

World Scene...

HONDURAN COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN WORLD HEALTH WORK

(For Classroom and Group Discussion)

Community participation in Honduras is an inexpensive system which fosters in the community itself a special sense of helping to improve its own people's welfare. What does this say to us?

Courtesy: World Health Organization

Part III of Four Parts

The community representative is a born leader of the community. His main duty is to participate actively in health promotion. He also provides valuable logistic support, arranging transport and board and lodgings for visiting teams of health officials in remote towns and villages which have not yet established their own services. This is invariably done in a routine and businesslike manner for the visitors. The community representative makes an invaluable contribution towards building the most basic health care units in our organizational structure—the Rural Health Centres. He also cooperates in other basic health activities, including even improving roads and building bridges, and has become an important factor in such environmental health programs as latrine-building, disposal of solid wastes, and providing water supplies.

The Health Guardian is also selected by the community, and plays a leading role in it. He is required to know how to read and write so that he can undertake the necessary training and can form a link in the information network which is a vital

part of epidemiological surveillance.

Usually the person chosen is keen on first aid, and in some cases has already practiced traditional healing in districts not yet reached by permanent staff sent from the Health Ministry. The Health Guardian receives first aid training, and is taught some basic guidelines for treating the main diseases which are endemic to his region.

He learns to collaborate closely with the auxiliary nurse attached to the Rural Health Centre (CESAR, as it is called in Honduras). Guidance is given on the referral system for cases which are beyond his capacity to handle, and a handbook lays down the precise limits of the health services he is able to provide, while his instructions include an account of the data which he must pass on to the auxiliary nurse, so as to expand the range of the epidemiological surveillance system. He is provided with certain first aid materials and basic drugs enabling him to offer medical treatment to patients showing early symptoms of such communicable diseases as can be controlled at this level, when treated in time. The Health Guardian also plays a part in health promotion and health education programs by fostering better hygiene habits among the inhabitants in this area.

The third type of community health worker is the lay midwife. In Honduras, a chiefly agricultural country where 70 per cent of the population live in rural areas,

assistance for mothers-to-be has since pre-Colombian times been the responsibility of local midwives who have learned their skills according to traditions passed down from family to family. In the not too distant past, with the advent of specialist doctors, a campaign began to prevent lay midwives from practicing. However, the same specialists are to be found only in the country's main cities and as a result the lay midwives have continued to operate in rural populations without any kind of control. We adopted a policy aimed at changing this attitude towards these health workers whose services are so vitally needed today. Lay midwives are given training courses in their field which emphasizes the importance of avoiding infection and instruct them when they should refer complicated cases to a higher level of medical care. They are also provided with a complete up-to-date kit for attending births.

Key Questions:

1. What are three main issues in this article?
2. What does this article suggest that you can do about our world situation?
3. How many words did you look up in the dictionary? (If we do not use a dictionary daily, and for every word whose full meaning we may not know, we cannot grow individually and assure the best use of our resources for group freedom and a better America.)

BLACK EVENTS QUIZ

1) In what ways does the government of Tanzania seem to be faced with internal and external difficulties? In your view, do or do not such problems seem to represent continuing concerns or possibilities for black African nations? Please explain.

2) How does the internal scandal of the South African government seem to bear upon the possibility for racial improvements within South Africa: In what way or ways may a long hold upon power by one party (as shown from 1948 to the present in South Africa) tend to lead to corruption, in some degree?

3) What lessons should any oppressed group learn from the back-turning exercises recently upon blacks by the customarily liberal Greenwich Village Voice?

4) What further lessons may blacks and other oppressed groups learn from the rash of indictments of black officials? Please note that this has been going on now for 5-6 years, with the overwhelming majority quietly been exonerated.)

5) What about Depression levels of unemployment among black Americans? (Please treat this in any manner that to you seems to have meaning.)

SECTION 8 ANNOUNCEMENT

THE HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE COUNTY OF CLARK, NEVADA

Wish to announce that they are temporarily discontinuing the taking of applications for the Section 8 Housing Assistance Payments Program. This action has become necessary because of the limitation of funds allocated by the Dept. of Housing and Urban Development to the Housing Authority.

If further funds become available, the Authority will notify the Public of the fact in the local newspapers and other means, and at that time will again welcome applications from those needing assistance.

Those people wishing to receive assistance under other housing programs administered by the Housing Authority may do so by contacting our office in Henderson or the main office at 5064 East Flamingo Road.

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