Searching for Sustainable Solutions and Outstanding Needs

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First let me summarize about what we learned before the break ... during the last session, heard about the REAP nutrition and education studies that were done in the 2008/09 academic year

- Anemia rates are high ...
- Few people (principals / teachers / parents) even understand what anemia is ...
- When vitamins supplements were delivered by the REAP team itself ➔
  - Anemia rates fell
  - Test scores and psychological health rose
But we do not believe this is enough
(so, we are continuing our work in this year)

• What are the questions in which we are interested:
  – How do we make this sustainable?
  – What is keeping schools from trying to solve anemia themselves?
    Education of Principals?
    Budget Constraints?
    Could it be that Principals do NOT have an Incentive?

• To answer these questions, we are now doing a project called: “Paying for Performance”

This is being implemented by the same team as last year … BUT, this time it was expanded with collaboration with Ningxia University (my university) and Qinghai Minority University
So what was our original “PLAN”? We launched a 90-School Study in the 12 Poorest Counties in Shaanxi, Ningxia and Qinghai

In 20 Schools (2000 students)  \(\rightarrow\) **We trained the principals**

20 Schools (2000 students)  \(\rightarrow\) Training + Give Subsidy

20 Schools (2000 students)  \(\rightarrow\) Training + Subsidy + Provide Incentive

30 Schools (3000 students)  \(\rightarrow\) CONTROL
To train the principals, we trained a group of “nutrition trainers” from Xibei University. After getting trained, each trainer went to 10 schools and spent half a day in an intensive one-on-one session with the principal … training them according to a special nutrition training book designed especially for this study ….
90 School Study ... in 12 Poorest Counties in Shaanxi, Ningxia and Qinghai

20 Schools (2000 students) ➔ Training Principals

In the second set of 20 Schools (2000 students) ➔ Training + We gave the principal a subsidy

20 Schools (2000 students) ➔ Training + Subsidy + Provide Incentive

30 Schools (3000 students) ➔ CONTROL

The original “PLAN”
• Each principal was given 30,000 yuan [What was the money for?]

• Each principal filled out a budget, choosing from this list the idea was to let each principal design his/her own anti-anemia strategy

Training PLUS subsidy

Ways to Fight Anemia

1. Balanced Diet: Provide wholesome school meals to students at school. Make sure to include foods with heme iron, non-heme iron, and Vitamin C.

2. Multivitamins: Give students multivitamins each day. This is a good strategy for children who are very anemic, as diet change may not be enough to raise iron levels. Don’t give kids more than 40mg of iron at one time, and be sure to provide clean drinking water!

3. Fortified Foods: Use special foods that have extra added iron in school meals, such as vitamin sprinkles, soy sauce, or wheat flour.

4. Educate Parents: Tell parents about anemia and why it’s important. Share the strategies that you have learned to reduce anemia and about the importance of a balanced diet.

5. Cooking Methods: Cooking with iron cookware can add iron to school meals. Educate school cooks on providing balanced meals.
90 School Study ... in 12 Poorest Counties in Shaanxi, Ningxia and Qinghai

20 Schools (2000 students) $\rightarrow$ Training Principals

20 Schools (2000 students) $\rightarrow$ Training + Give Subsidy

In the third set of 20 schools (2000 students) $\rightarrow$ there was Training + Subsidy + Plus we implement an Incentive Program for the principals

30 Schools (3000 students) $\rightarrow$ CONTROL

The original "PLAN"
In this set of schools we offered a “Paying for Performance” (P4P) Contract to each Principal

The contract was simple:
For each student that was cured of his/her anemia, the principal received a payment (directly to his bank account) of 300 yuan …

For example: If 15 students were cured of anemia, the payment would equal to about 2 months of salary … this is not a small number
Our study now is a 90-School Study ... in the 10 Poorest Counties **ONLY** in Ningxia and Qinghai

- 20 Schools (2000 students) ➞ Training Principals
- 20 Schools (2000 students) ➞ Training + Give Subsidy
- 20 Schools (2000 students) ➞ Training + Subsidy + Provide Incentive
- 30 Schools (3000 students) ➞ CONTROL

However, we could not implement the program according to our original design ... this is our final research design
Why did we change in design? Why did we drop Shaanxi from the Paying for Performance study?

• We could not use Shaanxi schools because of a *Policy Directive* issued in September 2009 by the Governor of Shaanxi Province … the directive says:
  
  “Starting October 9, 2009, every child in every elementary school in Shaanxi shall be provided one egg per day … with funding provided from the Shaanxi Provincial Finance Department”

• Certainly many reasons that the governor issued this directive, but REAP’s research was one important factor:
  
  – In the *Policy Directive*, REAP’s policy brief is cited
  – PLUS: the Head of the Department of Education of the Province also was shown the same ppt that you are being shown right now
So will the anemia problem solved by giving out an egg per day?

• Unfortunately no … In response to the “Policy Directive,” we wrote and submitted a formal “Comment”

“While eggs and milk are nutritious foods and the government should be commended for beginning a program that is concerned about improving the nutrition of students in China’s rural schools …

… to the extent that anemia is a serious barrier to health and education, since eggs and milk have very little iron, such a program should not be expected to alleviate this nutritional deficiency … more is needed.”
So what happened?

- We encouraged the Shaanxi Government to continue with the “One Egg per Day” program …
- But, we suggested that they evaluate the impact of doing MORE than giving one egg per day …
- That is why we launched a program called ➔ [next page]
This project is a 70-School Study in 10 Poorest Counties in Shaanxi

In 20 Schools ➔ The Gov’t gives 1 Egg/day + REAP gives 1 Vitamin

In 20 Schools ➔ The Gov’t gives 1 Egg/day + REAP gives a nutritious, prepackaged meal

In 20 Schools ➔ The Gov’t gives 1 Egg/day + REAP provides Nutrition Training to Principals, Teachers AND Parents

In the 30 Control Schools ➔ Students only get 1 egg/day

Is one egg enough?

This work is going on right now … and will be done in June
• In addition to the impact that our work has had in Shaanxi Province …

• REAP’s work on Nutrition and Educational performance also has begun to have real policy impact nationally
On the right is the formal notification that there has been a “policy directive” directing MoEdu and MoHealth to move our information into the policy discussion … it was signed by:

Wen Jiabao: Premiere
Li Keqiang: Vice Premiere (for health)
Liu Yandong: Standing Committee member (education)

For example, on the left of this slide is our 4-page brief sent DIRECTLY to the desk of the Premiere and other State Council members (think of President Obama’s desk and the desks of his cabinet members …)
We also have had other policy briefs from REAP to the State Council which have been incorporated into national policy … These policy briefs have been written on:

• Improve **Boarding School management** (based on work that Prof. Shi will talk to you about this afternoon—also supported by Ford)

• Promote **Early Childhood Education** in Poor Rural Areas

• **Address Severe Problems about Migrant Schools**

• Increase the Coverage of Catastrophic Illnesses under **New Rural Health Insurance Program** (NCMS)
In addition, in February 2010, there are new policies in some of these areas being implemented …

For example:

• The subsidies given by the national government for enhancing the nutrition of meal provided to children in boarding schools WILL BE RAISED beginning in the 2010/11 academic year

• Boarding schools facilities will be improved
Indeed … there is a lot going on … but, there is still a long way to go …

Thank you!

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