



Preschools in Rural Qena Governorate Using Partnership Agreements

Egypt Network for Integrated Development



Case Study 019

Preschools in Rural Qena Governorate Using Partnership Arrangements¹

Introduction

Over one-fifth of Egypt's children are growing up in poverty. Children in income poor households are more severely deprived. Slightly less than half of children (47%) in income poor households experience at least one severe deprivation compared to 14% of non-poor children (UNICEF, 2010). Mother's education is an important determinant of child wellbeing. The mother's educational level is particularly strongly correlated for most kinds of deprivation

Under five mortality rates vary from 45.7 in rural Upper Egypt to 18.0 in urban Lower Egypt. Overall, child mortality is generally inversely related to the mother's educational attainment, with children born to women (who never attended school) being more than twice as likely to die by their fifth birthday as children born to mothers with secondary education or higher (44 deaths per 1000 live birth vs. 25 deaths per 1000 live births respectively).

Opportunity

The preschool period is a bridge to the gap between home and school, leading to better adjustment to and performance in primary school. Children who have attended preschools are generally more ready to learn, and stronger in their basic social, cognitive and emotional development, they still must overcome the uncertainty and stress associated with moving into a new and different settings.

One of the main jobs of preschools is to discover the deficiencies that cause problems upon entry into school and sometime lead to failure. For example, one of the most important problems "poor health/ nutrition that reduces activity and increase absence, physical or learning disabilities and social insecurity. Preschool classes make it easier to discover these deficiencies and consequently provide the solutions.

Despite the presence of a good percentage of kindergarten classes in the Governorate of Qena, most of the enrolled children are among the non-poor; this is explained by the lack of interest of some poor families in educating their children but more often by their inability to pay even the low fees of these classes.

Egypt thus has very low level of preschool coverage: about 24 % enrolment rate compared to the 60% of national enrolment goal for the year 2015. The shortfall of government resources can be covered by civil society with government support. ENID criteria to improve or provide preschool is based on a participatory approach that includes government, NGOs, and local community.

ENID/El Nidaa Approach

ENID/El Nidaa has therefore adopted a new vision in dealing with children and mothers depending on integrated interventions that provide educational and health services to reduce some dimensions

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of deprivation and empower them. It has designed and implemented a model that focuses on combining preschool education and healthcare. The classes have been equipped with the best educational tools and furniture according to the UNICEF model and the healthcare for children is provided by outsourcing a pediatrician. To complete the intervention, a bundle of health and nutrition awareness sessions have been organized to provide the mothers with proper information on sound nutrition and diseases' prevention.

Methodology of implementation

Village selection process

Village's selection criteria started with the poorest villages in Qena Governorate as identified by Egypt's Poverty Map. In order to identify the needs of the poorest villages, the program carried out participatory needs assessment reports for ten villages in 2013, in addition to another 22 reports which had been carried out by the Social Contract Center in 2010. After reading and analyzing the needs assessment, the program conducted numerous field visits and focus groups in different villages and with different NGOs in Qena Governorate to choose the village and the appropriate NGO for its support services.

NGOs selection process

The partner NGOs were chosen depending a predefined criteria that includes: good institutional capacity that enable it to manage and implement the project, to have already existing programs and activities, to have previous knowledge of the intervention or related intervention, the willingness of its General Assembly members to implement the project, to donate the place where the classes taking place, and to have good relations with the village community.

Cooperation protocols

Because ENID/El Nidaa interventions are based on the idea of integrated and sustainable replicable developmental models that require a local participatory approach at the implementation level, ENID/El Nidaa has placed great emphasis on its dealings with local NGOs and CDAs. To this end, it has signed cooperation protocols with local NGOs and CBO in order to ensure continuous and effective work strategies, particularly at the administrative level. Cooperation protocols detail the responsibilities of the two parties as follow:

ENID/El Nidaa provides for the establishment and operation of the first phase of the project within the limits of the funds allocated for the intervention, including the following:

- The establishment of infrastructure for classes through fixing the classes locations and the purchase of required furniture and equipment.
- Providing the educational curricula and the needed training.
- Providing the needed operational supplies in the first phase of the project.
- Providing transportation allowances for trainers and trainees.
- Providing the necessary technical and practical advices for the classes management in the future through a pre-agreed framework.

NGO & CBOs:

- Provide the location for the establishment of classes.
- Compile children and mothers who wish to enroll in classes according to the standards set by the program.
- Responsible for preschool administration issues.

The predefined and constructive cooperation with NGOs and CBOs on the ground has greatly contributed to the success of the ENID/EI Nidaa intervention and will greatly impact on its sustainability and scalability.

The process

After selecting the village and the partner NGO, the ENID/EI Nidaa Qena office together with the local NGO partner made announcements regarding the preschool teachers' training. This was to choose 4 women facilitators to attend the training who had to be from the village to ensure the sustainability of the intervention. After the end of the training period, the preschool consultant and trainer with ENID/EI Nidaa Qena team interviewed and chose two teachers for the preschool class.

The partner NGO with the help of the chosen teachers made announcements regarding the children's application process. A panel composed of the ENID program local coordinator, the preschool consultant, and the partner NGO staff carried out an interview of the candidates on family conditions, childcare availability, commitment to regular attendance and other factors. Priority was given to children from families with no or low level of education and among the poorest. Through this process the panel selected 25 children, taking into consideration that there might be possible drop-outs in the first month of the 9 month class period.

Training to the pre-school teachers was delivered by a qualified trainer from the Directorate of Education in Qena on the most appropriate educational practices for children of ages of 4-5 years according to the UNICEF curriculum. ENID preschool consultant carries out a monthly visit and on job training to classes to assess the teachers' performance and children improvement. Three days refresh training was delivered to the teachers after 3 months.

Costs

The cost formula ENID has adopted for the pre-school program costs only a margin of what the government pays (an estimated EGP 30,000+, although exact figures are hard to obtain). ENID/EI Nidaa preschool detailed cost were as follows:

Establishment cost:

Description	Total
Furniture cost	EGP 26,075
Training of trainer cost	EGP 8000
Total	EGP 34,075

Running cost

Item			
Teacher salaries	EGP 350*P 2 *M9	EGP	6,300
Co-worker	EGP 200* M9	EGP	1800
Educational tools	EGP 20*P 25 * M9	EGP	4500
Trainer follow up	EGP 100*P 1 * 9 M	EGP	900
Health Care	EGP 1000* Q4	EGP	4,000
Total		EGP	17,500

From pilot to scaling up

In January 2014, the ENID/EL Nidaa program established one preschool class in the village of Abbassa in Qous district as a pilot. The class included 25 children from the poorest families in the village, and on graduation these children moved to next level (KG2 in October 2014). Following the success of the first class in Abbassa village, another two preschool classes were created in November 2014, one in the village of Awsat Kamola (Nakada district), another in the village of EL-Ramla (Abo-Tesht district). In September 2015, two new classes were opened in the villages of Gezeret El-Hamoudy (El-Wakf district) and Gezeret Mottera (Qous district). Preliminary results indicate that those children attending preschool were better equipped to deal with next stage KG2. The ENID/El Nidaa consultant has emphasized that children showed more intellectual and language development. They developed the ability to engage in different activities and also to ask questions, which will enable them to learn more, and help their self confidence.

Lessons learnt

- NGOs have shown that they are capable of supplementing efforts by the Ministry of Education to expand preschool in the deprived regions. The proviso is that technical assistance is given by the Ministry (such as teacher training) on the one hand and paying salaries of teachers on the other hand
- Consolidating the role of NGOs will increase the enrolment percentage, particularly in rural poor areas, and at a lower cost than traditional government financing.
- Sustainability is a main challenge. ENID/El Nidaa efforts to secure sustainability has been by building the capacity of NGOs across programs that focus on building partnerships. These partnerships have included the participation of government in training, the use of tried and true pedagogical methods using UNICEF material, and the ability of NGOs to provide classroom space and administrative facilities.
- It would be prudent to secure a slot of money through monthly fees to ensure financial sustainability of classes.
- There is a need for continuous technical assistance for NGOs on preschool management
- It is highly recommended that preschool teachers are recruited on a legal and permanent basis