

**FINAL REPORT
COLLABORATION FOR COMMUNITY-LEVEL
SERVICES (CCLS)**

Submitted to:

**United States Agency for International Development
USAID/Egypt**



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
FINAL REPORT COLLABORATION FOR COMMUNITY
LEVEL SERVICES PROJECT
JANUARY 2001-FEBRUARY 2004

Implementation of the Collaboration for Community Level Services (CCLS) project began in January 2001 and ended in February 2004. Project purposes included testing several hypotheses related to its overall strategy and approach, identifying lessons that would help guide the planning of future large scale governance and local service improvement projects, and to “enable Egyptians to design, test, and implement methods of improving the management of essential community service provision through enhanced community participation and public private partnerships in four ‘Pilot Communities.’”¹

Over the course of its three years, the project accomplished a variety of tangible and useful results in each of its four pilot sites.² In addition, the project demonstrated that a “consultative group” made up of politically sophisticated and well-connected Egyptians would be willing to volunteer their time and could be of significant assistance to a project in which they believe.

The project also demonstrated that it is possible in Egypt to create partnerships among the government, local economic elites, and other local community leaders that will result in increased or improved levels of public services. Among the most important lessons for future projects are:

Project Organization and Structure:

- ▶ A group of prominent, committed volunteers such of the CCLS’ Consultative Group (CG) can provide invaluable cultural and technical credibility and expertise necessary to accomplishing project objectives.
- ▶ The role and responsibilities of a group such as the CG needs to be clearly defined and agreed upon from the start.
- ▶ Conceptualizing project plans and activities in terms of social capital or service delivery improvement objectives is an effective framework for accomplishing meaningful social and economic results.

Selection of Pilot Sites and Key Local Partners

- ▶ Clearly articulated and thoughtfully developed criteria for site selection are critical.
- ▶ Selection of sites should be made on the basis of a well focused feasibility study.
- ▶ A local community targeted for project participation should be conceived in terms of its governance system, rather than in terms of governmental organizations and functions,

¹ Statement of Work, *op. cit.* p. 3

² Two of these sites – New Borg al Arab and the Tenth of Ramadan – are designated in Egyptian law as “new” cities, and the other two – Dumat and Naqada – as traditional or “old” cities in terms of local government structure.

- ▶ and the project should be able to work primarily with NGOs and informal groups, as opposed to primarily with governmental bodies.

Entry into the Community

- ▶ How projects are introduced into the community is a critical element that influences the readiness of the local community to interact and work with the project.
- ▶ The blessing of the appropriate local leadership is critical for project effectiveness.
- ▶ Community needs assessments that are focused on specific sectors or service areas can promote community cohesion and institutional change objectives, and are more effective than broad scale community-wide assessments.

Activity Focus and Implementation

- ▶ Concentrating project attention on an issue that is widely recognized as vital to local leaders is the best way to begin work in a community.
- ▶ Focusing on a community issue related to economic growth and income generation can be a very effective way to accomplish governance objectives.
- ▶ Gaining the trust and confidence of local leaders is essential.
- ▶ Staff members whose role is that of community development liaisons play an instrumental role in facilitating stakeholders' collaboration and mobilizing key community players.
- ▶ Assigning a junior staff member, typically on a part time basis, to support CDLs with logistics, administrative, and reporting activities is highly desirable.
- ▶ Regular monitoring and reporting on pilot site activities that is tied to concrete project objectives and that is used by senior management can improve project performance.
- ▶ The ability of the project to supplement its staff with outside, specialized technical assistance is critical in achieving project objectives.
- ▶ Small grants and commodities can be important tools in accomplishing project objectives, but they need to be consciously integrated into an overall strategy in a community for achieving community service or social capital results.
- ▶ International and in-country training and observational study tours can be important tools when they are integrated into a local community development plan.
- ▶ Mid-term assessment and refocusing of project activities can be critical to project success.
- ▶ Local service and governance improvement objectives can be furthered and sustained by the involvement of multiple donors.

On reflection, the CCLS project staff concludes a simple and promising model for an expanded program to improve local governance and services in Egypt involves the following steps:

Step 1: *In conjunction with a formally constituted body of prominent and committed Egyptian volunteers, such as those who served as members of the CCLS Consultative Group, identify criteria for the identification of potential project target communities and for the selection of target sites and areas of service delivery focus from among them.*

Step 2: *Conduct diagnostic studies of more communities than will be selected, and focus the studies on identifying a critical area of community need recognized by virtually every governmental and non-governmental leader as being vitally important to the community. The studies would also assess the extent to which the various stakeholders would be interested in working with the project on solving this recognized problem in a manner that involves collaboration among the stakeholder, including community residents.*

Step 3 : *Approach the formal leadership – in” new” cities the Ministry of Housing and then the Board of Trustees and City Development Agency, and in “old” ones the governor and Popular Council and Executive Council – and get their commitment to work with the project and to identify the relevant community stakeholders who would be involved from the start.*

Step 4: *Involve the identified stakeholders in articulating their needs and in developing an approach to identifying a technical solution to the widely acknowledged problem.*

Step 5: *Involve the stakeholders in implementing the technical solution, and work on building strong collaborative relationships among the stakeholder groups, and expanding the circle of stakeholders as much as possible.*

Step 6: *Monitor and assess the activities and their strengths and weaknesses in each target community and apply the lessons learned. This process should involve the local governmental and non-governmental stakeholders as well as project donors and staff.*

Although it is too early to tell whether or not the local CCLS inspired partnerships established to enhance service delivery will be institutionalized and sustained over the long run, the willingness of USAID and other donors to continue to nurture these efforts bodes well and attests to the usefulness and applicability of the CCLS approach. In each of the four pilot sites one or more partnerships between community leaders and local governmental officials is poised to produce additional service delivery results and also has received a pledge of ongoing support from one or more outside institutions.

FINAL REPORT

COLLABORATION FOR COMMUNITY-LEVEL SERVICES (CCLS)

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to summarize the results and lessons learned from the Collaboration for Community-Level Services (CCLS) pilot project. There is no precise moment when this project was conceived: it emerged from extended interactions among senior USAID personnel, a senior member of Development Associates staff and several prominent Egyptian private citizens, all who of whom were concerned about the future of Egypt and the failure of past externally-funded attempts to improve governance structures and operations. The exchanges took place over a several year period and led to an approach that USAID/Egypt eventually decided to support on a pilot test basis. The belief of those directly involved was that the project design represented a fundamentally new approach to improving the quality and outputs of governance in Egypt, and those elements of the approach might have applicability elsewhere. The pilot project was funded for three years beginning in mid-January 2001. This report is written as the project comes to an end of that three year period, during which much has been accomplished and much has been learned.

B. BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE OF THE CCLS PROJECT

USAID has a long history of supporting local government in Egypt. During the 1980s and 1990s USAID programs in Egypt approached the objectives of participation and decentralization through the central or governorate-level bureaucracies. The Basic Village Services/Neighbourhood Urban Services (BVS/NUS) and Local Development II programs in the 1980s were large, highly visible and nationwide in scope. There is general agreement that little progress was made as a result of either program toward either of the two objectives. Essentially the same may be said of the Participatory Rural Governance Program (PRGP I — also known as “Shrouk”) that USAID supported and then aborted during the later half of the 1990s. None of these major reform programs (BVS, LDII, and PRGP I) directly or indirectly stimulated the creation of advocacy groups for decentralization and participation. Neither did they mobilize significant numbers of new individuals or groups nor provide resources or incentives to those already in existence. In essence, these were programs that were designed to build institutional capacity for administrative structures which devoted insufficient attention or resources to enhancing collective action by citizens in order to ensure program sustainability and to generate demands for more accountable, participatory government.

During the final stages of USAID’s funding of PRGP I, members of the USAID Office of Democracy and Governance began conversations with the director of the PRGP monitoring and evaluation unit regarding the constraints and potential for improving the quality of governance and public services at the local level. The director of the monitoring and evaluation unit was a widely respected political scientist, on partial leave from a senior university post, and with over

twenty years of experience and long-standing personal relationships in Egypt.³ Building on these long relationships, the views of a small number of concerned and prominent Egyptians not directly affiliated with the government were sought. Initially, these conversations were among old friends and colleagues who shared a deep concern with improving services and developing local communities in accord with the realities of Egypt's political and administrative culture. Over time, the circle of individuals widened to include other prominent Egyptian intellectuals who shared a conviction that it was in the best interests of Egypt to increase the level of participation and quality of public services at the local level and who also believed that this would require carefully crafting innovative and sensitive approaches that the central government would initially tolerate and eventually support.

Following a change in the leadership of USAID/Egypt's Office of Democracy and Governance, it was necessary for personnel new to Egypt to become familiar with the nature and results of past USAID-funded activities. Eventually, the new Office Director concluded that experimenting with innovative approaches was desirable, and that it would be worthwhile to test whether a group of intellectual and business leaders, serving as volunteers, could design a program that would accomplish systemic and lasting results. In the context of the relatively large USAID/Egypt portfolio and the limited results of past democracy and governance programs, there was skepticism within the Mission and the Embassy regarding such an approach. Nevertheless, the Mission approved a three-year pilot test to see whether this approach had the potential to be more effective than had the programs of the past.

The analyses of prior USAID programs that were intended, at least in part, to decentralize governmental decision-making included the following among the most important lessons learned⁴:

- ▶ Do not work exclusively with a governmental instrumentality, the primary interest of which is maintaining control.
- ▶ Attempt to facilitate communications and interactions between governmental and non-governmental actors in order to reduce possible tensions/suspensions and to encourage both parties to use their respective resources in a productive, cooperative fashion.
- ▶ Seek to encourage communal action by stakeholders to achieve collective goals.
- ▶ Work in specific service areas so that the quality of those services can be improved, thereby demonstrating to stakeholders, including government at the local and national levels, real and tangible gains from participation and decentralization.
- ▶ Engage private sector service providers as much as possible in order to ensure quality and sustainability and to add them to the group of stakeholders who would benefit from decentralization of service delivery.

³ The director of the PRGP I monitoring and evaluation unit was Dr. Robert Springborg, an internationally respected expert on Middle East politics, with a particular specialization in Egypt. Dr. Springborg had also done considerable intermittent work for USAID, and it may also be important that he resided only part-time in Egypt throughout this period. While this split residency surely added to the time required to formulate the pilot project, it may also have permitted a more natural development and added to the project's legitimacy from an Egyptian point of view.

⁴ Springborg, Robert. *Decentralized, Participatory Decision Making For Service Provision in New Communities*. Concept paper submitted to USAID/Egypt in June 1998.

- ▶ Consciously try to involve those with material and political resources in the activity so that their leverage can help to bring about changes in governmental policies and practices.
- ▶ Employ a “trickle down” approach, commencing the activity in communities with substantial material and political resources, social capital, and, if possible, successful experiences with collective action, then proceed into communities less well endowed.
- ▶ Work in different types of communities, such as those involved in manufactured or agricultural exports, those more or less remote from primate cities, and so on, at least in a pilot phase, in order to determine which are most responsive.

The analyses concluded that a program with multiple, interrelated objectives would probably have a greater chance for success than a simpler, more straightforward one. The goals of enhanced participation and decentralization are more likely to be attained if they are linked to improved, sustainable service delivery in support of local communities engaged in export production or servicing, with that sustainability being based upon mobilization of local resources.

Building on this base, the CCLS Pilot Project was designed to test several hypotheses. These hypotheses include:

- ▶ A small group of politically sophisticated and well connected Egyptians, mostly outside the government and serving in a voluntary capacity, can protect project activities from dysfunctional interference by the GOE bureaucracy and build partnerships between local economic elites, the GOE and popular community leaders.
- ▶ The creation of partnerships among local economic elites, the GOE, and popular community leaders will result in increased or improved levels of local level public services.
- ▶ The concept of partnership-building to enhance service delivery can be institutionalized at the local level and popularized so that it expands beyond activities directly supported by USAID.

CHAPTER II. OVERVIEW AND DISCUSSION OF PROJECT STRUCTURE

In this chapter we briefly describe and then discuss the relatively complex organizational structure of the CCLS project. The organization of the project included some innovative features, most particularly the presence of a “Consultative Group” (CG) of prominent Egyptian intellectuals and business leaders whose role proved to be extremely valuable but also a source of disquiet and tension. Also included was a “Government Coordinating Group” (GCG) composed of representatives of Government of Egypt (GOE) agencies and local governments where the project is working and whose role was also not always clear. Indeed, a major weakness of the project design, and its subsequent implementation, was the ongoing ambiguity with respect to the roles and responsibilities of these two important groups.

A. PROJECT STRUCTURE

The CCLS project was designed to build and benefit from a complex set of collaborative relationships among central government ministries, governmental and non-governmental bodies at the local level, interested and influential Egyptian members of the project’s Consultative Group, USAID, and the Development Associates project team serving as a Technical Secretariat. Each of these entities was to have an important role to play in accomplishing the project’s objectives. The major elements of the project’s organizational structure were:

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) was the donor agency for the project. Working with the other project members, it was to provide overall support and guidance while monitoring activities and finances. The Office of Democracy and Governance within USAID/Egypt was responsible for the design of the project, the selection of the implementation contractor, and ongoing oversight and support.

*The Sector for International Cooperation (SIC)*⁵ was the official Arab Republic of Egypt (A.R.E.) counterpart for the project. The SIC was responsible for executing all bilateral agreements and amendments, and approving all administrative documents, including budgets and Implementation Letters for the project. The SIC assisted with customs issues and facilitated the importation of commodities associated with the project, and also collaborated with USAID and the Consultative Group in the selection of the project pilot sites.

The Technical Secretariat (TS) was created to act as the full-time staff responsible for implementing the project and for energizing and facilitating a wide variety of project activities in four pilot communities and at the national level. The TS consisted of thirteen full-time, Egyptian professional staff and an expatriate Chief of Party employed by the implementation contractor, Development Associates, Inc. It also made extensive use of specialized expert consultants, who also were almost entirely Egyptian. With guidance from the CG, USAID, and the GCG, the Technical Secretariat offered technical assistance, administrative support, limited commodities, small grants, and training to public and private sector organizations in the project’s four pilot communities. It was also responsible for coordinating information and activities among the project members, monitoring progress, and reporting about project operations. Internally, the

⁵ In October 2001, the former Ministry of International Cooperation became the Sector of International Cooperation in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Technical Secretariat was organized such that one senior professional Community Development Liaison (CDL) was assigned to each of the four pilot sites, with a Program Coordinator responsible for managing the CDLs, and a Technical Assistance Coordinator responsible for assuring that each CDL and pilot community received the technical assistance needed from expert consultants or professional service subcontractors. Responsibility for managing a small grants component of the project was assigned to the Deputy Chief of Party and a small grants assistant, both of whom supported other work in the pilot sites as well. The TS also included a full-time Information Technology Administrator who, in addition to central office functions, assisted several pilot communities in the development of project-related web sites and information systems. The size of the TS staff and its internal organization evolved over the life of the project. Exhibit 1 provides an overview of the project's internal organization as it functioned during the final seven months of project activity.

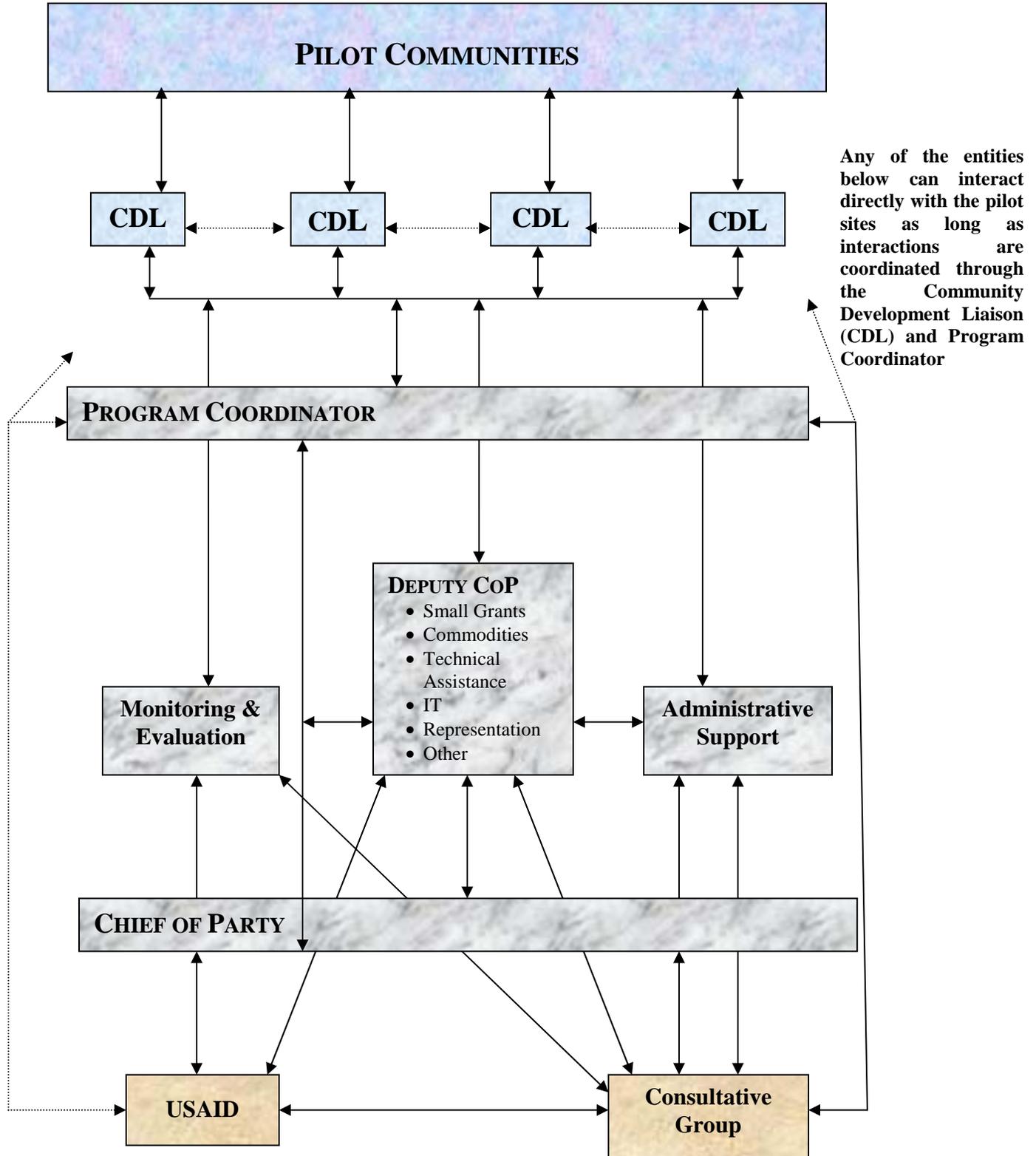
The Consultative Group (CG) was formed in May 1999 by a number of knowledgeable and influential Egyptian volunteers who were concerned with problems of governance and service delivery at the local level and desirous of promoting community participation in creating solutions. According to the project design, the CG was to facilitate cooperation with relevant public and private sector institutions, assist in policy oversight and evaluation, and act as an advisory group to USAID by providing guidance, suggesting new partners and access points in the pilot communities, and signaling changes in the enabling environment (negative or positive) that would affect implementation.⁶ During the three-year life of the project, CG members were active in designing the project, with one member participating in selection of the implementation contractor, and they were instrumental in supporting project activities at the local level, in dealing with governmental agencies, and in providing guidance to project staff. Of the initial group of seven members, one had lost interest and ceased participating in the CG by the time the project actually began. The other six members were active in one way or another throughout, and were joined during the latter stages of the project first by one and later by a second new member, neither of whom was ever fully incorporated into the group. While playing a critical role in the project's development and ongoing operations, the CG never had a clear and agreed-upon set of rights and responsibilities with respect to the project, nor did it have a formal internal organizational structure or mutually agreed-upon roles and procedures governing the group's decision-making.

The Governmental Coordinating Group (GCG) consisted of members from the Sector for International Cooperation (SIC); the Ministry of Housing, Utilities, and Urban Communities (MOH); the Ministry of Finance; and the Ministry of Youth; as well as from the governorates where the pilot cities are located. In seeking the establishment of this group, USAID, the CG, and the TS drew on governmental bodies with strategic roles to play in improving community services. As designed, the GCG was to provide support for the activity by assisting in finalizing site selection criteria, and facilitating compliance with or rationalization of administrative, legal and regulatory requirements which would affect implementation. The GCG was also to participate in implementation meetings as necessary. As was true for the CG, the GCG had neither a clear statement of its role and responsibilities with respect to the project, nor an internal organizational structure. Members of the group actively participated in the selection of the

⁶ USAID/Egypt, "Collaboration for Community Level Services Request for Proposal: Statement of Work" p. 2, November 2000.

EXHIBIT 1 Project Organization Chart

Showing Information Flow and Responsibility



project's pilot sites and individual members supported or were engaged in local project activities, but the group had ceased to be operational in any meaningful way by the final year of the project.

A Local Pilot Community was initially envisioned in the project's design as being one of Egypt's "New Communities." Since 1979, Egypt's New Communities have been administered through the Ministry of Housing and they have a different administrative/governance structure than Egypt's "old" communities which are administered under the requirements of the Local Administration Law that divides Egypt into 26 governorates.⁷ During the first year of the project, however, it was decided by all involved that the four pilot sites in which the project would concentrate its efforts would consist of two new and two old communities. The representatives of the SIC argued that the "old communities" were more numerous and many of them could benefit from the planned inputs. Partly to address these concerns and also to permit more systematic comparisons within each administrative context, it was decided to choose two "new" and two "old" communities as the project's pilot sites.⁸ The first pilot site selected was New Borg al Arab (new), an industrial city located on the Mediterranean coast northwest of Alexandria. The second was Dumyat (old), a port city and long-established center for the production of traditional Egyptian products. These were selected during the project's first year. The third and fourth pilot sites, 10th of Ramadan (new) and Naqada (old), were not selected until well into the second year (October 2002). Within each pilot site, the community of interest was defined as the population living or working in the pilot site that was targeted as the expected beneficiary of project activities, with the understanding that this might encompass all or a limited subset of the residents.

The Local Deliberative Body (LDB) of a pilot site was described in the Statement of Work and the Results Package as the local organization to which most project inputs were to be extended. In these documents, the terms "local deliberative bodies" and "local governing bodies" were used interchangeably. The project's objectives included developing "mechanisms to increase local stakeholder representation in local deliberative bodies," initiating coordination between these bodies and the private sector, identifying methods by which these "bodies and communities can work together to solve service delivery problems," and "increase[ing] local deliberative bodies effectiveness in their ability to formulate policy for services and oversee implementation."⁹ It is clear from the Statement of Work, the Results Package, and Development Associates CCLS proposal that in "new" communities the expectation was for the project to work with Boards of Trustees and to treat them as the "deliberative body" on which efforts would concentrate, although it was recognized that NGOs such as Investors Associations and quasi-governmental organizations such as Youth Centers might, in some circumstances, also play this role.¹⁰ In "old" communities, local popular councils and NGOs were expected to be the most likely eligible institutions with which to work, although it was recognized that governors were likely to play an important role as well. Consistent with these expectations, in the two new cities of New Borg al Arab and the 10th of Ramadan the deliberative bodies on which the project placed its primary focus were the respective Boards of Trustees. In Dumyat and Naqada, the

⁷ USAID/Egypt, "Collaboration for Community Level Services: Results Package No. 263-0278" p. 5, August 31, 2000.

⁸ Huxley, Frederick, C. "Reflections of Project Evolution" p. 3, December 30, 2003.

⁹ Statement of Work, p. 4.

¹⁰ Development Associates, Inc. "Legislative Strengthening: Collaboration for Community Level Services" a proposal submitted to USAID, p.I-7, December 15, 2000.

project worked with the respective governors and over time developed new NGOs on which project efforts focused. In Naqada, the Local Popular Council was also significantly involved throughout.

The Board of Pilot Communities (BPC). The BPC was expected to act as a framework through which stakeholders from the local pilot communities could build personal relationships, exchange information, address issues of common concern at regularly scheduled meetings, and otherwise help each other to improve local service delivery. In large part because the project took considerably longer than anticipated to become functional in all four pilot sites, the Board of Pilot Communities never had an opportunity to move beyond a forum for the exchange of information among representatives of the pilot communities.

B. COMMENTARY ON THE STRUCTURE

Although the CCLS project produced many useful results, there were issues with respect to its organizational structure and functioning that proved to be constraints on the effectiveness of the project, and there were lessons with respect to organization and structure that were learned over the life of the project that may be useful in future endeavors.

Role Clarity of Key Actors

One of the main issues that constrained the effective implementation of the project was the lack of consensus with regard to the goals and level of authority of the various project stakeholders. In particular, rules governing the relationships among the CG, the TS and USAID were never clearly articulated. Clear boundaries were not identified in terms of the level of authority with respect to decision-making, implementation, and the monitoring and evaluation of project activities. This lack of clarity, which existed as much within as among each of the three major groups, contributed to a sometimes tortuous decision-making process and a lack of clarity and focus in the selection and implementation of project activities.

The Results Package explicitly characterized the CG's role as advisory to USAID and recognized that "since the CG is a voluntary group, their level of responsibility within the project is contingent upon their personal commitment and the time available to work with the GCG, USAID and the contractor."¹¹ It also described the CG as "an equal partner" and as playing the same role as the GCG in terms of creating public-private partnerships and facilitating linkages. This was consistent with the informal nature of the CG, whose membership was reluctant to become formalized as a body with an official status that might complicate the members' ability to speak and act independently. It also, however, built into the project design a potential for confusion and bad feelings.

From the start, the Technical Secretariat attempted to implement a project policy decision-making process that centered on what were described as full project meetings. These project meetings were to be models of linkage-building and collaborative decision-making among the four major, national level stakeholders — USAID, the TS, the CG and the GCG. On matters such as determining the pilot site selection criteria, the selection of sites, and areas of program

¹¹ Results Package, op. cit. p. 19.

focus, the process followed was to convene large group meetings of all parties involved. In this context, decisions were made either by consensus or on the basis of votes in which everyone was treated as an equal. Over time, an effect of this approach was frustration among CG members and such poor attendance that it slowed the selection of the third and fourth pilot sites by almost a half a year. By the end of the second year, the process had broken down, and the new mode of operation was for the CG and USAID, sometimes with the TS, to meet together. The GCG did not meet in project year 3, although individual members continued to be involved with the project and supportive of its activities.

Major weaknesses of this decision-making structure were the size of the group and the diverse styles, interests and inclinations of those involved. The members of the GCG were appointed by their respective Ministries and were middle- or relatively junior-level staff who were not in a position to make commitments or effectively advocate for policy changes. As a result, their interests and style were quite different from those of the CG, whose members tended to operate more on a policy than program implementation level and who had no bureaucratic constraints or interests to protect. While many of the GCG members were effective during this pilot project in playing the role of facilitators, they would have been more effective if they had had sufficient authority and the backing of their ministries to make decisions autonomously. In addition, it is likely that the structure would have worked more effectively if agreements had been reached at the start of the project with all of the stakeholders regarding the types of deliberations and decisions in which they would be involved. In retrospect, the CG much preferred to deal at the level of project strategy and impacts, whereas the GCG functioned best and was most helpful in dealing with the details of implementation in the pilot sites.

Complicating matters further, members of the CG were not united with respect to how they visualized their role and responsibilities with respect to the project. As the project evolved, divisions among the group emerged regarding whether they wanted the relationship with USAID to remain somewhat ambiguous or to become more formal. The CG was also divided with respect to its internal organization. Consistent with the view that it was simply a group of prominent individuals who would be as involved as their time and interests permitted, there was no formal internal organization. The TS served as the secretariat for the CG, but there was no chairperson or other CG member formally designated as the primary point of contact. Although this arrangement generally worked well, it also made for rather cumbersome decision-making and at times led some members to feel left out of important decisions. Again in retrospect, in practice this lack of structure worked to undermine the transparency and responsiveness of the group.

If this structure is to be adopted in the future, the CG, or its equivalent, should be recognized as a policy-making group with clearly defined roles, functions, and responsibilities. In addition, both the CG and the GCG need to define rules and procedures for their internal operation as a group in terms of decisions pertaining to inclusion, exclusion, delegation, and division of labor. Their members proved to be very effective as independent advocates and promoters of improved governance and decentralization and in dialoguing with senior officials, but the project would have been more successful if the role and responsibilities of these two important bodies had been clearer and they had been better organized.

The Technical Secretariat's Internal Organization

The TS also suffered somewhat from an ambiguity of roles and responsibilities. A problem faced by the TS from the start was a lack of clarity with respect to its relations with USAID and the CG and the expectations of these two groups. This, over time, led to communications problems with these two groups and in some cases among staff within the TS.

Nevertheless, the basic structure of the Technical Secretariat in which CDLs related to a Program Coordinator who was supported by a technical assistance coordinator and other support and managerial staff was fundamentally sound. As the project evolved, it became clear that the role of the Technical Assistance Coordinator was particularly important in this design. Because the CDLs were essentially generalists who were skilled in group process and mobilization, they inevitably lacked the technical knowledge to address all the service delivery issues raised at the pilot sites. Thus, an important element of successful project activities was the specialized technical expertise that could bring issues that needed to be addressed to the forefront and then strategize, in partnership with the TS, on how to mobilize the community.

During the project's third year staff roles and responsibilities were reviewed and more clearly articulated, and a decision-making structure that more strongly encouraged collaboration among functions was implemented. This increased staff productivity and better integrated pilot site activities during the final eight months of the project.

A possible weakness of the staff structure was in the area of monitoring and reporting project activities at the pilot sites and administrative support for the CDLs. The original staffing plan provided for intermittent assistance to the CDLs from persons based in the pilot sites, but little use was made of this resource, and for much of the project CDLs devoted a considerable portion of their time to logistics and administrative activities. In addition, requests to the CDLs from the project's Monitoring and Evaluation Coordinator for documentation of meetings and other activities frequently went unanswered because of other CDL work pressures, and the because the Chief of Party, USAID and the CG did not demand or appear to use such information. During the last six months of the project, more junior staff based in the TS central office were assigned as part-time field support to the CDLs to assist with logistics, reporting and other administrative duties. This allowed the CDLs to concentrate more on the conceptual and organizational aspects of their work and contributed to accomplishing desired results more quickly than earlier in the project. It also improved the detail and timeliness of the information for monitoring and reporting on pilot site activities.

Definitions of Community and Roles of Deliberative Bodies

A clear definition of the project's target community and flexibility regarding how and with whom the project would work proved to be important ingredients of project success. Rather than defining "community" in geographic or political terms and concentrating attention on the local governing body, as did the project's design and initial approach, experience soon showed that the objectives of the project could be better attained when community was defined in terms of persons with shared and deeply felt interests, and the local governing body was involved but not necessarily the primary object of attention. Defining these key structural elements of the project in this manner provides the necessary focus to clearly identify goals and objectives for project

activities, and provides the flexibility to ensure the engagement of all the community stakeholders that need to be involved.

The program model set forth in the early project documents assumes that once pilot site selection criteria were determined there would be feasibility studies of several potential sites, and that once a site was selected the project would commence working with a local governmental body to identify and solve service delivery problems in partnership with the private sector, and those persons directly effected by the service.¹² The examples of anticipated services included in the Results Package are: potable water, adequate electricity, healthy air, sanitation and refuse services, availability of health services, adequate schools, cultural outlets, and parks and recreation facilities.¹³ The Results Package continues by providing a “menu of possible interventions” and capacities the project was expected to build within pilot communities. These were: gathering information on stakeholder preferences, developing alternative ways to provide services, developing ways to leverage resources from the private sector, contracting for and overseeing delivery of services, stimulating potential service providers, and engaging Egyptian NGOs.¹⁴

Consequently, in the two “new” communities — Borg al Arab and 10th of Ramadan — the project began by focusing on the Board of Trustees and attempting to build their capacity to involve citizens of the pilot sites in identifying and prioritizing community needs, and implementing activities designed to address these needs. In the two “old” communities — Dumyat and Naqada — the approach was somewhat different. In those cases, the project reached an agreement with the Governor as to an area of important community need prior to formally designating the community as a pilot site, and in both of these cases the focus was on the revitalization of a critical economic sector of the community — furniture in Dumyat and crafts in Naqada. In effect, in the “new” communities, the TS worked with the local governmental body in the broad and ill-defined area of community planning and development, while in the “old” communities it worked under the aegis of the governor in the somewhat more narrowly focused area of economic growth.

More specifically, in Dumyat, because of prior relationships between the governor and a member of the CG, the project was invited to consider working in the city and a feasibility study was conducted by the TS. As a result of this study, which concentrated primarily on opportunities for private sector involvement with the government in promoting economic growth, the project from the start clearly defined the furniture sector as its target community. This made it possible to identify and recruit the entities and groups that needed to be engaged as the local counterparts for the project, to deal creatively with the fact that there was no existing entity that was fully capable of promoting furniture, and eventually to develop an NGO with close links to the local government that has the further development of the furniture sector in Dumyat as its goal. As is discussed in Chapter III, the project’s activities in Dumyat have produced a variety of positive, tangible results, and there is reason to be hopeful that an institution of lasting value has been created.

¹² Results Package, Statement of Work, Development Associates’ CCLS proposal, and the project work plans.

¹³ Results Package, op. cit., p. 8. Similar lists are elsewhere in the package as well.

¹⁴ Ibid., p.p. 13 & 14.

In Naqada, the other “old” community, the outline of the scenario during its year of involvement with the project was largely the same as in Dumyat. In this case, the role of the governor, although important, was less, and the role of the Local Popular Council was more. This may be related to the fact that in Dumyat the project was working in the capital of the governorate, while in Naqada it was not. What is similar in both instances is that from the start of project involvement, the focus was on a relatively narrow, but vitally important governmental activity (promotion of economic development) and subset of community residents. With the project’s focus on crafts, the community was clearly identified as the handicrafts sector in Naqada, and this made it relatively easy for the project to identify and ensure the engagement of the relevant stakeholders.

A major lesson to be drawn from these two sites is that neither the service area on which the project focused (i.e., economic growth) and the local governmental unit with which it most closely allied (i.e., the governor’s office) were what was anticipated in the project design. However, as the Results Package explicitly states, the design was not intended to be a “blueprint” but rather a strategy by which Egyptians could be assisted in developing and testing new approaches to improving essential community services. The flexibility to learn and adapt to local circumstances, and in both cases to take advantage of the insights and relationships of CG and GCG members, was critically important.

In the “new” communities, by contrast, the project was focused primarily on working with a particular local governmental body, the Board of Trustees, with an emphasis on increasing its capacities with respect to citizen involvement and then service delivery. This approach, which is what was suggested in the initial design documents, was essentially focused on governmental processes, and it generated much less local engagement than the focus on producing tangible results in a particular domain. In New Borg al Arab, the first of the pilot communities, the project expended a great deal of time and effort, but there were few, and relatively minor, tangible results of project activity until the project’s final months. When the project began, the Board of Trustees appointed a liaison committee to work with the project, and over time they sponsored a community needs assessment and strategic planning process and supported several small, largely project-financed activities. However, it was not until the final months of the project, when project attention shifted from the Board of Trustees to an essentially ad hoc group of committed citizens working with Board support, that tangible results began to emerge. In this instance, the community service was community parks, although it too was linked in the minds of the local advocates with economic development through improving the livability of the city and thereby maintaining its employment base.

In the 10th of Ramadan the pattern of project development was similar to New Borg al Arab, although interventions proceeded at more than twice the pace. Activities began with a focus on the Board of Trustees, but despite considerable project energy after the initial eight months there was little or nothing to show and the liaison committees with which the TS staff were attempting work had for all practical purposes ceased to exist. In June 2003, however the TS changed its strategy and both narrowed its service improvement focus and began to work more closely with a group of committed citizens rather than the Board of Trustees. The results of this change were dramatic, and as described in Chapter III there have been positive changes in the 10th of Ramadan that it is hoped will be sustainable and have a significant impact on employment and economic growth. By focusing on building economically productive linkages among the many

industries within the 10th of Ramadan, the project's target community was defined clearly, which in turn enabled the project to work with stakeholders who have been instrumental in taking this initiative forward after the dissolution of a Board-of-Trustees-designated committee that had no real interest in the activity and thus withdrew.

Thus, a lesson learned from the project's work in all four pilot sites is that the project's target community needs to be clearly defined in terms of potential beneficiaries of tangible governmental services or support, and, although the dominant unit of local government (Board of Trustees, governor, Popular Council) must be involved and supportive, they ought not be the focus of project attention. Local partners must encompass the right stakeholders who have a real need that will motivate and trigger them to work collectively to address the need and overcome constraints.

It is also important to note that while it is certainly possible that the ideal local service delivery partner may already be in place, this was not the case with any of the four communities in which the project worked. In Dumyat and Naqada, the stakeholders organized themselves and registered as an NGO. In 10th of Ramadan, though the project worked with a Steering Committee appointed by the Board of Trustees, that committee is working on becoming an NGO in the near future. Similarly, and as illustrated by the project's most recent experience in NBA, as the need for setting up community parks emerged, stakeholders organized themselves under the auspices of the BoT and formed the "Friends of the Park" committee. Thus, based on the experience of the project, the "deliberative body" on which the project should focus should be a body that is representative of those who have a common stake and have a real need and interest in addressing an articulated community problem.

Finally, it is also clear that a project such as CCLS needs to have a structure that provides governmental support at the local level. In Dumyat and Naqada, the respective governors' initial agreement with and support of the project's goals and objectives was essential. In new communities, the Board of Trustees played this role in collaboration with the City Development Agency when needed. The project need not have worked directly with these entities, but it needed to work under their umbrella and ensure that they endorsed the activities undertaken.

CHAPTER III. SUMMARY OF MAJOR ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN THE PILOT SITES

Project efforts were focused in four sites: New Borg Al Arab, Dumyat, Naqada, and 10th of Ramadan City, and were accompanied by supportive cross-cutting activities. In this chapter we provide a brief review of the work completed in the pilot sites. This overview is organized on a site-by-site basis, ordered chronologically by the date each site was selected and examines very briefly the prognosis for long-term impact after cessation of project activities. The site discussions are followed by an overview of three cross-cutting activities.

A. NEW BORG AL ARAB (NBA)

1. An Overview of Activities and Accomplishments in NBA

New Borg Al Arab was chosen as a pilot site in the summer of 1999, prior to the formal inception of the CCLS project. As a new community on the outskirts of Alexandria with comparatively superior physical and human resources, but facing numerous problems related to inadequate services, it appeared to be an excellent site for testing project hypotheses. The local Board of Trustees was selected as the project's local partner, and the community to be served was defined as NBA residents at large. Accordingly, the project took a broad-based approach to service delivery and the building of collaboration.

All work conducted in NBA was in response to needs identified by the Board of Trustees and/or other local stakeholders. Efforts undertaken there can be grouped into four general areas: capacity-building activities for local governmental and civil society organizations; programs for children; activities supporting the business sector; and general community improvements. Efforts in each of these areas are described below.

a. Capacity-building for Local Governmental and Civil Society Organizations

CCLS conducted or facilitated substantial capacity-building activities in NBA, primarily for the Board of Trustees (BoT) but also for local NGOs and the City Development Agency. This focus was based on the expressed interests of the head of the BoT and the assessment of the TS that building BoT capacity would lay the groundwork for increasing the BoT's sophistication in promoting and utilizing citizen participation in service delivery planning, implementation, and monitoring. Capacity-building activities included:

Study to assess the capacity of the Board — This was a two-phase study conducted during the Fall of 2001. The first phase examined the laws, rules, and regulations governing the BoT to identify opportunities and constraints within the overall legal/regulatory framework within which new communities operate, with respect to enhancing the board's capacities to improve local services. Phase two provided general recommendations and specific areas for improvement. In summary, the recommendations suggested greater formalization of Board procedures, development of an action plan, improved communication channels, and development of a clearly defined administrative structure.

Needs assessment workshop — This workshop was held in June, 2002, for 40 attendees including the Board and a range of community stakeholders representing an assortment of local organizations. The workshop's goal was to build the Board's ability to identify community needs in a participatory manner. As suggested by the head of the BoT, prior to the workshop questionnaires were distributed to assorted civil society representatives to give their constituents an opportunity to state their needs and propose methods to meet them.

Strategic planning workshop — The strategic planning workshop in October, 2002 was designed to build upon the needs assessment workshop described above. Its goals were to enhance participants' skills in strategic planning so they could analyze and prioritize community needs and develop realistic approaches to addressing them. Workshop attendees included the head of the BoT and other Board members; investors; NBA residents; and representatives of the New Urban Communities Administration (NUCA), various NGOs, and line ministries from Alexandria.

Training for the Board of Trustees — Based on its assessment of what training was needed to help the Board better solicit stakeholder input and increase accountability to the community, CCLS arranged training for the BoT in the following areas:

- ▶ Performance Monitoring and Evaluation of Service Provision
- ▶ Best Practices in Public-Private Partnerships in Local-level Service Delivery and Local Resource Mobilization
- ▶ Best Practices in Local Resource Mobilization.

CCLS also facilitated participation by two BoT members in a study tour to South Africa in the first quarter of 2002 to learn about "best practices" in stakeholder collaboration and public-private partnerships to enhance local service delivery.

NGO training — With the support of DT2 (the USAID program which, during the relevant period, was principally responsible for coordinating all training efforts that USAID supported through its projects in Egypt), four training programs were implemented to enhance the capacity of NGOs in mid-2002. A fifth program was supported by USAID's NGO Service Center Project (Internal Governance Program). The subjects covered included internal governance, proposal writing, fundraising, project management and financial management. Nearly 100 participants from 7 NGOs participated.

Training for staff from the City Development Agency — The BoT requested the City Development Agency (CA) to nominate candidates from their staff to attend training provided by the Urban Studies and Training Institute in the first quarter of 2003. The first program, entitled "Housing and Management of Housing Projects," was attended by three participants — two from the CA and the third an investor. The second program was entitled "Economic Management Plan for Cities: Tools for Improving the Financial Performance of Cities." Four CA staff attended the program.

b. Programs for Children

CCLS undertook a number of activities to further services for children, in keeping with the expressed priorities of the Board of Trustees and a belief that educational programs offered an excellent opportunity to involve stakeholders in service improvement. Activities for children included:

Summer education program — In summer 2001, CCLS brought together the BoT, the local Youth Center, the Community Development Association, Al Azhari Institute, and children and parents, in order to design, provide resources for, implement, monitor, and evaluate a summer education program for NBA children based on the “Child-to-Child” methodology. (This program trains children to work with their peers to develop environmental, health and social awareness, make qualitative improvements in their own lives, and act as change agents.) Fourteen facilitators were trained and more than 100 students actively participated, with very positive overall evaluations. Activities, for children ages 8 to 14, were designed to promote their creative, problem-solving, analytical, and presentation skills.

Advanced Child-to-Child training program — At the request of the BoT, the CCLS project implemented an advanced program in Child-to-Child methodology to help NBA in enhancing the skills of the already-trained facilitators. Nine of the facilitators originally trained, two new ones and five children took part in the Advanced Child-to-Child training program implemented in NBA in February 2002. Training aids and materials for the Child-to-Child program were purchased to help the participating institutions expand the number of children they would be able to serve in subsequent summer programs. Other learning resources for schools and associations in NBA were also purchased at the request of community stakeholders, and two local community members were designated to distribute the learning materials.

Global Learning and Observations to Benefit the Environment (GLOBE) — training for teachers — In collaboration with the American Cultural Center in Cairo and the Computer Education Department of the Ministry of Education, five students and three teachers from NBA’s Al Azhari School participated in a GLOBE Workshop in July 2002. The goal of the workshop was to provide orientation to the GLOBE program, which offers students opportunities to conduct real scientific research, to use the Internet for data analyses and research, and to engage in collaborative learning with students in over 85 countries.

Student-Centered Learning for Schools Training Program — The BoT’s Education Committee requested the support of CCLS for the provision of training to enhance teachers’ capacity to utilize student-centered learning techniques and enhance the management capacities of the school administration utilizing the same methodologies. The program was initially implemented in October 2002 and repeated in early 2003, ultimately training over 100 teachers and school inspectors. Upon completion of training, teachers used new strategies to create lesson plans, employed methods to enhance students’ engagement in classroom discussions, organized students into working groups, changed the way they developed examination questions, and utilized mental images and diagrams to help augment the learning process. Evaluations indicated positive impact in terms of scholastic achievements of students, especially the weaker ones, and inspectors noted a difference in student interaction and learning levels between classes led by trained versus non-trained teachers.

Support to services provided by the Future Association for NBA Women for children with special needs — The Future Association for NBA Women is the only NGO in NBA serving special needs children; it works to provide specialized services, mobilize local support, and raise community awareness. With a grant from CCLS, the Association was able to sign a protocol with CARITAS (an international organization devoted to improving the quality of life for mentally retarded individuals) in June 2003 to provide formal and on-the-job training for staff. The grant also supported the Association's outreach and mobilization activities. The association is now serving 65 children and involving parents as volunteers in its educational efforts, and recently placed three of its graduates in private sector jobs. As a result of these accomplishments, the association secured a grant from the Ministry of Insurance and Social Affairs in the amount of L.E. 62,000 for the first year, to be followed by L.E. 35,000 in subsequent years. The grants will be used to establish a preschool for children with special needs, ranging in age from 4 to 8.

c. Activities Supporting the Business Sector

Responding to priorities expressed by the Board of Trustees, CCLS aided in the development of an NBA website. Through its small grants program, it supported development of a Human Resource Management Center and an industrial safety awareness program. These activities are briefly summarized below:

NBA website — The NBA website is intended to assist local investors in marketing their products and services within Egypt and abroad, and to provide an overview of the community, especially its industries and economy, to neighboring Arab countries and the world at large, with a goal of attracting investors, marketing products, and laying the foundation for an information and communication center for the city. Development of the website proved quite difficult, due to a number of barriers including limited data and a reluctance on the part of the business community to provide information. Following over two years of effort, the website was launched in February, 2003. It has so far attracted hundreds of visitors, most of whom download materials from the site.

Establishment of a Human Resource Management Center by the Investors Association — With a small grant provided by CCLS, the Investors Association has been working since July 2002 to create a Human Resource Management Center to link employment seekers with appropriate employment opportunities. The Center is developing a database with information on factories and their labor needs, and candidates seeking work. It also aims to improve the capabilities of staff in human resource departments of local factories through the provision of training. It is now developing a plan to become financially self-sustaining, which will be crucial to the Center's future. In August 2003, the Center placed 100 job-seekers with the consumer goods company Americana. It was paid in kind by the company with HR training. The Center had also placed 54 workers in other jobs as of December 2003.

Industrial Safety Awareness and Training Program sponsored by the Maryout Rotary Club — This project, funded through a small grant from CCLS in October 2002, has provided training to 25 factories. More than 1000 individuals have received training, and a permanent safety committee has been established in each factory from among the trainees to ensure sustainable

implementation of safety measures. In May, 2003 the training program won first place in a regional competition of Rotary Clubs for best design and project implementation.

d. General Community Improvements

Two CCLS efforts in NBA have addressed general quality-of-life issues: water portability and public parks, as follows:

Study on the quality of potable water — All NBA stakeholders indicated that concerns over water quality in NBA were a high priority. In early 2003, CCLS commissioned a study examining the problem, which was shared with members of the BoT. The study noted that the results of analyses conducted by three different organizations on water samples indicated that heavy metals are within the limits outlined in Legislation No. 108/1995. However, bacterial counts in the main water tank and the water distribution network exceeded the permitted limit. Therefore, the study recommended using the treated water by the water treatment unit as the potable water. The BoT is expected to share these findings with citizens, who should participate in deciding on the best alternative for access to potable water.

Formation of a “Friends of the Park” Committee — With assistance from CCLS, NBA residents have recently formed a “Friends of the Park Committee,” based on a bottom-up assessment that local open spaces need to be developed into parks (with benches, shady areas, and playground equipment) to increase their appeal as gathering spots for local residents. The Committee consists of various community stakeholders including a representative from each neighborhood where a park is planned. To date, the Committee has defined its objectives, selected sites, and developed designs in a participatory manner with consultation from neighborhood residents. A maintenance plan has also been developed. So that this initiative can go forward after closure of the CCLS project in January 2004, the project linked the committee with GTZ, which indicated willingness to support the initiative.

2. A Brief Assessment of the Impact of Project Interventions in NBA

The experience in New Borg al Arab is mixed. In the short-term, CCLS interventions have unquestionably had a clear impact on the citizens of NBA. Various members of the community, in particular schoolchildren, have benefited from, and will hopefully continue to benefit from, the services provided by the project, and organizations that participated in training and capacity-building exercises will improve their internal functioning as a result. However, this sort of impact alone was not the *raison d'être* of the project: the real measures of accomplishment are whether citizens have been working with governmental bodies to improve the quality or quantity of public services and whether community leaders and other citizens believe in the value of collective action to address shared problems. In brief, there should be proof that community members are more willing than they were previously to work together on issues of public concern. These actions may take the form of grass-roots efforts by citizens, but they may also be evidenced when organizations increase their transparency, improve their efforts to obtain citizen input into decision-making and work across institutional boundaries.

By these measures, the project cannot be judged as having fully achieved its objectives in NBA, although as a result of the project's refocusing of its activities during its closing six months the

situation in NBA began to change. When CCLS entered NBA, relations among institutions were sometimes fractious and no grass-roots initiatives were in evidence. Now, the “Friends of the Park” committee exemplifies collective action by concerned stakeholders. The willingness of the Board of Trustees to at least consider the potable water issue long a taboo subject despite well-known concerns by residents — is encouraging, wherever it ultimately leads. However, these efforts, along with other potentially excellent initiatives such as the Human Resource Management Center, are still nascent. It would be interesting to observe — in one year, five or ten — what ultimately becomes of these efforts and whether the changes that CCLS has worked for turn out to be lasting.

B. DUMYAT

1. An Overview of Activities and Accomplishments in Dumyat

The city of Dumyat, an old Egyptian community located in the northern Delta, was officially selected as a pilot site in May, 2001, with the understanding that it would provide an interesting and hopefully illuminating contrast to project efforts in the new community of NBA. As a result of early needs assessment activities, the project decided to focus on the furniture sector and define the community to be served as all actors in Dumyat’s furniture industry (large, medium and small producers; importers, exports, and traders). Because furniture production is such an economically significant activity in Dumyat, it was determined that increased sales and export of furniture would contribute to the economic well-being of the community more generally.

The local partner for CCLS activities in Dumyat was the Association for the Upgrading of the Furniture Sector in Dumyat (AUFSD). AUFSD was first formed as a committee, established as a logical outcome of the initial needs assessment workshop conducted by CCLS with local stakeholders. It quickly progressed to NGO status. The organization was founded to represent all segments of the furniture sector and to improve furniture quality and marketing, build capacity and develop linkages, and conduct advocacy and outreach.

Project efforts in Dumyat were tightly focused on the furniture sector, first through efforts that led to the creation of AUFSD and subsequently through assisting AUFSD to define and carry out its mission. For the purpose of summarizing project work there, major activities can be loosely grouped into three (somewhat overlapping) areas: capacity-building with AUFSD and its forerunner; linkage development between AUFSD and key government, NGO, and international organizations; and efforts supporting improved furniture production and marketing. These project activities are recounted below.

a. Capacity-building with AUFSD and its forerunner

As can be observed from the descriptions that follow, these efforts spanned the lifetime of the project in Dumyat and began with efforts to energize stakeholders before the idea of forming an organization representing the furniture industry had even been formally articulated.

Needs assessment workshop leading to the formation of a committee — In January, 2002, CCLS, in cooperation with the Public Administration Research and Consultation Center at Cairo University and with the patronage of the Dumyat Governorate, organized a two-day workshop

entitled “The Role of Increasing Participation in Enhancing Export Opportunities for Dumyat’s Furniture Sector.” The governorate played a key role in workshop preparations, designing and issuing invitations and providing a venue and logistical support for the event. Over 100 people participated in general sessions and in focused working groups, representing the Governorate; relevant line ministries; Dumyat’s Chamber of Commerce (including its more specialized branches for furniture and exports); NGOs; the Local Popular Council; Dumyat’s MPs to the Shaab and Shoura Councils; small, medium and large furniture producers; exhibitors, exporters, and donor organizations. Two CG members chaired sessions, and the workshop featured presentations by two furniture-industry experts, followed by extensive discussions by participants.

In this workshop, a variety of serious problems facing the furniture sector were identified, including poor quality of imported wood, lack of adequate drying facilities, use of outdated/unsafe manufacturing and packaging techniques, designs that have not kept pace with changing international and Egyptian tastes, and a difficult legal and regulatory environment.

As a direct outcome of the aforementioned workshop and strong gubernatorial support, in April 2002 the governor issued a decree establishing the Committee for the Upgrading of the Furniture Sector in Dumyat (CUFS) and identifying 18 membership slots; this number quickly expanded to 22 with additional decrees issued at the behest of CUFS members. CUFS was charged with identifying and analyzing problems confronting the furniture industry and devising solutions and mobilizing resources in response.

Participatory planning workshop leading to the establishment of a formal NGO — CCLS conducted a participatory planning session with CUFS in May 2002 to outline the Committee’s mission, future directions, goals, and objectives; and plan of action covering the next one to three years. The three-year strategy had the following main goals: increase Dumyat’s furniture manufacturing exports by improving the quality and marketing of wood products; enhance the export potential of Dumyat furniture by developing a comprehensive marketing strategy; and develop CUFS as an institution.

With CCLS assistance, CUFS subsequently chose officers, established operating guidelines, and formed various task forces to improve production, identify training needs, enhance marketing, and regularize its status as an officially registered association. On February 15, 2003, the Committee became registered as an NGO with the Ministry of Insurance and Social Affairs – fewer than ten months after the Committee’s inception. The Committee is now officially known as the “Association for Upgrading the Furniture Sector in Dumyat” (AUFSD).

In June, 2003, the Governor of Dumyat signed papers formally granting 1319.5 square meters of land on the outskirts of Dumyat, in Shata, to AUFSD. The land is being used to build a permanent facility and move forward with AUFSD’s goal of establishing a furniture manufacturers’ service center. Through its limited commodities support capabilities, CCLS has contributed essential office equipment (two computers and printers, a fax machine, copier and overhead projector) to AUFSD.

At this writing, the AUFSD general assembly is 55 members and growing.

Skills training and technical assistance to AUFSD — CCLS trained AUFSD members in skill areas and on subject matters that will help the NGO to grow and to sustain itself. These areas included proposal writing, fundraising, monitoring and evaluation of service provision, best practices in public/private partnerships, and best practices in local resource mobilization. CCLS technical assistance also helped AUFSD formulate a mission statement, define strategic directions, and create internal by-laws.

Participation in an observational study tour — CCLS facilitated participation by an AUFSD member in a study tour to South Africa in the first quarter of 2002 to learn about “best practices” in stakeholder collaboration and public-private partnerships to enhance local service delivery.

Participation in a seminar on Local Government in the Arab World, in Oman — CCLS arranged for the AUFSD’s deputy chairman to participate in a governance workshop in Oman in August 2003, where he presented a case study of Dumyat, examining community participation in decision-making using AUFSD as an illustration and highlighting how it has become the organization representing Dumyat’s furniture sector.

Additional training activities — Complementing the efforts above, and with the goal of establishing good will with the Directorate of Insurance and Social Affairs in Dumyat, training on capacity development was provided to 28 directors representing the Ministry of Insurance and Social Affairs districts and cities. The workshop was implemented by the CCLS community development liaison for Dumyat and was hosted by a local NGO.

b. Linkage Development Between AUFSD and Key Organizations

To maximize Dumyat’s access to various forms of assistance, CCLS organized individual and group meetings with different donor organizations and programs – those working or planning to work with Dumyat’s furniture sector – to enhance coordination and avoid duplication of efforts. Other activities and accomplishments that fall under the rubric of linkage development include:

Conduct of meetings with local authorities to initiate advocacy efforts — AUFSD held meetings with various public entities to advocate for changes that impact the furniture sector. The project facilitated meetings with the Industrial Registry Office to advocate for changes to speed up work procedures; meetings were also held with the sales tax authority to advocate for policies favorable to the growth of the furniture industry. Finally, meetings have been held with the Customs Authority to identify specifications that relate to the quality of imported wood and seek the Authority’s support in adhering to these specifications.

Establishment of a Projects Forum — When CCLS did its initial needs assessment in Dumyat, it discovered that eight different donor-funded projects, sometimes with overlapping goals and activities, were at work in Dumyat (in addition to CCLS there were two funded by CIDA and five others funded by DFID, GTZ, the Social Fund for Development, USAID, and the EU). There was no mechanism for collaboration among these projects. CCLS took the initiative to invite all of these projects to meet and discuss means of collaboration, and representatives formed a “Projects Forum” to meet regularly to exchange information. In March, 2003 it was agreed that AUFSD would become the administering body for the Projects Forum.

Collaboration with the Mubarak-Kohl Initiative — AUFSD represented the governorate in signing a protocol in November 2002 with the Mubarak-Kohl Initiative to promote technical education and vocational training in Dumyat. AUFSD has worked with the Initiative to design tailored curricula for four furniture specializations: joiner, wood construction mechanic, carver, and finisher. The outcome of this linkage was a program starting in September 2003; at this writing, eighty students are being trained in factories on furniture production methods.

Collaboration with the Industrial Modernization Program — AUFSD was tapped by the governor in December 2002 to study the Industrial Modernization Program, in order to identify how they can utilize IMP support to upgrade the furniture sector. As a result of this effort, 55 producers will begin to work with the IMP.

Assistance to the governor with foreign delegations — At the governor's request, AUFSD organized an itinerary of site visits for foreign delegations from Ukraine, Uganda, the French Embassy, the Turkish Consulate in Alexandria, and an Italian Cooperative. The objective of these site visits was to promote Dumyati furniture.

Establishment of a Faculty of Applied Arts in Dumyat — With the assistance of CCLS, AUFSD approached the governor to obtain the approval needed to establish a Faculty of Applied Arts in Dumyat as a branch of Mansoura University, opening in September, 2004. The first five sections of the Faculty to become operational are those serving the furniture sector. AUFSD is now working with the university to offer input into the curriculum, making practical training a core component of the students' education.

Donors workshop — With the project's work in Dumyat ending, the project is organizing a workshop to be attended by various donors (those not already working in Dumyat) to link AUFSD with other sources of funding and support. AUFSD established a committee to prepare for this workshop consisting of five members who are responsible for developing and delivering the presentation that will outline the history of AUFSD's establishment, its achievements to date, and its future plans. The Governor of Dumyat expressed his support for the initiative and has agreed to inaugurate the workshop, scheduled for January 19, 2004.

c. Efforts Supporting Improved Furniture Production and Marketing

Creation of a student internship program — With help from CCLS, AUFSD created and operated a successful internship program that operated in the summers of 2002 and 2003, bringing nearly 100 students from the Faculty of Applied Arts at Helwan University into nine Dumyat factories. The program gave students their first hands-on experience with furniture production while introducing producers to new ideas for furniture design and packaging, and led to full-time employment for the majority of participants who were entering the workforce (others were returning to school or fulfilling obligations for military service).

Training for furniture producers — To help them compete in the global marketplace, the project arranged workshops to enhance the knowledge and skills of furniture producers in the areas of export essentials and computer software. The programs provided the participants with the knowledge needed to adhere to export procedures and guidelines and improve their operational efficiency through the use of computer software.

Establishment of a service center for small and medium-sized furniture producers, with drying kilns — CCLS assisted AUFSD to draw up plans for a Furniture Manufacturers' Service Center, which is being housed at AUFSD's new site. With the support of the project, two drying kilns were procured that small producers can use to improve the quality of wood used in their manufacturing. In early January 2004, the drying kilns arrived at AUFSD's site. The Governor agreed to connect the site with water, electricity, and sewage networks as well as pave the entrance leading to the drying kilns at the government's expense. The Governor also agreed to provide a loan with no interest to the association to cover expenses that will be incurred by the association for the construction and commissioning of the kilns. Board members have also agreed to lend the association a sum of L.E. 1000 each to commence the work needed until the loan is released from the governorate. Installation of the kilns and training are expected to take until the end of February. By then, AUFSD will be ready to provide its services to furniture producers.

Holding an international furniture fair — To penetrate new markets, AUFSD identified a need to hold an international furniture fair carrying the name of Dumyat. Subsequently, the Industrial Modernization Program (IMP) and AUFSD agreed to co-fund and organize an exhibition in Dubai in October 2003, dovetailing it with an international furniture fair in Dubai that had already been planned. Eleven exhibitors from Dumyat took part, the first time that Dumyat furniture producers participated in a furniture fair *collectively* rather than individually.

Participating in "Salon du Meuble" in France — AUFSD, with the support of the IMP, also provided an opportunity for six furniture producers to participate in this international fair, being held in France in January 2004. Information about the opportunity to participate was disseminated through meetings with furniture stakeholders and ads in a local newspaper.

Developing a brochure for AUFSD — To support its outreach and fundraising initiatives, AUFSD developed and published a brochure in both Arabic and English.

Producing a Dumyati furniture catalogue — AUFSD's board collectively endorsed the idea of producing a 120-page catalogue of Dumyati furniture that would be sold to interested customers. Furniture producers/companies interested in advertising in the catalogue will pay a fee to AUFSD. Producing this catalogue will support the association's marketing and revenue-generating activities. To promote the catalogue, the association will need to intensify its outreach efforts, which will have the added benefit of assisting it to attract new members. AUFSD will advertise in a local magazine to market the catalogue. It is noteworthy that the association's board members have already reserved 20 pages to advertise their products.

Creating a website for AUFSD — to support its marketing and outreach activities, AUFSD is working on developing a website. AUFSD has requested the Egyptian Cabinet of Information and Decision Support Center (IDSC) to host its website. The Industrial Modernization Center offered to design the website once approval for the website is secured from IDSC. The governor has issued a letter to IDSC to speed up the procedures for hosting the association's website.

Management of the small grants program — As part of its efforts in Dumyat, CCLS offered small grants to assist local non-governmental organizations to implement special activities that would enhance services catering to the needs of the furniture sector in Dumyat. Following

training to representatives from seven NGOs to prepare them to procure and manage grants, proposals were submitted and evaluated. In April 2003, two small grants received approval, one to the El Shoaraa Association involving a solid waste collection project in El Shoaraa village, and one to the Community Development Association to improve information and marketing in the furniture industry.

The grant agreement signed with Al Shoara Association entailed improving the environmental conditions in El Shoara village by developing a system for solid waste management. Using 30 daily-hire workers, the association removed approximately 85 percent of accumulated wastes. Ninety-five percent of the main and side streets, comprising approximately 7000 apartments, were covered by the collection program. L.E. 11,350 was collected from the residents, which will be used to sustain the project after December 2003.

The second grant, made to the Community Development Association for the purpose of improving the marketing of and information for the furniture industry, conducted some seminars but only achieved 20 percent of its targeted objectives. The grant was terminated on November 30, 2003.

2. *A Brief Assessment of the Impact of Project Interventions in Dumyat*

The project has had its greatest success in Dumyat, both in terms of public service and community governance results. Indeed, it may not be an exaggeration to characterize the impact of CCLS efforts in Dumyat as “transformative.” The project has resulted in tangible benefits to manufacturers, positive linkages with academic and governmental institutions that are benefiting the community, and increased citizen belief in the value of collective action, as evidenced by how independent members of the furniture business community now interact and by the formation of the AUFSD. This organization in turn has supported citizen involvement in public decision-making by operating in a transparent manner and building linkages across institutions. Moreover, AUFSD has built sufficient momentum and internal strength that it seems well-prepared to face the challenges that will inevitably occur as it matures as an organization. By performing much-needed work to upgrade furniture production, marketing, sales, and export, AUFSD is poised to make long lasting contributions to Dumyat’s major economic sector, and thereby to the lives of Dumyat citizens, and to serve as a model of the value of collective action.

C. TENTH OF RAMADAN CITY

1. *An Overview of Activities and Accomplishments in Tenth of Ramadan*

Tenth of Ramadan City was selected as a CCLS pilot site on August 28, 2002. The first of Egypt’s new industrial communities to be established, it was selected based on its diversified industrial base, developed infrastructure, and key local institutions, including the City Development Agency, the Investors Association, and the Board of Trustees. The BoT served as the local partner for CCLS activities. As a result of initial needs assessment activities with stakeholders, CCLS identified local business and industry as the community it would work with. Industrial integration was the primary focus. Also as the result of needs identified by stakeholders, a secondary focus was on school maintenance and environmental awareness.

Activities in Tenth of Ramadan followed the framework which was successfully used to launch efforts in the earlier pilot sites: namely, it began with a needs assessment workshop that gave a range of community members an opportunity to articulate their needs, followed by a participatory planning workshop that assisted stakeholders to begin establishing priorities and devising logical strategies to address those needs. Next, CCLS conducted capacity-building efforts with local organizations, with the larger goal of increasing their ability and willingness to work collaboratively, and initiated activities related to specific, priority needs (in this case industrial integration and school maintenance). This progression of activities as conducted in Tenth of Ramadan is recounted below.

Needs assessment workshop — As part of the planning for this workshop, CCLS staff liaised with Board of Trustee members, helping them to understand the goals of the project and to create a Liaison Committee that would serve as the official channel between the Board and the project. The needs assessment workshop was then held for three days in November 2002 on the premises of the Board of Trustees. Approximately 60 participants attended, including representatives of governmental agencies, NGOs (including SME associations), the youth center, and the community at large.

Strategic Planning Workshop — This workshop was held in February/March 2003 with 28 participants. It resulted in the formation of task forces, comprised of BoT members and community citizens, which then worked with the Board's Liaison Committee to refine action plans drafted in the workshop.

Training for NGOs, the City Development Agency and the Board of Trustees — CCLS trained NGO representatives on proposal-writing and fundraising in two sessions conducted during January, 2003, with a total of 19 participants. The project also facilitated training of City Development Agency representatives by the Urban Training and Studies Institute in February and March, 2003, on finance and economic issues related to city management. The Board of Trustees also received training under CCLS auspices, during fall 2003, to improve members' English language skills. In addition, a member from the BoT and another from the City Development Agency attended a training program on "Monitoring the Private Sector's Solid Waste Management" in May 2003. In December 2003, two BoT members attended a program on "Management and Development of Solid Waste Landfills."

Study of industrial integration in Tenth of Ramadan — In coordination with the BoT, CCLS contracted an industrial marketing consultant to assess opportunities for and constraints facing improved industrial integration in the city. The study was carried out during summer of 2003; it recommended the initiation of a pilot linkage project to address a number of issues, including a marketing orientation for SMEs, identification of homogenous enterprises, database establishment, and developing capacity and support among organizations that could foster the pilot project's activities.

Roundtable discussion of multi-level business linkages — To follow through on the study, CCLS sponsored a roundtable discussion on August 26th, 2003. Eighteen representatives, from the CCLS Consultative Group, the Tenth of Ramadan Board of Trustees, the City Development Agency, the Investors Association, SME associations, and the High Institute for Technology, attended. Discussions focused on the need to find a viable mechanism for establishing

commercial linkages, developing a dynamic and accurate database of commercial offerings, addressing sustainability, and ensuring that small businesses are represented and their needs met. The result was the formation of a steering committee, described below.

Formation of an Industrial Linkages Steering Committee (ILSC) to develop an Industrial Integration Center (IIC) — Participants in the roundtable discussion volunteered to form a steering committee to create, implement and monitor strategies to enhance linkages, in particular an Industrial Integration Center to provide services to businesses seeking to expand their commercial linkages. This IIC is envisioned as a clearinghouse for knowledge and information that will provide guidance to industry on capacity-building opportunities and promote industrial integration through contracts, matchmaking, joint projects and referrals. As of this writing, the Steering Committee has obtained commitments from the BoT, the Business Resource Center of the Industrial Modernization Program, the High Institute of Technology, local NGOs and business leaders. The ILSC has shown its commitment to the initiative by the frequency and regularity of meetings that have been held by its members, and by developing its internal procedures such as rotating the chairmanship of meetings. It has also developed an action plan and carried out a pilot phase to test the center's main components, resulting in comprehensive documentation and a business plan. So that it can sustain the long-term effort that will be needed if the center is to become a reality, the Steering Committee is now in the process of formalizing its internal procedures and taking steps to become a registered NGO.

Linking the Industrial Linkages Steering Committee (ILSC) to other donors — With the project ending in January 2004, the project arranged a workshop where the ILSC presented its achievements and business plan to other donors to seek their support to continue this initiative beyond the pilot phase. Funding organizations included CIDA, JIKA, GTZ, UNIDO, other USAID projects (NGO Service Center, and Partners for a Competitive Egypt), the World Bank, Sawiris Foundation, IMP and the Social Fund for Development. The forum was moderated by Dr. Heba Handoussa (CG member) and attended by another CG member, Dr. Ahmed Sakr Ashour. The workshop was successful in providing the attendees with information pertaining to this initiative and the ILSC, soon to become the Egyptian Association for Industrial Integration (currently being registered as an NGO), and it paved the way for donor support. With the completion of the feasibility study for the creation of the industrial integration center, the committee or future association will need to take the initiative to approach the donors and tailor proposals to secure funding.

Training for educators on environmental auditing — In August 2003, twenty-four teachers and administrators representing five schools in 10th of Ramadan attended a three-day workshop on environmental auditing, designed to assist them in devising environmental education programs that will improve the school environment. Training covered sustainable development, energy, solid waste, and environmental auditing and security, particularly as these issues relate to the school environment. Participants created environmental checklists and completed collaborative exercises to demonstrate how discarded products can be reused. Trainees were enthusiastic and reported that they intended to put the lessons they had learned to use in the classroom in the coming school year. Through another USAID-funded project, CCLS was then able to provide tool boxes to each of the five schools, to assist teachers in presenting material to students. Monitoring visits conducted in November 2004 showed that teachers were applying their training in the schools. With the ending of the project in January, the project was unable to continue its

support to this promising initiative, that ideally would have resulted in involving parent associations and citizens in the maintenance of schools.

Implementation of approved small grants — In response to CCLS training on proposal writing, two NGOs (El Salam Charity Association and the Association for Developing Small and Medium Scale Industries in the New Cities [ASMINC]) submitted proposals that ultimately received approval from the Ministry of Insurance and Social Affairs during summer 2003.

Funds were disbursed to the El Salam Charity Association to train widows, youths, and members of low-income families in income-generating skills and in how to conduct a job search at city factories. As a result of project activities, 200 individuals completed a one-month course on dress-making; they produced 900 dresses and generated L.E. 7,000 by selling them. El Salam also arranged for 42 trainees to work at home and market their products through the Association. In addition, 28 trainees found jobs at factories in 10th of Ramadan, the Association employed 10 at their workshop, and 67 were hired by shops in and around 10th of Ramadan.

The project's grant to ASMINC supported practical technical training for unemployed graduates and matching of their skills with job opportunities at the city's industrial establishments. As a result, 37 new graduates were trained and hired by 5 factories. These factories paid fees which will be used to sustain the program and train more individuals.

2. *A Brief Assessment of the Impact of Project Interventions in Tenth of Ramadan*

The project began in the Tenth of Ramadan with no real focus other than working with the Board of Trustees to identify and help resolve community needs. During the initial months of activity, the project provided various sorts of training and technical assistance, but there were very few positive results. During the project's final six months, however, it focused on two service areas (industrial linkages and school environment), concentrated its efforts on community-based groups rather than the Board of trustees, and began to achieve tangible outcomes.

Whether the CCLS project will have an impact that goes beyond the immediate service benefits achieved through small grants and the school maintenance program cannot yet be fully evaluated. The willingness of the community to identify and address issues of industrial integration and school maintenance is a good sign, particularly given that various actors persisted in the face of early setbacks. If the Steering Committee is ultimately able to obtain the support it needs to create a self-sustaining Industrial Integration Center, this will not only be an accomplishment in its own right, but it will also serve as a demonstration to the community that citizens and their institutions can collaborate and participate to produce valuable results. Should that happen, much credit for the genesis of the center will be attributable to CCLS.

D. NAQADA

I. *An Overview of Activities and Accomplishments in Naqada*

The old Egyptian community of Naqada in Upper Egypt was selected in August, 2002 along with Tenth of Ramadan, creating a balance between old and new communities in the pilot sites. CCLS worked with the Local Popular Council as its primary partner, and – at the behest of the governor and in response to the needs voiced by community stakeholders – focused on revitalization of the handicraft industry, in particular the weaving of “firka,” finely woven traditional textiles made in Naqada since Pharaonic times. The project also sought to assist makers of other Naqada handicrafts such as rattan, pottery, and reed mats.

Activities and accomplishments in Naqada began, as in other sites, with workshops that built a basis for focused interventions, followed by capacity-building efforts designed to help local organizations become stronger and therefore better equipped to promote collaborative efforts. The project then developed activities in support of handicraft development, and assisted local craftspeople to form a new Crafts NGO for the purpose of collective action to revitalize craft production and marketing. Details on these project interventions are given below.

“Participatory Needs, Resources and Opportunities Assessment” workshop — Conducted in January, 2003, this needs assessment workshop used a “participatory rapid appraisal” methodology relying on collaboration between community stakeholders and external actors. The workshop, which attracted 30 participants from NGOs, youth centers, the LPC, and craft industries, explored the current situation of the traditional crafts industry and issues related to production and marketing.

Participatory planning workshop — This follow-up to the needs assessment workshop was held in March/April 2003 and attended by 38 participants. The workshop gave participants an opportunity to discuss how to overcome production and marketing problems that endanger the sustainability of the crafts industry.

Capacity-building and training — In spring of 2003 for the Local Popular Council, CCLS conducted an organizational needs assessment to help members identify the opportunities and constraints facing the LPC. Additionally, CCLS conducted two training workshops on proposal writing and fundraising in January/February 2003 for a total of 58 participants from NGOs. In January, the project conducted two “best practices” workshops, one on public-private partnerships in local-level service delivery and resource mobilization and one on performance monitoring and evaluation of service provision, attended by three and six community members respectively.

CCLS also arranged two observational study tours. One was conducted to the Association for the Protection of the Environment, an NGO that is considered a unique model of volunteerism, community mobilization, empowerment of marginalized groups, and job creation. The second focused on providing a model for pottery craftsmen. This entailed visiting an environmentally and user-friendly pottery kiln in Koum Ghourab (supported by CIDA and implemented by CEOSS).

Finally, the project provided ongoing TA to help the newly formed Crafts NGO (described below) develop a sound internal structure. The TS also assisted the Crafts NGO in developing its bylaws and establishing substantive committees, and encouraged the NGO's board to meet regularly and initiate a monitoring and evaluation system. CCLS assisted the Crafts NGO to submit a grant to the Social Fund for Development to create a revolving credit fund and provide related financial training and technical assistance to crafts workers.

Formation of a crafts NGO — Craftspeople brought together by the CCLS interventions described above decided, with support of CCLS, to form an official NGO that would have as its mission the improvement of the socio-economic status of craftspeople through promotion of the production and marketing of traditional crafts. With assistance from the project, this new NGO was registered in May 2003. It now has premises and 65 members representing the various crafts in Naqada, with applications pending from at least 20 more.

Marketing brochure — A marketing expert was contracted by the project to develop a brochure in Arabic. This brochure, designed to be used in tandem with exhibitions and crafts fairs, highlights the unique characteristics of Naqada's traditional crafts.

Participation in a crafts exhibitions — The project linked local craftspeople with the Social Fund for Development (SFD) so that five entrepreneurial artisans from Naqada were able to exhibit pottery, firka, tapestry, reed mats, and rattan in June, 2003 at the 24th Youth Exhibition in Cairo, a two-week fair organized by the Social Fund for Development in collaboration with the Ministry of Information. CCLS contributed 75 percent of their expenses while the craftspeople paid the rest. In addition, the Crafts NGO helped Naqada artisans to participate in exhibitions held in Qena and Alexandria.

Apprenticeship programs — With support from CCLS, fourteen Naqada craftspeople participated in apprenticeships, one in Kafr El Dawar on dyeing techniques for tapestry and one on weaving carpets in Kafr El Sheikh. Follow-up activities, including echo workshops, have been designed to reinforce and disseminate their training to other interested crafts producers, and a proposal for funding them has been submitted to the Social Fund for Development.

Marketing study to examine the feasibility of developing a crafts village — The CCLS Consultative Group proposed exploring the feasibility of a crafts village in Naqada. Such a village would capitalize on Naqada's proximity to seven beautiful monasteries as well as to Luxor, and would attract tourists who could plan their trips to include a visit to a traditional crafts center along with these other sites. CCLS contracted with marketing experts to examine the potential for Naqada crafts development, along with opportunities for and constraints facing development of a crafts village.

The marketing research indicated that indeed there is potential for the various crafts. Based on this study, a marketing strategy was developed and shared with the Crafts NGO and other local stakeholders to assist them in developing an action plan that will support craftspeople. The study highlighted the need to market Naqada products more aggressively to tourist sites, starting with Luxor. The greatest potential appears to be for firka, pottery, and rattan. By increasing their market demand through increased distribution, they can generate revenue that can then be used

to improve the quality and design of products. The study thus recommended creating awareness of Naqada and noted that the association needs to adopt a brand management system.

The study also indicated that there is potential for the creation of a crafts village. The study recommended creating a platform where both rational factors (product quality, design, packaging, pricing, usage) and emotional ones (images, values, character) are used to market the village to tourists. The study also stressed the importance of developing alliances with travel agencies who set the itinerary of tourists and noted that other factors are key as well. These factors include security of tourists, paved roads, high quality services, and good promotion abroad to create an emotional link with Naqada products.

Implementation of approved small grants — In response to CCLS training on proposal writing, two NGOs (Naqada Young Women’s Islamic Association and the Islamic Charity Association in El Khatara Village) submitted proposals that ultimately received approval from the Ministry of Insurance and Social Affairs during summer 2003. The Naqada Young Women’s Association sought to improve the health conditions of expectant mothers and children during and after delivery through conducting house visits and seminars. The association trained 50 village workers and ten supervisors on information pertaining to maternal and child health. These workers then conducted house visits to 11,000 females and conducted 30 workshops with 1500 women attending. As a result of this initiative, the number of women that went to follow-up visits with physicians increased from 9 percent to 39 percent, the number of women who became aware of critical signs during pregnancy rose from 12 to 24 percent, and approximately 45 percent of women visited at home became more knowledgeable on the need for breastfeeding, critical signs indicating danger to newly born children, and the need to consult physicians when these critical signs appear.

The Islamic Charity Association in El Khatara Village aimed to improve environmental conditions in the village by removing household and street garbage. As a result of this initiative, all accumulated garbage was removed, and household garbage is being collected regularly for a fee. The number of houses served is 1,100. Accrued fees compiled as of December 2003 are L.E. 7,244.

Linking the Crafts NGO with other donors — With the project ending in January 2004, the project assisted the Crafts NGO to develop proposals for submission to other donors that will enable them to become a sustainable organization that can meet the needs of their constituents. Two donors, CIDA and the World Bank, were approached. CIDA has expressed its willingness to support capacity development for the Crafts NGO. A representative from CIDA will visit Naqada in February 2004 as a means of gaining more understanding of the Naqada context and to assist CIDA in deciding whether to support the proposal which the NGO intends to submit by April 2004.

Naqada’s proposal to establish a network of ten civil society organizations was awarded \$10,000 (US) by the World Bank. The purpose of the network is to solicit both local and external support in order to carry out the crafts marketing study’s recommendations. The network will also support community mobilization of resources to complement efforts by the Naqada Local Fund to support the governorate in implementing a sewage network and beautification for Naqada City and its villages.

Finally, Naqada representatives were encouraged to submit a proposal to the Information and Communications Technology Program, a USAID-funded project, to establish an IT center that would make fee-based computer training and services available and develop an electronic network within and among key organizations (such as the Crafts NGO, Local Unit, LPC, Teacher Syndicate, and other NGOs/Youth Centers).

2. *A Brief Assessment of the Impact of Project Interventions in Naqada*

In less than sixteen months the project accomplished a great deal. There are clear parallels between the formation of AUFSD in Dumyat and the new Crafts NGO in Naqada, but the former is a year older (a very significant length of time in the context of a three-year project) and has had more time to develop internally and initiate projects that benefit the community. In addition, in Naqada the project's focus on crafts was not as firmly established from the start as was the furniture sector focus in Dumyat, nor were the human resources available in Naqada as sophisticated. It took several months for the project to make a decision to include craftspeople in addition to firka makers in the economic sector of project concern. Also, for several months thereafter there were serious questions raised about the economic viability of Naqada's crafts and the appropriateness of the project working to improve them. Thus, that so much has been done given the relatively short time the project worked in Naqada attests to soundness of the approaches followed there, especially to the focus on an economic sector that touches the lives of a large portion of the population. After only a little more than a year of activity, CCLS has planted a seed. Only in time will it be clear if the fruits of the efforts will take root, grow, serve the community, and demonstrate the value of collective action, but at the time of this writing the prospects are bright.

E. CROSS-CUTTING ACTIVITIES

Over the life of the project, three principal cross-cutting activities were conducted. While each had its own specific objectives, in general terms all cross-cutting activities had the goal of creating linkages — among project sites or between the project and other organizations — in order to directly or indirectly strengthen the collaborative and participatory processes being developed in each community. These activities — formation of the Board of Pilot Communities, creation of a newsletter, and conduct of a workshop for international development organizations are explained below.

1. *The Board of Pilot Communities*

The Board of Pilot Communities was formed to facilitate networking and coordination among community members in each of the four sites, and to allow them to share successes and lessons learned. The BPC consisted of up to five representatives from each site, selected by and from the local partner in each community. It first met in July, 2002, with representation from the first two sites, NBA and Dumyat. At that meeting, Dr. Adel Abu Zahra, a well-known civil society activist, shared examples of effective umbrella organizations to serve as models for the BPC. At the second meeting, held in February 2003 and attended by representatives from all four sites, the Governor of Alexandria discussed how services were improved in Alexandria through public-private partnerships and local resource mobilization. The meeting was also attended by

the Governor of Dumyat, who discussed how community participation is critical in addressing community needs and shared his experiences with public-private partnerships.

CCLS provided training for the BPC on two occasions, beginning with “Best Practices in Public-Private Partnerships in Local-Level Service Delivery and Local Resource Mobilization” in January, 2003. The training program provided an overview of the kinds of public-private partnerships and gave examples from the United States. The program encouraged the various site representatives to share examples of public-private partnerships from their community and suggest service areas where this dimension could be utilized. In July 2003, training was provided to BPC members and representatives of local organizations on best practices in local resource mobilization. The program was implemented in two iterations; one for the new communities and the other for the old communities. Twenty-four participants attended the two iterations. Local and international case studies were presented to provide participants with ideas that can be implemented in their local context. Working groups were organized during the workshops to discuss and develop a strategy for community-based issues.

2. *Workshop on “Governance, Community Participation and Economic Growth”*

In collaboration with World Bank, GTZ, and CIDA, CCLS conducted a workshop on “Governance, Community Participation and Economic Growth,” at the Alexandria Library and Palestine Hotel, from September 29 to October 1, 2003. The objective of the workshop was to exchange success stories and lessons learned, to articulate possible future focus areas, and to identify themes and mechanisms for collaboration among participating organizations. To provide a common frame of reference, participating organizations agreed to use the definition of governance outlined in the Arab Human Development Report. CCLS prepared and presented two case studies at the workshop, one on activities in Dumyat and the other on New Borg Al Arab.

At the workshop, it was agreed that the development partners will jointly prepare for a workshop in Spring 2004, where government officials, decision makers, and local partners will be invited to disseminate their findings and recommendations. Development partners also agreed that cross visits will be conducted to gain greater understanding of successful mechanisms utilized to promote greater participation and to identify specific areas for potential collaborative efforts. USAID has given approval for CCLS to continue its support of this initiative for two months beyond the official project closure date of January 11, 2004, to enable the project to fulfill its obligations to other donors.

3. *Publication of a CCLS Newsletter*

The purpose of this newsletter was to assist project team members, primarily the CG, in publicizing and gaining support for project activities. It was published twice, in June and September 2003, as a one-sheet, full-color document, explaining the purpose of the project and containing highlights of its activities. Both editions were published in English and one Arabic translation was also published and disseminated.

CHAPTER 4: LESSONS LEARNED AND MAJOR CONCLUSIONS

Identifying lessons that would help guide the planning of effective, large scale governance and service improvement projects in the future was an important expectation of the CCLS project. In this chapter we present these lessons as well as conclusions about the project overall. Although often referred to as a “pilot project,” CCLS may more appropriately be characterized as “exploratory.” Typically, pilot projects are designed to test an already articulated model, whereas CCLS was intended to test an innovative strategy or general approach to bringing about change in governance and service delivery at the local level. As is clearly stated in the original project documents, the CCLS project was to “enable Egyptians to design, test, and implement methods of improving the management of essential community service provision through enhanced community participation and public private partnerships in four ‘Pilot Communities.’”¹⁵ It was anticipated that, as a result of the project, the elements of a successful local services delivery model that could be applied on a larger scale would be identified.

The lessons we present in this chapter are organized in terms of four major topics: the general design, organization and structure of the project; the criteria and process for selecting project sites and key local partners; the entry and initiation of the project in the project sites; and the focus and implementation of project activities. These lessons are followed by more broadly drawn conclusions regarding the design and effectiveness of the CCLS project which may be useful in future endeavors.

A. PROJECT ORGANIZATION AND STRUCTURE

1. *A group of prominent, committed volunteers such of the CCLS’ Consultative Group (CG), can provide invaluable cultural and technical credibility and expertise necessary to accomplishing project objectives.*

Perhaps the most innovative dimension of CCLS was the Consultative Group, which we believe was a great success and worthy of repetition, despite the problems discussed earlier in this report. Individually, the members of the CG each brought a substantial store of social capital to the project that they were willing to invest along with their personal time and expertise. As a result, the CG provided significant assistance in gaining access and support at the national and local governmental levels, as well as sound conceptual and practical program level guidance throughout the project. At times, the assistance was provided by CG members acting as individuals, and at times through the members meeting as a group. It was the prior personal relationship of a CG member with the Governor of Dumyat, for example, that opened the doors of the city for the project, and it was the professional insight and experience of a CG member that recognized the potential of Naqada as a tourist site. Acting as a group, the CG members entered into spirited discussions that led, for example, to the development of site selection criteria, and frequently to identifying effective ways of interacting with national and local officials. Their combined knowledge, access and prestige was critical in overcoming bureaucratic obstacles, opening doors, and providing expert technical assistance to local communities at several important points during the life of the project.

¹⁵ Statement of Work, *op. cit.* p. 3

2. *The role and responsibilities of a group such as the CG needs to be clearly defined and agreed upon from the start. This is particularly true with respect to their relationship with USAID and the project's full-time staff.*

As discussed in Chapter 2, an issue that constrained the effective implementation of the project was the lack of clarity and consensus with regard to the rules governing the relationships among the CG, the TS and USAID. Clear boundaries and appropriate modes of communication were not identified in terms of their levels of authority with respect to decision-making, implementation, and the monitoring and evaluation of project activities. This lack of clarity contributed to a sometimes tortuous decision-making process, as well as periods of frustration and unfulfilled expectations on all sides. If this structure is to be adopted in the future, the roles, functions, and responsibilities of the CG or its equivalent need to be clearly defined with respect to the donor-funded project, and there needs to be an agreed-upon set of rules and procedures with respect to the group's internal operations, changes in membership, and communications with other components of the project.

3 *Conceptualizing project plans and activities in terms of social capital or service delivery improvement objectives is an effective framework for accomplishing meaningful social and economic results.*

A conceptual framework articulated during the third year of the project helped to focus CCLS project activities and provided criteria by which to assess their worth. Using this framework, most of the project's past and planned activities could be defined in terms of a two-fold model of service delivery and governance. In Dumyat, for example, the service objective has been to revitalize the furniture manufacturing sector of the economy through interventions to address the specific quality, marketing, and advocacy issues identified by furniture producers in consultation with CCLS consultants; and the social capital objectives included building a strong organization representative of all stakeholders in the furniture sector that could work with various levels of government to meet community needs.

From this perspective, the project's governance goals are cast in terms of two types of *social capital*. *Bonding capital* refers to the level of identity, cohesion, cooperativeness, sense of purpose, and capacity to act effectively within a group. It refers to internal relationships that strengthen and make more effective a particular group. Examples of activities to strengthen bonding capital include helping the group articulate goals, objectives and priorities; helping the group develop the skills to implement and monitor specific activities; and helping the group to maintain itself through clear roles for membership, internal organization, and financial stability. *Bridging capital* denotes the extent and quality of linkages between different groups, which in the context of the project refers to relationships that help to accomplish service delivery or economic growth objectives with the meaningful involvement of community residents. Examples include helping a group of community residents develop meaningful linkages with local public authorities and developing linkages with outside organizations (e.g. other donors or national service providers). It also entails helping local public authorities build bonds with civil society.

Using this framework enabled project staff to assess the merits of activities already carried out, and to judge the relative importance of proposed investments of time, energy and other project

resources. As a result, efforts during the final six or seven months of the project were more concentrated on achieving observable results and the increase in staff productivity was dramatic.

B. SELECTION OF PILOT SITES AND KEY LOCAL PARTNERS

1. Clearly articulated and thoughtfully developed criteria for site selection are critical, but those used in CCLS should be modified somewhat.

In May 2001 at a project workshop in Alexandria, the TS, CG, GCG and USAID agreed upon a set of criteria to be used in selecting pilot sites. These were:

- a. The candidate community fits with national development priorities — promoting exports, creating jobs, and seeking socio-economic equity.
- b. The community has potential for mobilizing local resources.
- c. The community has capacity to adopt “best practices” in stakeholder collaboration — including public-private partnerships.
- d. The community has access to adequate communications and transport.
- e. An organization within the community — such as a Board of Trustees, a Local Popular Council, an NGO, or other — represents a broad range of local citizens, generates and manages resources locally, and decides in a participatory manner.
- f. The existing community organization and/or its designated body is willing and has the capacity to work collaboratively with the project to improve community-level services.
- g. Relevant governmental agencies endorse participation by the organization and community with the project.

The existence of these criteria provided a basis for choosing among potential pilot sites, and for explaining to those outside the project the basis for site selection. In practice the data relating to these criteria — particularly criterion (5) and (6) — were not always sound and these two criteria do not seem to have been related to the impact of the project in the pilot sites. In retrospect, it might have been more appropriate to substitute a criterion pertaining to the existence of community consensus around one or more high priority needs on which project-related support to local community groups might reasonably be expected to have a meaningful impact.

2. Selection of sites should be made on the basis of a well-focused feasibility study.

Experience from development organizations around the world indicates that clear and focused diagnostics are essential to rapid start-up and efficient operations. Although CCLS conducted feasibility studies in each of the pilot sites, they were generally not sharply focused in terms of the seven selection criteria and proved to be of little value in site selection or guidance of activities after selection was made. An exception was in the case of Dumyat, where the feasibility study was undertaken with an objective of selecting the most appropriate economic sector or development issue on which the project should focus. In the other cases, most particularly those of the two new communities, the studies provided general descriptions of the communities but did not identify and assess service improvement opportunities with which the project could usefully become engaged. Project results — both in terms of service and governmental process objectives — were the greatest in Dumyat and came rapidly in Naqada where there was a focus on economic development activities from the start.

3. ***A local community targeted for project participation should be conceived in terms of its governance system, rather than in terms of governmental organizations and functions, and the project should be able to work primarily with NGOs and informal groups, as opposed to primarily with governmental bodies.***

As the CCLS project was originally conceived, the assumption was that the primary object of attention would be the local governmental body that was most representative of the community and that had administrative powers best suited to improving the level or quality of local service delivery. As a result, the feasibility studies and early project interactions focused on Boards of Trustees in the new communities and Local Popular Councils in the old. This, however, proved to be too narrow a focus. Over time the project had its greatest successes working with other elements of the local governance structure. In Dumyat and Naqada, primary attention and the greatest results were associated with economic-sector-related NGOs that were created locally as a result of CCLS-supported community needs assessments. In New Borg al Arab, the results were greatest with the local schools, the Youth Center, and most recently an emerging NGO focused on community parks. In the 10th of Ramadan, results have come from working with local industrialists and the schools. A constraint on the project during its initial two years was a TS concern that because of the project design its efforts should be devoted primarily to working directly with the selected local governmental unit, rather than concentrating efforts on units within the local governance system more broadly defined.

C. ENTRY INTO THE COMMUNITY

1. ***How projects are introduced into the community is a critical element that influences the readiness of the local community to interact and work with the project.***

The need for governmental endorsement was critical in both “new” and “old” communities, although the sources of those approvals proved to be different. For “new” communities, the introduction must be done by the Ministry of Housing, Utilities, and Urban Communities (MOH). The project was introduced via the Governor of Alexandria in New Borg al Arab, but this did not satisfy the need of key local organizations since the city administratively falls under the MOH. The local organization requested the approval of the Ministry to work with the project, and since the Ministry was not involved from the start, it took awhile for the project to overcome their discontent and mistrust and to receive the endorsement requested by the local officials. In selecting the second “new” community pilot site, the Ministry was involved with the project right from the beginning. In that case, the Ministry facilitated meetings at the local level during the feasibility study phase and provided the endorsement needed for the project.

In the “old” communities, the governor is the critical office that can provide the legitimacy needed by the project. Though the governor is the key person, working with the second tier on the governorate-level proved to be very effective as well. In Dumyat, the Secretary General played a key role in supporting the furniture stakeholders and the project’s work. The governorate was the one to introduce the project to other local stakeholders.

A closely related important lesson is that having well-known and respected Egyptians, such as CG members, introduce the project to governors or key officials at the Ministry is very useful.

As was the case in Dumyat and Qena, this is especially true when the person introducing the project already has social or previous working relationships with the key official.

2. *The blessing of the appropriate local leadership is critical to project effectiveness.*

In new communities, working under the umbrella of the Board of Trustees (BoT) is required, although it is not necessary that the project work directly under or even closely with the BoT. What is important is that the BoT should be the one that introduces the project to other local bodies in collaboration with the City Development Agency, if needed. Similarly, in “old” communities the governor needs to be aware and supportive of the project, and to make introductions as necessary, but may otherwise be actively or passively involved. In Dumyat, the governor has played an activist role in support of the project, whereas in Naqada the governor has been very supportive but less directly involved.

3. *Community needs assessments that are focused on specific sectors or service areas can promote community cohesion and institutional change objectives, and are more effective than broad-scale community-wide assessments.*

Once a pilot site was formally chosen, the TS worked with the local governmental body to implement a community needs assessment. The purpose was to acquire key stakeholders’ perceptions of needs for services, which needs were most pressing, and how best they could be addressed. These were done in conjunction with the project’s designated “deliberative body” (the BoTs in New Borg al Arab and 10th of Ramadan, the governor’s office in Dumyat, and the Local Popular Council in Naqada). The purpose of these assessments was not only to identify and prioritize community needs, but also to encourage participation by as many different community stakeholders as possible.

In New Borg al Arab and Naqada the needs assessments were community-wide in focus and designed to engage women and marginalized groups. In these assessments stakeholders were encouraged to articulate their needs in a broad manner, covering almost all sectors of service delivery in their communities (e.g., education, health, transportation, recreation and culture, and the environment). While this approach succeeded in allowing a wide variety of parties to identify their needs, it proved to be ineffective in allowing the community and the project to focus on particular service areas where a limited number of specific interventions could produce tangible outcomes in a timely manner.

In Dumyat the needs assessment was more narrowly focused on the furniture sector. Relevant local stakeholders then built on the assessment with strategic and action planning, and by identifying concrete activities to pursue in a systematic and timely manner. In the Tenth of Ramadan, the TS started with a broad-based needs assessment, but it was only when a particular service area (industrial linkages) was singled out that stakeholders were able to highlight the needs of that service area and begin to address them. Similarly, in Naqada, the focus on upgrading the handicraft sector was enabling in areas such as community organization and prioritization of the needs of the crafts producers.

D. ACTIVITY FOCUS AND IMPLEMENTATION

1. Concentrating project attention on an issue that is widely recognized as vital by community leaders is the best way to begin work in a community.

In Dumyat the decision to focus on the furniture sector was made on the basis of the initial feasibility study which was completed before serious project work in the community began. In New Borg al Arab, the 10th of Ramadan and to a somewhat lesser extent in Naqada, the initial focus of attention and activities was community wide. In these cases, especially New Borg al Arab and the 10th of Ramadan, the community needs assessment and the CCLS activities that followed were unfocused and produced few results. However, once the project had made choices among potential areas of concentration, and then made realistic action plans, meaningful results began to come quickly. Unless the project enters a community with an initial concentration on an issue of vital community concern, and quickly involves as many knowledgeable stakeholders as possible in a diagnosis of the problem and identification of possible solutions, the likelihood is that the project will amass an overwhelming list of problems, engage in diffuse efforts and activities, generate few service delivery accomplishments, and fail to accomplish its governance improvement goals.

2. Focusing on a community issue related to economic growth and income generation can be a very effective way to accomplish governance objectives.

The experience in Dumyat, Naqada, and also the Tenth of Ramadan, indicates that citizens will become involved and public-private partnerships will form quite rapidly if the focus of attention is on an issue related to economic growth and income generation. This was the focus of attention from the start in Dumyat, and one of the initial foci in Naqada. Positive project results began to occur almost immediately in both of these sites. In the Tenth of Ramadan, virtually nothing of substance was occurring until the project began to focus on building community systems and structures that would encourage commercial linkages among the city's large, medium and small industries. Once the issue was clearly defined and community stakeholders identified, an organization composed of local stakeholders was soon formed and significant progress on addressing the issue has been made.

3. Gaining the trust and confidence of local leaders is essential.

An underlying assumption of the CCLS project was that real people, in real communities are primarily concerned with their pressing needs, and that talking in abstract terms about partnership and participation does not generate great interest or support. This proved to be the case. The project's early difficulties in New Borg al Arab were attributable in part to an initial lack of clarity and concreteness in explaining the project's goals and objectives that led local leaders to have doubts and suspicions about the motives and value of the project. The project's successful response in this case was to engage in several activities (the design of a web site and support for a summer schools program) that were tangible examples of ways the project could respond to locally felt needs. In subsequent sites, the opening discussions built on the New Borg al Arab experience, as did the project's willingness to be flexible in working with local leaders in meeting local needs (e.g., by providing wood drying kilns in Dumyat and basic office equipment to the Local Popular Council in Naqada).

4. ***Staff members whose role is that of a community development liaisons play an instrumental role in facilitating stakeholders' collaboration and mobilizing key community players.***

In all four CCLS pilot sites, the community development liaisons (CDLs) played an important role and proved to be very effective in promoting project objectives. They performed a social catalyst function by encouraging local stakeholders to help themselves by coming together to address issues of mutual concern. The CDLs worked with local leaders to convene public meetings, facilitate discussions, and encourage active participation of stakeholders in identifying problems, proposing solutions, examining goals and methods. They also encouraged participatory practices and democratic decision-making among the local groups they worked with, and they identified areas of need for specialized technical assistance and worked with consultants who were hired to assist the project's local partners. The CDLs also monitored implementation of project activities, were the liaison between the pilot sites and the project, and assessed service and social capital needs on an on-going basis.

5. ***Assigning a junior staff member, typically on a part time basis, to support CDLs with logistics, administrative, and reporting activities is highly desirable.***

Effective CDLs need to focus their attention on facilitating community mobilization, interaction, and decision-making. This often includes distributing materials, taking accurate minutes of meetings, and arranging for the travel of community leaders or outside experts to and from a pilot site. The CCLS design recognized that performing these administrative tasks was likely to interfere with the CDLs effectiveness in accomplishing higher order community organizing activities and budgeted for employing of local assistants in each pilot site. However, the CDLs generally concluded that it was more trouble to identify, hire and supervise local assistants than to perform these activities themselves. During the final months of the project junior level administrative staff based in the TS home office were assigned on a part time basis to assist the CDLs, and this arrangement increased the CDL productivity in the communities, and also improved the quality of monitoring and reporting information available from each site.

6. ***Regular monitoring and reporting on pilot site activities that is tied to concrete project objectives and that is used by senior management can improve project performance.***

During its first two years the project provided USAID with quarterly and annual reports that met agency reporting requirements but the results of the project's pilot site monitoring and reporting activities were not used for internal management by the TS nor were they provided to the CG in a form that its members found meaningful. Following the refocusing of the project in June 2003 and the preparation of work plans for each pilot site that specified concrete results and anticipated major activities, a new reporting system was developed. This was used by the TS field staff and management team to review progress and report to the CG, and it was useful in encouraging focused and rapidly paced activities at the pilot sites.

7. *The ability of the project to supplement its staff with outside, specialized technical assistance is critical in achieving project objectives.*

Specialized technical assistance proved to be of great value, especially in the areas where the Technical Secretariat (TS) lacked the expertise. Staff of the TS needs to be experts in participatory practices and have the requisite facilitation skills to promote collaboration on the local level, but TS staff cannot be expected to be technical experts in all the potentially needed technical subject areas. Thus, the role of specialized technical assistance is important to ensure that service improvement objectives are met. For example, the procurement of specialized technical assistance in marketing for Nagada to assess the potential of traditional crafts with the vision of establishing a crafts village was essential. Likewise, in the 10th of Ramadan the technical assistance to support studying the feasibility of establishing an industrial integration center was needed, as also was true in Dumyat with respect to technical expertise in furniture manufacturing.

8. *Small grants and commodities can be important tools in accomplishing project objectives, but they need to be consciously integrated into an overall strategy in a community for achieving community service or social capital results.*

The CCLS project design provided for making small grants to governmental or non-governmental bodies in the pilot sites. The assumption was that these would facilitate the actual delivery of services by local NGOs, but initially the relationship between these grant activities and the other CCLS activities was not well defined. As the project progressed, however, it became clear that the small grants could reinforce the projects larger service and social capital building objectives. This was the case with grants and commodities related to the furniture sector in Dumyat and a grant to a small business association in the 10th of Ramadan. Even in New Borg al Arab, where the grants were not closely linked to a broader project objective, they generally produced quite positive results, and the experience there also serves to support the proposition that when consciously used as instruments to achieve project goals, small grants and commodities can be quite effective tools.

9. *International and in-country training and observational study tours can be important tools when they are integrated into a local community development plan.*

The limited amount of international training provided through CCLS was useful in exposing participants to different models of how enhanced community participation in decision-making leads to enhanced service provision and greater accountability. It was an eye-opener to pilot site representatives and governmental officials who observed the model first-hand and were energized to contemplate changes in way they operated. In addition, international training provides the various participants with the opportunity to interact and communicate on a daily basis, increasing their learning and cohesiveness as a group with a common purpose. Similarly valuable was exposure of representatives of the pilot sites to new service delivery models and to exchanging experiences with people working of similar problems from other communities within Egypt. There were perhaps inevitable issues regarding the implementation of the training and observational tours related to selection of participants and scheduling, but on balance this was a useful component of the project that should be included in future efforts of this sort.

10. *Mid-term assessment and refocusing of project activities can be critical to project success.*

Because of the exploratory nature of the CCLS project it was planned that there would be extensive internal documentation and reflection and that there might be an on-going need for adjustments in how the project would operate. Early in the project this proved to be the case. For example, the project shifted from operating only in “new” communities to testing its approach in “old” communities as well. It also moved away from its expectation of focusing primarily on traditional local government services such as sanitation, transportation and schools, and began to work in the area of economic growth and development services. Shortly after two years of implementation, an external evaluation was conducted that concluded there was a need for greater focus in the project’s work in the four pilot communities, and that a reorientation and reorganization of staff functions would also be beneficial. In response, the project devoted serious, concentrated attention to these issues and there was a significant increase in staff productivity and on-the-ground community results. In retrospect, the external evaluation would have been much more helpful if it had come at the mid-point of project’s three years of operations, or perhaps even shortly after the end of the first project year.

11. *Local service and governance improvement objectives can be furthered and sustained by the involvement of multiple donors.*

Very early in its work in Dumyat the project began to coordinate activities with other donor agencies as well as with Government of Egypt agencies and Egyptian academic institutions. This had the effect of avoiding duplicating efforts and augmenting project resources for the accomplishment of project goals. By the end of the project in Dumyat there were coordination meetings of projects funded by USAID, projects funded by other international bi-lateral and multilateral agencies, and Egyptian community economic and social development groups. Also, during the third year of the project considerable effort was devoted to working with the Canadian and German development programs in Egypt as well as the World Bank in the design and implementation of a major workshop at which field staff from all four organizations working in the area of local service and governance improvement would share experiences and lessons learned. This activity resulted in bridges being built among the four organizations and interest in supporting one another’s work. As a result, during the project’s closing months, CCLS was able to take lead in familiarizing other donors with activities in the pilot sites with the objective of assuring the sustainability of major project initiatives. As the project came to a close one or more CCLS initiatives was being considered for adoption by another donor organization in all four of the project sites.

E. OVERALL CONCLUSIONS

As indicated in Chapter 1, the purposes of the CCLS project included testing several hypotheses related to its overall strategy and approach. The first of these was whether a small group of politically sophisticated and well-connected Egyptians would volunteer their time and be of significant assistance to the project in accomplishing its goals. Clearly the experience of the CCLS project indicates that such a group could play an invaluable role in the design and implementation of local governance improvement projects in the future. The CG was invaluable

to the CCLS, and with some relatively minor changes in structure a group such as the CG could be even more valuable in the future.

The CCLS project also demonstrates that it is possible in Egypt to create partnerships among the GOE, local economic elites, and other local community leaders that will result in increased or improved levels of local level public services. This has been shown most clearly in the case of Dumyat, but by the time the project came to a close, public-private partnerships working on the resolution of locally identified community service needs were functioning in all four of the pilot sites.

Third, it is too early to tell whether or not the local CCLS inspired partnerships to enhance service delivery will be institutionalized and sustained over the long run, but the willingness of USAID and other donors to continue to nurture these efforts bodes well. In each of the four pilot sites there are one or more partnerships between community leaders and local governmental officials that are at least poised to produce tangible service delivery results and that have also received a pledge of ongoing support from one or more outside institutions. And in Dumyat, there is discussion among local leaders of replicating the CCLS approach to the furniture sector in other sectors of the local economy.

On another level, the three years of the CCLS project illustrate the practical importance of conceptual frameworks and assumptions for the implementation of development projects on the ground. For example:

- ▶ *The CCLS project's underlying assumptions about "new" communities were incorrect and incomplete.* The original project design assumed that new communities were not tightly controlled by ministries in Cairo. The importance and level of control of the Ministry of Housing was not recognized, and this contributed to the significant delay in accomplishing results in New Borg al Arab.
- ▶ *The project's conceptual model of governance in new communities and how it could be made more responsive to residents' needs was too limited and too focused on changing the internal operations of governmental bodies.* The project focused on "government" rather than "governance" and on changing the attitudes and behaviors of people and institutions that had little or no desire to change in the ways the project was promoting. Focusing on the formal elements of local government (i.e., the Board of Trustees, City Development Agency, Investors Association, Local Popular Council and Executive Council) put the project in the position of working with groups that wanted service delivery improvements, but at best only paid lip service to the participatory goals of the project. For its first two years, the project did not view the other important elements of a local governance system (e.g., schools, the youth centers, or NGOs) as primary partners. Even though the project worked with several NGOs and the schools in New Borg al Arab almost from the start, the focus was on assisting the Board of Trustees to be more responsive to citizen needs and on building linkages from the Board to community groups. It did not think in terms of building bridges among all the various governance stakeholders, including from one NGO to another or from schools to the Board of Trustees, as a way to strengthen and make more participatory the local governance system. If it had, it probably would have spent less time on trying to change the internal

workings of the Boards of Trustees, and much more on supporting potentially strong community-based partners of local governmental units and building strong and supportive relationships among them.

In conclusion, after reflecting on the experience and lessons from the CCLS project, a simple and quite promising model for an expanded program to improve local governance and services in Egypt might be:

***Step 1:** In conjunction with a formally constituted body of prominent and committed Egyptian volunteers, such as those who served as members of the CCLS Consultative Group, identify criteria for the identification of potential project target communities and for the selection of target sites and areas of service delivery focus from among them.*

***Step 2:** Conduct diagnostic studies of more communities than will be selected, and focus the studies on identifying a critical area of community need recognized by virtually every governmental and non-governmental leader as being vitally important to the community. The studies would also assess the extent to which the various stakeholders would be interested in working with the project on solving this recognized problem in a manner that involves collaboration among the stakeholder, including community residents.*

***Step 3:** Approach the formal leadership – in “new” cities the Ministry of Housing and then the Board of Trustees and City Development Agency, and in “old” ones the governor and Popular Council and Executive Council – and get their commitment to work with the project and to identify the relevant community stakeholders who would be involved from the start.*

***Step 4:** Involve the identified stakeholders in articulating their needs and in developing an approach to identifying a technical solution to the widely acknowledged problem.*

***Step 5:** Involve the stakeholders in implementing the technical solution, and work on building strong collaborative relationships among the stakeholder groups, and expanding the circle of stakeholders as much as possible.*

***Step 6:** Monitor and assess the activities and their strengths and weaknesses in each target community and apply the lessons learned. This process should involve the local governmental and non-governmental stakeholders as well as project donors and staff.*

In sum, the Collaboration for Community level Services project quite clearly accomplished tangible and useful results in its four pilot sites. Perhaps more importantly, it was an opportunity to explore innovative structures and approaches to local governance and service improvement in Egypt, and from that exploration many potentially useful lessons have been learned.