

AREA CAIRO REGIONAL CONSULT REPORT

From 1976 - 1980 the work of the ICA in Egypt was identified with the Bayad Project. Except for Cairo development and a few LENS seminars, ICA work had been limited to the Bayad village. The sole legal authorization for ICA work in Egypt rests on an unclear relationship with the Beni Suef (state) Governorate. Beni Suef Governorate images of the ICA have been tied to the initiating consult and early contractual agreements.

The Regional Consult offered an opportunity to broaden our regional/national frame and to establish a new relationship with Beni Suef. The break-through in set-up was the decision of Minia University to co-sponsor the event. The key to that decision was Dr. Abd El Moniem Shawky, Chairman of the Sociology Department and President of the new ICA Egypt Association being formed, and his interest in ICA methods training for his faculty and students. The President of the University agreed to co-sponsorship, and Dr. Shawky assigned 1 faculty member and 3 students to the ICA set-up team for four weeks.

Initial conversations with the University indicated that the appropriate "region" was the tri-governorate states of Minia, Beni Suef and Fayoum. These three states form the North Upper Egypt Planning Region (Upper Egypt is south of Cairo), which is one of eight national planning regions. (This placed the Governorate of Giza outside of the Regional Consult turf and raised questions regarding the actual area/region grid. New grid recommendations will be presented at the summer global council.)

The Consult, publically called "The Conference on Rural Development for North Upper Egypt", received immediate support from the Minia and Fayoum Governors. The Beni Suef Governor's support was facilitated by a personal visit from Dr. Shawky. Even after consenting to participate, the Beni Suef Governorate proved reluctant and unsure as to the priority it would place on the Consult. This was evidenced by the number of delegates officially sent from the Governors' offices: Minia - 12, Fayoum - 10, Beni Suef - 3.

The Conference on Rural Development of North Upper Egypt was the first formal time that representatives of the three governorates of the region involved had met together. Participation in the Conference was 103 in all. In addition, some twenty-five played significant support roles. The public, voluntary and local sectors were predominantly represented throughout with major interviews with the private sector being mainly related to the Practicum. The Symposium, hosted by Minia University, was attended by some 70 people. Each of the three governorates was represented by top level officials. A number of Muslim and Christian service organisations were also in attendance. Participation from Minia University's Department of Sociology included virtually all graduate students and more than two-thirds of the faculty.

The Symposium was opened by the Director of Security, Minia Governorate, and closed with a dinner hosted by the Governor of Minia.

During the Practicum, the three governorates hosted about 30 full-time participants. The hospitality of the Beni Suef, Minia and Fayoum officials was extremely gracious. They arranged for site visits to projects, entertainment, transportation, meals and housing at no cost to the conference or the participants. During this time, it became clear that public sector development focusses on large-scale economic and specific social projects. There is simultaneously a concern for decentralization of the development planning and implementation process. During the Practicum a strong sense of teamhood emerged which carried over into the spirit of the Assembly.

The Assembly was attended by nearly 60 people. It was hosted by the Bayad community. Participants were welcomed by the presidents of both the local elected and the local executive councils. The Bayad cluster leadership, representing Bayad and the six communities adjoining it on the East Bank, was prominently in attendance. The Assembly meals, prepared by the community kitchen staff, rivalled those given by the Governors of Minia and Fayoum and the President of Minia University in quality and quantity. The Assembly closed with a luncheon hosted by the General Secretary (top bureaucratic official) of Beni Suef in the Government Club.

Two observations remain. First, because of the support of the University, the governorates and the Bayad community, 60% of the entire conference budget of LE 5,000 was received in kind. Second, the fact that this was the first time for these three governorates to meet led to a great deal of excitement about what was going on across the region. This put considerable strain on the consult design, since any report got extended, and therefore workshops had to be abridged. However, the willingness of conference participants to work late and their fascination with the methods allowed all workshops to be completed and the document written within the overall timeline.

The resulting product was a 50-page bi-lingual public document (Arabic-English) summarizing the strategic components for rural development in the three participating governorates. Participants commented that the charts could be subsequently used in their own future planning sessions.

#### Possibilities

The framing done in preparation for and execution of the Consult places the work of the ICA in a new orbit. Continued integration of public, voluntary and local sectors in future planning and implementation of ICA work would expand the victory of human development from one local community to multiple communities involving all sectors of this region.

Minia University co-sponsorship gave not only clout and maneuverability to this conference but initiated detailed planning for the permeation probe.

Public and voluntary sectors pushed hard for effective training programmes for executives and local leadership and human development projects in the other two governorates in the region. The Ministry of Planning representative from Cairo asked for further regional conferences in Egypt as well as for us to visit him relative to ICA planning methods.

This Conference was a bi-lingual event initially facilitated by Minia University staff and later aided by Governorate staff. The conclusion is that there are good translators available and bi-lingual events are no problem for the future.

A four-year model for continental break-open, areal development and regional saturation was created by the ICA staff after the Assembly. The cluster launch model is key to regional maneuverability.