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Ministry of
Education and Sports



**Social and
Political Mobilization
of Education
for all
The Brazilian Experience**

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Introduction

In the past two years, Brazil has undergone many changes for the better, especially in the área of education. Upon taking office, in 1995, President Fernando Henrique Cardoso reaffirmed that the goals of improving the quality of teaching in public elementary schools and ensuring that all children of school age have access to Education, were among his top priorities.

This priority was born of an agreement signed by the member countries of the Education For All Initiative (EFA-9) in 1990, at the World Conference on Education for All, held in Jontien, Thailand. As a first step towards these goals, in 1993, the Brazilian Ministry of Education and Sport-MEC launched social mobilization campaign which resulted in the drafting of a Ten-Year Plan of Education For All. The Plan was the fruit of intense debate among educators from all of Brazil's 27 States, and provided an outline of the priorities and goals for the improvement of education throughout the Country.

Upon taking office, in 1995, President Fernando Henrique Cardoso, demonstrated his commitment to education with the launching of the *Mãos à Obra* programme (Lets Get to Work), and determined that the Ministry of Education and Sports pursue five priority goals:

1. Ensure that **Federal resources for elementary schooling actually reach the school**, rather than being consumed by the bureaucracy or spent for purposes other than those clearly connected to the functioning and improvement of schools;
2. Formulate a **basic standard curriculum**;
3. Improve the **quality of text books**, using feedback from teachers, and **decentralizing procurement and distribution**,
4. **Training teachers** through the Distance Education System, relying on the State and Municipal education authorities to maintain the system initially set up by the Federal Government;
5. Expand the **National Evaluation System for Elementary Education** to encompass the full spectrum of Primary and Secondary education.

To demonstrate his personal commitment to the attainment of these goals, on 9th February 1995, the President taught the first class of the year at the José Barbosa School in Santa Maria da Vitoria, in the interior of the State of Bahia. That same day, he met with teachers in the town of Diamantina in Minas Gerais, and later visited a school in Campo Mourão,

in the State of Paraná. On 13th February he spoke to the parents and students of the Dom Bosco School.

Aside from the actions to be implemented by the Federal Government, President Fernando Henrique Cardoso foresaw the need for a much broader based initiative aimed at challenging the Brazilian population to awaken to the pressing need for education.

Raising awareness as to the need for universal elementary education proved to be a great challenge. The scope of the project was vast and it demanded huge efforts on the part of all concerned, owing to the cultural, economic and ethnic diversity of the Brazilian population and the vastness of Brazil.

Up until 1995, the effect of isolated and sporadic to social mobilization activities within Brazil been quite modest, despite the high levels of popular participation in government sponsored campaigns of various types. What was needed was a permanent campaign to change the outlook and behavior of society with regard to Education.

In 1995, President Fernando Henrique Cardoso and the Minister of Education and Sports, Paulo Renato Souza, launched a programme named **"Acorda Brasil. Esta na Hora da Escola!"** *Awaken Brazil, It's time for School!* The aim of the programme was to bring into focus all governmental action in the education área and launch a process of social mobilization designed to engage all segments of society, in order to cultivate awareness of the need for urgent measuresto promote Education asa national priority.

To this end, a social Communications plan drawn up which adopted all the available tools for the development of actions to inform citizens of their rights and duties with respect to Education.

The social response exceeded all expectations. Partnerships were formed with businesses and a round of debates was carried out throughout Brazil, and a toll-free telephone service called *"Fala Brasil"* (Speak Brazil) was established so that members of the public could register their views. A Database on Educational Actions was also set up to record successful experiences in education and to make them available for replication or adaptation in other regions.

The *Awaken Brazil! It's time for School!* campaign has achieved a series of successes. Though much still remains to be done, Brazil has now firmly embarked upon the path in the awareness that the only way to meet the challenges and overcome the obstacles to Education is through a united effort on the part of the whole Nation.

President
Fernando
Henrique
Cardoso
launches the
Awaken
*Brazil. Its Time
for School!*
campaign in
Santa Maria da
Vitória, State of
Bahia.



The mobilization effort

The *Awaken Brazil. It's time for School!* mobilization campaign was the first appeal of the Fernando Henrique Cardoso Government to Brazilian society in defense of Education. The success of the campaign was so great that, in order to provide continuity to the work of social and political mobilization in favor of Education, it has now been incorporated as a permanent programme of the Ministry of Education.

Within the context of this programme, which will be described in greater detail presently, the Ministry also adopted a strategy involving the intense use of instruments of social communication. Close and efficient ties were developed with the press, advertising agencies were contracted to develop campaign materials and the Ministry's Coordination of Public Relations, responsible for organizing events and destined to play an important role in the strategy, was strengthened.

In view of the importance of the Communications effort required for mobilizing the population in favor of Education, neither President Fernando Henrique and Minister Paulo Renato Souza spared any opportunity to draw attention to the subject. They have been the main protagonists in the efforts to mobilize society for the cause of Education.

The Ministry of Education's Social Communications Advisory has pursued the following objectives in its efforts to promote social and political mobilization in favor of Education:

- a) publicize Federal Government actions in the Educational área, with a view to keeping society informed;
- b) raising the awareness of political leaders and mobilizing the population in order to make them agents of change in Brazilian Education;
- c) cultivate a new social outlook with respect to Public Education and stimulate a sense of participation and responsibility among citizens;

This work is developed by four separate áreas: Journalism, Advertising, Public Relations and the Awaken, *Brazil* Program. Jointly, these four sectors of the Department of Social Communications are permanently committed to winning over hearts and minds to the cause of Education.

To enhance the uniformity and provide greater capillarity to this work, the Subsystem of Social Communications - MEC-SICOM was created, which brings together all the actions and agents of social communication of the Ministry and its Departments spread throughout the 27 Brazilian states, including Superintendencies, Universities and Federal Teaching Institutions.

Communications

Journalism

In the field of journalism, various measures have been adopted to make Education a part of national news with greater intensity and frequency, beginning with the development of closer ties to the principal newspapers and with television stations, under the leadership of the Minister himself who has been tireless in his cultivation of contacts with the press.

Besides traditional Press Advisory activities, which include responding to requests from reporters from all parts of the Country and the preparation and distribution of news bulletins to radios, newspapers and television stations - through the EMBRATEL Datafax system -, as well as organizing interviews with the Minister and other Education authorities, other aspects of journalistic interest are organized.

One such activity includes the preparation of five-minute radio programmes, with statements concerning successful experiences in Education and information about the Ministry's actions, which are broadcasted at no cost, thanks to an agreement between the Ministry and the Association of Brazilian Radio and Television Stations - ABERT, which will be described shortly.

There are also daily two-minute broadcasts on the "Voz do Brasil", a government programme carried by all Brazilian AM and FM radio stations. These programmes provide information on Ministry actions and encourage the population to participate in Education. On Fridays, Minister Paulo Renato Souza uses this programme to respond queries from listeners about educational affairs.

Once a week, the Minister participates in three interview programmes, responding to questions from educators, mayors and listeners concerning the Government's proposals for Education. This material is then re-edited and distributed to radio and television stations and to newspapers throughout Brazil and is also available over the Internet. Exclusive interviews with the Minister are often granted to television broadcasters from the interior.

Furthermore, two publications are produced:

- "Rede MEC" - a daily report on Ministry actions, distributed to 176 newspapers, public organizations and Institutions throughout Brazil;



MEC Newspaper cover.

- "*Jornal do MEC*" - a monthly newsletter with a circulation of 100.000 copies, which is distributed to State and Municipal Secretariats of Education, Members of Congress, unions, teachers, institutions and others connected to the área, providing accounts of the Ministry's actions, successful experiences and other subjects of interest to Education. The "*Jornal do MEC*" is also distributed together with the "*Revista TV Escola*" (School TV Magazine) to schools which receive "TVEsco/a", a system for updating teacher training through television programmes, created by the Ministry.

Another instrument used is the "*TV Executiva MEC*", a teleconference programme for protagonists in the educational área with closed-circuit broadcasts connecting 56 EMBRATEL auditoriums and 1.100 other locations spread throughout Brazil, besides the 52 thousands schools connected to "*TV Escola*". The shows, lasting three hours, feature monthly debates on Ministry policies. In 1996, average audiences for the programme were 25.000. On some occasions, depending upon the degree of interest in the subject matter or actions under discussion, the programmes are aired on regional television.

PREPARANDO O CIDADÃO DO FUTURO



Pôster for the "TV Executiva" Programme on computer programs for use in schools.

Para assistir, procure uma das salas da EMBRATEL, um teleposto de Educação a Distância ou uma escola que tenha TV Escola. Se possuir antena parabólica, sintonize no transponder 6A2, frequência 3930, polarização horizontal.

Ministério da Educação e do Desporto
Brasil EM AÇÃO

Publicity

Since the launching of the *Avvaken Brazil It's time for School!* campaign, the first to be developed by the Ministry of Education and Sports under the Fernando Henrique Cardoso Administration, advertising techniques have been extensively used as an instrument for mobilization.

Alongside actions in the fields of journalism, public relations and the *Awaken Brazil* programme, publicity has been used in support of Ministry initiatives as a means of informing society of its accomplishments and calling upon society to do its' part, especially with respect to the exercise of social control over the Government actions in the field of Education, ranging from participation in children's school activities, to inspection of the construction of new school installations and the transparent application of financial resources. The results as we shall see shortly, are quite tangible and highly positive.

With the assistance of two publicity agencies which provide services to various Ministry programmes, campaigns have been carried out with a wide variety of objectives, ranging from subjects aimed at the population as a whole, such as the *forSchool/ Lunch* and the *Textbook* campaigns, to more limited themes such as, the *Teacher's Census*, carried out exclusively in the Northeast region of the Country. The public to be reached is studied with care, and the agency is responsible for ensuring that the most effective means of communication is used, at the lowest possible cost.

There two aspects of the Ministry's publicity activities which need to be stressed. The first is that all campaigns, whatever the themes they develop, must aim to increase the status of schools, of teachers and Education in general, in order to impress upon the public that Brazil cannot progress unless it educates its children properly.

The second involves the development of specific campaigns aimed at promoting literacy, stressing the importance of reading skills, and support for reading. In this context, the "*A/fabef/zação Solidária*" (Solidarity for Literacy) campaign presents an excellent example of social mobilization to promote literacy among young people nor enrolled in school, and it receives support from businesses, Universities and local communities, besides Federal funding through the Ministry of Education and the Armed Forces. Another highly innovative initiative in this área is the "*Quem Lê Viaja*" (He who reads, travels) campaign, which aims to encourage young people to read. This campaign has elicited an impressive response, and with participation by the Brazilian Chamber Bookstores, 19 publishers, libraries, mayor's offices, the press, and other institutions connected to literary Culture in the

states of Brazil. The partnership between these organizations has resulted in the publishing of books, folders, book markers, promotional ribbons, banners, T-shirts, stamps, notebooks and stickers.

Finally, as a matter of policy, the Ministry makes use of its power as a large consumer of media services and gives preference to those media organizations which have permanent sections on with Education and particularly the newspapers, when it is distributing funding for publicity campaigns. Thus the Ministry is able to stimulate media to create and maintain permanent news sections dealing with Educational matters.

Minister Paulo Renato Souza launches the Year of Education, in 1996.



Public relations, in combination with other forms of communication already alluded to, has an important role to play in molding events so as to direct Brazilian society towards a fuller commitment to Educational themes.

Through the organization of events programmed by the Ministry itself, or through participation in fairs, congresses, meetings and similar events, the Coordination of Public Relations is involved in every aspect of Communications activity and the generation of situations

which provide opportunities for exposure of the Ministry's activities through journalism and publicity.

One good example of such involvement was the launching of the "*Dinheiro Escola*" (School Money) programme in 1996. Another was the ceremony for the launching of the Year of Education, in the same year, in the city of Belo Horizonte, attended by the President of the Republic and other authorities, intellectuals and artists representing various walks of national life. These events were the focal point of mobilization efforts for the cause of Education. Their success can be assessed in terms of innumerable initiatives which they helped spawn in the quest for solutions to the obstacles facing Education in Brazil.

The use of commemorative dates connected with Education is another way to bring attention of the public to the discussion of Educational themes. One example of this is Teacher's Day and, in 1996, the date was celebrated with a ceremony in which President Fernando Henrique Cardoso and Minister Paulo Renato Souza participated. A one-minute video was shown on television, in honour and in recognition of Brazil's teachers. On this date, a film ready to be shown on television, honoring and recognizing the accomplishments of Brazil's teachers.

Public Relations



Initially conceived as a publicity campaign to mobilize Brazilian society in favor of Education, the *Awaken Brazil* campaign was subsequently incorporated as a permanent programme of the Ministry of Education and Sport, linked to the Department of Social Communication. The aim of the programme isto mobilize Brazilian society for improvement in public schools, and especially in elementary education.

MOBILIZATION

Organization

It is widely recognized that the bases for social and political mobilization are dependant upon three basic prerequisites: explicit political will; social support; and a Culture of Education within a literate environment.

The process currently under way in Brazil easily meets with these three criteria.

a) *Explicit political will*

As has already been stated, the President of the Republic at the beginning of his term of office, established that the quest for quality in elementary schools and the guarantee of universal access to education would be his top priority, and would serve as an outline for the five principal goals of the Ministry of Education.

b) *Social support: spontaneous partnerships*

The mobilization process in Brazil had been underway even before the of launching of the *Awaken Brazil* programme.

In the field of Education, with "*Projeto Pescar*" the Linck Foundation provided educational services for young people who had had no previous schooling opportunities. The Azaléia shoe company also supported project called "*From the Cradle to the University*", which provided financing for



Pôster for the *Awaken Brazil*. *It's Time for School!* program.

***Awaken
Brazil.
It's Time
for School!***

the education of its employees their family members. The "Minas Pact for Education" movement had also achieved considerable success in mobilizing various sectors of society to reduce drop out and grade repetition rates in primary and secondary schools, in the State of Minas Gerais.

The Bradesco Foundation made investments in the education and school improvements and sponsored vocational training courses. The Roberto Marinho Foundation, in partnership with the State of São Paulo Federation of Industries, was involved in various educational initiatives, such as "*Telecurso 2000*", a supplementary and extension programme for primary and secondary schooling.

c) the *Culture of Education within a literate environment*

The existence of an environment for literacy is evidenced by the recent improvements in educational indicators:

- The percentage of children between the ages 7 and 14 years enrolled in school has risen from 86.1% in 1991, to 91% in 1996;

- The percentage of adolescents between the ages 15 and 17 years enrolled in school has risen from 55.3% in 1991, to 66.8% in 1996; and

- Literacy rates among those above age 15 have risen from 78% in 1990 to 93% in 1996.

The degree to which a Culture of Education existed prior to the process of mobilization can be corroborated by means of the percentage of students enrolled in primary schools. Relative to the population from ages 7 to 14 years, this percentage has risen from 111% in 1994 to 116% in 1996. These figures reflect the inclusion of youths from outside the age group, indicating that their ages do not correspond to their grade, owing to the effects of grade repetition.

The Ministry has assumed a position as the moving force behind mobilization initiatives for Education, and for combining the forces of the Federal Government, the States, the Municipalities and Brazilian society as a whole, with a view to providing support for initiatives aimed at improving Education, from wherever they may emanate.

The following lines of action have thus been established:

a) *Internal Mobilization* - mobilization of the staff Structure of the Ministry itself, with a view to imbuing each administrative unit, and especially those working within the states, with the new focus which must be attributed to Education. The new working philosophy has outlined actions which recognize the value of social participation and the constant search for new partners. Meetings were held at the Ministry in Brasilia, with managers



from all the various segments of the organization. The process of changing mentalties had to start with the staff of the Ministry itself;

b) *Cycle of lectures* - Taking the meetings at the Ministry, as a starting point, each regional management unit embarked upon an cycle of lectures, aimed at disseminating the new philosophy in the field of social and political mobilization in their respective States. A specially trained group started working on this change of mentalty. There were also a series high-level technical meetings with various entities, and numerous fairs, symposiums and congresses were held;

c) *Involvement of other áreas of government* - in the quest to stimulate participation by State Governments in the implementation programmes was launched. Such initiatives included extension courses, - of which *TV Escola* (a programme the training and recycling of teachers) was the most prominent - and in the definition of parameters for the National Curriculum for Elementary Education. Other áreas requiring support of the States included the decentralization of the Distribution of Tértbooks, adaptation of *School Lunches* to regional taste, implementation of the *School Money* program - an overview of Federal Transfers of Resources directly to the schools -, and the implementation of the *Fund for Ma/nenance and the Development of Elementary Schooling and Enhancing the Status of Teachers*;

d) *TheSpeak Brazil* answering service was developed in September of 1995, with a an 800 number to provide free phone calls for complaints, criticism, suggestions and public information. None of the calls received by the system remained unanswered, either on-line or by mail in the cases where more detailed information was required.

Monitoring and analyzing these calls, which are being made on a 24-hour basis, has provided important feedback for the evaluation, not only of the reception of the Ministry's programmes, but also of the effects of social mobilization and of social Communications and publicity actions.



Pôster of *Speak Brazil* telephone service.

Covers of the first
two bulletins of
Awaken Brazil.
It's Time for School!



e) Database on *Educational Actions* - in partnership with the University of Brasilia, thousands of innovative initiatives in the field of Education are being catalogued. Many of these experiences have been made available over the Internet, on CD-ROM, on video, and in a book recounting 300 successful experiences. A catalog provides figures on national investment in Education, and presents accounts of actions carried out and resources spent, and a bimonthly news bulletin provides updated information. The objective of these initiatives is to serve as a basis and source of ideas for all those who wish to participate of the effort to improve Education in Brazil;

f) *The Awaken Brazil Bulletin* - is as bimonthly publication which provides information to people who contact the Ministry, or who are in any way involved with initiatives in the cause of Education, about the latest developments in the

mobilization process;

g) *Partnerships* - the formation of partnerships with such segments of society as, business, non-government agencies, philanthropic entities, professional associations, communities and government. Such partnerships are of various types and aim to stimulate mutual assistance, exchanges of information and experiences, and the donation of teaching materials, equipment and services.

Implementation and adaptation: the use of commemorative dates

Commemorative dates and events have also been used as strategic implements for mobilization, and are widely recognized by the Coordination of Public Relations as excellent opportunities to reinforce mobilization efforts.

Partnerships formed with the private sector have resulted in over R\$ 20 million in donations. Aside from resources contributed by partners, budgetary resources amounting to R\$ 15,4 million were also devoted publicity in the 1995-1996 period, and to R\$ 16 million in 1997. In 1998, spending on publicity is forecast to amount to R\$ 16 million.

The Ministry's greatest asset for its publicity initiatives, however, is the agreement it maintains with the Brazilian Association of Radio and Television Broadcasters - ABERT, known as the MEC/ABERT agreement. This agreement, which is established by law, allows the Ministry the broadcast five-minute messages, each day from Monday to Friday, from television stations and throughout the country. At weekends, it has access to twenty minutes on AM radio and on TV to broadcast educational messages five minutes in length.

It has been estimated that were the Ministry to have to pay for such air time, the cost would amount to roughly R\$ 1 30 million a year.

Funding

Results

After little more than two and a half years since the start of this social and political mobilization effort on the theme of promoting High Quality Education For All significant results have been achieved, and the theme of Education has become an integral part of the national agenda. State and municipal authorities now understand the importance of Education, quite aside from the fact that it is a top priority for the Federal Government, as can be perceived from the seriousness and commitment with which actions have been carried out.

The National Congress has also given clear indication of the importance it attributes to Education, in recognition of the social pressure which many constituencies have manifested in favor of the development of Education. We need cite only two examples to demonstrate this. The Law of Regulations and Bases for Education, which had been languishing in Congress since the promulgation of the new Constitution in 1988, was finally approved in 1996.

Also recently approved was the Constitutional Amendment which foresees the creation of the "*Fund for Maintenance and Development of Elementary Schooling and for Enhancing the Status of the Teaching Profession*", which calls for spending of no less than R\$ 300 per student per year (at present the average is R\$ 50,00). That same sum is to be the average teacher's wage. Congress has also approved a law which regulates the functioning of the Fund, and ordains that shall go into force no later than January 1998.

Brazilian society has responded to the challenge and has, for its part, sought to participate in the solution of obstacles to Education at a variety of levels. Most importantly, however, the idea has become a consensus among the population that, without education, there can be no growth, either individually or for the Country as a whole.

The increased importance attributed to the theme of Education in the press is evidenced through the greater volume of news on educational themes in Brazilian newspapers. From of a total of roughly 6.000 articles on the theme in 1995, currently the number has soared to 10.320. Of these, 39% are induced, ie., are the result of the work of the Ministry's press advisory service, and consist of interviews and press releases, whereas 61% are news bulletins spontaneously published by newspapers. News broadcasts on themes relating to Education on radio and television have expanded at a similar rate, in the last two and a half years, although no accurate figures are available.

Data relative to the volume of calls received through *Speak Brazil* are also remarkable. No less than 366.000 calls were answered in 1996, and there were over 163.000 up to August of this year. If we consider that nearly 2/3 of the incoming calls are lost for sheer lack of staff and capacity to respond, it can be guessed that, in 1996, the service generated roughly

1.100.000 calls from all parts of the Country. The system continues to receive calls at an average rate of 1.500 per day.

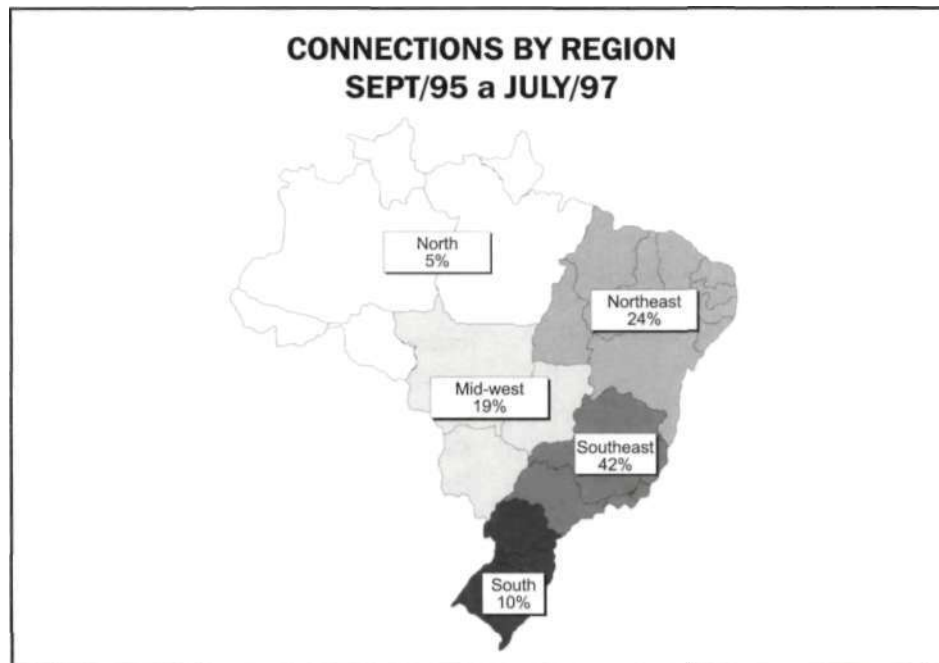
The *Awaken Brazil* programme, with its system of direct contacts, reports that since it was launched in March of 1995, a total of 130 partnerships have been effectively established. These, besides intangible gains they offer, add up to more than R\$ 20 million in teaching material, publicity time in the media, equipment, teacher-training and other services rendered. One example of this is the telecommunications equipment donated by the Banco Itau for the *"Speak Brazil"*

Programme. These partnerships have already benefitted nearly 18 million students, particularly those in the elementary schools.

Over 6.000 people have participated in the Cycle of Lectures, especially mayors and other Education authorities, community leaders and businessmen. The multiplying effect has been considerable and has taken the debate far beyond the select public to whom it was initially aimed.

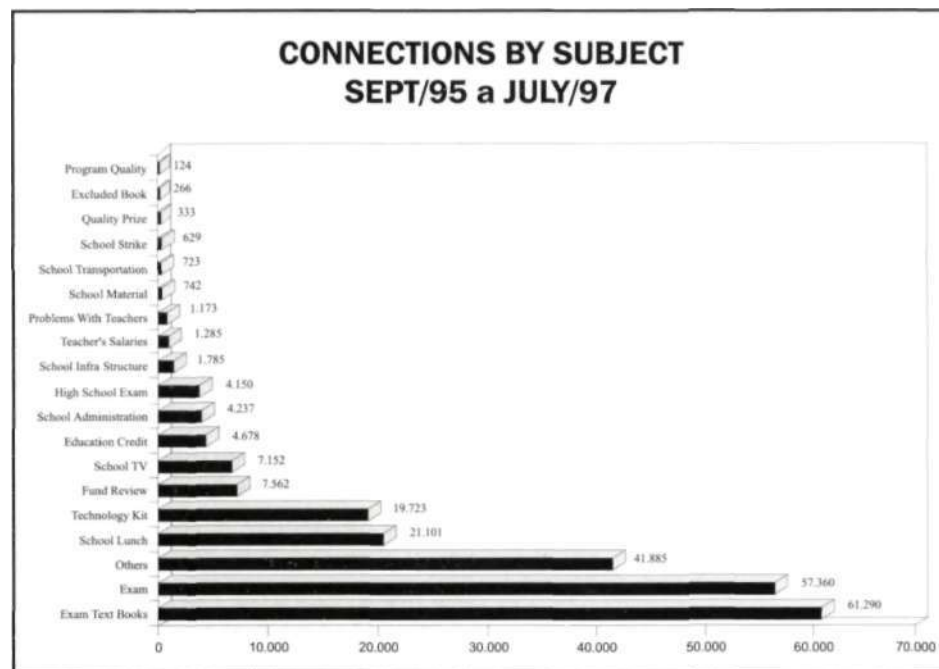
By the end of September 1997 the Database on Educational Actions will be available over the Internet, displaying its first 500 reports. By March of next year, a CD-ROM, a book, a catalog and video showing samples of these cases will be ready for publication.

Ministry staff will be organizing and participating in a great number of events. By the



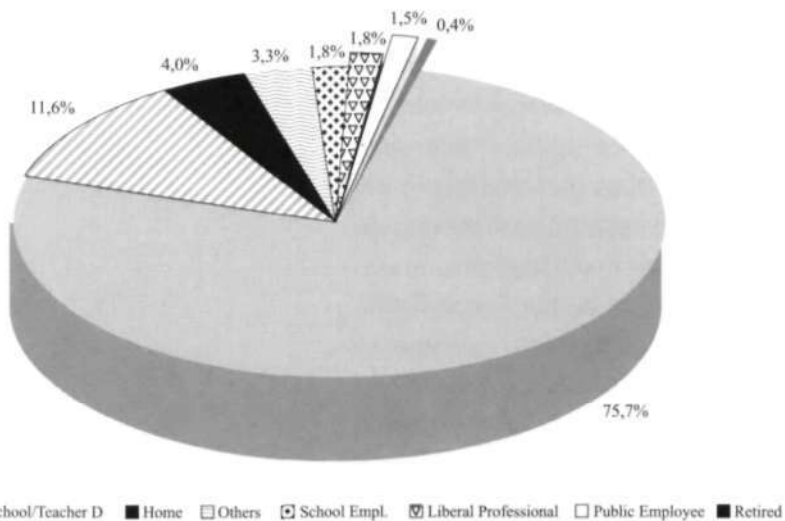
Calls to *Speak Brazil*, by State, up to July of 1997.

18



Graph of Brazil, *Speak according to subjects.*

CONNECTIONS BY PROFESSION SEPT/95 a JULY/97



Calls to *Speak Brazil*, showing the profession of those using the service.

end of this year, the Coordination of Public Relations will have participated in over 300 events, including the launching of Ministry programmes, national seminars and international meetings, exhibitions, inauguration ceremonies, and the signing of Special agreements, among others.

The results attained through publicity activities have been noteworthy. *The Teacher's Census*, conducted in the Northeast Region of Brazil, in 1996, was indispensable for the application of resources from the *Fund for Maintenance and Development of Elementary/ Schooling Teaching and Enhancing the Status of Teaching Profession*. The return of Census

questionnaires presented certain problems since they had to be filled out by the teachers themselves and they requested personal data. Nevertheless, thanks to the publicity campaign developed previously, a response rate of 83% was achieved, which made the initiative a success.

Another important case, which gives a measure of results obtained as a consequence of publicity activities, is the School/ Lunch programme. In 1996, it was found that roughly 3.300 municipalities were late in submitting accounts to the Federal Government. According to current law, those who have not accounted for past spending are not eligible for new funding and thus the Ministry could not forward them transfers of financial resources.

A film was produced, at a cost of little over R\$ 13 thousand (a relatively small sum in advertising terms), calling upon the population to complain to their mayors' offices in case lunches were not served to their children. The film produced remarkable results. Of the 3.300 municipalities that were behind in their accounting, nearly 3.000 promptly submitted accounts in order to continue receiving transfers so that their to the children could receive school lunches. This illustrates the power of the pressure exerted by the population on municipal authorities.

Lastly, the choice of *School Textbooks* for 1998 is an interesting case in point. As a consequence of the publicity campaign conducted prior to the choice, nearly 100% of the teachers have already Selected the titles they wish to use, with the help of the Guide book distributed by the Ministry, which is designed to ensure adequate distribution books, within a deadline, before next years classes begin.

The Communications efforts carried out within the context of social and political mobilization require constant vigilance and correction in order to improve upon the actions carried out so far, so as to ensure continuing success.

The objective is to instill in the general population, and the community most directly involved with Education (teachers, parents and students), with the expectation of receiving high-quality Educational products and services and the feeling of being participants in the process, so that should any fall in quality standards occur, social pressure will immediately be brought to bear upon the federal, state and municipal Education authorities.

It is in this regard that the feedback provided by the *Speafc Brazil*, and the relationships carefully cultivated with the press, become so important. The outcry against any attempt to abolish such a service would be too loud for any government to ignore, and the political cost of closing this channel of free and democratic expression of society's commitment to education would be exceedingly high.

The free press, which serves as the eyes, ears and voice of the Nation, expects and receives from the Ministry an absolutely professional treatment and is perfectly capable of exercising its critical powers whenever it deems that the Government's actions or policies fail to serve the best interests of Education and citizenship. Should at any time the press feel that it own or the Nation's interests are not being respected by the Education authorities, undoubtedly, it would use its power and influence to denounce those responsible.

The decentralizing thrust of many of the Ministry's programmes, has also fostered participation among the communities. Without community participation, it would be extremely difficult to maintain programmes such as the Fund for Maintenance and *Development of Elementary Schooling and for Enhancing the Status of the Teaching Profession* which, in the light of its decentralized nature, requires social Communications to inform and guide its managers at the local level.

The publicity agencies which work for the Ministry have one-year contracts which will remain in force for half a year under the next administration so as to ensure continuity, without however obliging the next Minister to maintain the contracts beyond that period.

The *Awaken Brazil* programme also has plans to pursue new projects, besides continuing the work currently underway. The capacity of the *Speak Brazil* is to be expanded, greater number of lectures are to be given, and a

Future Prospects

course in social marketing is to be provided for SICOM staff members, involving participation in events, such as courses, fairs, seminars and congresses, besides the holding of events specifically devoted to social communication techniques.

A seminar is to be held for the press, with a view to enlisting support for greater coverage of Educational themes in the media, and meetings are to be held with opinion makers (artists, writers and communicators), with the aim of securing their commitment to carrying the message of Education to a wider audience through their work and respective fields of communication.

There is also a project for stimulating the formation of Student Associations, through combined efforts on the part of Government agencies and private institutions, with a view to ensuring greater student participation in school affairs.

And lastly, but by no means least, on 2nd October, a concerted campaign is to be launched to ensure that all of Brazil's school-age children, including those who were not in school last year, are duly enrolled this year. The effort will seek the support of all Brazilian society. To this end, the Department of Social Communication Advisory of the Ministry of Education will be using its full capacities, creativity and resources to ensure that not one single Brazilian child between the ages of 7 and 14 years is not in school.

FOUR EXAMPLES OF INNOVATIVE ACTIONS

ACTION OF THE PUBLIC POWER

Projeto Educar Plantando

Based on the constructive theory teaching of Jean Piaget, the *Education by Planting* project, developed in Paracatu, State of Minas Gerais, brought 300 families back to the fields, caused evasion to fall from 15% to 5,6% and repeats from 25% to 5,2%. Then mayor, Manoel Borges, offered free quality transportation and began purchasing the lunch products directly from the local growers, augmenting their income and giving them the incentive, for those reasons, to free their own children from working the fields to becoming students. The *Education by Planting* project revealed itself to be the best program of rural Education for Brazil, according to the Executive-Director for the Banco do Brasil Foundation, João Pinto Rabello, who decided to implement it in over 60 cities in the Country.

COMPANY ACTION

Itaú Bank Creates Answering System

Through its' Community Actions Program (PROAC), the Itaú Bank donated all the equipment for the phone center called *Brazil, Speak*, which consists of 10 services posts with computer and phone software worth RS 100 thousand. The bank, which also furnishes the periodic maintenance of the equipment, has agreed, further, to train the operators. With this gesture, Bank Itaú allowed the creation of a Service Post which has excelled in its' capacity to integrate the citizen to MEC policy. Daily, arrive at *Brazil, Speak* an average of 1.500 phone calls.

NON-GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATION ACTION

News Agency of Infants Rights (ANDI)

ANDI is pioneer in the Country in supplying the means of communication with guidance in the áreas of Infancy and Adolescence, with priority to Education. It also studies material released by the press and informs the media about their news accomplishments, calling attention to editors about the need to amplify and deepen the coverage of these subjects.

As another act of partnership, it joins with private initiative and other organizations to create promotional events, such as, for example, journalst scholarships for those who wish to specialize in Education. In partnership with MEC, the "Correio Braziliense" newspaper and the Secretary of Education of the Federal District, launched the contest *First Impressions* as an incentive to create more newspapers at junior high schools in the F.D.

COMMUNITY ACTION

Parents work for schools

The Association of Parents of the Pedro II School in the state of Rio de Janeiro, gives a great example of partnership. Parents make use of their jobs to help the school. One father, an electronics engineer, fixed the electrical installations. Another, a civil engineer, built ramps and a bathroom for use by those students with handicaps. Still another, a military man, gave after hour classes to a class which later passed their exams as a group.

With this, these parents got a classroom from the school's directors in which to work. Besides having seats in the School Council, they also discuss their participation with the directors in the teaching curriculum (assured by law in Brazil), and promote events to help needy students, such as the one developed to purchase textbooks for junior high schools.



Agriculturist Deócles
Gomes Machado at
the Pouso do
Amanhecer Center.

CITIZEN ACTION

Food donations

Retired agriculturist Deócles Gomes Machado, age 92, living in the city of Ituiutaba (MG), works from sunup to sundown to donate food to eight children's homes, a pre-school, two elderly homes and a clinic, 1200 children and adults. He has done this for 13 years. Since then, he has obtained 36 empty lots on loan, where he plants cereals, vegetables and fruit. With one part of the crops, he pays the owners. With another, he makes his donations. To do the work, he uses his own salary. He receives R\$ 112 (roughly 110 U.S. dollars) from social security and with half this

amount he buys seeds and other necessities. When placing his profession at the school's service, the farmer became known to the local mayor, Públio Chaves, who intends to enlarge the supply of school lunches and also benefit state and federal schools within his city.



Minister Paulo Renato with the host of the program "Angélica" for children.

COMMUNICATIONS ACTION

Donation of fees

The host of children's programs, Angélica, is one of the great partners of arts and entertainment. Using her charismatic image towards the national public, especially with the children, she filmed two publicity specials for the *Wake up Brazil*, without charging a fee. During her daily program, shown on the largest television network, Rede Globo, Angélica calls attention to the importance of all of Brazilian society's participation for the cause of Education.

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