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THE ANNE WHITE
HEALTH EDUCATION SUMMER CLUBS
ESTABLISHED AT SIX PRIMARY SCHOOLS
IN MENOUFIA GOVERNORATE

FINAL REPORT

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INTRODUCTION

"Women, Water and Sanitation" is an action-research project conducted by the Social Research Center, American University in Cairo, and funded by the International Development Research Centre, Canada. It addresses problems of poor sanitary and health conditions in two villages in Menoufia governorate. The ultimate goal is the promotion of community health and the improvement of village sanitary conditions.

Two of the main action and research components of the project concentrate on the initiation of water and sanitation educational programs in an effort to change unhygienic behavioral patterns and raise villagers' environmental awareness.

Parallel to this, the project acts as a catalyst in involving villagers and government officials at the different administrative levels in working out alternative solutions for unsanitary village conditions.

The summer club program presents one of the approaches of communicating health related information to children in a simple but interesting manner. It is held during the summer vacation utilizing the school as its institutional base and the teachers - after receiving training - as the hygiene promoters. This year the program was made possible by a gift offered by a prominent social scientist who recognizes the potential children can have in promoting community health.

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Framework of Action and Research

Five major parameters constitute the angles of a framework for action and research adopted by the project in general and the summer club program in particular. On the one hand, health, sanitation, and the environment are tackled within a holistic approach. Any changes in unhygienic behavioral patterns are expected to proceed in conjunction with improvements in the village environment. The latter is conceptualized broadly to include not only the physical environment, but also the social, political, and health conditions within which villagers live. At the same time, the holistic framework is meant to encompass the integrated efforts of villagers, the research team acting as a catalyst, and government representatives.

The second parameter recognizes the importance of contextualizing notions of health and sanitation to be compatible with and relevant to the people involved. This contextualization arises from an understanding of villagers' practices and perceptions of health, sanitation and the environment, and from the content of the health educational programs.

Third, a contextualization process cannot be adopted without a prior understanding on the part of the research team of patterns and perceptions shared by villagers. The crucial aspect of research and an on-going process of monitoring and evaluation allows for continuous feedback between the action and research components of the project.

Forth, sustainability of initiated programs, primarily in the sense of continuity of action after the withdrawal of the research team, is a major constituent of action and research activities. This entails developing the potential of integrated action among and between villagers and government representatives to maintain the momentum of initiated programs.

Fifth, parallel to sustainability of action, the project's strategy aims at dissemination of information for utilization. This entails testing different methodologies of each initiated program to develop viable and effective models of action in the form of information packages to be utilizable by others, whether these be research agents, government officials and planners, or villagers.

These five parameters constituted the frame of reference that guided the conduct of the 1990 health education summer club program. Meanwhile, the insights gained from the two previous summer club experiments (see Reports 1988 and 1989) as well as the action and research dimensions of the overall project, were utilized in an effort to build upon them with special focus on sustainability and utilization.

BACKGROUND, JUSTIFICATION, AND OBJECTIVES OF THE PROGRAM

As indicated in the 1988 and 1989 summer club reports, children (ages 8-12 years) have proven to play a crucial role in promoting health related behavior within their social surroundings. Being eager to learn and practice what they have gained, the communication of health related information to children through the summer clubs enabled them, on the one hand, to increase their knowledge about health, diseases, and the environment. On the other hand, they were able to enforce some of the adopted hygienic information and practices among their parents, especially mothers, their younger siblings, and their friends.

More important, some of the children felt that their role is contribute to the improvement of the sanitary conditions in their villages. In Babil, where the program has been established for two years, a group of five girls

approached the research team a number of times to ask about the garbage collection cart that has been operating there. When the process of waste collection was halted for a while, they reported they had gone to the village council representative to ask why the service was stopped. The same group also took it as their responsibility to clean the public stand-pipe which is used extensively by village women. Moreover, since they are now in preparatory education and have outgrown the age ceiling for participating in the summer clubs, they collected a group of younger village children, especially school drop-outs, and taught them how to read and write, while talking simultaneously about health and diseases.

Besides children, primary school teachers constituted another major target group, primarily in the capacity of communicators of health information. Previous experience revealed that teachers can play a crucial role in disseminating health information to children in a non-conventional manner. However, a number of factors mitigates such a contribution. Among these are: weak and distorted information about health, sanitation, and the environment; lack of enthusiasm and interest; no knowledge of innovative information communication methods; lack of resource and reference audio-visual material; and lack of supervision and monitoring.

Moreover, the previous experiences were part of a pilot project nature and this meant there was limited intervention on the part of the Education Department. Hence, the possibilities for sustainability and/or expansion replication was limited.

Besides the overall goal of promoting community health by communicating health related information to children and primary school teachers, these insights helped the research team define the specific objectives of the 1990 summer club program as follows:

- * Work out with the Education Department at the governorate level alternative strategies for sustaining the program as part of the directorate action strategies.
- * Provide teachers with intensive training to enable them to carry out their role as effective hygiene promoters targeting children.
- * Propose an alternative package for utilizing the time and effort of public service candidates by involving them in the program as monitors and resource persons.
- * Develop and test a package of reference material and guides to be employed by others, especially teachers and officials in the education directorate, while carrying out similar programs.

PROCESSES OF ACTION AND IMPLEMENTATION

Collaboration with the Education Department

One of the basic conclusions drawn from the overall activities of the Women, Water and Sanitation project is the concept of partnership between villagers, the research team, and government officials. The integration of actions of these three categories ensures the sustainability of the initiated programs as well as allows for further utilization in different action forms. Therefore, the collaboration with the Education Department since the inception of the 1990 summer club programs was considered basic. It opened up channels of cooperation with personnel at the village level, especially school employees such as masters of teachers, children, and their parents.

From another perspective, by involving the Education Department and the school staff in all the steps required to establish the summer clubs, a model of action was provided which they can ameliorate while carrying out the program in subsequent years without the full intervention by the research team.

Given budget and personnel limitations and the yet experimental nature of the model of partnership, it was decided to establish the health education summer clubs at six primary schools in Menoufia governorate. The research team along with personnel from the Education Department, selected the six schools. The Department was responsible for official notification and preparation for the program.

Baseline Data

At this stage, the role of the project team was primarily research oriented. Along with the help of public service candidates, who have been involved with the project in previous programs, baseline data was collected and evaluated. This data corresponded to:

- * village conditions relating to health services and sanitation;
- * teachers' background information relating to health, diseases, and the environment;
- * school conditions; and
- * children's perceptions and information about health and diseases (these were completed on the first day of the program).

Process methods and the results of data collection were shared tentatively with personnel at the Education Department with the aim of:

- * highlighting the significance of the research component in carrying out the program;
- * familiarizing them with methods of data collection and types of information needed;
- * acquainting them with conditions of the schools and villages in which the program will be held; and
- * determining the focus of the health component of the training program to be offered to teachers depending on results of pre-program interviews.

Evaluations of the collected data revealed the following:

- * Although teachers have general information as to the sources of pollution, health, and general sanitation, the connection between practice and disease transmission cycles is very weak. The same applies to the knowledge about bilharzia, environmental sanitation, and the sources of microbes.
- * Most of the teachers' knowledge is basically theoretical that finds little application in their practices.
- * Teachers primarily adopt conventional methods of communication of information to children, which renders the relationship between them very strict and unfriendly.
- * Teachers complained about the lack of resources and raw material to help develop childrens' skills in crafts. This shortage of material is coupled with an attitude on the teacher's part which is characterized by a lack of innovative ideas and enthusiasm.
- * Children's health information is limited to the content of the curriculum, which is very general and theoretical. Its weaknesses lie mainly in the connection between practices and diseases; i.e., bilharzia and sources of environmental pollution and flies as media for disease transmission.
- * The conditions of the six villages in which the program will be held is more or less similar with regard to population size, institutional set-

up, predominance of potable water home connections, flow of canals in the midst of the village, lack of sullage, and solid waste disposal systems, except for one village where the governorate introduced a sample sewerage plant.

- * Most of the schools have a similar number of students, however the hygienic condition in most of them is poor, especially the school yards, classrooms, and latrines.

Content of the Program

The content of the summer club daily program is similar to the one used previously. The health component covered mainly the following themes:

- * personal hygiene
- * home hygiene
- * nutrition and hygienic food preparation
- * environmental sanitation
- * modes of disease transmission

The program also included the teaching of simple crafts like sewing, handicraft work, doll and toy making, and simple carpenting. Painting, drawing, singing, dramatic, and physical exercises, display of films, and other audio-visual aids were some of the techniques employed to convey information to children.

Training

Designing the content and the daily program of the summer club is basic prior to the conduct of the training program. The training method followed is primarily learning by doing, implementing the details of the daily schedule in practice, whether this be in reference to the health component or the skills and crafts.

The research team collaborated with the Education Department in designing and conducting a two-day training course, focusing on:

- * basic health information that needs to be conveyed to children covering the five main themes;
- * methods and techniques of information communication;
- * skills and crafts; and
- * the use of audio-visual aids and reference material.

Resource persons in the department specializing in arts and crafts were called upon to train the teachers (five from each of the six schools) and the public service candidates who were to participate in the program.

As much as the training program was geared to the teachers who would implement the schedule of the summer club program, it had also been training for the personnel of the Education Department on how to conduct similar training programs in the future. This specifically related to :

- * identifying the specific objectives of the training and overall program and classifying these both to trainers and trainees.
- * preparing a detailed job description based on an agreed upon division of labor among participants and directing the training to the work needs of each group.
- * preparing a detailed training program that contains the main components of the training, but is flexible enough to allow for modifications based on needs.
- * providing trainees with simple and practical reference material to be employed as part of the training as well as a guide for use during program implementation.
- * avoiding the lecture form of training in favor of learning by doing and utilizing audio-visual aids.

- * drawing on the expertise of local resource persons who are familiar with the content of the program, the potential of trainees, and the field situation in which the program will be implemented.
- * gearing the pace, content and nature of the training course to the trainees' potential of information acquisition, based on our results of pre-program baseline data.
- * recognizing that training is an on-going activity, meaning that the implementation of the program itself is on-the-job training. This requires continuous monitoring on the part of supervisors to fill in the gaps of specified training if the need arises during the action phase.
- * since public service candidate, are to be involved as monitors, they have to participate in the training program designed for teachers. Simultaneously, special attention should be directed to training them for monitoring activities, record keeping, and evaluation processes.

Implementation and Monitoring

The summer club program was divided into twelve sessions scheduled during the period from early July to mid August 1990. Approximately one hundred children attended the program at each of the six schools. "Preventive Measures are Better than Resorting to Curative Services" was the slogan chosen by all participating teachers as the theme of the health education component. At each school, children were divided into four groups, ranging in size between twenty to twenty-five students. Each public service candidate was assigned to one school. Their role was primarily monitoring all the activities of the program and acting as a liaison between the research team and the school.

During this phase of the program, the Education Department was in charge of supervising the overall program. This entailed periodic visits to each of

the six schools during the course of the project. Their visits added an important dimension of seriousness and commitment on the part of teachers.

The research team, on the other hand, focused on a general monitoring of the program. It was also responsible for supplying the teachers with material and audio-visual aids to be utilized by the children.

While guiding the operation of the summer clubs, it became evident that some of the teachers needed reinforcement of some training components. Therefore, resource persons were invited to the field situation where a one-day training was pursued with some teachers. Primarily the research acted as a catalyst in coordinating the activities of the Education Department and the school administration and staff.

On the whole, the implementation of the program was an exercise in testing the compatibility of a partnership model, in this case between school staff, personnel in the Education Department, and research team. The evaluation of the program is thus an analysis of the feasibility of such a model.

EVALUATION OF THE PROGRAM AS AN EXPERIMENT OF THE PARTNERSHIP MODEL

Participants in the summer club program, including the Education Department, school staff, public service candidates, and the research team, shared in all evaluation processes. The evaluations were mainly geared to answer the following questions:

- * How successful has the process of information communication been both to children and their teachers to the effect of increasing their knowledge about health, diseases, and the environment; raising their environmental awareness, and changing their unhygienic practices?

* How do all participants perceive the effectiveness of the strategy of work that guided the conduct of the program and how do they evaluate their role in relation to that of all the others involved (mainly this refers to the role of school staff, Education Department, public service candidates, and research team) and the coordination of activities between them?

* To what extent and how do participants perceive a potential for sustainability of the program and how do they foresee possibilities for utilizing the experiences gained either by them or others?

Effectiveness of Health Education

The research team and public service candidates shared with personnel from the Education Department and the school staff processes of evaluating the effectiveness of the process of health information communication to children. Interview schedules were completed with participating children and their parents in relation to the health information gained by children and how they transmitted it within their families; and the actual changes in unhygienic behavioral patterns. Observations by both public service candidates and teachers supported the results obtained from the interview schedules.

In general, results indicated that some changes in the knowledge background of children had occurred, especially in making a connection between sources of microbes, their own practices, and how and what type of disease can inflict them consequently. For instance, the role of flies as a means of spreading eye diseases and gastrointestinal infectious was stressed by most

children. Similarly, associating their use of canal water, and urinating and/or defecating in it; with the cycle of bilharzia, was another theme of concern. Washing of hands with soap, cleaning vegetables, and covering food were also mentioned in connection to diarrheal infectious.

The type of information the children gained was, however, contingent upon the emphasis each of the teachers made while communicating information to them, which also related to the ability of the teachers in mastering information in certain areas. Moreover, the the themes that were communicated with the use of attractive audio-visual aids (e.g. magnetic boards, bilharzia chart) ranked highest among the information themes the children retained. The "Guide to Trainers", developed by the Women, Water and Sanitation Project, has been intensively used by teachers in the process of information communication, which shows in the drawings the children completed and the language that they used in commenting on the information they gained.

The changes in unhygienic practices the children and their parents reported corresponded to the type of information they retained. These ranged from not swimming in canal water, covering food and washing vegetables, washing hands with soap before and after eating and after defecation, covering the latrine opening to avoid flies and insects, and changing the dress women wear while preparing dung cakes. Observations by public service candidates confirmed that some changes in unhygienic practices had occurred. One of them commented that a mother met her in the street and told her: "What have you done to my daughter? All day she doesn't talk about anything except cleaning and covering food to avoid flies. Whenever she notices anything uncovered she runs to fetch any lids or pieces of cloth to protect it from flies."

Based on group evaluations and the daily reports by the public service candidates, it became evident that the teachers also have benefited from the information they have conveyed to children. Their intensive use, of reference material, especially the "Guide", in itself has been a process of information acquisition. The new information is primarily related to environmental sanitation, bilharzia, and flies as media for disease transmission. However, the benefit that accrued to teachers was not limited to health related information, but also skills and methods of communicating information to children, how to use audio-visual aids, how to make use of simple material available in the environment, and how to be committed to the job they are doing.

Strategy of Work

Group evaluation sessions including personnel from the Education Department, school staff, public service candidates, and research team were held to evaluate the strategy of work and processes of project implementation. The outcome can be summed up in the following points:

- * the approach adopted in conducting the training program had been successful in providing teachers with the basic skills to assume their role of hygiene promoters to children. This especially refers to use of audio-visuals and learning by doing. However, a longer training course could enhance the effectiveness of the implementation of the program in the sense of going more into depth in practicing all the details of the project implementation processes;

- * supplying teachers with simple and practical reference material, such as the "Guide" and using it as a basic media for information com-

munication to the teachers during training course is crucial to their ability to retain information and later communicate it to children;

- * the role of the Education Department as monitor of all stages of the project is indispensable. It allows for better channels of communication, information flow, and coordination of activities between administration and staff at the schools;

- * similarly, the role of the public service candidates is crucial as a liaison between the research team and school staff. At the same time, they were utilized by teachers during the course of the project in the capacity of resource persons with respect to the health education component and skills of information communication methods. However, this necessitates intensive training for the public service candidates to be able to assume such a role. Meanwhile, their contributions to research activities, starting with baseline data collection, record keeping, and evaluation processes is an asset to the Education Department, which lacks the trained manpower for such activities;

- * the role of the research team was basic in providing training for all participants as well as guiding the research and action components of the project. At the same time, its role in coordinating the activities of the Education Department and school staff and between schools (e.g. transmitting ideas from one club to the other has been essential). However, participants suggested that further integration channels are needed, especially between schools, in order to increase processes of information and experience sharing. This might take the form of field

visits by each school to the the other, video displays of other similar programs, etc.

Sustainability & Future Utilization

During the same group evaluation sessions all participants expressed their ideas about process sustainability and replication. These included:

- * the importance of utilizing the caliber of the core group of children and teachers in following up and sustaining the health education component during the regular school year. This can take place by involving these children in each of the regular activity groups; having the teachers be responsible for most of the activity groups; visiting neighboring schools to share the experience of the summer clubs with them; and visiting the families of participating children to keep the momentum of the project going;
- * utilizing the expertise of the public service candidates who were involved in the program in training other teachers and candidates of public service;
- * utilize the products made by children, e.g. charts, notebooks, waste baskets, etc., in communicating and enforcing health related information and practices among other children;
- * involving the health unit of each village in the program, especially the doctor, while conducting training courses for other teachers; and utilizing the clinic staff as a resource in enforcing health information of school staff;

* maintaining the coordination between the Education Department and the school staff in carrying out similar projects in the future. The role of each would follow the model of action set in this summer club experience. The Education Department being charge of the training, monitoring, and evaluation of the school staff in the implementation of the program. At the same time, the channel of communication between the Department and the school should be maintained, especially in collaborating to specify sources of funds for smiliar programs in the future;

* the role of the research team is necessary during the coming year for the initiated programs to be sustained. Its contribution would evolve around training processes, providing packages of reference material and guides, guiding the process of fund allocation based on integrating the resources of the Department and the school, or helping both to contact outside agencies for funds; and

* having the research team develop a package of information explaining the model of partnership as exercised in this project and disseminating such information to the Education Department and the schools.

**PROGRAM OF THE HEALTH EDUCATION SUMMER CLUBS
FOR PRIMARY SCHOOL CHILDREN
IN SIX VILLAGES IN THE
MENOUFIA GOVERNORATE**

**Theme: "Preventive Measures are Better than Resorting to
Curative Services."**

Date	Program
July 10 & 11th 10:00 a.m. & 4:00 p.m.	Workshop for Training the Teachers sponsoring the club on: Hygiene Information, Crafts and skills, setting the daily program for the summer clubs

The daily activities of the summer club were divided into three main activities lasting from 9:00 a.m. until one o'clock. The club was held three times a week.

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| 1. Health education messages | 9:30 - 11:00 |
| 2. Recreation | 11:00 - 11:30 |
| 3. Crafts & skills related to the theme | 11:30 - 1:00 |

July 15th	Introduction to the summer club and its goals Division of children into 4 groups (25 each) with one responsible teacher for the whole duration of the program going over the theme and explaining it
July 17th	Personal Hygiene Activities according to interest
July 19th	Continuation of Personal Hygiene Activities according to interest
July 22nd	Household Hygiene Activities according to interest
July 24th	Nutrition and Food Handling Activities according to interest

Date	Program
July 26th	Enviornmental Sanitation Activiteis according to interest
July 29th	Moving out to the village Street for observation recording what they see of unhygienic practices, and discussing how these conditions can be improved Activities according to interst
July 31st	Cleaning up of schools and doing simple repairs Activities according to interst
Aug. 2nd	Film display-on Bilharzia and Prescriptions to Health Activities according to interest
Aug. 4th	How disease travels Activities according to interest
Aug. 5th	Going over material gained and how the childen can make use of it in their daily life Activities according to interest
Aug. 6, 7, 8 Each two schools on one day	Exhibition of all the crafts Performance of children in the form of short plays and songs related to the theme
Aug. 8th 5 p.m.	Evaluation of the summer club with theachers, representative from the Ministry of Education, public service candidates and research team.