

2630026  
PD-AAU-560  
ISN = 47808

17

**ARAB REPUBLIC OF EGYPT**  
**NEIGHBORHOOD URBAN SERVICES PROJECT**  
**EVALUATION**

PHASE TWO REPORTS



**PHASE II**



**Prepared for**  
**The United States Agency for International Development**  
**Prepared by**  
**The International Science and Technology Institute, Inc and**  
**The Social Research Center of the American University in Cairo**

# **NEIGHBORHOOD URBAN SERVICES**

## **EVALUATION**

### **PHASE TWO REPORTS**

#### **GENERAL INTRODUCTION**

**Prepared For**

**United States Agency for International Development**

**Prepared By**

**International Science and Technology Institute, Inc.  
2033 M St. N.W.  
Washington, D.C.**

**Social Research Center/American University in Cairo  
113 Kasr Ai Aini St.  
Cairo, Egypt**

**January 1985**

# 1. The Project

The NEIGHBORHOOD URBAN SERVICES project strengthens local government in Cairo and Alexandria by funding activities at three levels: four urban governorates, twenty-three districts, and hundreds of neighborhood private voluntary organizations. These activities are supported by a program of technical assistance and training directed by the American firm, Wilbur Smith and Associates (WS).

Project activity, beginning in late 1981, was under the direct management of the AID mission until the TA Contractor began work in June 1982. The NUS Project is scheduled to end in September 1986.

The philosophy of the project is simple. Local urban government in Egypt had been given authority to carry out a wider range of tasks and take responsibility for provision of basic services, but it had neither the resources nor the experience. NUS provides resources in the form of funding for about two thousand small subprojects, and experience through carrying out these activities with guidance and training provided by Wilbur Smith and Associates. Through the repeated completion of NUS subprojects, Egyptian officials should gain confidence in the abilities of district units to perform important tasks. The result should be a certain devolution of responsibilities and matching financial resources to local levels of an increasingly more competent urban administration.

Although the focus is on public administration, the project addresses the private sector in two ways. First, most of the subprojects are performed under contract by private Egyptian firms. Second, the project supports a large number private neighborhood associations through the PVO program.

## 2. The Evaluation

The language of the Project Paper stressed the flexible and experimental nature of the NUS Project. The repetition of similar subprojects in twenty-three districts over a several year period provides an on-going laboratory for examining the changing processes of Egyptian urban administration. The Project Paper authorized a special external evaluation

project to monitor periodically the developments of NUS. This NUS Evaluation Project is carried out by the International Science and Technology Institute (ISTI) with the local support of the American University in Cairo's Social Research Center (SRC).

The Evaluation activities are divided into three phases. The Phase One main report was submitted in December 1983 and was supplemented by a special compendium on district resources in March 1984. The Phase One evaluation provided an across the board review of NUS progress during its first year and a half of operation, and it established the basis for further evaluation work and for the final measurement of the impact of NUS upon urban processes.

Phase Two aims at providing information on specific aspects of NUS rather than repeating the broad overview of the project. This phase is the last opportunity for the evaluation to contribute to the NUS Project's accomplishments and to the planning process for those urban projects to follow the current NUS Project. The aspects to be examined were chosen in consultation with AID project management in Cairo and in Washington, and with the TA contractor. The result is three reports:

**(a) Contract Management and Subproject Maintenance**

The first of these reports focuses directly on the practical aspects of the districts' management of construction subprojects - selection, design, costing, bidding, construction supervision, completion, and maintenance. This report focuses on the problem areas of NUS implementation and helps identify practical solutions. As part of this process, the evaluation team held debriefings and workshops with GOE line staff in the districts and with AID management and the TA contractor. The key findings of this activity have been translated into Arabic and should become the basis for a series of district level workshops also recommended in the report.

**(b) District Decision Making and Community Involvement**

The second report is intended to provide a more complete documentation of the operation of district decision making than was previously available. Additionally, it provides case studies of the social context, institutional operation, and human impact of six subprojects. This report documents the tremendous gaps in urban services that are being bridged by NUS and the very real and pressing human needs that are being served. Although the first and second reports may be read separately, there is much in them that is mutually reinforcing. This study stresses that local government in

urban Egypt is not a single entity, but an evolving federation of semi-autonomous institutions. The implications of this for the NUS project are that attention must be given to strengthening lateral communication and organizational links as well as the vertical links of rules, forms, and procedures. The study also finds that the "Popular Council" often plays an important role both formally and informally. The distinction which is often made in documents between these "elected" and the "appointed" Executive Council is an over-simplification. More accurately, Popular council members are local residents with connections to the national political party which nominates them for the office.

### **(c) Six Private Voluntary Organizations in Cairo Neighborhoods**

The case studies on Private Voluntary Organizations are intended primarily to inform AID decision makers as they plan for post NUS urban projects. Their purpose is to provide qualitative documentation of the capabilities and weaknesses of a few of the more than one thousand neighborhood organizations eligible for NUS support. The NUS project is the first donor project to allocate large resources (\$11.4 million) to a large number of private Egyptian development associations. These six case studies suggest that the next round of urban AID projects could do more to support these private efforts at community development, and in so doing could increase the direct impact of AID on poor urban communities.

## **3. NUS UPDATE**

Phase Two does not conduct a review of all NUS Project activities, but our evaluation interviews allow an update on project issues raised in the Phase One report of December 1983.

### **GENERAL**

The NUS project is a success of which the AID mission, the GOE, and the TA contractor should be proud. The pattern remains much the same with tremendous success in the rate of implementation of district and special governorate subprojects as the strongest point, and the lagging training activities and lack of specific targets for capacity building and decentralization as problems.

### **DISTRICT SUBPROJECTS**

According to the TA contractor's documentation, 80% of the district subproject funding category has been disbursed and almost 800 district

subprojects have been completed. Many others are in progress and there is no doubt that NUS will surpass its numerical target of 950 district subprojects before the end of the project.

### **SPECIAL DISTRICT PROJECTS**

The Phase One Evaluation report noted that 22% of the district funds had been used for special projects, chosen by the governorate, but largely administered by the districts. These special projects are for road paving, solid waste management, office equipment, equipment maintenance, and sidewalk construction. Since then the level of reallocation has increased dramatically so that to date 42% of the funds intended for district subprojects have gone to these special projects.

### **PVO SUBPROJECTS**

To date, about 1000 PVO subprojects have been initiated or completed. The TA contractor estimates that 75% of the 1600 eligible PVOs will receive grants averaging \$8000 each. The project paper projected 2500 PVO subprojects at \$4000 each.

The Phase One Evaluation worried that the PVO program was oriented toward larger and better established PVOs. The broad coverage that has taken place since then shows no such preference. A wide variety of PVOs, in terms of size and type, has received NUS support.

### **SPECIAL PVO PROJECT**

An important reallocation of funds has occurred in the PVO category where \$1 million (almost 10%) has been earmarked to create four large community centers, one in each of the four urban governorates. The trend is clearly for NUS to provide more support at the governorate level rather than at the lower levels as originally planned.

### **INCENTIVE AND MAINTENANCE FUNDS FROM GOE**

Problems of GOE provision of incentive and maintenance funds remain, although there has been progress in both of these areas.

### **TRAINING**

In Phase Two, we did not conduct an evaluation of the training program. It was felt that as it is only now moving into the implementation stage, close evaluation would be premature and counterproductive. From discussions with AID project management and TA contractor personnel, we venture the following assessment.

The nine courses are beginning - five for government personnel and four for PVO personnel.

The courses are institutionalized in Egyptian government training institutions. Whether the Egyptian Government will be willing to finance the continuation of these courses after NUS is not clear, however.

From the evaluations of the pilot training courses and from a review of some of the training manuals, the programs seem relevant to the Egyptian and NUS context, using cases drawn directly from NUS experience.

We are concerned about training numbers. For instance, although hundreds of district engineers receive training, it is difficult to make sure they are the right engineers. Most districts employ between ten and thirty "engineers", but only two or three are actually involved in subproject management. Since attendance at training sessions is reported to be a problem (generally running at 50%), the key two busiest district engineers may be among the absent. The next phase of the evaluation will need to consider not only the numbers of training person days delivered, but who was trained and how it affected their work.

We have also recommended the addition of team building type district workshops to the training program in order to address organizational issues of lateral communications, shared objectives, and motivation. These are now being planned by AID project management and the TA contractor.

### **NUS OBJECTIVES**

The Phase One report stressed that in an evolving project such as NUS the final goals regarding local government responsibility, competency, and resources remain unspecified. At the end of NUS, what levels of administration should carry out which tasks to what degrees of effectiveness? These are issues which the Egyptian government must decide on the basis of its experience with NUS. The Phase Two reports suggest that such decisions might be negotiated within a framework of planning for the next round of urban projects, and incorporated within a planned program of phaseover from the current NUS to its successor project or projects.

## **ATTITUDES**

The evaluation team observed important changes in attitudes toward NUS. Local Egyptian officials now discuss NUS and problems of urban administration in a more pragmatic way. In Phase One interviews, many local officials spoke of NUS as being unnecessary and troublesome and expressed unrealistic views of the relationship between district government responsibilities and resources. AID officials and TA contractor personnel also demonstrate much more realistic and better informed attitudes toward the problems of urban Egypt. On all sides and at all levels, the discussion is now considerably more practical and better informed than in 1983. The evaluation benefits from this increasingly sophisticated climate of discussion. Conversely, our presence, the evaluation process, and the information collected, also contribute to this increasing maturity of thought and discussion.