

Syria: Activating the community work

Introduction:

When The initiative of the National society meets with the local community ones , the benefits and changes will be clear and concrete, and that will ensure an effective participation of members of the community as it expresses the solutions for the considered hazards, and therefore that will reflect positively on community based risk reduction activities by the national society

In Syria, the Organization of the Syrian Arab Red Crescent takes in consideration the recommendations of the field study of the vulnerability and capacity assessment to build a community programme capable of enhancing the capacity of the local community to reduce the risks that might be exposed or already had.

Background:

(Al-Dwyer)Village is; (6 km north-east of the city of Homs) in Homs, the Syrian largest provinces, the highway passes through (Homs - Tartous), and divided by a (al-haya) waterway into two parts east and west. Where in the South East of the village there is a refinery for sewage water for all the city of Homs.

In the village there are about 1000 people. Most of them work in governmental positions as well as in agriculture and livestock on their land within the village.

Found in the village, one primary school .

Project:

In the period from April to July 2007, the team of community based risk reduction team in Homs branch and the community committee and some members of the local community in the area (Al-Dwyer) implemented a clean-up campaign which is the solution that was proposed during the planning stage through the tools of field study with the local community where the pollution problem of the waterway identified as the most risk to the community through air pollution and groundwater by the outputs of the refinery to be discharged through the waterway, it was determine how implementation and prospective partners for the next phase. also identified roles and responsibilities for cleaning of the waterway

the main implementation parties were Homs Department hygiene represented by public services directorate and Homs governorate through facilities and official credentials.

The cleaning has done over seven days using cars and trucks submitted by the City Council in addition to hand work by the community and the volunteers and then deported wastes to the allocated places.



volunteers during the field work

The impact of the pollution on the health was obvious through the repeating of cases of diarrhea and skin diseases, especially among children, and so the team of CBFA has implement a workshop after planning with the local community and the target group were primary children, the emphasis was on solutions to the problem of water pollution and risks resulting from. The workshop provided an opportunity to strengthen partnerships between the Red Crescent and the relevant government bodies.

The implementation of the project by the Organization of the Red Crescent and the community has been in co-operation with

- Homs province
- Homs City Council
- Directorate of Environment
- Directorate of Water Resources
- Directorate of Agriculture
- Directorate of Irrigation and Drainage
- Alooruba Newspaper

Partnerships with non-governmental organizations:
Baladna Newspaper.

Community Partnerships: with the local community of (Al-Dwyer)

The objectives of the project after the assessment field study conducted in partnership with the community:

- Reduce the risk of pollution located in the village (air- water-Soil):
 - Alleviate the problem of the smell of sewage
 - Alleviate the problem of muddy water runs on the waterway sides and the polluted plants.
 - Get rid of the accumulation of dirt on both sides of the waterway
 - Create initiatives to solve the problems of drinking water contaminated
- Community Based First Aid (the result of pollution - lack of a health point).
- Activation of community work through :
Local community committee working on long-term partnership with the Red Crescent.

Impact and lessons learned:

The impact of the project was on the both sides: Red Crescent and the local community.

The Red Crescent:

- Increasing community confidence in the Red Crescent.
- The dissemination of the Red Crescent activities at the local level.
- Establishing new partnerships at the national level as the media.
- Attract new volunteers from the target area.
- Strengthen networking with other programmes implemented by the Red Crescent.

Community:

- Revitalization of community initiatives towards the problem of pollution.
- Strengthening the knowledge of how to deal with polluted water.
- Community awareness of the role of the Red Crescent as a civil supportive of community activities, that the community could ask the help of the Red Crescent in the implementation of other activities in the future.