



SECOND REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON MALARIA ERADICATION

ADDIS ABABA, 16 - 21 NOVEMBER 1959

EM/AE-Tech.2/46

17 November 1959
ENGLISH ONLY

HEALTH EDUCATION IN THE MALARIA ERADICATION PROGRAMME IN IRAN

by

Dr. A. Tabibzadeh - Iran

The local customs and dialect, illiterary and lack of direct contact of the villagers with the urban population create considerable difficulties in the execution of the malaria eradication programs. This is due to the fact that the villagers who up to some years ago, believed in the diseases of the evil calamities and depended solely on God for their treatment did not accept that a mosquito could cause their sickness and death. In this connection, any action taken by the anti-malaria personnel was considered as bad and unnecessary. Even, in some villages, our teams instead of being welcomed and shown cooperation were scolded and mis-treated by the inhabitants. Also, sometimes after a long walk to reach a remote village, our men, due to lack of cooperation on the part of the villagers, had to pass their night in the desert out of the village and return to the same locality in the morning to carry out their duties. Moreover, some of the village inhabitants occasionally prevented the malaria men from entering and spraying the houses.

To eliminate such difficulties arising from absence of a proper educational organization, the Point Four Office undertook the production of a film to explain the usefulness of the malaria control program and thus help the malaria campaign personnel when confronted with such difficulties. This was done and a rather suitable result was achieved.

Later when the Health Education Branch was inaugurated, this film program was also included in its functions. Unfortunately, since this office was newly organized and lacked sufficient staff to meet its everyday-increasing requirements, the malaria control staff, inevitably had to carry out the health education work along with their spraying operations.

Now that the malaria control program has reached its final stage and an eradication phase has been put into operation, it goes without saying that the full cooperation of the people towards our field workers is needed more than ever before. It is gratifying to see that the management of the Malaria Eradication Organization while recognizing the vital importance of the cooperation of the people,

have set-up an independent office for health education within the Malaria Eradication Campaign. The functional phases of this set-up, which could be under the supervision of the Health Education Department of the Ministry of Health are as follows:

- a) To increase the people's understanding and knowledge of the disease.
- b) To arrange for participation of the people in the prevention of the disease and seek their cooperation for the completion of the action taken by the IEO employees.
- c) To train the malaria staff to be better able to carry out the health education part of the program.

To raise the level of the understanding of the people some programs have been arranged for the following groups:

1. The students in teaching institutions and schools.
2. The soldiers in barracks.
3. The gendarmes at their duty posts.
4. The local trustworthy people.
5. The village heads.
6. The labourers in the government and private workshops.
7. The forest guards.
8. The agriculture propagation men.
9. The fundamental training staff of the Ministry of Education.

To achieve this aim the following points will be taught:

1. The importance of the individuals' health in the economy and the productivity of the country and the damages which may result due to infection of the disease.
2. The means of transmission of the disease.
3. The steps that people must take to prevent re-infection of the infection-free areas.

The regional health educations will establish particular courses during which the surveillance agents and the malaria eradication staff will receive the necessary training and instructions. Following thus these men, at their own respective districts, will make the inhabitants familiar with the eradication program and seek their close cooperation.

The points which the inhabitants of the country are to be acquainted with are very simple and are indicated hereunder:

1. Why are houses sprayed?
2. How long does residual spraying last?
3. How many times should a house be sprayed?
4. Why is it that our spraying is not sufficient?
5. When will the spraymen come again?
6. How to understand the elimination of the malaria danger?
7. Are all the insects killed by spraying?
8. How does a mosquito transmit malaria?
9. Does it require a long time to see that a mosquito is off a dwelling?
10. What must a man do if malaria symptoms are observed in him?
11. How long will the treatment of the disease take.
12. Is the spraying harmful to the village animals?
13. Why is it that the spraying does not sometimes kill the flies?
14. How are the malaria symptoms diagnosed?

Along with the eradication of the disease it is the intention to gradually guide the people through necessary instruction and training, to have them keep the spirit of responsibility so that they would intend their service; help and cooperation to the teams working in the fields at the same time know what to do to prevent the return of the disease.