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PILOT PROJECT - WORKSHOP REPORT SURVIVAL IN THE WATER – SWIMMING NECESSITIES AND BASICS

LAKE BUNYONYI – CURRENT CONDITIONS

Pilot project focused on the importance of the lake for the inhabitants of this district. The dependence between the lake and the inhabitants is reciprocal. The lake is a main traffic line, a source of drinking water, as well as tourism. On the other hand, the lake is affected by negative attitude towards the lake and water by inhabitants because of pollution. The pilot project focuses primarily on survival in water with the basics of swimming, since life at/on the/in water is of great importance for locals. The knowledge of swimming is poor, and the project sought practical guidance with the auspices of the state, and thus the safety of the inhabitants and their attitude towards such an important source of life and life conditions.

The lake is 25 km long and 7 km wide and has 29 islands. It is the main traffic route for the inhabitants of the lake. The transport of food, construction materials and other goods also depends on the transport on the lake. The banks are mostly steep, but the inhabitants generally do not know how to swim. There is fear among the inhabitants around the lake, also because of the legends and the bad experience from the past. At the institutional educational level they did not pay attention to the safety of water activities and to the practical skills of survival in the water so far.

The depth of the lake is unknown. According to some measurements, it's up to 50 m in depth. But nevertheless, it affects water life, as there are few species of fish and lake crabs. Aquatic animals are thus not the main source of nutrition. The lake is also a very important source of drinking water. The inhabitants cook it, but they drink water from the lake directly mostly. For this reason, their attitude towards lake and water in connection with pollution is often surprising. At the lake, they also wash their laundry and perform basic hygiene. Nonetheless, the chemical analysis of water

showed even allowed contamination with faeces according to our standards. Tourism as a development opportunity also presents a risk of future pollution.

SURVIVAL AT THE WATERFRONT

Living in interdependence from the lake gives learning to swimming more importance than just learning techniques. This is the survival of the inhabitants in/on/at the waterfront. We visited lake Bunyonyi twice. There were no water safety lessons before our visit presented at the local pre-elementary school. Children were not familiar with the aquatic activities and they didn't know how to swim.

We performed daily workshops in and around water with children aged 4 to 10 years for a week. We took care that children felt safe and comfortable. Therefore, they played at the waterfront. In this way, we wanted to release the tension and possible fear of water. We performed workshops with children 5 times. In doing so, we had the help from a local teacher who translated the instructions to children, motivated them and contributed greatly to the performance of the workshop. The ratio was one swimming teacher and four pupils in the water. At the banks, where the other children were waiting, three other students took care of their well-being. The students constantly looked after children by drying them up with a towel after aquatic activities, giving them a drink, and motivating them for action.

In a one-hour workshop, all the children experienced water, many of them by sinking their heads under water, and about half of them slid through the support of the trainer. The end result shows that 10 per cent of children independently slid off of the ground and floated on the water surface. This was achieved by play full approach mostly.

They were not all the children from the school involved into the lessons. We think that the goal has been achieved, since the school board realized the importance of the aquatic activities for the children and the inhabitants in general. They set up waterfront activities on a weekly schedule after first year. They are not many appropriate waterfronts banks for swimming lessons around. Therefore they bought the appropriate real estate for swimming near the school after second year of our visit. The teacher who mentored and helped us was introduced as a helping coach. Waterfront activities were set us a part of the educational model and system. Therefor we achieved the effect on a long-term bases.

BASIC TEACHING PROPOSAL

The basic purpose includes procedures how to survive in the event of slipping into the water or falling from the boat and not to drown. In doing so, we can help them learn how to swim. It is also important to stay calm, therefore “a dead-man position” (floating on a back) is suggested to be practiced. They should practice a skill how to switch from swimming to “resting” position. The main purpose for the person who falls from the boat not to panic in water, to rest as needed and to move in any way with the emphasis on swimming with the head above the water. In swimming lessons the following procedures were suggested.

Procedures:

1. Adapting to water (walking in the water to the waist, wetting the face, sinking the face into the water, exhaling bubbles into the water, tapping the water with your hands while walking ...)
2. Playing water games (fishing, ...)
3. Lifting (the dead-men position) and gliding
4. Swimming (moving in different styles, head out of the water)
5. Switching from swimming to floating (resting) and back to swimming

WHAT'S NEXT?

1. Introducing secure holistic swim literacy planning technique into initial education as part of a program.
2. Trying to link the holistic swim literacy course at all levels of education (in schools near the lake).
3. Marking suitable places for holistic swim literacy and swimming.
4. Educating teachers and elderly children for mentors or tutors.
5. Using volunteer help throughout the swim literacy system.