achieve results in hardware and reports, to spend the time and energy necessary to field test educational strategies, much less communication aids and even less, pictorial aids, as the general misconception is that pictures are universally understood. Usually, neither time, will, finances or expertise are available in this softest of all soft 'sciences', communication

This Guide demonstrates that communicating with pictures is a subtle process, and very local, in style, content, symbolism and detail. This could lead to those at policy level, less sensitive to the power of visual communication and perhaps to pictures in general, to retreat from the complexities inherent in funding a series of surveys which might provide a Guide with more certain results than does this. However, from this and the few other works on visual literacy, it seems possible that broad generalizations over a state, region or country, even many countries, can be evolved, and specifics delineated for local variations and educational levels: there are already clear generalizations coming out of Africa, Nepal and now Orissa, where pictorial traditions in the folk culture are not standard, nor the exposure to modern mass media.

Well planned surveys resulting in a Guide with instructions for adaptations will enable projects to save time, energy and finances lost in hastily conducted, repetitious surveys, if they are conducted at all.

Toward this end, this author tried a small experiment on a publication aimed at rural children, field tested for the WHO. An adaptation kit was devised with instructions to translator and artist, on how to adapt picture stories meant for an Indian context, to other cultures. Figs. 41, 42, 43 on pages 35, 36 and 37 demonstrate that when base illustrations and sufficiently exact instructions are provided, illustrations can be adapted from culture to culture.

I. BACKGROUND

About Seeing

"Seeing is believing."

"Show me "

"I wouldn't have believed it if I hadn't seen it "

We have all said something like this at one time or other, implying that if we see something with our own eyes, it is proved true. We assume that there is a one-to-one photographic relationship between what is 'out there', and what we see inside our eyes. But this is not so. More than seeing, we *perceive*

About Perception

Perception is described as 'the act of forming a mental image or concept based on physical sensations, and interpreted in the mind in the light of prior experience'.¹ Research into perception has shown us that what we actually see is only a small part of the many visual signals in our environment. The brain directs attention and focusses the eyes, so what we see is selective. This is a necessary survival mechanism as too much input is disturbing and dysfunctional.

About Visual Language

Experiments on the visual cells in the brain² have demonstrated that they are very specific in their functions. Some cells respond to movement in one direction only, some only to lines at a particular angle, others only to corners and so on. The cells function like visual 'letters', which combine to form visual 'words', which in turn are arranged into visual 'sentences'. There is a 'language' to what we see, as there is a language to what we hear and speak.

And, as in any verbal language, incoming visual information is matched and compared with what is already imprinted in the brain. The visual letters, words and sentences are analysed and synthesized, and shuffled around until they agree with what is already there. What we see must have meaning, and meaning comes from the prior experience, the context. Construction and reconstruction in the brain happens independently of what is 'objectively' out there. Perception is not only a function of what is *coming into* the brain, but of what is *already in* there.³

So rather than saying: "I wouldn't have believed it if I hadn't seen it", it is

more accurate to say: "I wouldn't have seen it at all if I hadn't already known it in the first place."⁴

This fact is poignantly brought out in the story of Sheila who had poor eyesight as a child and became completely blind at the age of sixteen. As the blind will, she learned to find her way around by touch and smell and sound, and with the help of her dog. Then, when she was twenty six, an eye operation helped her regain her sight. As she tells it in her autobiography,⁵ regaining her sight was in many ways traumatic. Her mental picture of a tree, for instance, was what she had *felt*: the trunk, rough and tubular. But she was unprepared for its height, and when she saw the canopy of leaves overhead, her internal picture of a tree was so shaken, that she felt disoriented. And worse, she would suddenly realize she was looking *through* things: she had not seen them. And she had not seen them because she did not *know* what they were ... by sight. It took a long time for her visual cells to coordinate with her sense of touch and smell and sound.

Cultural Variations in Perception

If we accept that what is seen is founded on what is already known, then it is safe to assume that people of one culture will see things differently to those in another. For instance, it is recorded that eskimos see more colours in white than do people who do not live in the snow. Some cultures do not differentiate between blue and green. The Bantus of Africa have only three adjectives for all colours.⁶

People living in cities, brought up with horizontal and vertical lines, and closed-in spaces, have been known not to see things as clearly in the horizon, as those brought up in deserts. And people living in rural communities will, by and large, see things quite differently to those living in cosmopolitan cities: they have different perceptions.

Perceiving Pictures

When confronted with modern abstract art, many people are confused: they have to be educated to understand it, and the ability to appreciate complex images is considered a mark of cultural attainment. African and Indian sculpture, today accepted as having a high aesthetic value, was at one time considered 'barbaric' by Europeans

Education has made the difference.

Many urban adults in India don't like reading comics, not because they are 'bad literature', but because the juxtaposition of text and pictures is disruptive. This is also true of rural school children in Madhya Pradesh, who when tested⁷ confused the same characters from frame to frame when they were shown from different angles, and could not comprehend the meaning of bubbles. Pictures on their own did not tell comprehensible stories; they needed text to explain them. They were interested in the pictures because they were colourful, but preferred reading straight text: it was more familiar.

About Visual Literacy

One of the most common mistakes rural educators make is to assume that those who are illiterate in reading and writing will nevertheless be able to read pictures. Any pictures (Fig. 1).

"There is a prevailing assumption," says Andreas Fuglesang, "that pictures as a mode of expression are universally understood. Many observations from the field confirm that this is not so. People learn to read pictures just as they learn to read the pages in a book. This is not recognized because education in reading pictures is an informal process."⁸

There is not only a visual language, there is also visual *literacy*.

About Testing

It is often said that the 'hard sciences', physics, chemistry, biology, are exact, therefore easy to verify with tests: the social sciences are not. Of all the social sciences, communication is perhaps the most subjective, and therefore difficult to test and verify. Of all types of communication, the visual is the 'softest' and most subjective of all.

However, as Alan Holmes says: "It is never safe to act on an assumption of what people will or will not understand visually without first testing the assumption."⁹

There are admittedly few books on this sensitive and diffuse area of visual literacy. But what is a communicator to *do* even with the information given in these?

Some rural communicators, aware of the problems of perception, using their common sense and some reading, have had illustrations drawn by urban



Fig. 1: Urban artists unthinkingly use a European visual grammar with which to communicate with rural people. This colouring technique, vanishing point perspective and inset were found incomprehensible. Variations of this kind of illustration abound.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO ?

What should you do if you want to use pictures to help you communicate ideas to villagers as you carry out your village development work?

1. If it is possible for you to make simple drawings yourself that will be quite effective - certainly more effective than just talking or writing. It is not necessary for you to use photographs, which are difficult and expensive to make.



2. The most effective drawings are shaded drawings with little or no background, like this one.

However, these are the most difficult to draw.



3. If you cannot make shaded drawings, or get someone else to make them for you, then try to make line drawings, like this



If these are still too difficult to make, then make stylized drawings, like this:

artists, and tested them on rural audiences, in order to get an acceptable visual. All works on visual communication, suggest that this is the way to proceed (Fig 2) But in this way the communicator is still guessing at what the rural audience might actually be perceiving, because the urban artist, in the final analysis, does the illustrations pretty much in his/her own way. It is my experience that getting urban educated artists to break out of a way of perceiving that they have learned is 'modern' and 'progressive', is remarkably hard.

Educators at the Ashish Gram Rachna Trust in Pachod, Maharashtra,¹⁰ finding that illustrations done by urban artists were almost completely misperceived by rural people, asked rural people themselves to draw their version of certain subjects, and simplified them for further use (Fig. 3) They broke new ground but they didn't go quite far enough.

In no case, as far as I know, have rural artists been considered able enough to illustrate fully and in colour, their own interpretations of messages. Certainly this is not possible in cultures where there is no pictorial tradition, but this has not even been done where there is, perhaps because in most traditional cultures, art is decorative. In some cases, folk art tells well known myths and legends, but never messages heavy with 'shoulds' and 'oughts' as those we want to convey in 'development'. And so far, no methodology has been evolved to analyse the work of village artists, create visuals synthesized from village work, field test them and create a style of illustration which might communicate effectively to rural audiences.

A Shift in Attitude

What educators and communicators in development are looking for, is a shift in *attitude* amongst those less aware of issues in family planning, health, sanitation and so on. We aim at a growth of the knowledge bank which will create such a shift, and behaviours which will arise from this shift.

Fig. 2: Illustrations from *Communicating with Pictures in Nepal*. Suggestions to the urban artist.

However, we seldom look for a shift in our *own* attitudes towards those we seek to 'educate'. We are perhaps not even aware that such a shift is necessary: we 'know better', we are there to teach. There is today much questioning about the meaning of 'progress' and 'development' and about the role of 'educators'. And the findings of this experiment have some bearing on the attitudes of 'development educators and communicators' toward those to 'be developed'

Shifts in attitude cannot be forced. They come suddenly, usually unexpectedly, from a gradual accumulation of knowledge. Attitudes are complex, and often very insidious in their persistence. A personal experience is worth relating here, as all communicators can learn from each other.

While researching in Madhya Pradesh in 1985 for a picture/comic book on immunization¹¹, aimed at rural children, I saw that visuals understood by urban children were not necessarily understood by rural children with limited exposure to the print media. Therefore, when confronted with developing a largely visual range of communication aids in Orissa for a more general rural audience, I asked the advice of several people who had worked with rural

audiences longer than I had.

One of the products was to be wall posters. Here it is worth noting that too many educational programmes lean too heavily on 'educational materials' forgetting the *process*. And when contemplating 'communication materials', resort immediately to posters and hoardings. I had classed posters as *reminders* rather than as primary educational tools.¹² They were to be put up after intensive small group participatory discussions. As such, rather than communicate a rule. "You should use latrines to avoid spreading disease", or a closed deductive statement. "Using latrines keeps diseases from spreading", I planned to ask a question which would remind the people of what they had learned, cause comment and initiate discussion. "Wouldn't it be better for us to use latrines?"

Note, incidently, the terms 'we' and 'us' which I suggest using in all educational communications rather than the third person or 'you'. This 'we feeling' aids in communication with people living in tight communities, and reduces the distance between the educator and the audience.

I had sketched Fig. 4 to accompany this verbal statement. I was feeling well pleased with my thinking: the image was clean and uncluttered, the text

clear. But the rural educator to whom I showed this sketch said immediately: "Be careful about what you say in illustrations. The message received from this picture will be exactly the opposite to that which you want to convey. Since the latrine and the man going into it are small, they will be seen to be unimportant. The woman with the water pot, because she is larger, will be seen as the model to emulate."

She went on to tell me that testing the illustration sketched in Fig. 5, a woman feeding her child, rural women in Bihar stubbornly insisted that this was a woman feeding her *husband*: "We don't have *time* to feed our children like this," they insisted. When asked if their husbands were so small, the answer was a shrug and a giggle.

Then this educator told me that when asked to illustrate women in a group discussion, rural women drew what is sketched in Fig. 6. I immediately remembered the image in Fig. 7, and several things fell into place for me at this exchange.

1) Fig. 6 showed me that although I had understood some issues, a part of my mind was still caught in a European visual mind set. Vanishing point perspective (Fig. 8) is a recent European visual technique (it was discovered in the 15th century

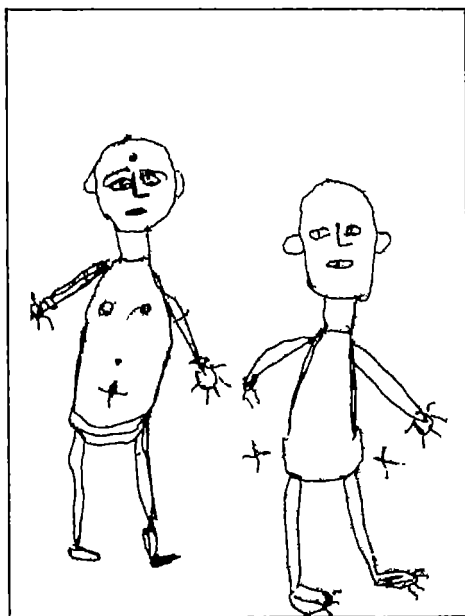


Fig. 3: Illustrations by a rural artist at the Pachod Project showing Vasectomy and Tubectomy. While urban educators thought them crude, the people understood them



Fig. 4: "Wouldn't it be better for us to use latrines?"



Fig. 5: Rural women in Bihar insisted this was a woman feeding her husband.

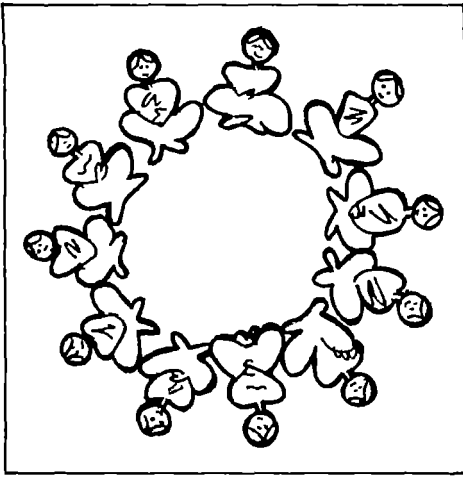


Fig. 6: When asked to draw women in a group discussion, rural women in Bihar drew this.

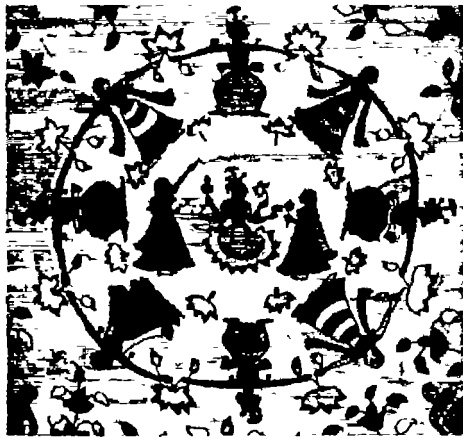


Fig. 7: Chamba folk embroidery showing Krishna dancing with the gopis. Does Krishna multiply, or is he shown several times dancing with different gopis in a circular movement?

during the Renaissance), before which all cultures painted in multiple perspective: what is behind is shown above, with little overlap. In our rural psyches, this multiple imaging is alive and very real today, unaffected by this 'foreign' (European) way of seeing things, which we urban educated take very much for granted. In drawing the illustration as I had, I was not only displaying a subtle arrogance that I, an educated communicator, could devise what a rural eye would comprehend, but I was also in effect, in danger of speaking Dutch to people who speak Oriya!

- 2) For rural audiences the *feeling* conveyed by a picture carries more weight than 'minor' considerations of accuracy and technique, and most pictorial communication aids forget this aspect entirely: there is no warmth, emotion, community history in urban initiated drawings
- 3) We western educated urban communicators, albeit Indian, belong to a different culture, we have been influenced by, and have absorbed the assumptions of the European mind. It is *we* who have to drop our 'sophisticated' western educated ways of seeing if we are to communicate effectively with our

own people who live in rural time/space/cultures. Here was a problem in cross cultural communication as real as that between British and Indian (on which I have done some work).

So I began to read what I could find on the subject of visual literacy. And realized that since so many communication aids to be produced were to be visual: exhibitions, flash cards, wall posters, brochures and pamphlets, pretesting to develop a pictorial language with which to communicate with the target audience was a necessity.

During the course of the field survey, many instances came up which demonstrated the counterproductive attitudes of urban educators and communicators toward rural people. These are italicised in the Guide for attention

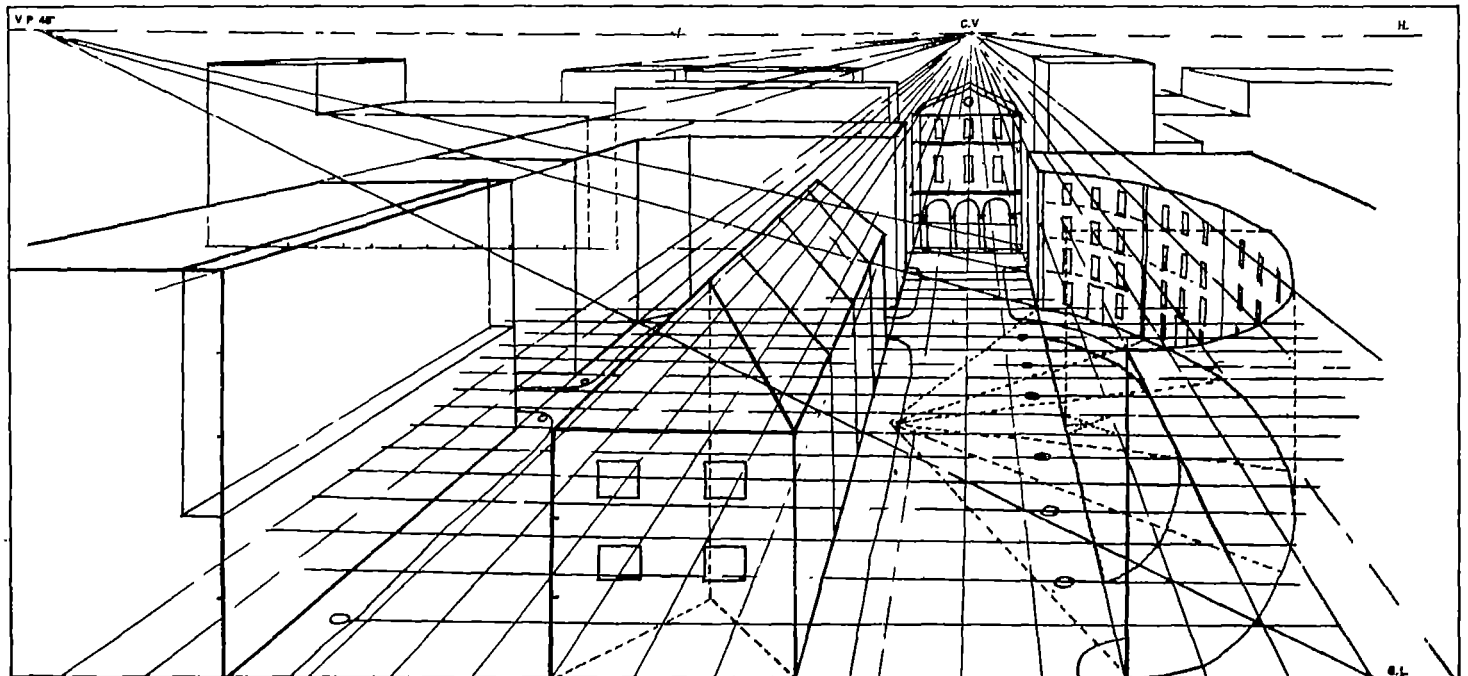


Fig. 8: The mathematical accuracy of vanishing point perspective originated in Europe during the 15th century

II. A METHODOLOGY FOR EVOLVING A PICTORIAL LANGUAGE

I am not Oriya, but to get even an Oriya urban artist to guess at what Oriya rural people might be perceiving, seemed to me a waste of energy. I was not in the least certain that I could, although I paint, implement what the available literature on visual literacy had to teach me.

The First Step: Getting Rural Illustrations

The first step, then, was to get the rural people themselves to draw how *they* visualized the messages we wanted to convey. Orissa has a pictorial tradition with a high degree of decoration and narration. Would the artists be able to use their traditional pictorial forms to convey messages? I had no idea at the time how I would analyse what I got from the field, but I thought that what the village people drew would be to an extent what they *comprehended* of the message, and the *style* in which did their illustrations would be what they could *represent*. It was conceivable that they could perceive a more 'Europeanized' rendering, although the style/grammar used in Phase I of the health education programme (Fig. 1) had no impact. However, getting them to do the pictures would convey to us something of appeal, atmosphere, a temperature of the emotions, which has elements not easily definable. Perhaps we would find some symbols at the very least, that we could use.

THE MESSAGES

The project socio-economists drew up six messages. We would get these illustrated by artists living in a block which had already received the health education programme, in order to save time transferring essential concepts to those who did not know enough.

The six messages formulated in the event were not questions, but concepts the education programme was to enable them to evolve in their own

minds. These would be simpler to illustrate

The Messages were.

- 1) Keeping our tubewell surroundings clean helps prevent disease
- 2) Drinking water from ponds and openwells will make us sick.
- 3) Carrying and storing containers properly prevents our water from getting contaminated.
- 4) Keeping our village clean helps prevent disease
- 5) We can call our self-employed mechanic to repair our handpumps
- 6) Using latrines helps us prevent the spread of disease.

THE RURAL ARTISTS

Since water is essentially a woman's concern, we looked for women from four different educational levels, who were known to have the ability to draw. We would not go to villages with a high degree of involvement in the traditional arts as this would skew the data base. The artists located were in Delang Block.

- 1) Dhani Sahu Gudia or sweet-maker community; 28 years; Class III pass, married; Village Dehasahi.
- 2) Urmilla Swain Khandaiet community, 32 years; Class IV pass, married, Village Beraboi I
- 3) Chandrama Das Harijan community; 18 years; Class IX pass, unmarried; Village Rencha
- 4) Surama Pradhan: Khandaiet community; 22 years, BA pass; unmarried, Village Beraboi II

They were given the messages translated into Oriya, poster paints, brushes and poster paper (28" x 22") and asked to illustrate the messages just as they liked, without any interference whatsoever from the socio-economist in charge. It was of some importance that the socio-economist already knew them well and was therefore able to get their cooperation. She spoke at least their verbal language!

She visited them off and on to see how they were progressing and to answer any queries, of which there were few. *The women were pleased to*

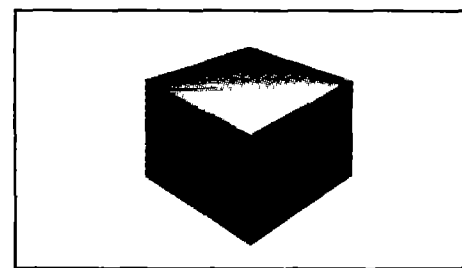


Fig. 9. Representing depth, the third side of a box

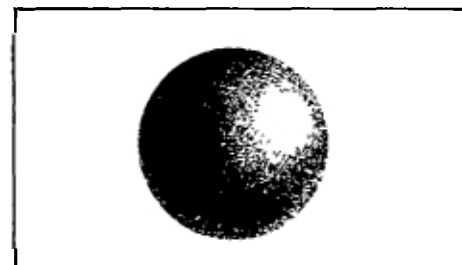


Fig. 10. Representing depth, light and shade on a sphere

Fig 11. The broadest aspect in Egyptian sculpture. The broadest aspect of the head: nose to the back of the head, the face turned to the side, the shoulders and chest straight on, hip to stomach sideways, arms and hands straight on, calf to shin sideways, and the longest view of the foot





Fig. 12: 'Rejoicing at the Birth of Prince Salim' from the *Akbar Nama*, 1562 In multiple perspective, the people behind are shown at the top of the illustration. Since they are dignitaries they are shown larger than the people in front, who, in vanishing point perspective, would be larger

have their talent recognized and willingly gave their time. Their work generated a great deal of good-natured discussion in the villages. When the women completed their drawings they were given a small gift of appreciation, and the remaining paints, brushes and papers.

A GRID FOR ANALYSIS

Before going on to make observations on the work done by the rural artists, it is useful to clarify a grid against which the pictures can be discussed.

- 1) *The First and Second Dimensions*
Pictures done on a flat surface will naturally have height and width. They are *two dimensional*
- 2) *The Third Dimension*: However, there is also the third dimension which we see but don't always represent. This is *depth*. This is shown in objects by drawing a third side, as in a box (Fig 9) and by light and shade, as in a sphere (Fig 10). Each object has depth, and objects placed on the same plane have *depth of field*: some things are close to us, some far away (Fig. 7). Before the discovery of the *vanishing point* in Europe, depth of field was drawn in multiple perspective.

Vanishing point perspective has the advantage of reproducing reality in a photographic way, mechanically, thereby giving us a better ability to manipulate the material world. But at the same time vanishing point limits the point of view to one, and separates us from a more *whole* way of seeing things.

Multiple perspective is aligned with what the mind *knows*: when we close our eyes to visualize something, as likely as not we will see a picture in which we are hovering about 45 degrees above it, allowing us to see more of the picture than we would if we were seeing it with our eyes open and standing at ground level (Fig 12)

Part and parcel of representing objects in multiple perspective is what art history and appreciation courses¹³ call 'the convention of the broadest aspect' (Figs. 11-17). Objects are shown as they are *known* rather than as they are seen. The broadest aspect gives us the ability to see things as a whole



Fig. 13: In the 14th century Europe painted without a vanishing point.



Fig. 14 Multiple perspective and the broadest aspect in the Mewar school Garuda appears at different events in the same frame Time flows unseparated

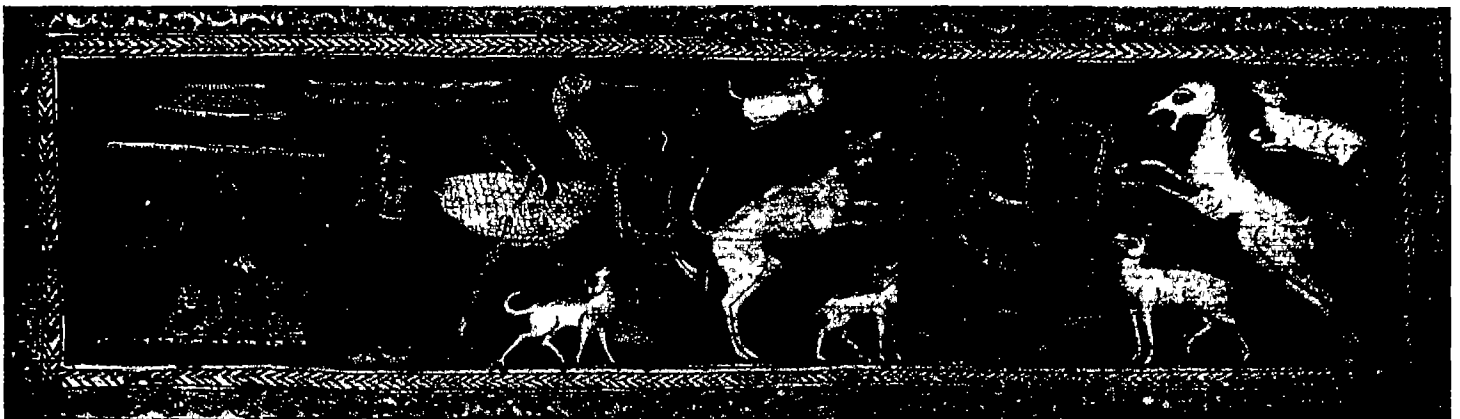


Fig. 15: An Oriya patachitra showing the broadest aspect and continuous time in the same frame Krishna appears again and again at different events.

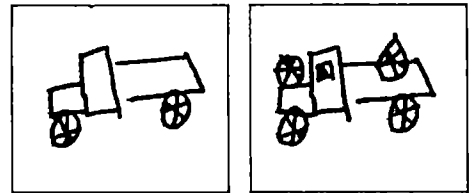


Fig. 16: Multiple perspective and the broadest aspect in Mughal painting from the *Hamza Nama*, 16th century. Note especially, the fountain.



Fig. 17: The beauty of Chinese painting lies in the use of multiple perspective. The artist's eye hovers 45 degrees above the landscape.

Fig. 18: A truck as we would see it (left), and at the right, how an African adult represents it. He draws what he *knows*, rather than what he *sees* (Fuglesang, *About Understanding*)



Seeing things as they really are, vanishing to a point in the distance, we don't see the back of an object, so it is usually not represented except by suggestion, by showing the object as transparent (Fig. 18) or in the abstract, in the fine arts.

3) *The Fourth Dimension* Then there is the fourth dimension: *Time*. This is difficult to represent on a flat surface, except by dividing the page, as in a comic strip, separating time into parts. However, before this technique was evolved, artists showed time in the same frame, as in Figs 14-15. The same figure moves from action to action. Time, before the modern industrial world became time conscious and dissected it, flowed timelessly¹⁴. Time still flows in rural India, while the urban mind is becoming more time bound.

4) *Decoration*: Pictures in rural cultures do not generally deliver a message; they are either just decorative, or they are highly decorative and tell a story, as in the Rajasthani phads and Oriya patachitras. But the story often has to be narrated by a singer as well. The picture does not stand alone. In the coastal belt of Orissa the educational level and exposure to modern mass media is higher than in the hinterland. The degree of decoration to message delivery are an important factor in analysing the village illustrations.

5) *Important Elements*: What are the elements rural people find important in the message?

6) *Symbols*: What symbols are used to denote dirt/cleanliness, good/bad, right/wrong; do/don't do.

7) *Narration*: Do the artists narrate a story as they deliver the message?

THE RURAL ILLUSTRATIONS

Here are some of the illustrations drawn by the rural women artists. It is not possible to reproduce all.

Fig 19: Dhani Sahu. *Drinking water from ponds and openwells will make us sick* This illustration is by the least verbally literate woman. It looks like a child's drawing at first glance, but its elements are most useful to our understanding. Only the objects *important to the message* are depicted, and they are clearly and boldly illustrated on a white background, with no clutter. The *third dimension*, depth, is represented perfectly in the broadest aspect: the tubewell platform is seen from the top, as are the stepwell and openwell. The pump, the woman, the bucket, glass, cow, and diseased drinkers are seen from the side. There is no attempt at representing roundness with light and shade. Depth of field is shown by the drinkers placed *below* the stepwell. She is drawing what she *knows* not what she *sees*. The *fourth dimension*, time is shown in the cause-effect of dirt/germs transferred from the dirty source to the insides of the drinkers, and the tubewell (the solution to the problem) is placed on the right. A story is *narrated*. The *symbols* for cleanliness is shown by flowers. Dirt/germs are symbolized with splodges. The diseased people are *important* to the message so they are larger. The artist makes no attempt to put the elements in proportion to each other. This artist, the least educated, puts text into her pictures; perhaps she is uncertain of her ability to represent visually, the verbal message.



Fig. 20: Dhani Sahu: *We can call our SEM to repair our handpumps*. Since the self-employed mechanic (SEM) is *important* in this message, his house is large. A village is necessary in this message, so the other houses are small, and as they are at a distance, are placed and on top of the picture, without overlap. The *broadest aspect* is represented. Note especially the SEM at the tubewell. Compare him to Fig. 11. The road makes for a feeling of community. A *story* is narrated. Someone has gone to call the SEM. The SEM appears in the door of his house, tools in hand. He then repairs the handpump. No frames are necessary, the *fourth dimension*, time, is simply made part of the picture. Since the SEM is a 'good man', a flower grows at his doorstep. The tubewell is clean – the *symbol* is a flower



Fig 21. Urmilla Swain. *Drinking water from ponds and openwells will make us sick* This is part 2 of a two part illustration, a clean stepwell is her answer to part 1 which shows a dirty pond (Dhani Sahu shows problem and solution in the same picture) Part 1 appears as a dummy (Fig 28) Here is a classic example of a mind picture at the *broadest aspect*. The stepwell is seen from the top. There is no attempt to define up or down. Flowers are stylized, representing cleanliness. The illustration is highly *decorative*, but quite obviously there is no contradiction between message and decoration. Were it to be drawn realistically in vanishing point perspective with one point of view, it would clearly lose impact. This artist has a highly developed sense of style, design and decoration, but not much for people or for story.

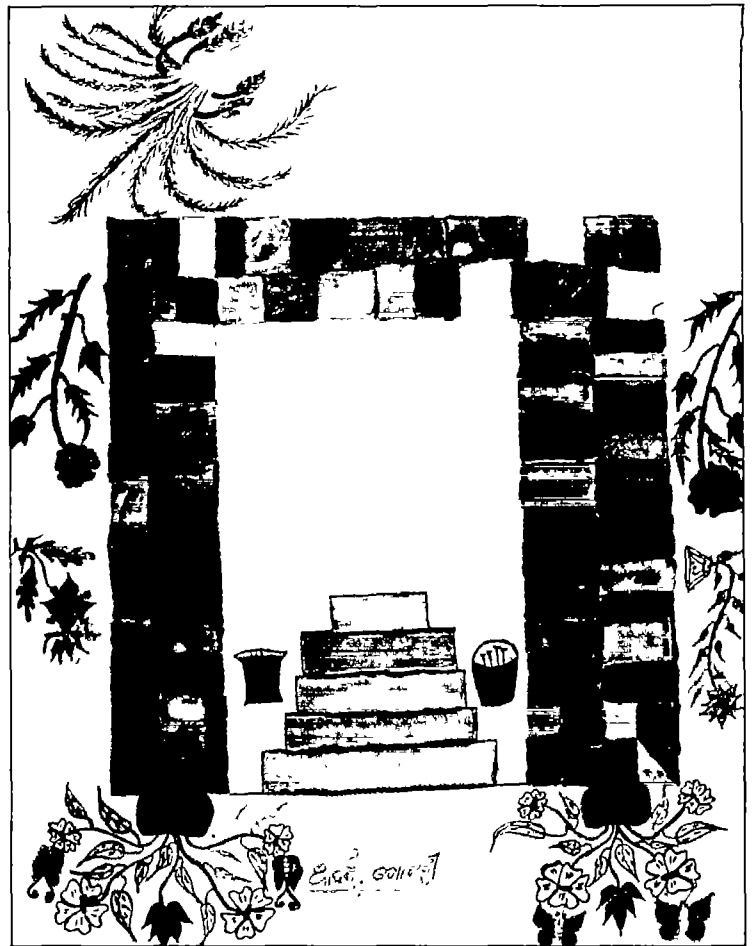


Fig 22: Urmilla Swain: *We can call our SEM to repair our handpumps* While all her other pictures are quite beautiful, attempts at drawing with some attempt at perspective are disastrous. She is much happier, obviously, with what she produced in Fig 21, and the illustrations on the cover of this Guide. It is of interest that she does not particularly narrate a story and the *fourth dimension*, time, is of little consequence. The people in her pictures are very small in relation to the objects. This could be a personal quirk; it could also be indicative of what came through in phase 1 of the health education programme: the importance of the hardware, rather than the people. This is a possibility rather than a certainty, but suggests a way of evaluating the messages received from education programmes.

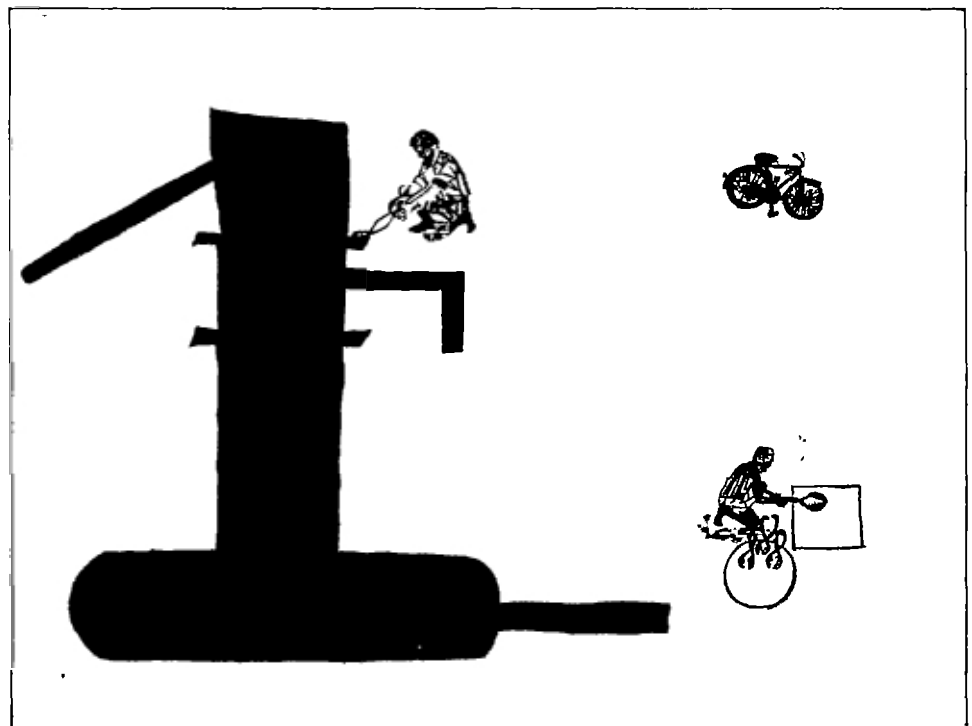




Fig 23: Chandrama Das. *Drinking water from ponds and openwells will make us sick.* This is a classic of *multiple perspective*, where the artist is hovering 45 degrees above the picture so as to obtain the *broadest aspect*. All houses are the same size, the ones behind shown above. She has no problem seeing the pond, well, platform and road from the top, people, flowers, ducks, from the side. She has a highly developed sense for negative space and understatement. All *elements* are discrete, but the artist is able to represent overlap, as in the house clusters. She has a slight sense for point of view as seen in the ovoid shape of the openwell. This artist has a strong *feeling* for community and village life. Homes, temple, roads and people are vividly portrayed. A story is *narrated* all the dirty activities result in people going to the hospital to the middle right, or becoming sick as shown at bottom left. Diseases/germs are symbolised in the sick man as dots. Flies hover over the faeces. Dirt/germs are shown as splodges at the openwell where the woman is washing dishes.



Fig 24 Chandrama Das. *Using latrines helps prevent the spread of disease.* Stories are narrated on the top of the picture, a boy eats raw vegetables from the field in which another boy is defecating. Flies travel from another boy's faeces to the food being prepared in a verandah. And consequently a woman takes her child to the hospital. At the bottom of the picture, flowers sprout in the garden of a house while the good people go to a latrine with very modern ladies/gents markings on it. The *fourth dimension*, time appears in the same frame. Story, to this artist, in people, community, gives the message more strongly than the *symbols* for good/bad, do/don't

Fig. 25: Surama Pradhan. *Keeping our tubewell platform clean helps prevent disease.* The most educated artist has the most certain sense of herself. people predominate in her pictures. Exposure to modern mass media comes through at BA pass: she breaks up her pictures into frames for the *fourth dimension*, time, and distinctly *narrates* a story. Flowers, for this most educated woman, as for the least, *symbolize* cleanliness. There is an attempt at point of view on the tubewell platform, some at light and shade, but essentially, she too uses *multiple perspective* and the *broadest aspect* in the objects, less so in people



Fig. 26: Surama Pradhan *Using latrines helps prevent the spread of disease.* Here again is a demonstration of a strong, individual style. There is a clear *cause-effect* story. women defecating in the fields cause sickness. The doctor tells them (in a very modern bubble) about worms going up unshod feet. The people build a latrine and all is well. A little more sophisticated, but as much of a narrative as that told by Chandrama Das. This most realistic of illustrators also shows the most *feeling* on the faces of her people



**The Second Step:
Preparing for the Field Test**

For the health education programme, we would have to use only *one* style of illustration comprehensible to all educational levels for all pictorial aids. However the four styles which came to us from the village artists were so diverse, that it was difficult initially to find common

threads, but for the obvious one: as the literacy level rose, so the style of illustrations evolved from a childlike rendering to that of a teenager. Previous works on visual literacy (Fuglesang, the Khatmandu Survey, Haaland, Holmes), had provided some guidelines. These are classified here under the headings, evolved for the Grid on pages 10-12.

GUIDELINES FROM PREVIOUS WORKS

A) First and second dimensions:

1) Overall Layout

- a) Layout should be functional, enabling the viewer to see better, and not done on artistic considerations.
- b) Illustrate within an oval for best impact as perception is selective and things in corners get left out
- c) Concentrate on elements, remove background where not necessary to message or completion of picture.

2) Style

- a) Use local pictorial traditions.
- b) Use familiar, realistic, specific, imagery rather than the abstract.
- c) Don't try to make illustrations into photographic reproductions: the two media elicit quite different responses. Photographs can, in fact, be less well comprehended than illustrations.

3) Colour

- a) Certain colours have specific meanings in different cultures.
- b) True to life colours are preferred.
- c) Colour is preferred to black and white.
- d) Bright colours make greater impact.

4) General Content

- a) Be aware of the reading level of the audience.
- b) Remember internal factors such as motivation, expectation, habits and attitudes determine what is selected for attention.
- c) Don't offend the religious beliefs of the people.
- d) Parts of the body are not necessarily seen as representations of the whole A hand holding a glass in isolation may not be understood.
- e) Don't use too many unnecessary details, certain details have relevance to the whole: use these.

**B) Third dimension:
depth/depth of field:**

- 1) Vanishing point perspective is a European artistic tradition and is not relevant to rural cultures.
- 2) Make 'memory pictures' 'twisted' to include as many sides wherever possible, rather than point of view pictures (by this Fuglesang means 'the convention of the broadest aspect').
- 3) A complete frontal picture is more likely to be identified than the side view which hides a leg and foot (again the convention of the broadest aspect).
- 4) Images superimposed one on top of the other, as in people sitting one behind the other may not be comprehended (the convention of the broadest aspect, and multiple perspective)

C) Fourth dimension: time:

This has not been attended to specifically, unless we understand narrating a story as implying the fourth dimension.

D) Decoration/realism:

- 1) This has not been attended to specifically unless we understand 'use local pictorial traditions' to imply decoration.
- 2) Too much shading is dysfunctional, as is total silhouette.

E) Symbols:

- 1) Be careful using symbols such as arrows, ticks and crosses, skull and crossbones, insets, gathering circles. They may not be comprehended as they are culture specific.

F) Story narration:

- 1) Illustrate people's proverbs wherever appropriate
- 2) Try to get the pictures enacted to see if they are understood or understandable.
- 3) Narrate a story to get the message across.

SELECTING A COMMERCIAL ARTIST

We were fortunate enough to find in Bhubaneswar, a commercial artist with a strong grounding in the folk styles of Orissa. How the local urban artist interpreted the village illustrations, we thought, would be an important element in the experiment. It is of interest that although most development issues concern women, the artists who illustrate for them are generally men. Men have a wider exposure to the world, their perceptions are therefore different. The work, in the event, was executed by both the commercial artist and his daughter. The daughter's work was warmer, better liked than that of her father!

EVOLVING ILLUSTRATIONS TO FIELD TEST

After some discussions between a visiting consultant social scientist, the artist, the Project socio-economists (who were interested but generally nonplussed with the experiment) and myself, we decided on the following:

- 1) We would field test only two messages: One negative in visual content, one positive. These were:
 - a) Drinking water from the tubewell keeps us healthy (positive)
 - b) Drinking water from ponds and openwells makes us sick (negative).
- 2) We would evolve three styles to test
 - a) Comprehension
 - b) Appeal

The three styles would be

Folk: Highly decorative, passive figures, stylized, all objects in the broadest aspect ('full twist' in Fuglesang's terminology), flat colours.

Realistic: with depth (light and shade), depth of field on the tubewell, pond, open well, houses.

This was incorporated as some socio-economists insisted that while the rural mind might represent only 'primitive' styles, it did not mean they could not comprehend more 'sophisticated' styles. Besides the people of the coastal belt of Orissa were better educated than in the hinterland and more exposed to the 'progressive', 'modern' and 'developed' mass media. This is an important point in attitude

There would be realism in postures and expressions. No decorations

would be added in this style as some socio-economists believed that to decorate pictures in such a serious business as health and hygiene education would be frivolous

Middle style: a mixture of the two with a 'half twist' on the major objects.

- 3) Multiple perspective would be used in all three styles as far as depth of field was concerned, except in the Realistic where objects were to be shown with a single point of view.
- 4) The background in each illustration would be left uncluttered and neutral
- 5) We would narrate a story, cause/effect, in each picture, not by breaking up the space into frames, but by repeating the same figure moving the action from top left, around to middle right, and on to bottom left in a clockwork sweep, as women use in decorating their homes. This would encompass the fourth dimension, time, effectively, in a manner the people might comprehend, although this had been merely suggested by the village artists.
- 6) Details pertinent to village life would be added
- 7) We would add as many elements from the village women's illustrations as we could. We had some of the village illustrations redone by the commercial artist to use as dummies, in order to:
 - a) reduce the 'add-on effect' (people able to guess the message of the third poster having seen the first two),
 - b) test audience understanding of village women's work,
 - c) present a similar *quality* of illustration: the village drawings were less finished than those of the commercial artist.

The social scientist advised us on the methodology for the field test. We would test in groups since all communication aids: exhibition posters and wall posters, would not necessarily be explained by an educator, but would be seen in groups by the audience by themselves and discussed. She helped us prepare a reporting card (Fig 37, page 25), select groups, and gave advice on drilling testers on questions

to ask, and the attitude to maintain during testing.

THE RESPONDENTS

The audience would be:

Group A: 6 children, illiterate, ages 9-12 (3 boys, 3 girls)

Group B: 6 school going children, ages 9-12, 3 boys, 3 girls (classes 3-8).

Group C: 6 women, ages 18-45, (3 literate, 3 illiterate, later changed to 6 each, separately)

Group D: 6 illiterate men, ages 20-50.

Group E: 6 literate men, ages 20-50 (classes 7-11)

Here is another interesting point on attitude all of us educated urban women professionals agreed to testing fewer women than children and men women go out less, we thought, and would be less likely to attend exhibitions and see posters Although we had chosen women artists to do the

illustrations, we suffered an interesting 'lapse' when we considered field testing! This was quickly seen and corrected during the pilot test

Each of these groups were to be tested in 3 blocks: one block which had received the health education programme and could be used as a control group, one near the sea, one in the hinterland, so as to encompass differences in educational attainment and exposure to mass media

The testers were to be a senior socio-economist from the Project office to display the posters one by one and ask the questions, an assistant to help her field the answers back to a reporter sitting behind the audience, filling in the forms. The assistants and reporter were from a local NGO which would be carrying out the health education programme.

DRILLING THE TESTERS

The testers were drilled in the following points:

- i) The tests were to be scheduled at a time convenient to the audience,
- ii) Testers were to be polite in requesting attendance;
- iii) The audience was to be approached as equals;
- iv) Doors to the room or courtyard were to be locked, no one else was to be allowed to intrude;
- v) Testers were to explain several times that the audience was *not* being tested; *we* were testing *our* ability to make the right pictures; there was no 'right answer' expected from them.
- vi) The tester was to ask only the questions on the form, not to hint or explain; ("What do you

see in this picture "What else?" "What else?"

- vii) At no point were the testers to patronize the audience or interrupt an answer;
- viii) All in the audience were to be encouraged to say whatever they liked, and to discuss with each other if necessary However, arguments and prolonged discussions were to be curtailed.
- ix) Whatever the audience said was to be recorded Every answer was to be considered 'right'. At no point was the testor to say: "No that's wrong", and attempt to give the 'right answer'.
- x) The audience were to be thanked for their time and any questions they might have on the test fully answered at the end.

**The Third Step:
The Field Test**

THE ILLUSTRATIONS TESTED

The following are the illustrations in the order in which they were tested, including dummies. All illustrations were pasted on board, and covered tightly with cellophane to ensure durability.



Fig 27: Serial 1, Style A: Folk, Message 1, Positive. Platform as in Urmilla Swain's illustration (copied as dummy, see Fig 33) Sari style taken from the illustrations by Chandrama Das.



Fig. 28: Serial 2, Dummy. Copied from an illustration by Urmilla Swain. Part 1 of a two part message. Part 2 is in Fig. 21. The design of the openwell and pond is used in Fig. 32.



Fig. 29 Serial 3, Style B; Middle: Message 2, Negative. Pond and well are in 'half twist'



Fig. 30 Serial 4, Dummy Copied from an illustration by Chandrama Das. The original is in Fig. 23. A point of interest here: on the first attempt the commercial artist 'tidied up' the illustration as he copied it. He straightened the trees and road, and made the hut clusters to his own specifications. He was 'improving' the original. It took some effort to get the artist to realize his version was not 'better'. Another point on attitude: The urban educated naturally 'know better'. It is a very deep-seated arrogance.

Fig. 31: Serial 5, Style C: Realistic; Message 1, Positive. Light and shade to represent the third dimension, depth in the objects. Realistic expressions The tubewell platform is shown with a single point of view



Fig. 32: Serial 6, Style A. Folk, Message 2, Negative. Well follows style from Urmilla Swain's illustration, Serial 2.



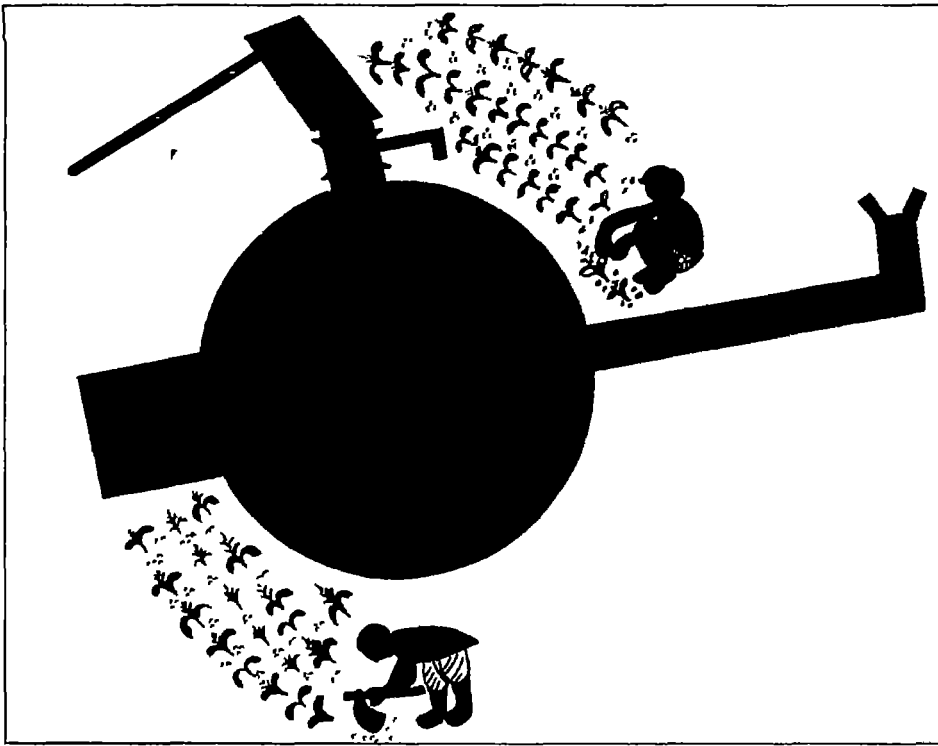


Fig. 33: Serial 7, Dummy: Copied from an illustration by Urmilla Swain. A classic of a 'twisted' picture in the broadest aspect. Note size of the people to tubewell. The original is on the cover of this Guide



Fig. 34: Serial 8, Style B. Middle, Message 1, Positive. Later we realized we should have used a 'half twist' on the tubewell platform

Fig. 35: Serial 9, Dummy. Copied from an illustration by Chandrama Das.

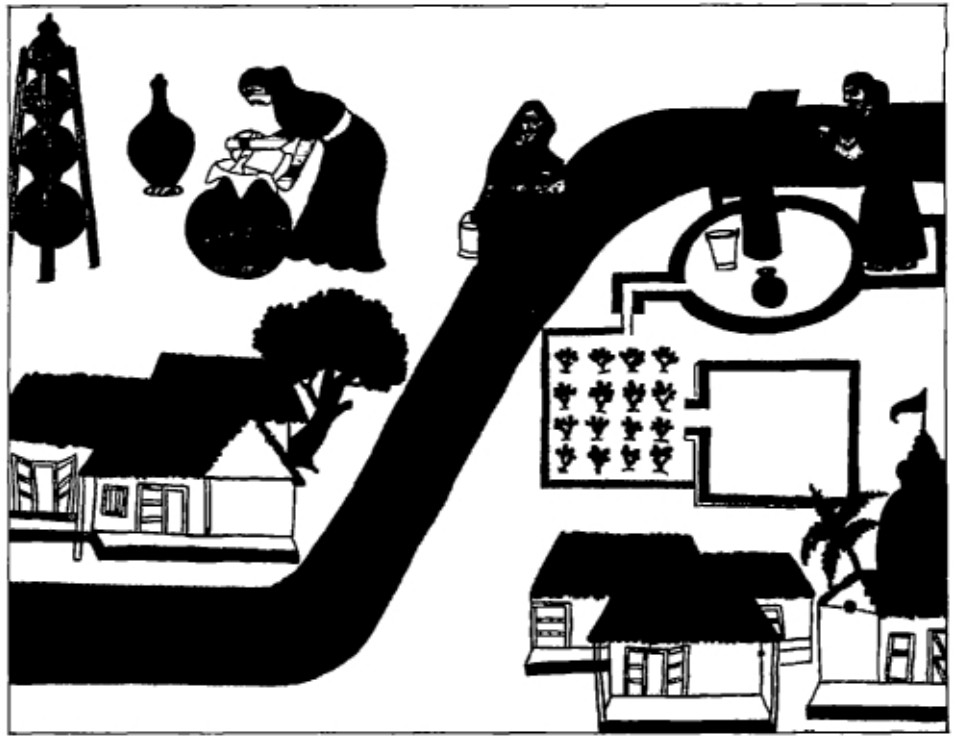


Fig. 36: Serial 10, Style C; Realistic: Message 2, Negative.



A PILOT TEST

A pilot test was held in the control village with three literate and three illiterate women together. It was found that the literate women dominated and the illiterate would not speak. So the groups were broken up, six literate and six illiterate women were tested separately in the two remaining villages. Altogether 102 people were questioned.

During the pilot test we found that one assistant could not field answers back to the reporter efficiently, nor one reporter record all the answers, so two of each were employed in subsequent tests, and the reports tallied after the test. The seating plan eventually was as in Fig. 38.

The tests were to be conducted in the afternoon when people would have completed their morning's work and had eaten their mid-day meal *It was difficult to get the people to attend to begin with, and after the test had started, difficult to keep others out. They filtered in, generally through unattended doors, and sat very quietly listening. Pictures, obviously, were very interesting stuff and the test itself an event which gave rise to much discussion in the village.*

Originally the social scientist had suggested that the best *comprehended* style was the one which should be used, and the report cards were made to this effect. However, during the pilot survey it was seen that while the test did ascertain comprehension, appeal was a quite different issue. More, the test itself seemed incomplete without removing the dummies and presenting the three styles of one message together and asking for a direct response to appeal. Therefore responses to overall appeal were recorded on individual responses behind the report card.

The test took three hours, and *the women thoroughly enjoyed it, concentrating completely all the while. they had seldom been asked for their opinions. And this was the general tenor in all subsequent tests. The socio-economist conducting them reported continuously how delighted the people were to be asked for their opinions, and how readily they gave them. The testers were most impressed with how knowledgeably the village people spoke, once they got going*

DANIDA HEP II
FIELD TESTING OF VISUALS
MESSAGE 1 VISUAL B

Q What do you see in this picture ?

<u>Major components identified</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Minor components identified</u>	<u>No</u>
1) Tubewell/handpump _____		1) Village huts _____	
2) Drain _____		2) Trees _____	
3) Platform _____		3) Plant _____	
4) Woman pumping water _____		4) Girl giving water to father _____	
5) Garden _____		5) Mother giving water to son _____	
6) Woman carrying water _____		6) Decorations. _____	
7) People drinking water _____		7) Footstep _____	
8) Water pot and glass on shelf _____			
9) Everything is clean _____			
10) Everything is healthy _____			

Other comments/suggestions

Objects not understood/questions/statements

Q. What is the whole picture about ?

Q. What do you like best in this picture ?/Why ?

Q. What do you like least in this picture ?/Why ?

Fig. 37: The Reporting Card used in the field test. One for each picture, ten for each group. Improvements in the design of this card are necessary. The reporters spent too much time searching for the component on the top against which to make a stroke when the audience made an identification. It would have been better to have left spaces for the reporter to write down responses as they came and add them up later.

COMPLETING THE TESTS

Testing 17 groups took three months (not continuous). *The commercial artist went along to observe some of the tests, and found the results enlightening. he had not dreamed the village people could be so visually discriminating.* A school teacher preparing teacher's guides for the health education programme observed the testing of the children, and came away with a new awareness children not attending school responded more swiftly and freely than school going children, who hesitated, looking for the 'right answer', afraid they would be chastized for giving the 'wrong' one. Prepubescent girls answered less spontaneously than the younger ones, some didn't answer at all. Elderly women spoke most confidently, the young married women were often silent and had to be encouraged to speak. Elderly men generally had little to say. often weak eyesight and impaired hearing made things difficult for them

The most revealing comment came from one NGO communicator filling in report cards. He said the tests had been an eye opener for him: he hadn't realized that village people knew so much, and now he saw how much he had been patronizing them. He was expressing an insight gained after 60 hours of LISTENING, something most communicators do not do, involved as they are in 'communicating', by which they usually mean filling up the space with their elevated, urban, educated wisdom. We thank this NGO communicator for his honest observation.

The Fourth Step: Analysing the Results

Analysing the results for such a subjective test was complex. The responses were those of a group, and not always easy to record. However, uncertainties went across the entire test for every group. While some components were not immediately identified, remarks noted showed identification had in fact, taken place. Tally strokes were placed later against component identification. While the major components were the same in each illustration, not all pictures in all styles had identical minor components, a point to correct in any future tests.

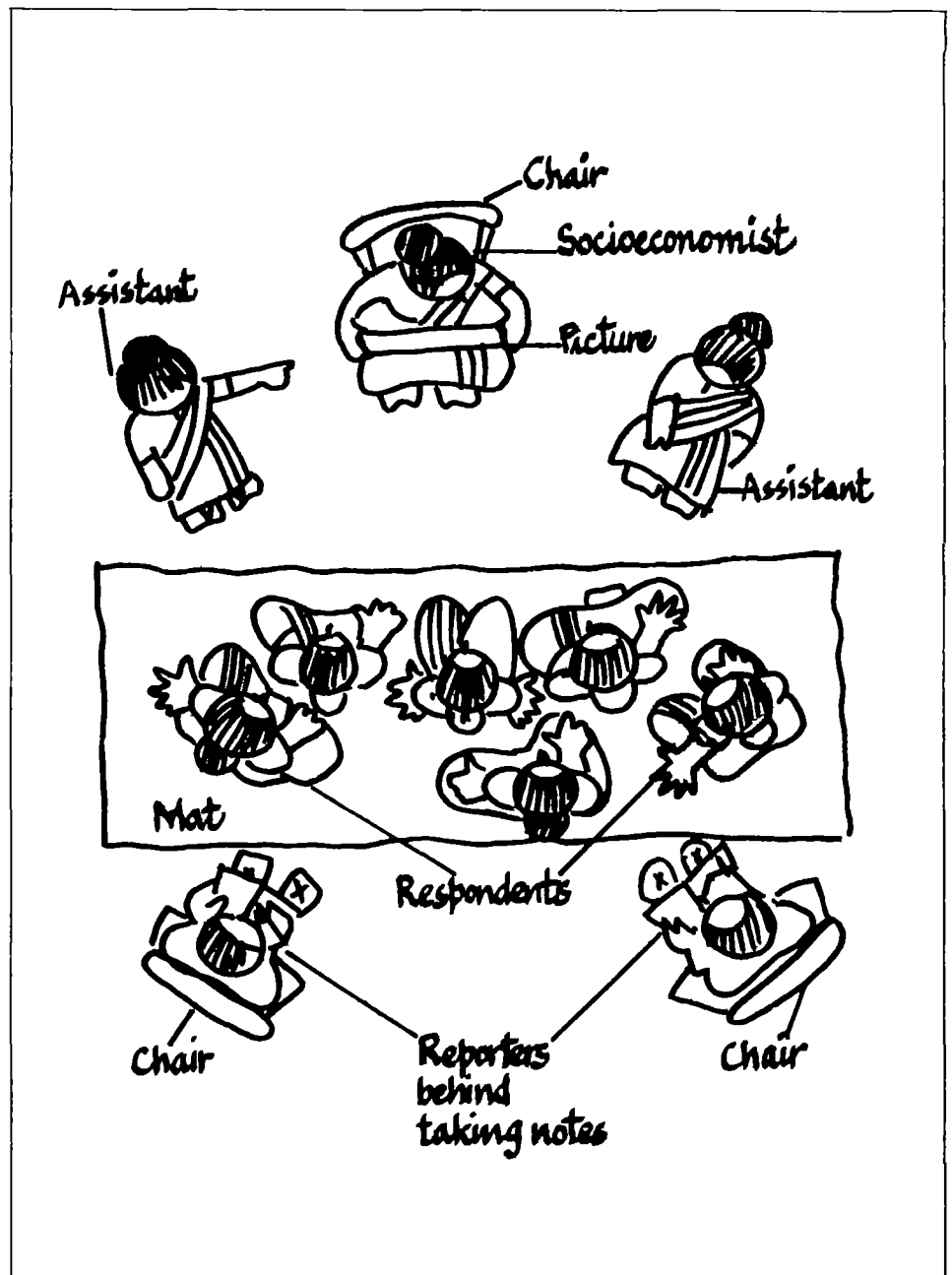


Fig. 38: The Seating Plan during field tests. This illustration is an interesting test. Many educated people cannot immediately comprehend what it represents. It takes time to decode, since the point of view is unfamiliar. It is the people seated seen from directly above.

This made the responses more difficult to systematize, but on the credit side, there were more and varied responses of which the artist could take cognizance.

The appreciation of style appeal was noted by individual responses and was accurate, but message understanding, likes and dislikes were necessarily analysed by recorded responses. Similar responses were given a code. The number of responses within a code were counted over all groups. The percentage of responses was calculated on the *number of recorded responses*.

RESULTS

The results showed briefly the following:

Comprehension

Full *comprehension* of messages fell squarely between styles B and C, Middle and Realistic: 52% of recorded responses each. A, the Folk, carried 38.5% of the respondents. From the comments the reasons were that over-stylized objects were not found comprehensible though this *style* as such had the highest *appeal*. The negative content message was better understood than the positive. There was more 'story' in the negative.

Appeal

The overall *appeal*, however, fell between styles A and B, Folk and Middle, again squarely: 38% and 39%. (Figures on individual responses) C the Realistic carried only 23% of the respondents. The style most appreciated was Message 1, Style B, (Middle) 45%; least appreciated Message 1, Style C, (Realistic) 23%.

By Group

We analysed by groups, literate v/s illiterate, and found that the literate, especially men, tended generally to like Style C, Realistic, the illiterate, especially women, tended toward Style A, Folk. We analysed messages partially understood and not understood at all

By Negative/Positive Content

Interestingly, in the negative content message which showed by and large, higher comprehension than the positive, there was a reversal of understanding in Style A, Folk and Style C, Realistic: the opposite message was received (A: 19%; C: 14%). The

message least understood was the Negative, Style A, Folk (22%) The message most fully understood was the Negative, in Style C, Realistic (74%). However, it was shown last and there was possibly an add-on effect despite the dummies. The second last shown, Message 1, Style B also shows a higher result. *This in effect demonstrates we had underestimated our audience, yet another instance of how insidious attitudes are* This should be noted for any further tests. The styles should be repositioned while testing on different groups.

However the add-on effect is tempered by comments to give a more balanced result. In the control group, the trend was the same as that overall, but that there were less partially understood or not understood messages.

Details

In both component appeal and understanding the 'twisted' 'memory picture' tubewell (in the broadest aspect) came out on top, as did the openwell, but the full twist on the pond (Style A) was not as appreciated as the half twist (Style B). Comments showed that this was because in Style A the pond had no base colour to give it coherence. The realistic openwell Style C was not appreciated and often not even understood. There were several comments which indicated a lack of comprehension of the language of vanishing point. "Everything should be the same size", "Why is that house so small?"

Realistic, complete and active portrayals of feelings and postures of people (as in Style C) were preferred to the passive (Style A). Family interactions were appreciated.

Decorations were greatly appreciated and the lack of them in Style C, Realistic, were commented on. But some decorations which were too abstract and expressionistic, such as those in the roof of the hut, birds, pond, fish, plants, in Style A were neither appreciated nor understood.

The familiar, such as cattle being bathed in a pond were liked, and since this is an activity the Project wanted to discourage, we thought about doing all negative content messages in a less attractive style as in advertising, with before and after pictures.

SOME TABLES

Given below are a few of tables we compiled as a guide to those who might want to use them.

TABLE 1
OVERALL COMPREHENSION AND APPEAL

Line	ITEM	Positive message – 1			Negative message – 2		
		Style A	Style B	Style C	Style A	Style B	Style C
1	Style most appreciated	32%	45%	23%	43%	33%	24%
2	Message fully understood	37%	52%	43%	59%	53%	74%
3	Message partially understood	43%	42%	46%	16%	25%	11%
4	Message not understood	20%	6%	11%	5%	22%	2%
5	Opp message received				19%		14%

The style most appreciated (calculated on individual responses) averaged by style from line 1, above

Style A 38%
Style B 39%
Style C 23%

The style best comprehended (calculated on responses recorded over groups) averaged by style from line 2, above

Style A 38.5%
Style B 52%
Style C 52%

TABLE 2
APPEAL ON THE BASIS OF EDUCATION AND SEX OF THE RESPONDENTS

GROUPS	No	Positive Message – 1						Negative Message – 2					
		Style A		Style B		Style C		Style A		Style B		Style C	
		No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Illiterate men	18	5	28	7	39	6	33	9	50	5	28	4	22
Literate men	18	4	22	9	50	5	28	2	11	5	28	11	61
Illiterate children	18	5	28	7	39	6	33	7	39	9	50	2	11
Literate children	18	7	39	7	39	4	22	10	56	4	22	4	22
Illiterate women	15	7	33	5	33	3	13	9	60	5	33	1	7
Literate women	15	5	33	10	67	0	0	7	47	6	40	2	11
Total:	102	33		45		24		44		34		24	

TABLE 3
COMPREHENSION AND APPEAL OF INDIVIDUAL COMPONENTS
 Figures represent percentages of recorded responses averaged over all groups

Major Components	Positive Message - 1									Instructions to artist
	Style A			Style B			Style C			
	Liked best	Liked least	Not understood	Liked best	Liked least	Not understood	Liked best	Liked least	Not understood	
1. Tubewell (with platform, drain and step)	17	0	0	13	0	0	8	0	0	Style 'A' platform to be used, but add central black as in C drain.
2. Woman pumping	5	0	0	6	0	0	12	0	0	Show realistic stance
3. Woman carrying water	1	0	0	10	15	11	8	0	0	Show realistic stance
4 a) Water pot/pitcher b) Shelf/bench	13 0	0 0	0 3	15 2	0 0	0 0	18 0	0 0	0 8	Use decorative pitchers on mud shelf not on decorative wooden shelf
5. Kitchen garden	9	0	0	12	6	0	12	0	0	Garden should be realistic with some decorative elements
6. a) Wife giving water to husband	8	0	3							Use, Mother giving water to son', or 'wife giving husband' or 'girl giving water' with necessary modifications from comments. Though realistic in style, action is not accurate
b) Mother giving water to son				12	8	0				
c) Girl giving water to father				4	8	0				
d) Man drinking water							0	0	23	
7. Hut/house	9	0	13	10	8	22				When not understood was seen as temple or school so make more realistic though decorated huts in village clusters
8 Fence of the garden				0	0	33	8	7	0	
9 Decorations	9	0	0							
10. Clean dresses	1	0	0							
11. Sitting position of people	0	18	13				0	13	0	To be modified according to suggestions.
12 Standing position	1	7	0	0	15	0				
13. Face and nose of people	0	4	0	0	15	0				
14 Children going for study	12	0	0							Use family/home details as long as they do not distract from message.
15 Boy with book/glass	39	0	0							
16 Bird	7	14	0							To be properly drawn and placed.
17. Roof with paddy hanging	9	4	48							No need or make complete but with walls.
18. Trees				6	23	0				To be modified and placed in right place.
19. Plant near the women				0	8	0				No need.
20. Action of the father				0	0	33				To be clarified.
21. Woman waiting							8	7	0	Realism in feeling is appreciated, if not in position or action.
22. Child standing behind mother							4	13	0	This is distracting from message. Drawing is not appreciated.
23 Cleaning grain							4	7	45	This is not done in village while eating.
24 a) Man eating							8	33	0	To be modified.
b) Glass in the right hand							0	7	0	Glass should be in left hand.
c) Food placed near feet										On positive messages show food on slightly raised platform.

However, poor drawing was not appreciated, "The drawing of the boy is not good", so the negative aspects would have to be shown symbolically. *Later we realized we had not clearly observed and analysed what the women's illustrations had shown us before we created the illustrations for the field test, or we would have used splodges in the negative content illustrations to show dirt and germs. Here is another point on attitude. Further the commercial artist at first tended to be patronizing about the village drawings. "Never mind, I don't need to study them, I understand them. They are only village artists."*

Details not pertinent to the message were found disruptive, such as the boy with a slate/book (No 1, Message 1, Style A).

Where the artist had not been careful enough of village customs, it was pointed out very fast. "The woman should not sieve grain while her husband is eating" (No. 5, Message 2, Style C). It was pointed out the husband should sit on a mat while eating. This firmly validated (as did much in this survey) what is said in earlier works on visual literacy.

Cause-effect connections were made where they were not intended, such as: "The woman is spitting because the man is defecating" (No. 3, Message 2, Style B), indicating the need to be careful about positioning. We had missed out roads in showing village scenes, and this was commented on loudly. That the village did not always look like a village was consistently remarked upon "It does not look like a village", "People should be *inside* their houses", "There are not enough houses"; "The broom and pots should be inside the house". We had shown them symbolically, as the less educated rural artists had. Obviously comprehension is also less subtle than representation!

The respondents gave many suggestions for improving both the visual impact of the picture, for message content and for village detail. They were in fact very vocal in their observations!

Alongside are "Components not understood" in Message 1, and "Comments and suggestions" on Message 2. It is not possible to reproduce all.

COMPONENTS NOT UNDERSTOOD

Message 1 : Positive

Visual 'A' (Folk) (Fig. 27)

(out of 31 recorded responses)

- 48% – Roof/paddy hanging
- 19% – Boy drinking water seen as holding book.
- 13% – Hut understood as temple.
- 13% – Man's sitting position.
- 3% – Shelf/pot, stand.

Visual 'B' (Middle) (Fig. 34)

(out of 9 recorded responses)

- 33% – Position/action of the father.
- 22% – Fence of the garden
- 22% – Hut mistaken as temple.
- 11% – Woman carrying water.
- 11% – Father understood as a traveller.

Visual 'C' (Realistic) (Fig. 31)

(out of 13 recorded responses)

- 23% – Woman cleaning grain understood as serving food
- 23% – Man drinking water understood as drinking tea
- 14% – Woman cleaning grain
- 8% – Woman cleaning grain seen as holding plastic bag
- 8% – Stool understood as cot
- 8% – Fence as bridge

RESPONDENTS' COMMENTS

Comments and Suggestions from all Groups: (Gross Record not Synthesized to Percentage point)

Message 2: Negative

Visual 'A' (Folk) (Fig. 32)

To improve the style

- Women drawing water from the openwell should bend.
- Fish should have fins.
- Boy's bathing position is not correct
- Steps should be better shaped.
- The water pot carried on head, hut, overall design of illustration and faces look like a tribal village.
- Plants near the well look ugly.
- The openwell should have steps.
- The man should stand on the other side of the bullock while washing it.
- The noses of man and woman should be drawn sharply.
- The rope drawing water from the openwell does not look right.
- The broom should be lying instead of standing without any support.
- Pond should have embankment.
- The bird is not perfectly drawn.

To improve the message:

- Bathing and vomiting is not clear.
- In this polluted environment, there should be more flies and mosquitoes
- The human beings should not look healthy in this unhealthy situation.
- We do not carry pots on our heads.
- The boy/woman should use a towel while bathing in the pond.
- The openwell should be distant from the pond.
- There should be more houses.

Visual 'B' (Middle) (Fig. 29)

To improve the style:

- All items should be big.
- The utensils should be kept inside the room, not in an open space.
- A woman should be shown carrying a pitcher on her hip.

To improve the message:

- The man should carry a 'lota' (water pot) when going for defecation.
- Bottle of medicine (ORT) should be kept near the diarrhoea patient
- There should have been birds on the trees defecating into the water, flies on the vomit, more hydrilla in the pond and human excreta around the pond to give a more vivid picture of pollution of the water source and environment.

General comments on the village:

- A washing platform should be at the edge of pond/river, not at centre.
- The washerman washing clothes is not clear and he should lift up the cloth in the picture while washing.
- There should be a road from house to pond and to open well.

Visual 'C' (Realistic) (Fig. 36)

To improve the style:

- The man should carry a lota (water pot) when going for defecating
- Wood bundle should be lying down.
- The sitting position of the woman is not perfect.
- Woman's sickness should be specified in her action and expression.
- Steps should be placed in the pond.
- Uncleanliness of openwell is not clear.
- Someone should be shown vomiting.

To improve the village situation:

- A road should connect the well.
- A house is necessary near the family

The Fifth Step: Devising an Overall Style

It seemed from the analysis that the style to be devised would definitely be in multiple perspective and the broadest aspect. The style would fall between A & B, without the stylization and abstraction of A but with its decorative elements. From style C we would use realistic postures, expressions and plants. We would have more realistic scenes of village life as in the pictures by Chandrama Das: people *inside* houses where they realistically would be. We would include roads and temples. We would use flat bold colours throughout, no light and shade, no ground colour.

The broadest aspect, and multiple perspective won the day, even with this generally well educated population of the Orissa coastal belt, who have been exposed to modern mass media (cinema hoardings, calendar art)

This was confirmed by trying out the two perspective drawings. a tubewell and platform drawn in an oval in vanishing point and as a circle in the broadest aspect, on two of the village educators for appeal. They instinctively chose the circle over the oval.

It can be argued that skills in perceiving and representing vanishing point and light and shade is, for the artist, a necessary accomplishment, heightening the ability to draw accurately, and should therefore be encouraged, and perhaps we are using the pictorial equivalent of 'baby talk' in drawing in multiple perspective. However, our business here is to *communicate* in a current pictorial language, not to teach art to rural artists.

On the other hand perhaps what we do need to do is teach our commercial/urban artists to break out of their narrow 'education', and respect our traditional perspectives more. Perhaps we need to train up a new breed of 'development education artists'.

While exposure to mechanical representation, will affect perception in time, the illustrations presented in Figs. 39 and 40; synthesized out of the field survey results, seem to be at this time valid (within the limits of this field test) in communicating with pictures to an audience with a pictorial tradition.

THE FINAL ILLUSTRATIONS

Fig. 39 : Illustrations synthesized from the results of the field survey.

a) Since the people of the Orissa coastal belt are generally more educated than those in the hinterland, we aim for a somewhat literate audience, on the assumption that the more literate will decode the picture for the less literate, and that the less literate will, in any event, be able to comprehend more than they can represent. The purpose is an exhibition or reminder poster where people will stand and look at the picture for a while and talk about it

b) The pictures are switched around to show 'before' and 'after' Message 2, now 'before', reads "Drinking water from a pond will make us sick." The openwell is removed: it will make another similar illustration. Repetition teaches Message 1, now 'after', reads "Drinking tubewell water will keep us healthy."

c) The major items are the same in each picture for easy identification. We ensure the village is complete, with roads, houses, electricity poles, temple. However secondary concepts are kept to a minimum (e.g. environmental sanitation), they will make other pictures. Extraneous characters are left out (priest, wandering cows, dogs, brooms)

d) We follow a clear multiple perspective, and the broadest aspect as far as possible

e) The picture is narrated from top to bottom in the same frame following the road: first the woman fetches water from a pond. Next she walks home with it (secondary messages: carrying it incorrectly, slopping water everywhere, no footwear); at home the woman draws water (incorrectly), gives it to her family, resulting in diarrhoea and vomiting. Her son and husband are also duplicated at different events in the same frame. Black splodges indicate germs and dirt. These are restricted here. On a picture on environmental sanitation they would be used more liberally.





Fig. 40: We show exactly the same scene with positive aspects. Flowers, placed decoratively (rather than realistically) denote cleanliness. The same woman appears in all events in each illustration: The pond is replaced by a tubewell (Secondary messages: footwear, water properly carried, stored, and drawn) The result is a happy (girl) child who studies and plays. The same child appears three times.

f) As the eye wanders over the picture (Fuglesang describes its route) it picks up (hopefully) first the pond/tubewell where something is happening. Next it moves right to the temple—registers nothing happening. Then to the woman walking. Right to the houses – nothing happening. Down to the large house – much happening. Then down, diagonally right to later events. The 'context' of village moves in a semicircle top left to middle right. Major events move middle left in semicircle to bottom right.

NOTE: Communicators *must not* take these illustrations as an easy formula to follow; but as an exercise to make them aware of the subtle points in the pictorial language of people existing in a different time/space than themselves, and perhaps a take off point for conducting their own surveys until such time a more definite Guide is available.

III. CONCLUSION

There were many ways we found later in which the illustrations for field testing could have been tightened and strengthened for a more rigorous test.

We should have had illustrations done by an illiterate artist as well. We could have tested the illustrations done by the village women on different educational levels and on people in other villages, before we devised the illustrations for field testing: the data so gained would have been useful in making up illustrations to field test. But there was simply no time for this: it was hard enough to conduct this field survey at all, as projects do not as a rule give sufficient emphasis to field testing educational strategies, less to communication aids, and certainly none to this generally incomprehensible and 'pointless' aspect of the visual. However, we analysed appeal and comprehension of the dummies based on the village women's work, and found, unsurprisingly, that while the appeal was high on the work of Urmilla Swain, the comprehension was low: the pictures gave half a message. The comprehension was better on the work of Chandrama Das.

We should have had the same major and minor components in all illustrations we eventually field tested and the same colours in all.

Much further field work needs to be done before the results of a survey such as this can be said to be in any way final.

Most of all, this survey needs to be conducted as a single item with more planning and detailed discussion, and with trained personnel, over a much larger data base; possibly several districts in a state and/or several states in India. Perhaps even in many countries with similar rural populations. On different subjects: nutrition, immunization, family planning, and social forestry. And on pictorial representations of details like magnifications/germs; hidden elements such as those underground and inside bodies, germ cycles, weather cycles. This will be especially valuable, as more accurately drawn generalizations can then be available in a more thorough Guide, which will also give

pointers for regional and local variations. As projects seldom have the time, even the inclination to carry out field tests, adapting from such a Guide will be a useful way to cut down local field tests to essential aspects of decoration, symbolism, degree of modernity in perspective and variations according to literacy levels and experience of modern mass media.

This publication, while in no way comprehensive, should serve at the very least to demonstrate to development educators and communicators that they need to be much more sensitive to the intelligence, abilities and visual perceptions of their audience; and possibly go a little way to convincing 'hardware' oriented development officials that greater budget allocations are necessary in the 'software', that if the hardware component is to be successful, education and communication must be given far greater emphasis than is the case currently, and that while this is a difficult area, it is nevertheless possible to be 'scientific' about it.

ADAPTING ILLUSTRATIONS.
A SMALL
EXPERIMENT FOR
THE WHO.

Fig. 41: A Printed Page in colour from *Stories of Adventure* on the fairly flexible subject of immunization, in which technical details are standard. All subjects are not as flexible to adaptation, as minor technical details vary greatly from region to region. This is a general, non-technical page, which carries the story forward.



Early the next morning Jagannath and Ramsevak set off for the jungle. They carried axes, brooms and matches. Soon the trees became thick, the light grew dim, and the undergrowth became heavy. Ramsevak and Jagannath had to hack their way with axes.



Two hours later they stood in the filthiest, darkest, smelliest place they had ever seen. It was even worse than they had imagined. From the cave came hideous burbling and snorting sounds. It was Narbhakshi Rakshasa, snoring in his sleep



Ramsevak and Jagannath crept up to the cave. Just then Narbhakshi Rakshasa woke up with a start. "Hah! Food!" he growled, "come to me by itself!" He leapt toward the man and boy, but fell back groaning, clutching his head, moaning, "Awwww!"



Jagannath gave Ramsevak a push, and Ramsevak said sternly, like a headmaster, "You're sick. And no wonder—living in such a filthy place. Aren't you ashamed of yourself? Didn't your mother teach you anything? You're making everyone everywhere sick too."

Fig. 42: Notes for the Illustrator from the Adaptation Kit. Not all points are made on this page, as many have already been made on previous pages

Are these implements you would use in your region?



Change foliage. See adaptation to Bhutan.



Turban cloth may not be relevant. See Bhutan adaptation.



If this gesture is not aligned to your culture, change.



This shows headache. If gesture differs in your culture, change.

We believe this gesture is universal.



Fig. 43. The Illustrations Adapted for a Bhutanese context. Changes are made in minor components. features, dress, accessories, foliage and portrayal of the demon, which comes out of Bhutanese folk lore. Field tested positions and major components remain the same

Fig. 44: Why do you tie me up in the house and barter me like a cow at a stake? An illustration produced by the Department of Audio Visual Publicity (DAVP), Government of India, in association with DISHA, a communication cell within the Department of Women and Child Development, New Delhi. Rural women in Rajasthan were asked to illustrate their version of messages, and their 'ideas and sketches' were used by an artist at the DAVP to produce the poster above. It is of interest that although a detailed step-by-step methodology as suggested by this Guide was not followed, some elements of rural perceptions are nevertheless evident: the fence is shown in the broadest aspect.



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ILLUSTRATION CREDITS

- Fig. 1: Poster used in the Danida assisted Orissa Drinking Water Project, Health and Hygiene Education Programme, Phase I.
- Fig. 7. Portion of a *Chamba rumal* at the Bhuri Singh Museum, Chamba, Himachal Pradesh.
- Fig. 8: From *Perspective: A Guide for Artists, Architects and Designers*, by G White, 1968.
- Fig. 11: Potrait panel of Hesy-ra. C 2650 BC. Egyptian Museum, Cairo.
- Fig. 12. Chester Beatty Library, Dublin.
- Fig. 13: *The Road to Calvary*, Simone Martini, C 1340. The Louvre, Paris.
- Fig. 14: The Kotah Museum, Rajasthan.
- Fig. 15: *Illustrated Palm Leaf Manuscript* at the Orissa State Museum, Bhubaneswar.
- Fig. 16. Collection of Mrs Maria Sarre-Hermann, Ascona.
- Fig. 17: From *Chang Dai-Chien's Paintings*, National Museum, Taipei.

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Indi Rana is a consultant in communications for development education and training. She has worked on projects for the World Health Organization, The German Agency for Technical Development Cooperation and UNICEF, in addition to those for DANIDA. She was educated at Stanford, and has a background in trade and educational publishing in New York, London and New Delhi. She is a film scriptwriter and author of several books for children and a novel for teenagers on Indo-British cross cultural themes.

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Keeping our tubewell surroundings clean helps prevent disease

Using latrines helps us prevent the spread of disease

Keeping our village clean helps prevent disease



ଆମ ଗାଁର ଗୋଟିଏ ଦିନ

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