National Programme Adolescent Health

Goal

The program provides services and information about reproductive health of adolescents in public schools for the first time in Egypt.

The project also provides information and advice for parents and teachers, in collaboration with the NGOs and local teams through which the project is being implemented.

Time Span

The Adolescent Health program is subdivided in three phases:

Phase II: ran from 2004 to 2007.
Phase III: runs from 2008 to 2011.

Geographical Scope

The program is active in the Egyptian governorates of Cairo (Maadi, Heliopolis and Mansha’t Nasser), Giza (Agouza), Ismailiyaa (Abu Subir), Beni Sueif (Ahansiyya), Fayoum (al-Aziziyya), Minya, Sohag, Qina (Abu Diab), Aswan (Abbasiyya), and Sharqiyya.

Target Group(s)

This program targets different segments of society:

- Adolescents from 10 to 18 years old in primary and secondary schools in villages, hamlets and slums
- Parents
- NGOs active in this field
- School psychologists and social workers
- Education specialists
- Doctors

Objectives

The program has a number of distinct objectives:

- Inform adolescents about reproductive health and Rights of the Child via campaigns in schools.
• Raise the issue of girls’ rights and get them to make use of relevant services such as clinics, support centres, etc.
• Empower adolescents by informing them about a healthy conduct and lifestyle with self-respect.
• Involve adolescents in the development of new projects to disseminate the acquired knowledge, rewarding their creativity, and celebrating the project’s success with “The Day of the Egyptian Girl”.
• Develop basic skills of stakeholders regarding healthy habits and self-respect, resisting peer pressure, and the risks of precocious sexual activity such as VD, AIDS, early pregnancy, etc.
• Create supportive environments for adolescents by addressing families and communities.
• Cooperating with professionals and government officials of the relevant ministries to inform the public and raise awareness.
• Defending children's rights, human rights, and reproductive rights while fighting violence and gender-based discrimination.

Achievements

The program has had a number of successful outcomes so far:

• It introduced reproductive health education for adolescents in schools by means of classes, projects, activities, research, etc.
• Local communities are made aware of issues regarding adolescent reproductive health through various seminars and meetings organized by NGOs and attended by parents, teachers, and clerics.
• CDs, educational manuals, letters, and brochures were drawn up and disseminated to inform students, parents, and communities about reproductive health, children’s right and other related topics.
• In collaboration with the Exxon Mobil Foundation, the Adolescent Health Project was implemented in a number of schools, e.g. to train students in volunteering.
• A questionnaire was drawn up to evaluate and follow up on the health education seminars.
• Via the program, in cooperation with ministries and governorates adjustments to related health policies were proposed.
• Peer educational programs were set up that focus on training youth and preparing them to inform, support and raise awareness among their contemporaries, concerning the issues of adolescent rights and reproductive health.
• Family planning projects were set up in several governorates.

Challenges

When the program first started, some governorates presented a number of challenges. The most important ones were encountered in Sharqiyya and Beni Sueif, and included the refusal of society to promote a culture of reproductive health among adolescents. This local resistance,
which is rooted in the proliferation of pornography and harmful practices among adolescents in these rural areas, was, however, overcome.

**Partner(s)**

This program is supported and/or implemented by:

- The funding agency of the United Nations Population Fund
- The joint United Nations Program on AIDS
- The Ministry of Education
- The Faculty of Medicine of Kasr El-Aini
- The General Authority for Health Insurance
- Relevant NGOs
- The local teams
- The Exxon Mobil Foundation
- Save the Children
- The Maadi Club
- The Heliopolis Library
- The program for the integration of reproductive health services