



CHL Newsflash

“Alam Simsim” Joins CHL in National Family Health Campaign,

“Sahetak, Sarwetak”

TV spots and materials on handwashing and hygiene produced under the USAID-supported Communication for Healthy Living project, implemented by the Health Communication Partnership based at Johns Hopkins University, in collaboration with Sesame Workshop’s “Alam Simsim.”

Adults and children throughout Egypt are picking up the habits of handwashing, good hygiene and safe water storage from the street—Sesame Street. *Felfel, Khokha, and Nimnim* from the popular children’s show *Alam Simsim* are the latest celebrity spokespersons to join Communication for Healthy Living’s (CHL) *Sahetak, Sarwetak* (Your Health, Your Wealth) national family health campaign. Two public service announcements (PSAs) featuring the much-loved characters began airing on Egyptian state television channels in early March 2006, supplemented by leaflets for children, care-givers, and service providers.

Handwashing, hygiene, and safe water storage are integral to the *Sahetak, Sarwetak* campaign, which works to empower families to protect their health by making informed choices and adopting simple health habits. Targeting children with simple messages helps instill healthy habits that will help protect their health throughout their lives. These messages are particularly relevant at a time when Egypt is depending its citizens to control an outbreak of Avian Influenza.

The TV spots and materials were produced through a partnership between *Alam Simsim* and CHL, a USAID-funded project working with the Ministry of Health and Population (MOHP), the Ministry of Information-State Information Services (MOI-SIS), and partners in the private and NGO sectors. Working through the MOI, CHL was able to secure prime time placement of the spots on Channels 1 and 2 through the Egyptian Radio and Television Union (ERTU). The spots will air for three months alongside the ½ hour *Alam Simsim* series every weekday afternoon, ensuring a high reach into the target audience of children and caregivers.

Over ½ million flyers have been produced as part of the *Alam Simsim*-CHL collaboration and are being distributed throughout Egypt by CHL’s network of health outreach workers in the government and NGOs, and through the Ask-Consult network of 13,000 private pharmacists, a component of CHL’s private sector program. In developing the content, CHL drew on the expertise of partners in the USAID-funded NAMRU-3, which provides technical assistance to the Ministry of Health and Population in the area of infectious disease surveillance and response.

Alam Simsim is a joint production between Cairo’s Al Karma Productions and Sesame Workshop, the creator of television’s Sesame Street, in New York, with active support and involvement from Egyptian education, media, film, television, and artistic communities. Funding is provided by USAID-Egypt, in cooperation with Egypt’s Ministries of Education and Information. *Alam Simsim*’s current activities with CHL grow out of a 2002 global partnership between Sesame Workshop and the Johns Hopkins University Center for Communication Programs, a pioneer in the field of strategic, research-based health communication.

