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## **CIVIC ADVOCACY FOR DEMOCRATIC RESILIENCE IN EGYPT PROGRAM (CADRE)**

### **Quarterly Report**

*Period: April 1 – June 30, 2015*

**Submitted to: USAID/Egypt**

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**Grantee: Counterpart International**

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July 31, 2015

**Amira Radwan**  
Agreement Officer's Representative  
USAID/Egypt

Subject: CADRE Quarterly Report (Yr1 Q4)

Ref: Cooperative Agreement No. AID-263-LA-14-00003  
LWA #DFD-A-00-09-00141-00

Dear Ms. Radwan,

On behalf of the Civic Advocacy for Democratic Resilience in Egypt (CADRE), and its implementer, Counterpart International, I am pleased to provide you with our Quarterly Report for the period April 1 – June 30, 2015.

Should you have any questions regarding this Quarterly Report, please do not hesitate to contact me for further information.

Sincerely,

Youssef A. Khalick  
Acting Chief of Party  
Civic Advocacy for Democratic Resilience in Egypt (CADRE)

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## ACRONYMS

<b>ACOP</b>	Acting Chief of Party
<b>CADRE</b>	Civic Advocacy for Democratic Resilience in Egypt
<b>CPI</b>	Counterpart International
<b>CSSC</b>	Civil Society Support Centers
<b>CSO</b>	Civil Society Organizations
<b>FO</b>	Field Office
<b>GOE</b>	Government of Egypt
<b>HEC</b>	High Elections Commission
<b>HOC</b>	House of Representatives
<b>ICNL</b>	International Center for Not-for-Profit Law
<b>IFES</b>	International Foundation for Electoral Systems
<b>IP</b>	Implementing Partner
<b>LERP</b>	Law of Exercising Political Rights
<b>LOA</b>	Letter of Authorization
<b>LWA</b>	Leader with Associates
<b>MIC</b>	Ministry of International Cooperation
<b>MOFA</b>	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
<b>MOSS</b>	Ministry of Social Solidarity
<b>MSI</b>	Management Systems International
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organization
<b>SCC</b>	Supreme Constitutional Court
<b>STTA</b>	Short Term Technical Assistance
<b>USAID</b>	United States Agency for International Development
<b>USG</b>	United States Government

## **I. Executive Summary**

Counterpart International (CPI) submitted to USAID a plan of action in the form of a partial suspension request during the current period due to its pending registration in Egypt. CPI requested, for purposes of compliance with Egyptian Laws, a partial suspension of the Award until such time as CPI's registration approval is received from the Government of Egypt (GOE). The partial suspension is based on meetings held last quarter between CPI, USAID, as well as the Egyptian Ministries of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), and International Cooperation (MIC) in Cairo, which centered on the fact that CPI is not authorized to practice any activities in Egypt before completion of the registration process as dictated by MOFA's list of registration requirements. USAID provided its concurrence with this partial suspension through July 31, 2015 or until registration is received. Furthermore, CPI has additionally requested an extension of its partial suspension, through October 31, 2015, in order to keep specific expenditures in place in order to comply with registration procedures. Until such approval for registration is granted by the GOE, CPI will remain under partial suspension of the Award by USAID.

During this reporting period, and in line with its Partial Suspension Plan, the following suspension activities were reached:

- i Notified all implementation partners to partially suspend their sub-awards and activities.
- i Amended CPI and MSI field office lease agreement to stay in line with our partial suspension and to remain compliant under Egyptian registration law requirements.
- i Notified program staff that only essential field and HQ-support to the program for registration and specific deliverables would remain.

### **Political Background and Developments**

Positive talks took place at the end of last quarter between US Secretary of State John Kerry and Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi with regards to restoring U.S. military aid to Egypt, which has already taken effect with military equipment transfers this quarter in order to support the Egyptian military to continue its fight against terrorism.

In the last reporting period, legal issues arose when the Supreme Constitutional Court (SCC) heard several lawsuits challenging the constitutionality of three laws: the House of Representatives (HoR) law, the Law of Exercising Political Rights (LEPR) and the Boundary Delimitation Law. The SCC decreed that Article 3 of the Boundary Delimitation Law and clause I of Article 8 of HoR Law were unconstitutional, resulting in the postponement of the proposed election dates. Earlier this quarter, Prime Minister Ibrahim Mahlab formed a committee of eleven members to review and amend the articles that were ruled unconstitutional. Accordingly, the High Elections Commission (HEC) declared that a new parliamentary elections schedule would be announced after the necessary amendments. While the committee formed to amend the laws has not completed its task yet, the GOE is planning to complete Egypt's parliamentary elections before the end of this year. Egypt has not had a formal parliament since 2012, when the parliament was dissolved, and therefore, President El-Sisi holds legislative powers until an elected parliament convenes.

Furthermore, work on the new Canal Suez project (a Government of Egypt mega-economic project) is moving forward as scheduled. The Government of Egypt is currently arranging for a large ceremony to inaugurate the new Canal on August 6, 2015, exactly one year from the inception of the project.

With regards to civil society development, training to prepare youth males and females to positively engage in the upcoming Local Councils elections is underway through a coordination effort between the Ministry of Social Solidarity, Ministry of Local Development, and Ministry of Youth.

## II. CADRE Program Strategy

CADRE intends to lend ongoing support to Egypt's historically vibrant civil society sector. In Upper Egypt, Lower Egypt, and Greater Cairo, CADRE's primary objective is to support Egypt's ongoing political transition through technical assistance, organizational capacity development, and grant making opportunities for CSOs that are working to raise public awareness around upcoming electoral events through voter and civic education; to promote inclusive dialogue that elevates the role of women and youth, the protection of minority rights, and religious tolerance; to combat gender-based violence; and to promote human rights and transitional justice.

The key "theory of change" behind this primary objective is that if CADRE strengthens Egyptian civil society leaders, organizations, their members and networks while improving the enabling environment for civil society actors, then Egyptian citizens will more actively participate in and influence the ongoing political process.

Building on this theory of change, its underlying assumptions, and to better link the program's components to its primary objective, CADRE has developed three sub-objectives to capture the program's theory of change. These include:

(1) **Strengthened Egyptian Civil Society Organizations and Networks:** Under this objective, CADRE intends to assist approximately 220 civil society organizations increase their capacity, 70% of which will increase their overall organizational capacity, 35% (or 75 organizations) will demonstrate improved financial accounting practices, and 50% will demonstrate an increased capacity in advocacy. In addition, target Civil Society Support Organizations (CSSCs) and their target CSOs will increase the representation of women and youth on their boards of directors, increasing their decision-making authority in their communities and their overall civic participation. Target organizations will receive grants that include institutional support and also enable organizations to apply their learning (gained via training, technical assistance, and mentoring) in their work. In addition, the program will create and strengthen networks among target organizations to encourage collaboration and a further resilience in the civil society sector. This objective will be achieved through the program's 4 Components outlined below.

(2) **Improved Civil Society Enabling Environment.** A restrictive legal environment can negatively impact the ability of civil society to meet its objectives or positively and constructively influence government decision-making. As a result, the second sub-objective focuses on improving the enabling environment for civil society actors by:

- a. Providing technical assistance to government officials, CSO leaders, and other stakeholders to inform the drafting of laws and policies to establish an enabling legal and regulatory framework for civil society;
- b. Advocacy support to CSOs to facilitate campaigns for more enabling constitutional provisions, laws, and regulations governing civil society;

- c. Implementation assistance to government officials and CSOs to support the fair, effective, and enabling implementation of a new CSO legal framework; and
- d. Capacity building technical support to strengthen the ability of CSOs in Egypt to benefit from, and comply with, a new CSO legal framework, including compliance with standards of good governance. As a result of these investments, at least 5 public policies will be introduced, adopted, repealed, changed, or implemented with citizen input supported under the program. This objective will be achieved via Components 2 and 4 as outlined below.

(3) **Increased Civic Participation of Egyptian Citizens, particularly women.** Stronger organizations will be better able to engage local constituents, improve their civic participation programming, and engage with the government directly about issues of concern, including the enabling environment discussed under objective 2. While this objective focuses on the civic participation of all, it is particularly focused on increasing women's civic participation and will support at least 15 activities designed to promote or strengthen the civic participation of women while also improving women's advocacy skills and networks to influence gender-related policies. In addition, in their grant implementation, CSO grantees will provide voter and civic education activities and increase civic participation among all segments of society, particularly women and youth. This objective will be achieved via Components 2, 3, and 4 as outlined below.

While not necessarily explicit in the theory of change, gender sensitivity is a primary strategy of the program. Gender considerations will be integrated into the practices, programs and policy advocacy of our partner organizations, at least 25% of the targeted CSOs will focus on issues of concern to women, and the program will work to involve men and boys in support of women's issues and greater inclusion in society.

To help this program vision become a reality, CADRE will focus on four, inter-related program components:

Component 1: Capacity Building for Egyptian Civil Society Organizations

Component 2: Support to Improve the Civil Society Enabling Environment

Component 3: Women's Empowerment in Political Processes

Component 4: Grant-making targeting women, youth and marginalized groups in support of Components 1-3

### **III. Accomplishments**

#### **Overview:**

On March 31, 2015, CPI submitted to USAID a Partial Suspension Plan for its current CADRE operations as well as partner operations during this interim period until CPI registration is received. On April 17, 2015, CPI received USAID concurrence to its partial suspension plan and quickly notified all implementing partners with timelines to wind down any of their operations and placing restrictions on allowability of their expenses during the partial suspension of their sub-awards. Currently CPI and MSI have one point-person supporting any administrative activities but mainly focused on advocating on behalf of the program on registration related actions. Furthermore, implementing partner's IFES and ICNL have stopped all work as of April 10, 2015 due to partial suspension and will resume work under their subaward once CPI registration is received. On June 17, 2015, CPI additional requested for an extension of our partial suspension through October 31, 2015 in order to remain compliant under Egyptian registration laws to remain present with a field office and office representative in order to receive its registration.

### **Follow-up actions for CPI Registration:**

On April 7, 2015, Acting Chief of Party (ACOP) called Counselor Nermine Afifi, Office of NGOs Affairs at MOFA, for an update of CPI registration status. She indicated that there is no new news and she will call the ACOP once she has new information. When ACOP offered to call her back or to meet her should she needs any more information, she politely declined the offer and promised to call ACOP if she needs any more information. On April 10, 2015, CPI's President and CEO, and Senior Director of Programs met with Paige Alexander, USAID's Assistant Administrator, to discuss CADRE and CPI registration in Egypt. USAID thought it would be fruitful that CPI meets with the Egyptian Ambassador in Washington, DC. USAID assisted CPI and arranged the meeting for CPI with the Egyptian Ambassador. On April 29, 2015, CPI's President and CEO, and Senior Director of Programs met with Egyptian Ambassador in DC to discuss CADRE, and its registration process. The Ambassador had recommended CPI finds a "Champion" within MOFA/MOSS to support our registration requests.

After discussions with USAID/Egypt and the Egyptian Ambassador in Washington, DC, CADRE's ACOP, reached out to MOFA to check on the status of CPI's registration and for any leads regarding updated information of our registration package. MOFA responded that CPI's registration status remained unchanged and that MOFA will notify CPI regarding whether any changes in status takes place.

On June 17, 2015, CPI requested extension of the current partial current in place in order to retain both CADRE's ACOP and field office through October 31, 2015, to remain compliant under Egyptian registration law requirements. Shortly following the concurrence of this extension

On June 21, 2015, the Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM) and USAID Mission Director met with MOFA's Ambassador Mounib, in charge of the Americas to discuss NGO registration issues particularly CPI's registration. Ambassador Mounib promised to look into Counterpart's registration status in particular and would provide USAID and CPI with some level of information.

## **IV. Challenges**

- i At the present time, the process for registration is quite slow and lengthy and the Government of Egypt's delayed feedback on Counterpart's registration application. Until approval for registration is granted by the Government of Egypt, Counterpart International has received concurrence from USAID to partially suspend the Award.
- i Clear understand of where CPI is in the process of receiving his registration has been a challenge. Senior USG officials have held meetings this quarter with the MOFA and MIC in reference to NGO registration issues in Egypt but no real understanding of where our registration falls in this process.

## **V. Planned Activities for Next Quarter**

### **HQ/Field Office and Staff:**

CPI will retain the services of the ACOP (hired as a local consultant) to act as CPI's registration and local point-person through October 31, 2015 on the CADRE program. He will serve as focal point for all advisory and facilitation work related to CPI's registration and communications with USAID.

CPI HQ-staff that supports CADRE will provide minimal support to its local point-person through July 31, 2015. After that date, they will limit time on CADRE to that required to communicate between parties (field consultant, USAID, implementing partners, and Government of Egypt) or actively pursue registration procedures, until the registration is complete.

With regards to the local office, CPI has retained its current lease agreement and inventor, so that CPI meets all registration requirements under Egyptian law, and to allow, upon completion of registration, the authorized activities to be launched quickly and with minimal costs.

**Implementing Partners:**

CPI has informed the programs implementing partners regarding its partial suspension and CPI will not undertake any activities until receipt of the registration. Below is a summary of partner actions moving forward:

1. MSI has wind down its staff as of April 30, 2015. Currently, MSI has one point-person in the field supporting any remaining administrative actions, after which only the following administrative charges will be allowed.
  - a) Costs for sub-lease of two rooms within CPI office
  - b) Costs for one point person for CADRE purposes after April 30, through October 31, 2015.

All work under Component 1 (CSO Capacity Building) has been placed on hold until CPI receives its registration.

2. ICNL has been notified to suspend all activities. ICNL has no active staff or ongoing work on CADRE. All work under Component 2 (Improved Civil Society Enabling Environment) has been suspended since April 10, 2015 until CPI registration is received.
3. IFES has been notified to suspend all activities. IFES has no active staff or ongoing work on CADRE. All work under Component 3 (Women’s Empowerment in Political Process) has been suspended/on hold since April 10, 2015 until CPI registration is received.

Upon receiving official registration and work permit, CPI will submit a revised timeline to return CADRE to full operation.