Community-Based Responses to Malaria and Other Epidemic Diseases as a Public Health Disaster: Rockefeller Failures and Successes, 1915-1950

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Are those who do not remember history condemned to repeat it?
1984 Bhopal Disaster
1987 Edmonton Tornado
1995 Midwestern Heat Wave
1998 Hurricane Mitch (Honduras)

Fig. 1.—Map of World-wide Activities of the Rockefeller Foundation

It is the purpose of the Rockefeller Foundation and its departmental boards to have a part in the world-wide movement for preventing disease and bringing about improved conditions of health. In 1921 aid was extended to five medical schools in Canada, to one in England, one in Belgium, one in Brazil, and one in the United States. In China a modern medical school in Peking was supported in full and three other medical schools, five pre-medical schools, and twenty-nine hospitals aided. Two million dollars were given to Harvard for a school of public health; and the School of Hygiene and Public Health at Johns Hopkins University, and courses in hygiene at São Paulo, Brazil, supported. A campaign against yellow fever was continued in Mexico and Central and South America. Aid was given to ten southern states and two foreign countries to continue the work of malaria control. In seventy-seven counties in sixteen southern states, county health organization on a full-time basis was promoted in co-operation with state and local agencies. Hookworm work, now merged in county health programs in the Southern States, was prosecuted abroad in eighteen governmental areas. Anti-tuberculosis work in France was brought close to the point of complete transfer to French agencies. The 1920 gift of $1,000,000 for the relief of European children was completed. Emergency assistance in the form of scientific journals and apparatus for medical schools was continued in five countries and extended to four other countries in Europe.
DEMONSTRATE
EDUCATE
COLLABORATE
ESTIMATE
RF Exhibit, Mississippi, 1923
Spreading Paris Green, Brazil, c. 1921
Spreading Paris Green by Hand, 1920s
Spraying Pyrethrums, India, 1938
Spraying Equipment, India, 1938
Fig. 4. Captain Arthur W. Hill of Washington, D.C., and T/5 Joseph Russotto of Bayonne, New Jersey, apply louse-killing DDT powder to an Arab family at L’Arba in Algeria.

(Courtesy of Prev. Med. Serv., Surgeon General’s Office)

(36)
DDT Spraying, Naples, Italy, 1944
DELOUSING WITH DDT

Both sleeves then three shots fore and three shots aft at both the neck and waistband.

When numbers are to be treated a seat for the subject saves the back of the operator. Don't forget the head and hat.
DDT Spraying, Mexico, 1945
Fig. 11 - Dairy barn in Maccarese area - the site of some of the early work with DDT residual spray in Italy.

Fig. 12 - Group of children at one of the large dairy farms in the Maccarese area. Practically no new cases of malaria occurred following DDT spraying in the season of 1945.
Taiwan, 1950s
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<th>STATE HEALTH OFFICER</th>
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<td>STATE DIRECTOR OF</td>
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<td>COUNTY HEALTH WORK</td>
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**COUNTY HEALTH OFFICER**

**Duties**
1. Direct the Work of the Unit.
2. Health Education—Lectures, Publicity Work, etc.
3. Maternity
4. School Hygiene—Physical Examination of School Children
5. Examination of Children in Infant Hygiene and Preventive Clinic
6. Vaccination for Smallpox, Typhoid, etc.

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**SECRETARY**

**Duties**
1. Health Education—Distribution of Pamphlets, Letters, etc.
2. Maternity Statistics and Maternity Records
3. Correspondence, Records, Post Maps of Statistical Data, Graphs
4. Distribution of Articles for Children in Charge of All Societies
5. In Charge of Laboratory Examinations for Distribution to Physicians

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**NURSES**

**Duties**
1. Health Education—Lectures, Mothers’ Conferences, etc.
2. Preventive and Maternal Work
3. Registration of Births
4. Infant Hygiene Clinics
5. Pre-School Age Work
6. School Hygiene—Vaccination
7. Tuberculosis—Supervision of Cases under Supervision

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**SANITARY INSPECTOR**

**Duties**
1. Health Education—School Hygiene, Sanitation, etc.
2. Quarantine and Isolation
3. Inspection of Markets, Public Buildings
4. Water Supply, Public Baths and Establishments
5. Assessment of Nuisances
6. Mosquito Control Work
7. Inspection of Public and Private Sources of Water Supply, Collection of Water Samples
“The wisdom of having the first health units in the East started in Ceylon has been confirmed by experience... As short a time ago as eight years there began to be implanted the idea of community responsibility in health. Today this is firmly rooted.”

Rockefeller Foundation, *Annual Report for 1933*, pp. 103-104
A hookworm demonstration office
Group of Mothers and Children Attending Clinic at North Kalutara, Ceylon. Building Rented and Given by Mr. M.F.P. Gooneratne
Public Health nurses setting out from the First Health Station
PEARL S. BUCK

TELL
THE
PEOPLE

Talks with JAMES YEN about
the Mass Education Movement

Two-thirds of the world’s people are illiterate, ill clad, underfed, and at the mercy of disease. The Mass Education Movement is a plan, tested for thirty-odd years, to transform these millions in a generation.
“A rural health unit organized at Ting Hsien has been an important factor in the instruction of Chinese medical students in rural hygiene.”
