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UNICEF / منظمة الأمم المتحدة للأطفال

SA/REP/85-N0103

23 April 1985

Dear Mr Williams,

SUBJECT: UNICEF Support to Saudi Arabia's Health Fairs

Please find enclosed Ahmed Moosa's report on UNICEF support to Saudi Arabia's 1985 health fairs, which were held from 7 - 13 April 1985. This is the third year for UNICEF to support the Ministry of Health in organizing health fairs.

As Mr. Moosa reports, we seem to have helped to change the concept of health fairs from a mere display of equipment and medical products into a real vehicle for teaching people about health.

Mr. Moosa has proposed that Universal Child Day be fixed as December 11th and that we release our SOWCR each year on that day. I support his proposal. As WHO makes use of World Health Day at a fixed time each year, we need a day (or days) around which to arrange government activities commemorating children. Our 40th Anniversary celebrations offer a good chance to fix this date from 1985 onwards. To the degree possible we should try to ensure that the launch of SOWCR is on that day every year.

Best regards.

Sincerely,

Thomas McDermott
Representative

Mr. John Williams
Director, Communication & Information Division
NYHQ.

cc: ✓ Mr. R. Tuluhungwa, NYHQ
Ms. H. Kittani, NYHQ
Mr. V. Soler Sala, Amman
Mr. S. Allawi, Abu Dhabi

PSC SERVICE	
Date	13 May 85
Attention	T.M.
Action	Attached video was filed
Also send by	Date
	Tashi

UNICEF'S SUPPORT
TO HEALTH FAIRS IN SAUDI ARABIA
7 - 13 APRIL 1985

CHANGE OF CONCEPT

It has become quite clear within the Ministry of Health that UNICEF has managed to change the concept of health fairs from a mere display of medical equipment and products, into a real campaign for health education and national advocacy for the needs of mothers and children. Saudi media were very instrumental in effecting this change. This year the volume of media production in one week was quite incredible and the response of the public was extremely positive.

Since we are not sure whether the themes of health fairs in future years will be related to CSDR (and in order to maintain the present momentum gained over the last two years) we need to find a new approach to national advocacy for the Saudi child and mother.

It would be extremely helpful to consider my earlier proposal related to Universal Child Day. In my report on media coverage of SOWCR 1985 in Saudi Arabia, I proposed to establish universal child day December 11. This would be similar to World Health Day (April 7), and would also coincide with the launch of SOWCR, and this year's 40th Anniversary of UNICEF. We should set December 11th permanently as UNICEF's day and release the SOWCR each year on that day, rather than changing the day each year.

For the last three years, health services in Saudi Arabia have been celebrating World Health Day. Celebrations continue for one full week. In 1983 UNICEF was first invited by the Health Service of the Eastern Province to participate. It was given, like any participating agency, one booth to display material. The event was utilized to disseminate public information through the use of video tapes, films, posters and hand out of UNICEF publications.

In 1984 UNICEF was invited to support three different provinces. The Representative proposed that UNICEF take a more effective role in such events. Instead of being like any business firm, promoting its product, UNICEF was instrumental in turning the health fairs to a national campaign for health education. It was in that year that UNICEF contributed by forming the first health information committee of the Eastern Province. Through this committee the UNICEF PI Officer produced a number of PSC materials and helped this

committee play an educational role. The result of efforts exerted towards changing the concept of the health fair were very much felt in the Eastern, the Central and Southern Provinces. UNICEF's efforts were also reflected in the national media, which projected the new concept of health fairs as a national campaign for advocacy of the needs of children, health education and raising awareness among parents.

The theme of World Health Day in 1984 was particularly helpful in this campaign; it was "Child Health-Future Wealth". The 1985 theme was also utilized to reflect CSDR, although the theme is related to the youth rather than children.

THE NEW CONCEPT ESTABLISHED

Until November 1984, Health officials were under the impression that the use of Saudi TV and Radio service for health education is an expensive process. the launch of SOWCR 1985 was our chance to prove otherwise. Health officials were impressed by our use of Saudi TV and Radio for the launch of UNICEF SOWCR December last.

Based on this experience UNICEF was invited to co-ordinate and assist in extensive use of Saudi media (TV, Radio and press) in 1985 health fairs. Meanwhile, UNICEF was invited to give support to health services in four provinces.

Although the theme of the health fair this year was the health of youth, yet most of the activities were focussed on child health as a basis for healthy youth. Earlier this year some health officials were not sure of the role of UNICEF in view of the theme of this year's health fair. Fortunately, the statement by Sheikh Faisal Hajailan, Minister of Health, on the launch of health fair campaign stressed the role of mother and child care in bringing up healthy youth. He stressed the importance of comprehensive health care including pre-natal care, mother and child care, nutrition, immunization and health education in general. The Minister of Health also invited the media to contribute effectively to health education.

UNICEF support this year covered several areas at both central and provincial levels in the following manner:

1. Press

For the first time health fair turned to be a very strong press health education campaign. The Information

Officer's contributions to the press coverage of health fair were through:

- a) Ten articles produced on the theme of health fairs relating the theme to CSDR. These were used centrally from Riyadh as well as from the provinces.
- b) Organized a press conference in Asir Province headed by HRH Prince Faisal, Deputy Governor of the Province and attended by Director Generals of Boys' Education, Girls' Education, Health Service and Religious Affairs. The press conference touched upon CSDR and the role of girls and boys of today, mothers and fathers of tomorrow. Prince Faisal and Director General of Girls' Education praised the role of UNICEF in Asir Province.
- c) An interview for Director General of Health in Eastern Province on the new concept of health fairs, the role of fathers and mothers in CSDR and future activities of health education.
- d) A press conference in Hail Province for officials of Provincial government departments. The new concept of health fair was illustrated and carried by the press.
- e) Arrangements were made by UNICEF to tie press reporters to health officials who can contribute to raising awareness through statements and interviews. Reporters were brought to UNICEF office and briefed on the concept of health fair. Material available on the theme of the fair were handed out to reporters to help them develop significant content. This arrangement was made in collaboration with Director of National Health Education Department. (press clippings enclosed).

2. TELEVISION COVERAGE

The experience of UNICEF in proper utilization of TV programmes in the launch of the SOWCR encouraged the Ministry of Health to count upon UNICEF in TV coverage of the Health Fair. A co-ordination committee consisting of Director of Health Education, UNICEF Information Officer and TV Programmes Co-ordinator was set up. The committee has planned for the production of two TV special programmes and two TV seminars. Child and mothers' health were among the major components of the themes. One

programme was especially successful. This was Healthy Youth Starts With The Family. The programme plan and scripts were drafted by UNICEF Information Officer who also supervised the production. In this programme much credit is given to UNICEF. The programme focuses mainly on Child Health and Survival (copy enclosed).

3. RADIO

A Co-ordination committee for radio coverage was set up. UNICEF Information officer was a member. The Committee planned for a number of programmes. UNICEF made the following contributions besides its co-ordinating role.

- a) Five scripts of Morning Thoughts programme that were heard each day during the health week (UNICEF was mentioned as a co-producer).
- b) Twenty health messages were disseminated through the radio all through the health week, in between daily programmes.
- c) In his provincial visits, UNICEF PI Officer was given a daily one hour access to the radio station via telephone for a daily programme called From All Over the Kingdom. The officer collaborated with health provincial officials in drafting and transmitting the daily programme, themes were very much related to mother and child health.

There have been a number of other programmes to which UNICEF contributed through the radio conveying the purpose and message of the fair.

4. PUBLICATIONS

Very few publications were produced this year on the theme of the health fair. Available publications were not very well focussed on Healthy Youth. Fifty different booklets were made available; almost 90% of them were on child health.

UNICEF produced two new publications this year:

- a) "Passage to Survival" - 10,000 copies were printed and distributed. UNICEF cost of production was nil, as the Central Health Service covered the total cost. The Ministry of Health through the National Committee of IYY is planning to make this

booklet one of the IYY's publications. Expected reprint is 500,000 copies. Co-sponsors of the reproduction will be Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, Presidency of Girls' Education and Presidency of Youth Welfare.

The booklet is a new approach to health education; it is a narrative story. The narrator is a young man who relates in a fiction style the health problems he encountered in the course of his life, starting with pre-natal care. The narration is substantiated by verses from the Holy Qura'an in matters related to nutrition, child care, growth, breastfeeding and other relevant issues. The title of the booklet, the illustrations and the element of suspense in the story invites anyone to read it. In the internal pre-testing it was witnessed that once a person looks at the cover, he tends to pick the booklet and once he starts to read, he cannot stop until he finishes it. (copy enclosed).

- b) Personal to Girls of Today, Mothers of Tomorrow
To help the Presidency of Girls' Education get more involved in the health fairs we helped the Presidency produce its own booklet for distribution through girls schools. This was based on a proposal of the Representative

The Information Officer drafted Personal to Girls of Today, Mothers of Tomorrow. He followed the same style as the two previous letters Personal to Mommy and Personal to Daddy. The opening message of the letter addressed to the girls is a very strong religious and patriotic text which motivates the spiritual and national feelings of young girls. This message leads to a number of advices based on verses from the Holy Qura'an on maternal and child care. GOBI elements are strongly pronounced in this booklet.

According to director of Girls School Health Service, the President of Girls' Education, Sheikh Bin Ouda, was very happy to receive this initiative from UNICEF. Although it came only one week before the beginning of the health fair, yet the enthusiasm with which the booklet was received made it possible to be printed at this very short notice.

Sheikh Bin Ouda ordered an initial print of 20,000 copies which were distributed to a number of schools in different provinces. (copy enclosed).

EFFECTIVE USE OF PUBLICATIONS

In the Health Fairs, organizers received a lot of 'give-away' gifts. there was no particular guarantee that publications distributed in the fairs are read or utilized in one way or another. Therefore UNICEF proposed "test your health knowledge contest" where questions on the contents of publications were passed to the audience in between lecture intervals, and prizes were given to winners. This enhanced the interest of visitors to read the material distributed and created an atmosphere of interest and excitement in the fairs.

CSDR WALL CALENDER

Within the health fair activities UNICEF collaborated with Ministry of Education (Boys School Health Service) and Ministry of Health (Health Education Department) in organizing children's painting competition on Child Health and Survival.

Selected paintings were used in setting up children's Paintings Exhibition. Twelve of the best paintings will be selected for production of a wall calender for the year 1406 Hijri (1985/86). Cost of production will be covered by the government.



Ahmed Moosa
Information officer



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Page 2
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Brief report by Ahmed Moosa, information Officer, on the health fairs 7-13 April 1985, and letter from Thomas McDermott, UNICEF Rep in Riyadh.

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