

Providing for a quality of life for
persons with disabilities through
promoting self-help, self-reliance and
social action

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Introduction

- Project in Cairo, Egypt with support from public and private sources
- Joint project supported by USAID, Lucent Technologies and Egyptian Ministry of Social Affairs
- Partnership of two agencies-
 - long established agency struggling to survive because of limited resources- (Day Hospital Association- Egypt)
 - agency with modern technology, history of excellence and commitment to extend its services to the development of programs (Community Options-US)

Background

- Egypt has long history of concern for persons with disabilities
- Current laws provide a number of important rights, including right to care
- For number of years, governmental and numerous private agencies worked to establish services for persons with disabilities

Background for project

- Egypt and other Middle Eastern countries need to:
- determine needs and priorities for persons with disabilities
- plan for delivery and evaluation of services
- promote citizen participation in public policy making process

Areas addressed

- Acceptance and self-help must be encouraged among persons with disabilities and their families
- Public understanding of problems and issues affecting persons with disabilities must be increased
- Public policy on behalf of persons with disabilities should be developed and lobbied
- Service organizations must be re-oriented and re-tooled

Assumptions

- Knowledge can empower people to enhance physical and psychological health
- Knowledge can empower people to gain access to and maintain meaningful employment
- Knowledge can inform and motivate people to secure more adequate housing
- Knowledge can motivate people to participate more fully in family and community affairs

Approach

- The Day Hospital was designated as the local Cairo agency to coordinate activities of the project
- Dr. M. El-Banna, an internationally recognized leader in rehabilitation was the project director
- Community Options provided direction and international leaders to consult with the project and with Day Hospital staff in areas including rehabilitation technology, treatment and training techniques

Approach

- Tools and materials were purchased to fabricate quality prosthetics
- Community Options worked with Day Hospital staff in providing training in technology, augmentative communication aids, work site accommodations and adaptive toys
- Needs of various people with disabilities were assessed

Approach

- **Local support groups were developed, including persons with disabilities, parents, professionals, government officials and volunteers**
- **A base for future activities identified:**
 - policy issues must be clearly defined
 - community based approaches need to be expanded and reinforced
 - current services based on input from clients and professionals
 - strengthen institutional capabilities of participating local organizations

Results

- Transformation of Day Hospital into modern appearing facility with advanced tools and technology
- Conference held at the Hospital, co-sponsored by Ministry of Social Affairs, attracting numerous officials from other agencies serving persons with disabilities

Results

- A competency based training program in various areas was provided through the “Partners in Policymaking” of the Minnesota Developmental Disabilities Council
- This introduced training and materials development in supportive employment, assistive technology, how to conduct meetings, and a study of how laws are created and how to meet with lawmakers

Results

- Policy was studied by the support group as related to education, healthcare, housing and employment
- A special workshop was offered relating to advocacy skills- the planning and implementation of basic advocacy skills
- Three years later the support groups remain active and meet on a regular basis

Conclusion

- A number of other activities have resulted-stimulated by various aspects of project activities
- Leaders of the Egyptian government have become involved
- Project demonstrates how a modest effort can have far reaching effects with implications for the host country

Gracias

Thanks