

ATFALNA

UNICEF AND CONFEDERATION OF AFRICAN FOOTBALL UNITE TO PROMOTE QUALITY EDUCATION FOR ALL CHILDREN

UNICEF and the Confederation of African Football (CAF) united in January in a joint campaign to harness the power of football during the 2008 Africa Cup of Nations- Africa's biggest international football competition. The campaign sought to promote quality education for all of Africa's children and was featured during the tournament in Ghana on billboards and in televised coverage of matches.

Famous football players from various African countries joined the campaign appeared and in a series of public service announcements with the aim of delivering the message that quality education helps children, especially girls, to stay in school and gain the knowledge and confidence that they need to pursue their dreams. Mohamed Aboutreika from the Egyptian national team and star of Al-Ahly Club also participated in the campaign by appearing in the Egyptian TV spot. "I am happy to send out a message on the importance of providing quality education for children, as I believe that a player has a mission outside of his playground, which is to contribute to promoting good qualities in society", said Aboutreika. Significant progress has been made in education in Egypt, with a high primary school enrolment rate. However, challenges remain, such as the lack of teaching tools, extracurricular and recrea-



tional facilities, appropriate and functioning water supply and sanitation facilities.

The Government of Egypt's commitment to education is strong, and most recently the Ministry of Education has developed a national strategic plan which addresses several issues such as improving the quality of learning environment, setting standards that equip schools with the appropriate facilities, and introducing models that make schools free from violence.

The Government of Egypt and NGOs, supported by UNICEF, are running 227 Community Schools in Upper Egypt which apply active learning techniques and promote community participation. In order to enhance the quality of teaching and learning processes, UNICEF is assisting the Ministry to apply the active learning methods used in Community Schools in the formal education system as well. UNICEF also provides technical and financial support to the Girl's Education Initiative aiming to tackle the gender gap in education. The National Council for Childhood and Motherhood is leading the initiative which has to date established 760 schools reaching more than twenty thousand children in remote areas. Much of the focus of UNICEF now is also given to supporting efforts to increase the enrolment rate of children to pre-schools (kindergartens).

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JAPANESE AMBASSADOR TO EGYPT VISITS UNICEF-SUPPORTED AVIAN INFLUENZA COMMUNITY EDUCATION ACTIVITIES

The Ambassador of Japan to Egypt, His Excellency Kaoru Ishikawa, made a visit to Tamouh Village in Giza governorate on the 28th of February. Ambassador Ishikawa had the opportunity to see the community awareness activities implemented by the Ministry of Health and Population in cooperation with UNICEF, with the support of the Japanese Government, to disseminate avian influenza messages to rural communities in Egypt.



Giza Governorate is one of 17 Governorates in which this joint project is being implemented to prevent the outbreak of Avian Influenza in Egypt where the first case was confirmed in February 2006. "UNICEF works at the community level to support the Government's national plan" said Dr. Erma Manoncourt, UNICEF Egypt Representative. "The most important thing is for people to be aware of the risks of this disease, how it is contracted, and then to know what to do about it" added Dr. Manoncourt.

As more than 90% of poultry infection cases have occurred in households, the community education campaign led by the Ministry of Health and Population- with UNICEF support- delivers messages to families on how to protect themselves against the disease, and is implemented by the Ministry of

Health's cadre of community health workers, the "raedat refiat". This is community outreach that aims to raise public awareness and change behavior of families who raise poultry through house-to-house visits and community education.

Ambassador Ishikawa attended an awareness session targeting women, an activity regularly conducted by the community health workers at the local health clinic, besides their house visits.

Addressing participants at the awareness session, the Japanese Ambassador said, "In my country, they say that the mother brings knowledge to the household. When the house is well governed, the village is in turn well governed, and ultimately the nation is well governed. Therefore I am happy that you are all attending this meeting to learn about avian influenza".

Through this project in Egypt, more than eleven thousand community health workers have been trained on effective communication. The community education campaign is also strengthened by a social marketing campaign including messages on street walls, banners, handouts and vehicles traveling from village to village.

UNICEF GOODWILL AMBASSADOR KHALED ABOL NAGA SUPPORTS SAILING THE NILE CAMPAIGN

UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador Khaled Abol Naga completed a two-day visit to the city of Al-Minya, stop of the Sailing the Nile campaign, on the 31st of November and 1st of December 2007, to highlight the issues of Female Genital Mutilation and HIV/AIDS.

"Sailing the Nile" campaign was first launched in 2006 through a partnership between the United Nations, the Egyptian Government, NGOs and the private sector. Over 45 days, eight feluccas make the journey from Aswan to Cairo, over eight stops to create awareness on the Eight Millennium Development Goals.

On the first day of his trip, Khaled Abol Naga met with Minya youths in a seminar organized by Better Life Association for Development (BLACD) in a youth center.



UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador Khaled Abol Naga speaking during the HIV/AIDS Youth Camp in Minya

This open meeting between Mr. Abol Naga and young people from Minya resulted in a lively discussion on the subject of FGM, which, as Mr. Abol Naga emphasized, "is one of the most important issues for our future, and for the future of Egyptian youth." This successful dialogue was characterized by the honesty and outspokenness of all participants.

During his second day in Minya, and on the occasion of World AIDS Day, Abol Naga participated in a youth camp aimed at raising awareness about HIV/AIDS. Abol Naga also performed a skit addressing the stigma related to HIV/AIDS with fellow actor Amr Waked, which illustrated the challenges faced by people living with the condition in Egypt.

International Year of Sanitation 2008

On 7 May, 2007, experts from the private and public sector attended the First Planning Meeting on the International Year of Sanitation 2008 to map out an action plan on how to accelerate progress on sanitation. An estimated 2.6 billion people world wide remain without proper sanitation and thereby lack protection against preventable diseases, which claim the lives of thousands daily, primarily children under the age of five.

This issue led the UN General Assembly to globally set up The International Year of Sanitation in December 2006, to help accelerate progress on sanitation by putting the spotlight on this silent crisis.

Sanitation is a problem that people are often shy to discuss, with excreta and its disposal being unpopular subjects from the local to the international levels. Over one billion people worldwide have gained access to improved sanitation in the past 14 years, with the global sanitation coverage having increased from 49 per cent to 59 per cent between 1990 and 2004.

Yet, the world continues to be off track to meet the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) target to reduce by half the proportion of people without access to basic sanitation by 2015. If current trends continue, there will be 2.4 billion people without basic sanitation in 2015.

Children especially continue to pay the price in lost lives, missed schooling, in disease, malnutrition and poverty. Poor

sanitation, hygiene and unsafe water claim the lives of an estimated 1.5 million children under the age of five every year. In Egypt, only a handful of the country's current 4,500 villages have proper waste water disposal systems or municipal solid waste management.

"The contamination of water supplies from improper disposal of liquid and solid wastes to canals and drains is a serious problem in Egypt, that is being aggravated by the rapid growth of the nation's population as well as the fixed and limited water resources," said UNICEF Egypt Deputy Representative Hannan Sulieman.

UNICEF is working with various national partners such as the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation and the Holding Company for Water and Sanitation in different geographical areas throughout Egypt, mainly in Upper Egypt, in support of enhancing national capacities in water management, hygiene and sanitation promotion. Of the many shareholders included are school teachers and students, community members, and local authorities.

This year, UNICEF in Egypt will be highlighting the issue of water, sanitation and hygiene through events and campaigns to create public awareness and mobilize public policy to improve the sanitation situation and hygiene in the country.

WELCOME!

Dennis Arends, Chief of Social Policy, Monitoring and Evaluation (August 2007)

German Reyes, Health Officer (January 2008)

Samy Isaac, Health Officer (January 2008)

Dina Khaled, HIV/AIDS officer (January 2008)

Samar Ibrahim, Programme Communication Officer (January 2008)

Sahar Mashhour, Child Protection Officer (February 2008)

Luisa Balbi, HIV/AIDS UNV (February 2008)

Hala Abu Khatwa, Chief of Communication (March 2008)

Nihad Gohar, Child Protection Officer (March 2008)

EMPOWERED FOR GOOD: CHILDREN IN UPPER EGYPT CHANGE ENVIRONMENT AND SANITATION HABITS

Tawayel El-Sharqiyya School and Zarazra Elementary School, SOHAG

By Serene Assir, March 2008

Perhaps owing to her innate elegance, her peers refer to 10-year-old Fatima, from Tawayel El-Sharqiyya, as a future leader. Her words are strong, as are her positions on the urgent need to protect the environment. At her young age, she has started to write poetry, and though her themes are varied, among her commitments is to improve environmental awareness in her school and amongst the village community.

"I have learned a lot about how to keep the environment safe at school. Now, whenever I meet a child who doesn't take care of the environment, I feel sorry for him, and I try and tell him ways to change his habits."

Like the primary school children of 373 primary schools in Assiut, Sohag and Qena governorates, Fatima has directly benefited from UNICEF's School Sanitation and Hygiene Education (SSHE) project, which was launched last year with funding from USAID. And because of the close-knit nature of the communities in Upper Egyptian villages and towns, the impact of the project has been manifold, and profound.

That the programme has taken a holistic, participatory approach goes a long way in explaining the reasons behind its success. Over 1,400 schoolteachers received training on how to effectively deliver messages relating to the environment, sanitation and hygiene to pupils, both within the context of the subjects they teach and beyond. Those who received training then went on to involve other members of school staff by informing them on how to implement these important messages.

For some children much of the information relating to environmental awareness was no doubt new. But in many cases, given the rural nature of Upper Egypt, the programme had the advantage of enforcing a pre-existing respect for nature. "Now, when I see people throwing things away on the streets, I tell them not to do that," said 13-year-old Islam, who goes to school in Zarazra Elementary School, Sohag. With confidence in his



Fatima,
from Tawayel El Sharqiyya in
Sohag Governorate
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knowledge enforced, his self-respect has also risen. "Being so involved in the project on environmental awareness, I have also become more focused on my studies. I think this is because when you are good at one thing, you want to try your best in other things too."

Through the use of art and outdoor activities including tree-planting on the school grounds and in the villages, children directly participated in their own education and also in the broader context of public community life. "We planted trees outside, and this made us feel very good," Islam said proudly.

Simultaneously, UNICEF provided the technical and financial support to rehabilitate both bathroom and sink facilities in the target public schools, and thereby made it possible for children to have access to the facilities that would help them practice better hygiene. "So we taught the kids a number of different things, such as the need to wash their hands after going to the bathroom," said teacher Safaa Sadeq at Zarazra Elementary. "Then they started to implement those basic messages at home too, and we knew then the change was for good."



School children wash their
hands before lunch time, in
Zarazra school

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Growing up in Upper Egypt, the children of the target regions may well be amongst the country's poorest and thereby in many ways most marginal. However, that the children of Upper Egypt have become capable of taking the lead on sanitation and environmental issues has empowered them for life, with the Ministry of Education taking the lead at the grassroots level to help improve conditions for the school children and communities.

"The Egyptian Government's commitment has been crucial for the success that has been achieved so far" said Dr. Vijayakumar Moses, Chief of Young Child Survival and Development Section at UNICEF Egypt. "We believe that what these children have learnt from being involved in this project will contribute to their development and help them live healthier and more productive lives."

"If we are clean then we face a lower risk of disease," said Islam. "I believe fully in what we are doing for ourselves, and for the environment. I can see the whole town has benefited, and we must continue with our work."

BON VOYAGE AND REASSIGNMENTS

Irene Olumese, Nutrition Officer (December 2007)

Yasmine Wahba, Child Protection Officer (February 2008)

Wessam El Beih, HIV/AIDS Officer, currently the new UNAIDS Country Coordinator in Egypt

Charles Parks, Chief of Operations, reassigned as Chief of Operations UNICEF Cambodia

Hannan Sulieman, our Deputy Representative, who will take up her new assignment as the Deputy Representative in Somalia in April 2008

LAUNCH OF UNICEF POVERTY STUDY

How many children live in poverty? What is poverty? Is it only lack of income, or is it also deprivation of education, health, nutrition and other things that are important for child development?

UNICEF has launched a Global Study on Child Poverty and Disparities to answer these questions. And Egypt is one of the 40 countries in the world where such a study will be undertaken.

This study is crucial because, globally, a lot of work remains to be done to reduce social inequalities, improve economic growth and achieve human development. Despite the urgent need for action, there is no strong evidence on how to do so. And when there is evidence, it often focuses on statistics and outcomes or process indicators. Much less attention is usually given to the causes for these outcomes, or the public policy side of the coin. A good understanding of legislation, finance

allocations, public policies, and institutional capacity is pivotal if we want to make progress in the fight against poverty.

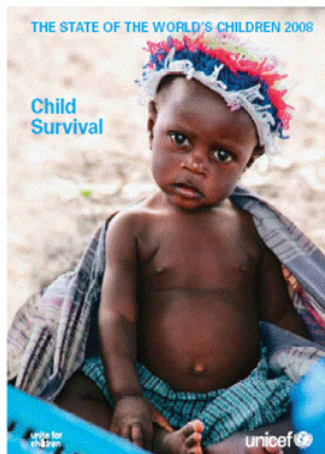
The study considers gaps and opportunities in national poverty reduction strategies, and focuses on the poverty and disadvantages faced by families with children. The study also examines in detail how public policies could more effectively reduce child deprivation by providing better services and protection for all children and families caring for children, including efforts that promote gender equality. The UNICEF study ultimately aims at strengthening the profile of children at the national policy table, and identifying ways that poor children and families can more effectively benefit from national efforts and international commitments.

(For more information visit www.unicefglobalstudy.blogspot.com)

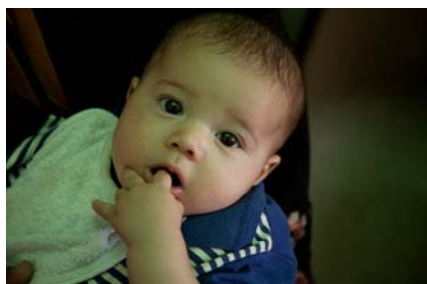
LAUNCH OF THE STATE OF THE WORLD'S CHILDREN 2008 REPORT : CHILD SURVIVAL

The State of the World's Children 2008 Report was launched by UNICEF on the 22nd of January 2008, providing a wide ranging assessment of the current state of child survival and primary health care for mothers, newborns and children. SOWC 08 examines lessons learned in child health over the last few decades and highlights the most important emerging precepts and strategies needed to achieve MDG4 – a two-thirds reduction in under-five mortality between 1990 and 2015.

The report emphasizes the importance of investing in the health of children and their mothers, not only as a human rights imperative, but also as a sound economic decision and one of the surest ways for a country to set its course towards a better future. SOWC 08's main focus is on sub-Saharan Africa, accounting for almost half of all child deaths, and West and Central Africa in particular, where little progress has been made in reducing the under-five mortality rate since 1990. The report also pays attention to South Asia and countries and communities lacking essential services worldwide.



In terms of child survival, Egypt has succeeded in reducing its under-five mortality rate from 91/1000 in 1990 to 35/1000 in 2006; so far the largest improvement among all countries in the region. Furthermore, over the last few decades, Egypt achieved – through vast immunization campaigns and reduction of diarrheal infections- an impressive 68% decline in child death. But formidable challenges persist, particularly since this progress has been accompanied by enduring disparities sub-nationally, particularly in Upper Egypt where 25 million or 37 per cent of the population resides.



• Upcoming Events:

- World Health Day—April 7th 2008
- Education for All Week—23rd to the 29th of April 2008
- International Day of Families—15th of May 2008
- World Environment Day—5th of June 2008
- World Day Against Child Labor—12th of June 2008
- Day of the African Child—16th of June 2008
- World Population Day—11th of July 2008

About UNICEF (The United Nations Children's Fund)

UNICEF is on the ground in 155 countries and territories to help children survive and thrive, from early childhood through adolescence. The world's largest provider of vaccines for developing countries, UNICEF supports child health and nutrition, good water and sanitation, quality basic education for all boys and girls, and the protection of children from violence, exploitation, and AIDS. UNICEF is funded entirely by the voluntary contributions of individuals, businesses, foundations and governments.

In Egypt, UNICEF has been working with the government and people of Egypt since 1954 to protect and nurture the nation's children. UNICEF currently supports Egypt in various ways as the country strives to achieve the UN Millennium Development Goals. The new 2007-2011 country programme of cooperation between UNICEF and the Government of Egypt guides the organization's work in areas such as Child Protection, Young Child Survival and Development and HIV/AIDS.

UNICEF EGYPT

87, Misr Helwan Agricultural Road
Maadi, Cairo
Egypt

Phone: +202 2526 5083 to 5087

Fax: +202 2526 4218

E-mail: cairo@unicef.org

For more information or to donate, please visit our website:

www.unicef.org/egypt/