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United for healthy kids initiative in an Egyptian village: Towards an exemplary village shaping the future of children

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Childhood, a time of hope and promise, can also be a time of hardship in countries where the burden of poverty often falls heavily on the young mainly in rural communities. The united for healthy kids (U4HK) initiative was designed to prevent malnutrition and promote good nutrition with respect to household food availability and use for all children from birth up to 12 years of age in El Othmanyia village (1500 children) along three years. The basic philosophy of the initiative is to establish exemplary village whose families adopted the recommended nutritional and cognitive behaviors for having healthy kids in a way that is effective and sustainable. The initiative is focusing on six recommended U4HK behaviors (feed your baby like a baby, manage portions, choose nutritious and varied options, choose to drink water and move more, sit less and enjoy meals together) under the supervision of professional team from NRC. The initiative is conducted as phases; first the formative research to determine the level of behaviors of the targeted children as well as the caregivers then behavioral development and change interventions followed by evaluation of outcome in terms of determining the level of behavior changes. The initiative partners are: Ministry of Social Solidarity, Ministry of Health and population and Private sector partner; Nestle- Egypt, Sanofi, ABB, Government partner. The implementing partner is the National Research Center of Egypt. The impact of this model will improve the lives of the kids and will be replicated all over the Egyptian villages.

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