



Youth for Youth Project

The Results

Two hundred and forty young leaders from Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and Oman have received training to be peer educators. These young people are able to educate other young people on topics such as drug abuse, accident prevention, sexual health including STD and HIV/AIDS prevention. These young educators form a network across the region. The principles of the project have also been integrated into the Scout programme, through community development projects.



Peer education in practice

This project has been possible through establishing a strategic alliance with the World Health Organisation.

The Reasons

During recent years, a number of individual projects have been undertaken with a variety of different agencies, e.g. UNICEF (The United Nations Children's Fund) UNESCO (The United Nations Education, Science and Cultural Organisation), UNHCR (The United Nations High Commission for Refugees), IPPF (The International Planned Parenthood Foundation) and ICRC (The International Red Cross and Red Crescent) and DANIDA (The Development Agency of the Danish Government).

The individual projects with the agencies enabled Scout Associations in the Arab Region to gain experience in undertaking health awareness and health education programmes but each programme was responding to a specific need and there

was no overview of the needs of young people in the Arab world.



Peer education is a very effective method of reaching young people

This project 'Youth for Youth', undertaken with The World Health Organisation, started with an analysis of young people's health problems in the region. It was also innovative in involving young people in delivering the programme by training them as peer educators. This has been found to be a very effective method of training young people in issues which affect them, particularly health issues, sexual health and drug awareness.

The Methods

- A survey was undertaken in all the countries in the Arab Region to define young people's health problems. This questionnaire was designed and analysed with the help of the World Health Organisation. The major health problems identified in the region were:
 1. Adolescent malnutrition.
 2. Lack of efficiency in promoting health lifestyles (sports, fast foods).



Arab Regional Office

Strategic Priority 7

Scouting's Profile – strengthening communications, partnerships and resources



The World Organization of the Scout Movement

3. Reproductive health issues:

- Early marriages, and marriage between relatives.
- Repetitive early pregnancy and motherhood.
- Abortion.
- Inherited diseases.
- Blood diseases.

In addition the questionnaire revealed that young people are ready and willing to listen to their peers.



The peer educators develop training and communication skills

- The overall plan for the project was designed, setting out the aims and the tools available to deliver the project. This enabled a common approach to be undertaken in the different countries, while enabling each country to adapt the project to their particular circumstances.
- Young people who had the potential to be peer educators were selected. In addition to training skills, the young Scout and Guide leaders received training in communication skills and project management.
- A Regional Network was set up so that experiences were shared and successes celebrated. The network, through national supervisory committees, was also responsible for promoting, planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating the project.

- Circulars and guide books were produced on a range of topics, to support the peer educators.
- Key decision makers in Scouting, The World Health Organisation and Government in the Islamic World were also made aware of the project and the activities undertaken by the Scouts. The project was presented to:
 - The 20th Arab Scout Conference (1995)
 - The World Scout Bureau Staff Conference (1996)
 - The 46th General Assembly of the World Health Organisation (1996)
 - The Arab Youth Ministers Conference (1997)
 - The 6th Islamic Scout Conference (1997)
 - The Meeting of World Health Organisation's Representatives in the Arab World (1997).

Our Learning

Working in partnership with other organisations and agencies can be very beneficial. Scouting was able to benefit from the skills and experience of the World Health Organisation in the field of health education, project management, survey design and analysis and from the provision of funding to carry out these tasks.

Scouting was able to provide volunteers who were willing and able to commit their time and effort. It was also able to provide access to young people who would not otherwise have received the health education.

Young people can be effective peer educators if they are provided with the appropriate skills and knowledge and they have useful tools and a supportive environment.

Because the project is 'peer education' and young people share the information

with other young people there is a dramatic multiplier effect. The messages about HIV/AIDS or drug abuse therefore reached many more young people than were initially trained, making it a very effective method of educating young people.

Our Future Plans

1. Co-operating with WHO Regional Offices and their representatives in the Arab countries in order to complete the national plans which focus on celebrating the universal health days in such topics as preventing smoking, drugs, AIDs/HIV.
2. Co-operating with Arab national programmes in order to continue implementing the project at the national level.
3. Holding a meeting of Community Development Commissioners in order to review, plan, and evaluate the future plan.
4. Organize a meeting for patrol leaders and crew mates responsible for implementing the project, in order to follow up the implementation and train them on the recent health awareness programmes.

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World Organization of the Scout Movement
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