

Community involvement in Education

Introduction:

Coptic Evangelical Organization for Social Services CEOSS is one of the strongest active organizations working in the Egyptian society. Moreover, as a one of the important NGOs, CEOSS concentrates on solving the developing problems, through using the local sources at hand and encouraging people to share and support in different fields of services. And its efforts are tangible.

We can see their efforts helping in one of the important field: Education. It has a great experience in improving the capacity of the educational process:

- 1- Through selection of schools in needs.
- 2- Investment of the great energy we can get from volunteers.
- 3- Supply of the basic need and restorations in those schools.
- 4- They create a link between schools and the local community.
- 5- Training teachers.
- 6- Though all the previous actives they changing the people attitudes and direction towards the educational process.

Moreover, you will find all what we have mentioned in the following report.

Education

With approximately 40% of Egypt's population belonging to the young age cohorts, providing effective universal education is a difficult task. Building schools to accommodate the population, equipping to schools with proper education tools, modernizing institutions and curricula, address urban/rural and male/female disparities, as well as hiring and training the right caliber of teacher in sufficient quantities, are all necessary to meet the requirements Of a globalized world. Reducing drop out rates and important efforts. As part of it's strategy of improvement, the Ministry of Education (MOE) seeks to involve parents and communicates in school governance. It is difficult for MOE to reach grassroots areas. Local Civil Society Organization - CSOs, when properly trained, can be extremely effective in reaching out to parents because of their knowlage of community; their connections to people, stakeholders and local resources; and their participatory approaches.

Literacy and education have been fundamental CEOSS concerns since its earliest day, and CEOSS is committed to making a contribution to the current national effort. CEOSS understands education as a means to open opportunities to the poor and illiterate. Its emphasis is on enrolling young people, specially girls, in formal education; enhancing the quality of education in poor areas; and providing informal education for impoverished children, adolescents and youth to build their self-esteem and develop their talents.

Formal Education:

In 2002, CEOSS built the capacity of CSOs in impoverished communities to coordinate projects in improving quality and infrastructure for education. Through its efforts it worked to develop models for improvement that can be effectively replicated by government or other NGOs in other communities.

The various projects involved 125 schools and addressed 4 main aspects: connecting the school to the community; enabling work teams composed of school staff and persons from the community, and

enhancing the efficiency of those responsible for the educational process; improving student participation by involving them in environmental camps, cleaning environmental themes; and improving school environment and infrastructure by upgrading furniture and bathrooms and by creating green areas. Initial meetings in each community were held with the participation of them undersecretaries of Departments and Divisions. These projects have been very helpful in solving the problems of children and improving the quality of education.

In 2002, CEOSS also implemented innovative “income Generation for Education” Projects in seven communities. CEOSS enhanced the capacity of CSOs to run income generation projects to raise money to meet the financial requirements of girls who wish to enroll or remain in school. El Baraaem wa Ahlem El Moktama Association, a CSO comprised of graduates from the community Dreams Video project in Zeinohm, is one of the groups involved. Their fundraising project, based on positive results of a feasibility study, is a Business Center equipped with computer, copier, and printer for public use. Another group developed a Special Occasions Rental Center providing tents, chairs, microphones, and other equipment for rental for wedding, funerals, and other special occasions.

Informal Education:

As a result of CEOSS efforts, many impoverished communities benefit from informal education projects to establish children’s clubs, address children’s rights, combat illiteracy, and build the self-esteem and understanding of adolescent girls. In 2002, the children in Kom Ghorab, a squatter community in Cairo, were thrilled to participate in two novel projects offered through a newly established Children’s Cultural Center equipped with a library and computer and video laboratories. Center staff trained teams of children to use video cameras to create short films stressing messages important to the community. The children were also taught basic computer skills such as word processing and educational games. In addition the Cultural Center provides field trips to the Egyptian Museum. As a result of the field trips the “Egyptian Museum School” evolved. In this program, leaders from the Cultural Center work at the Museum with groups of Kom Ghorab children 8 to 15 years old teaching them drawing and stone carving.

The children of Kom Ghorab conceived the idea of the Cultural Center and they presented it to the Swiss Ambassador in 2002 when he came to tour their community. Impressed with the children’s self-confidence and ability to express themselves, the ambassador responded to the children’s request and provided funding to a local CSO to establish the Cultural Center.

Number of beneficiaries:

Program	Item	Value
Education	Illiterate people completed literacy classes	1805
	Dropouts returned to schools	3806
	Poor children in the compulsory education stage enrolled in school	856
	Primary School teacher trained	232
	Women completed home economic curriculum	1656
	Youth completed life skills curriculum	1739
	Children joined children’s art clubs	3340
	Health	Children treated for malnutrition
	Mothers studied health and nutrition curriculum	921