



Bahrain is a small archipelago with a population of approximately 1 235 000. The health bus aims to provide physical activity opportunities for all children and young people in Bahrain.

The main aim of the project in Bahrain is to enable young people and children to practise physical activity. The project commenced in February 2010 and is ongoing.

Dr Amal Al-Jowder was awarded the Sasakawa Prize for Health Development in May 2009, and used the prize money to fund the Dr Amal bus project. The prize money funded the project for its first year of implementation (2010–2011). The project was funded by the private sector from 2012 to 2013. The Ministry of Health has agreed to sponsor the project in 2014. The lead agency in the project is the Health Promotion Directorate, Ministry of Health and partners include nongovernmental organizations and the private sector.

The project focuses solely on physical activity promotion and is targeted at children and young people, particularly those from low socioeconomic groups.

The health bus visits schools to provide children with opportunities to use a range of equipment including a trampoline, bicycles, balls, skipping ropes, and weight lifting equipment.

Dr Amal, a health promotion specialist, educates the children about the benefits of physical activity and different ways to be active.

The programme also aims to raise awareness among parents.

Dr Amal attends a range of events including World Days related to health.

On national holidays the bus visits public parks and local community settings to promote physical activity.

Evaluation

A satisfaction survey is carried out with the target group and stakeholders.

Monthly statistics are recorded on the number and destination of bus trips.

Key findings

From 2010 to 2013 the bus has undertaken 66 visits to different places and events.

Results from the satisfaction survey indicate high awareness of the bus.

Overall the equipment and activities were deemed appropriate.

Key factors contributing to the success of the project

Children enjoy the wide-range of equipment.

The programme is mobile and can be delivered in a wide range of communities.

The programme has received wide spread support and publicity.

Challenges

Equipment periodically needs replacing.

Limited number of health promotion specialists can travel in the bus and deliver the programme.

No sustainable monitoring and evaluation system.

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