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Participants

LEARN BY DOING

REPORT OF HOME IMPROVEMENT WORKSHOP
July 22 - September 13, 1963
Prospectus 40

Federal Extension Service U. S. Department of Agriculture

WHY THIS SPECIAL WORKSHOP FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS?

Teaching village women and girls elementary principles of health, sanitation, and improved homemaking practices is basic to improving standards of living in a country and the development of its agriculture.

Each year a number of women come to the U.S. under the auspices of the Agency for International Development, U. S. Department of State, to study these principles. Some of these enroll in Colleges and Universities for academic study in Home Economics. Others come for shorter term field programs to study Agricultural and Home Economics Extension. Some come on group programs, others come individually. Most countries sending such participants request that the training prepare them for either of two kinds of positions upon their return:

(a) To work with women and girls in the villages, or to train those who will work at the village level.

(b) To teach home economics in the educational system, where young women will be trained for work in the villages.

The countries desire the participants to learn basic subject matter and practical home economics skills easily adaptable to their home countries.

Participants have expressed a desire to practice new skills in the context of their home country situations as a part of their training programs.

People in the United States concerned with such home economics training have an increasing recognition of the need to help participants relate training experiences, in this country, to their own particular home situations. It is felt that principles learned and knowledge gained in academic and field study can become more meaningful when the participant is given an opportunity to apply them directly to her country through actual practice in a workshop situation.

As a result of the recognition of these needs, Ohio University at Athens, through the leadership of Dr. Vivian Roberts, Director of the School of Home Economics, organized and conducted this year a special 8-week seminar-workshop, on Home Improvement, for the participants from six countries.

The pages and pictures that follow reflect the work, spirit, and enthusiasm of both the staff and the participants.

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Prepared by Federal Extension Service for the Agency for International Development, U. S. Department of State.

Learn By Doing

How to train participants in the United States so they are prepared to apply their new knowledge when they reach home has long been a problem. Too often the returnee has had to rely on the costly trial and error method of making adaptations after she returns home. Now, an attempt has been made to come to grips with the problem. In the Home Improvement workshop, held last summer, it was demonstrated that theory, practice and application can be combined successfully in United States participant training.

Twelve women from eight countries participated in this Home Improvement workshop sponsored by AID and USDA.

Focus of the course was on application in the countries represented. Students and teachers alike strove to direct every class discussion and every laboratory project toward the solution of a home problem in the countries represented. That these problems were similar not only provided an atmosphere for enthusiasm, but made the group quickly homogenous.

Plan of the Workshop

The workshop was organized so that the morning sessions included study of subject matter related to home improvement, methods of teaching, program development, along with analysis of problems in home countries of the participants. Afternoons were spent in practical work in the laboratory or field trips which illustrated what was being taught in the classroom.

Catherine Wangui, an F.A.O. Fellow from Kenya, used visual aids to illustrate the needs and use of proteins in a demonstration before participants of the A.I.D. sponsored International Home Improvements Course.

Morning Sessions

The course started off with discussions of home situations in countries represented and identification of problems. Quickly the group found similarities in village homes. Village women everywhere cook over three stones, carry water great distances, have few facilities for storage in their homes, and sell surpluses in village markets. Problems stemming from these turned out to be similar, too, whether in Nigeria or Jamaica. Diseases that result from drinking impure water were the same in Rhodesia as Liberia, and loss of food stored unprotected was a waste a family could ill afford whether in Ghana or Kenya.

Mrs. Ivy Hin of Jamaica shows the effectiveness of posters during a visual aids session.

Subject Matter training included:

- Basic Bacteriology
- Control of Insects and Household Pests
- Waste Disposal
- How to Have Safe Drinking Water
- Management of the Home
- Kitchen Storage
- Care of the Children
- Laundry Methods

Teaching methods applicable to use in rural villages were discussed, demonstrated, and later some were practiced by the participants. Some of these were:

- Farm and home visits
- Demonstrations
- Discussions
- Finding and training local leaders
- Field trips
- Exhibits
- Use of visual aids, such as posters, charts, slides and films

Participants demonstrated different teaching methods as they might use them in an actual situation in their own country. For example - one of them role-played making a home visit to a typical family in a village. Another one gave a method demonstration as she would to a group of village women in her country.

Improvised Laundry Equipment

How to start work in a village, how to get people to change, and how to develop a program with the people and not for them, were subjects enthusiastically discussed by the group, as they are problems faced by every new worker. Discussions included such questions as:

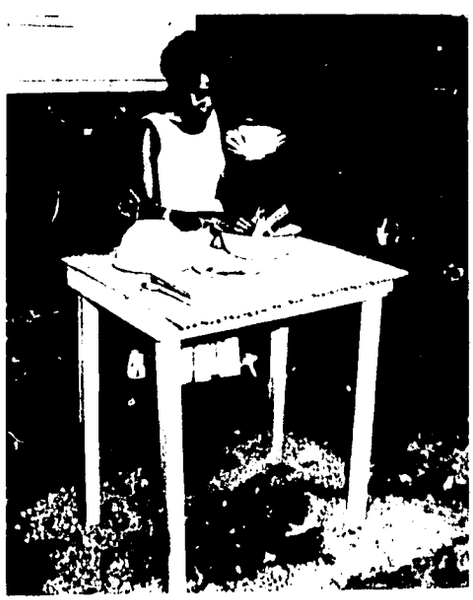
> How do you explain to the official leader of the village who you are and how you might be of help to the people of the village?
>
> How do you begin to get support from the leaders?
>
> What do you do on your first visit to a family in a village?
>
> How do you collect helpful information in the village and from the people?
>
> How do you involve the people in developing a program - for example - a program in better disposal of waste ?
>
> How do you find volunteer leaders in a village?
>
> How do you train them?

Each participant developed a project of particular interest to her which she worked on during the course and presented to the group, near the completion of the workshop. These ranged from providing clean display cases, made of available materials, for women to use in markets, to a village clean-up campaign. It was at this point that all the study and hard work of the course came to life.

Afternoon Sessions

In the afternoon laboratory sessions, the participants sawed, hammered and built. For many, it was the first time they had even used a hammer and saw. They all seemed to like this emphasis on work with their hands - this learning by doing. By the end of the 8 weeks course, their hands had produced a variety of useful and inexpensive articles such as:

> Iceless "refrigerator"
> Mattress
> Numerous types of kitchen storage made from wooden boxes and bamboo
> Oil can oven
> Smokeless stove
> Baby bed and play pen
> Soak pit
> Dish washing table
> Improvised shower



In a demonstration for rural villages without running water and sewage systems, Hilda Tamakloe of Ghana washes and drains dishes on a bamboo-topped work table placed above an ample soak pit made of filtering layers of gradated rocks.

Exhibit Showed Results

For the last day of the workshop, the participants displayed the results of their laboratory efforts in a grand exhibit. Finished articles were arranged on all sides of their workroom and in an outside area where the setting simulated a village situation in another country. A group of 7 Kenya women as well as faculty members from Ohio University visited and examined the exhibit. Everyone was impressed with the practicability of the articles made by the participants.

Sylvia Omogo Obiora and Kike Olufunke Falope of Nigeria study the effectiveness of an iceless "refrigerator" built by the class for use in tropical regions. The screen covered wooden frame has an inset pan at the top which feeds water down a burlap cover providing constant cooling action.

WHAT THEY SAID

The 12 participants liked the workshop and expressed their satisfaction with it as a training experience in such statements as these:

1. "It has given us a chance to talk about and work on problems of our own country."

2. "We brought the problems ourselves to be worked on."

3. "We like having teachers with experience in other countries."

4. "This has not been a duplication of what we had in our regular class study. In our regular classes, we think about the United States, and in this workshop we are brought to think of our own countries."

5. "I liked to make useful things and know how to do something."

6. "We learned a variety of simple methods of teaching rural people. We broke big problems down into workable problems."

7. "It brought an awareness of what could be done to improve homes throughout the world."

Those in charge thought it was useful, also.

Dr. Vivian Roberts, Director, School of Home Economics, Ohio University, said: "For some time, I have been convinced that the formal training of our International students would be more significant if the principles and knowledge learned in college courses were then applied to the student's own country. This Seminar-Workshop demonstrated the value of the dual purpose program, supplementing the academic with the practical. The participants were challenged to devise ways of solving problems which they thought existed in their villages."

Miss Kathleen Flom expressed her enthusiasm thus, "The idea of this type of workshop is good. Such a learn-by-doing experience offers the participants both the benefit of U. S. experience in basic home improvement and an opportunity to sort out which of these is practical in another country."

In a design problem for a pit latrine and shower stall building Sylvia Omogo Obiora, Nigeria, thatched a roof on a model building.

OBJECTIVES

Every one concerned agreed the objectives of the workshop had been met. These were to provide the participants with an opportunity to:

1. Understand basic needs for home living within reach of countries represented and how these requirements may be achieved within the resources available.

2. Learn how to develop programs and use a variety of teaching methods that will bring about the desired changes.

3. Gain basic knowledge of sanitation and home improvement necessary for teaching and explaining why these improvements are necessary for better family living.

4. Learn how to make simple home improvements and equipment which will lead to more comfortable and healthful living.

5. Learn how to apply information by selecting a local problem applicable to participant's own country situation and developing a plan of action to solve the problem.

Mrs. Amy Peart and Mrs. Ivy Hin of Jamaica engineered a home shower for hill areas on their island which do not as yet have running water. A five gallon kerosene can was fitted with a faucet and shower hose and supported by a platform which can be lowered by pulley for refilling. To solve drainage problems, the demonstration shower was placed above a mat covered soak pit made of graded layers of rocks and gravel into which waste water will seep, avoiding a muddy or wet flooring.

Learning the techniques of sewing, stuffing and beating a straw filled mattress, Dominica Nolisa of Nigeria works on a space-saving set of trundle beds designed for small village homes.

FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTED TO SUCCESS

1. The understanding leadership provided by Doctor Vivian Roberts, Director of the School of Home Economics, Ohio University.

2. Through the wholehearted interest and support of the President of Ohio University, the Business Manager, and other staff members, the space and facilities provided were excellent for the type of practical experience included in the workshop.

3. Overseas experience of the two instructors, Mrs. Vivian Cady, a member of the Home Economics Faculty, and Miss Kathleen Flom, a former Home Economics Advisor to Uganda.

4. The learning-by-doing method used consistently throughout the workshop.

5. The fine attitude and enthusiasm of the participants.

PARTICIPANTS

Six countries, Northern Rhodesia, Kenya, Ghana, Nigeria, Liberia, and Jamaica were represented.

The workshop took account of the great diversity in the educational backgrounds and the work experience of the participants who were:

4 women from Nigeria, who had enrolled, for one year, at Ohio University, as undergraduate students, in basic home economics.

2 women from Ghana and 2 women from Liberia, who were in their second year of undergraduate study in Home Economics at Oregon State University.

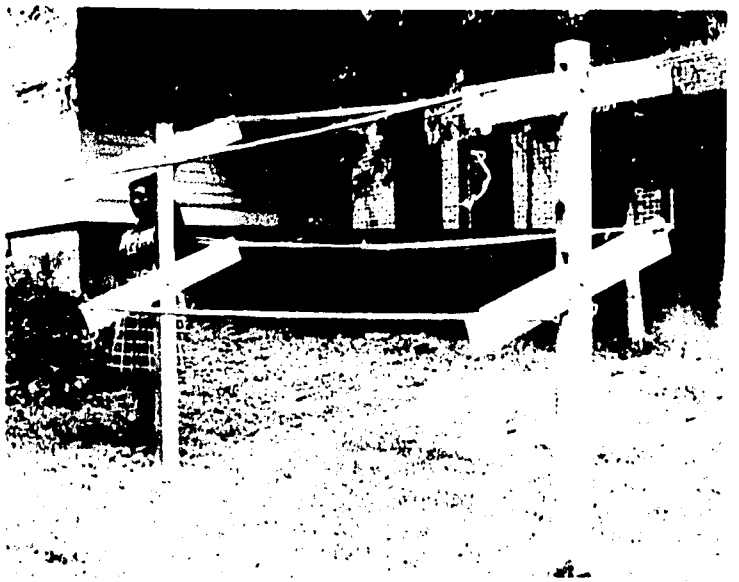
1 woman from Kenya, who had enrolled, studying nutrition for one year, at Oregon University.

2 women from Jamaica and 1 woman from Northern Rhodesia, who had already been in leadership positions in their countries, who had just arrived in the United States for Home Improvement Special Course, Prospectus #40.

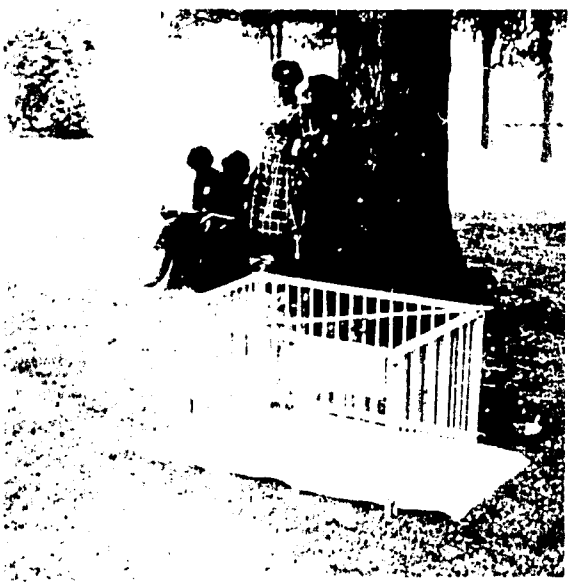
Kemi Omotayo Alalade of Nigeria covers a calabash bowl of food with an effective and attractive cover of mosquito netting to keep flies off and still allow for circulation of air.

Standing at a brick and clay stove with a pipe chimney, Mrs. Ada Kandeke, Northern Rhodesian, demonstrates the convenience of the work level stove which she helped build. Mrs. Kandeke hopes to introduce this type of smokeless stove for use in the separate kitchen buildings of her country's villages.

Improved kitchen storage.



A clothes drying rack of wood and bamboo poles.



A baby's play pen made of wood or bamboo.

COVER PICTURE:

Mrs. Ada Kandeke built a model ventilated food safe for use in tropical countries. Mrs. Kandeke learned simple carpentry skills which she in turn expects to teach to village women in Northern Rhodesia.

MISSIONS NOTE:
Additional copies available from: Publications and Technical Services Branch, AID, Washington.

Photographs by courtesy of American Home Economics Association and Ohio University.