



**Washington Women's Foundation
International Grant Committee
Progress Report September – December, 2014**

Project: Empowering Local Women to be Community Health Leaders

Etta Projects' Health Promoter program is providing training and resources that enable women to become leaders in their community. Participants have studied a variety of topics over the last three months including personal hygiene, health diagnosis, injury treatment, life-saving, parasite recognition and treatment, environmental safety, and water rescue and life saving measures for drowning victims. As they advance their skills, they are learning to organize themselves and take on leadership and responsibilities.

In the first part of their training, they learned about proper sanitation. They made a three dimensional map of sanitation in their community in order to identify problems and begin searching for possible solutions. Each community completed their task creating a didactic model to be able to display in their community meetings. In this project they demonstrated strong creativity and showed their motivation to improve the quality of the messages that they give their community.



Students practiced treating a variety of injuries on dolls and then each other.



Etta Projects believes that changes occur across generations, as children are always present at training watching their moms become leaders.

Students learned about microscopic parasites and how to treat them.





Early on, Health Promoters began learning vital signs that include details of temperature, breathing rate, heart rate, and pulse. They learned the Heimlich maneuver and its practical use as well as various techniques for giving injections.



An interesting issue arose as the group learned about blood pressure. Investigation and problem-solving arose from their self-diagnoses. After practicing with each other and learning symptoms associated with low blood pressure, they analyzed their results and realized that many of them had low blood pressure. After some discussion, most participants agreed that in order to come to the training workshops they must wake up very early to make lunch for their spouses and children. They also need to leave the house clean before they may come to training. For these reasons, it does not give them time to eat breakfast and sometimes they feel bad with low blood pressure and headaches during the workshop. To solve their issue, the participants voted to add more fresh fruit and protein to their morning snack during long workshop days. This type of engaged learning and real life response really solidifies many lessons of the training. It also allows them to consider how children who have not properly eaten before school must feel. This type of analysis begins the process of becoming real health promoters.





Health Promoters in La Reforma have taken their new knowledge to their community with dedication. The Promoters wanted to bring an elderly community member to one of the workshops. He has worsening rheumatoid arthritis in his upper and lower limbs which left him unable to work and hence unable to pay for medications and care. To treat him, the women asked Etta Projects for materials (gauze, iodine, etc.) for the variety of wounds he had on his body due to poor blood circulation, as they had not yet completed the training that gives them access to their own first-aid kits. The La Reforma Health Promoters feel as time passes, they may be able to help him through their new role and, without hesitation, took initiative.



It is always a big day when the Health Promoters get their first aid kits. To have one represents that they have come to a point in their training to begin treating minor health issues. Participants learn the requirements for maintaining the enclosed medicines, the function of each one, the dosages, indications, and the prices. This group of Health Promoters discussed and agreed upon logistics of medicine sales and how to best communicate the function of the kit to each community. It was agreed that the community would be informed about the first-aid kits during Christmas celebrations and fairs.

After receiving their first-aid kits, Health Promoters spoke about how the kits will change life in the communities. The rainy season is approaching and the communities of Chane Rivero and Paisaje are impossible to exit during this time. These Health Promoters, with their first-year of training, can now use their first aid kits to provide basic and potentially lifesaving healthcare.

Problem-solving outcomes like what we've seen in La Reforma and the engaged learning expressed during blood-pressure training are exactly what we set out to accomplish with our program. Stories like these prove that long-term change can and does happen through this Health Promotion training that Etta Projects provides.

