

PJ-ABY-780

DIS دعم المؤسسات الديمقراطية
Democratic Institutions Support Project

**ADVOCACY-ORIENTED NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS IN EGYPT:
STRUCTURE, ACTIVITIES, CONSTRAINTS, AND NEEDS**

May 1995

Prepared for
The Office of Institutional Development and Support
USAID, Cairo, Egypt

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ACRONYMS

AHED	Association for Health and Environmental Development
CEOSS	Coptic Evangelical Organization for Social Services
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
EEAA	Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency
EBA	Egyptian Businessmen's Association
EOHR	Egyptian Organization for Human Rights
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
ICPD	International Conference on Population and Development
IDRC	International Development Research Center
ITSU	Industrial Training Support Unit
MOH	Ministry of Health
MOSA, MSA	Ministry of Social Affairs
NCF	New Civic Forum
NCNW	National Council of Negro Women
NCPD	National NGO Committee for Population and Development ("NGO Steering Committee")
PHC	Primary Health Care
RCRD	Regional Center for Research and Development
RLA	Right to Live Association
SAAW	Scientific Association for Arab Women
SCW	Successful Career Women
UNFPA	United Nations Family Planning Agency
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This research examines the work of 15 Egyptian NGOs which do advocacy, that is, work to change state policy or laws, or public opinion, concerning certain issues or practices. The goal is to identify these groups' strengths and weaknesses in promoting their own interests and needs, and recommend ways in which USAID can assist Egyptian NGOs in general to become more effective as democratic institutions. In their work as intermediaries between citizens and the state, these groups increase societal input in governance and balance state authority, helping meet USAID's priority of promoting sustainable democracy. The groups were selected to represent in a general way the types of advocacy NGOs functioning in Egypt today.

A. Organizational Strengths and Weaknesses

A1. Organizational Strengths

- Nearly all groups had clear by-laws, an elected board, and officers.
- Women play important roles as leaders and are well represented as members. Only two groups, both businessmen's associations, had no women on their board.
- Groups were involved in effective activities, including organizing conferences and workshops, networking, producing and appearing in print media, and personally lobbying important officials.
- Ten of the fifteen groups interviewed had activities that reached beyond the elite or professional membership and reached grassroots groups.
- Most of these mainly urban groups had basic facilities like office space, and a phone, fax, and computer.

A2. Organizational Weaknesses

- Most members only attend annual meetings and pay dues, and many groups said they lacked younger members, who were too busy to volunteer.
- In most groups, one or a few members made decisions, not a broad based group.
- In terms of human resources, most group leaders were professionals with technical expertise (health, environment), but they often lacked specific skills like organizational development or public relations.
- While most groups used print media like brochures and newsletters well, and had some radio and television coverage, they lacked the non-print coverage to reach a wider audience.

- Advocacy work focused largely on policy makers, often through personal contacts; groups need a broader base to do advocacy, and to work more on influencing public opinion.
- Funding was often a problem, especially for project work, although some groups raised money through dinners, bazaars or donations. Many depended on outside donors, not a sustainable base. These donors were often Scandinavian, Canadian or Dutch bilaterals; several groups mentioned the difficulty of obtaining USAID funds in terms of accounting requirements and the long lead time necessary.

B. Constraints

- When asked, more groups reported constraints external rather than internal to the group, often involving limited funding.
- Especially human rights groups reported being ignored or misrepresented by the media.
- We had expected Law 32, governing the activity of NGOs, to be a serious constraint on their operation. However:
 - Most groups said it was mainly a bureaucratic problem, and did not seriously constrain their work.
 - Law 32 requires a complex registration process, and mandates a Ministry of Social Affairs (MOSA) person be on the board and attend meetings, and that the group submit reports of meetings and obtain permission for funding, including foreign.
 - In fact, many groups were able to ignore most of these rules, especially if a) they had influential members who could smooth the way, or b) their activities did not threaten the government.
 - Thus Law 32 was more a potential problem, and a means of exerting control regarding groups the state disapproved.
- Accepting funding directly from USAID was a constraint for only two groups; the rest would accept it, though a few added funding would need to “fit their conditions,” which basically meant not compromise them.

C. Recommended Actions

USAID should work through an international NGO like CARE or Save the Children, so that all groups would have access to assistance, and to avoid problems with meeting USAID accounting and other requirements. This organization could serve as a center for advocacy or NGO services offering seminars or workshops to NGO officers and/or members in several areas:

- Needs identification—which would allow groups to choose which of the other workshops would be most useful to them

- Organizational management—including broadening the decision-making process, and expansion of membership in both numbers and involvement
- Fundraising and/or income generation
- Proposal writing
- English, for proposal writing and access to literature
- Project identification and implementation
- Advocacy strategies—including speechwriting, public relations, and work with radio and television
- Networking—locally, nationally, regionally, and internationally
- Computer techniques—networking machines, E-mail, Internet

Groups mentioned they could be more effective with access to certain commodities, including computer software, particularly for E-mail, more computers, faxes, and access to literature on the activities of similar NGOs in other areas.

ADVOCACY-ORIENTED NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS IN EGYPT: STRUCTURE, ACTIVITIES, CONSTRAINTS, AND NEEDS

A. Introduction

This study of Egyptian nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) was done in the context of the promotion of sustainable democracy, a central objective of USAID Washington and USAID/Egypt. The Governance and Democracy Strategy of the Egyptian mission is to strengthen democratic institutions contributing to lawful governance, including the legislature, the justice sector, and professional and community organizations. These latter organizations are an essential component of civil society, that is, non-state associations or intermediaries between the state and citizens, which interact with the state to increase input from the society and limit state influence.

Beginning in the 1980s, there has been a rapid increase in the number of NGOs worldwide, and also in the literature on them; the references below are a brief guide to further reading. Several authors refer to the capacity of NGOs to promote civil society and democracy (Serageldin, Hirschmann, Norton); others call for more information based on fieldwork and primary observation (Carroll), a need which this and Kandil's report help to fill. Kandil has just published an overview of NGOs in the Arab region (1995), and her paper complementing this one contains detailed information on the Egyptian context. Sullivan's book (1994) discusses the over 14,000 Egyptian NGOs. His chapter one provides a general introduction, while Ibrahim (1994) examines in detail the constraints of Law 32 on Egyptian voluntary organizations. A paper by Gomaa provides an example of how environmental NGOs were able to influence Egyptian policy; their work on non-threatening internationally respected issues, accompanied by donor funds to pursue them, was accepted by the government (1994). Singerman (1995) provides a grassroots example from the other end of the spectrum of NGO operation; she gives a detailed case history of the interaction of government, NGOs and a neighborhood group in a working class area of Cairo.

This research focuses on specialized Egyptian civic organizations, including business associations, human rights and environmental groups, and others which are non-profit and do advocacy work. Advocacy here means a group attempts to change state policy or public opinion on certain issues (e.g., economic or political liberalization) or practices (e.g., the exclusion of mentally disabled children from public schools). Groups do this in pursuit of their own interests, and in the process strengthen civic culture. They activate citizenship and democratic practice as they involve wider groups of people in such advocacy; people learn that their concerns can influence the state. While in the United States such groups may only do advocacy, in Egypt they often combine advocacy with other activities, for example providing services or bringing together groups of NGOs to increase their impact. The companion paper by Dr. Amani Kandil elaborates on advocacy in the specific Egyptian context.

USAID is considering working with advocacy-oriented special interest groups (or NGOs) to reach a program outcome which will strengthen them in articulating and acting on their interests and needs. These interviews with NGOs which do some type of advocacy assess their abilities and needs in order to determine specific ways in which they and similar groups might be strengthened.

B. Sample and Methodology

A sample was selected to be generally representative of the larger sample of types of NGOs doing advocacy delineated by Dr. Amani Kandil. Thus groups I interviewed include:

- 5 environmental groups
- 2 human rights groups
- 2 groups encouraging civic culture (economic and political liberalization)
- 2 women's groups - one supporting NGO development
- 2 businessmen's groups
- 1 group advocating rights of disabled children
- 1 group doing development work
- Total: 15 groups

All but two groups were from Cairo. The two that were not there were the Dakahliya Governorate Businessmen's Association and the Regional Center for Research and Development [civic culture]—both from Mansoura. Dr. Kandil or her assistants have interviewed 12 groups, some outside Cairo, and those results will be included in her report. In all cases, the person interviewed was either a founder or an officer of the organization, and most were both.

C. Organizational History and Goals

C1. History

The groups interviewed ranged from being 2 to 35 years old. The oldest was The Coptic Evangelical Association for Social Services (CEOSS), and the newest were the New Civic Forum, the National NGO Committee for Population and Development, and the Successful Career Women branch of the American Chamber of Commerce in Egypt. It is interesting that the two groups designated as doing advocacy for women are also among the newest. While seen as relatively new areas, the environmental groups began between 7 and 21 years ago, and the human rights groups from 4 to 10 years ago.

C2. Goals

While these groups were chosen because of their advocacy work to influence public opinion or policy makers, they vary in the degree to which they focus on advocacy. They can be grouped into three main categories.

- Few do ONLY advocacy. The Egyptian Society for Health and Environmental Legislation is one of these, and the New Civic Forum another. Both have conferences, speakers or publications to influence public opinion and policy. The first group's main activity is an annual conference attracting about 400 people; the second group has a monthly guest speaker for an audience of 40-50, plus the director speaks to other groups almost weekly and they have a publication series.
- Most groups have projects supporting a cause for which they also do advocacy, like the Association for Health and Environmental Development. Their goals are to change health and environmental policy, and to provide technical support for grassroots NGOS. They do this through introducing studies and providing the results to policy makers and

holding conferences. They also run a primary health care center as both a project and a model for some of the changed policy they advocate.

- Some groups at first seem to be service organizations because they focus so strongly on project work, but a closer examination reveals their advocacy work. The Right to Live Association built and operates a school for over 100 mentally handicapped children, and has an attached Institute that gives a one-year course in Special Education to 25 to 30 teachers. Yet members also appear on television to advocate the more normal treatment of these children, including placing them in special classrooms in regular schools, and they lobby high officials to start a course in Special Education at Cairo universities.

These examples of advocacy through work on a project support a point made by both Aziza Hussein and Mona Zulficar of the National NGO Committee for Population and Development (NCPD), a group trying to coordinate NGOs working in certain topical areas after the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD). Both women said that one cannot do advocacy in a vacuum; it is much more effective to work on a project. They have done this in work before the ICPD in drafting the Egyptian NGO Platform Document, and afterward in campaigning against female genital mutilation (FGM). As they work, the NGOs develop relationships to each other and evolve in their capacities.

D. Strengths and Weaknesses in Institutional Functioning

D1. Organizational Structure

All but two groups had a board of directors which ranged in size from four to fifteen persons, with nearly half having nine or eleven on the board. The Regional Center for Research and Development, registered as a civil company, was run by a group of six who were not structured as a board. The other civil company, the Center for Studies and Legal Information on Human Rights, has a board of four. The NGO Steering Committee (NCPD) consisted of twelve members who were a committee, not a board.

In almost all cases, the board was elected by the members (often with one-third being elected each year), and then itself elected four officers: president, vice president, secretary and treasurer. Usually there were no maximum terms for the board or officers, and they tended to stay in place. This rather surprising uniformity is explained by the requirements for NGOs registered with the Ministry of Social Affairs (MOSA), which nearly all were.

All but two groups (the Regional Center for Research and Development and the Center for Studies and Legal Information on Human Rights) had by-laws, which are also required by MOSA. Interestingly, several groups mentioned that they did not follow them, or used other, informal ones. The Regional Center for Research and Development is a civil company so has no MOSA requirement and said their group of six works on personal relationships. Yet their brochure mentions that the Director has the authority to sign contracts and is responsible for obligations, so they have formalized some aspects.

The Center for Studies and Legal Information on Human Rights is also a civil company and lacks by-laws, which seems to be a problem; they said in this area they have been “destroyed by democracy,” because there are no clear rules for making decisions. It appears they spend significant time and effort in trying to reach decisions on group functioning rather than on human

rights issues. This is a clear case in which assistance with organizational management would be useful.

While at first it appears that most groups have a clear organizational leadership, in fact the structure is mandated by MOSA and often somewhat empty. Having a structure probably helps with decision-making, yet the structure often reflects people's personal relationships, and many could function equally well without it. The group being "destroyed by democracy" is a younger group which probably lacks the hierarchy of the elite found in many of the older groups. This indicates that some newer groups, especially those not registered with MOSA, need to have by-laws which are acceptable to all members.

The Association for Health and Development (AHED) is one newer group, and they provide a good example of involving members through specific committee action. Their organizational structure was the most complex encountered, going well beyond the MOSA-mandated board and officers, and was presented to us in clear computer-generated diagrams. See Appendix B, paragraph 2.a. of their interview for details.

Another problem with having a only a few central leaders is that it may support the social hierarchy rather than putting the most effective members into positions of power. Since the board is elected by the members, it reflects their priorities; members should be cautioned about this, or other, less-prestigious but more functional offices need to be added. Finally, social prestige can be useful to the group, especially for lobbying or publicity purposes.

D2. Membership

The smallest group had fifteen members (the Dakahliya Governorate Businessmen's Association) and the largest 2500 (the Egyptian Organization for Human Rights). Five groups were rather small, with 30-70 members, and six more had 100-400; the two civil companies (RCRD and the Center for Studies and Legal Information on Human Rights) did not have members. Members were often recruited by other members, and the high dues of some groups (5,000 Egyptian pounds to join and then 1,000/year for the Egyptian Businessmen's Association (EBA); LE 450/yr for the Successful Career Women) limited membership. A few groups, including the EBA and the Egyptian Organization for Human Rights, said one had to apply and be approved to join.

Most members only meet once a year in the general assembly to elect the board and pay dues; they are not very active. Some groups have subcommittees which work for special purposes, and these seem to involve members more. The Egyptian Businessmen's Association creates such committees of experts for special needs, and the Association for Health and Environmental Development (AHED) has standing committees which work on specific topic areas, like health policy or disabilities. The Successful Career Women have meetings every month or two on issues of concern to women, and about half the members attend; these last two groups have among the most active memberships.

Members of most groups are involved only in the annual meeting and providing dues. Groups with a structure of committees working on specific activities involved members to a greater extent.

D3. Decision-making

One way to examine the “democracy” or participation within an organization is to elicit examples of how decisions are reached. Most groups try to reach agreement; some said they never vote except to elect board members. In many cases the process is very hierarchical: the central figure makes a decision and the rest approve it, or she or he talks them out of something of which they personally disapprove.

The three exceptions were in the younger groups. In the Egyptian Organization for Human Rights, they wanted to change the by-laws so the board would be elected by a proportional instead of a total member vote. Not all agreed so they postponed the decision, and board members will go to their thirteen branch sites and discuss it with members before considering the issue again. In the Center for Studies and Legal Information on Human Rights, the two board members we interviewed had a frank discussion in front of Mr. El-Meehy and me on whether the group should be run ‘democratically’ with all four directors having equal input or should have clear rules; they said the failure to agree is causing serious problems. Yet neither was in a position to overrule the other.

Finally, the Association for Health and Environmental Development did have a confrontation between older and younger members on how to deal with female genital mutilation (FGM). The older group thought it would be all right to have a conference with Sheikh Al Azhar and the Mufti debating FGM; younger members did not want to give them such a central role. The younger group threatened to run for the board and displace the elders next election, and they prevailed; the conference was held with Al Mer’a Al Gedida instead.

Thus most groups are run by one or a few central members, indicating limited participation within the group. Exceptions were newer groups with a younger membership; two of these three were human rights groups, and their general ideology may have encouraged greater participation.

D4. Gender, Age, and Socioeconomic Status of Board, Officers, and Members

Gender. Only two organizations had no women on their boards: the Egyptian Businessmen’s Association and the Dakahliya Governorate Businessmen’s Association. Two groups had all female boards and officers (the Right to Live Association and My Country), and women were in the majority on the boards of four other groups (Association for Protection of the Environment, Scientific Association for Arab Women, the NGO Steering Committee, and CEOSS). Six other groups had one to three women on their boards.

It was a little more difficult to get figures on female members, so there were estimates of “a good number of women” (New Civic Forum), “many women” (the Egyptian Organization of Human Rights) or “some men” (Scientific Association for Arab Women). Six groups had predominantly female members, two had one third to one half women, and the Dakahliya Businessmen had none and the Egyptian Businessmen nine or ten women among their 400 members.

Thus women were not excluded, especially from leadership roles, in most Cairo-based organizations. Asking for this gender data seemed to raise the consciousness of many of the interviewees, and those without precise data will probably have it next time. Business groups seemed to be most lacking female participation. In Dakahliya they said it would not be culturally acceptable for women to go to evening meetings, or exchange gifts like the male members do.

The high cost of the Egyptian Businessmen's Association may limit female members, yet women who belong to Successful Career Women do pay.

Six of the groups interviewed (40 percent) could be called "women's organizations" based either on their interests or membership: the Association for Protection of the Environment (APE), My Country, the Scientific Association for Arab Women (SAAW), Successful Career Women (SCW), the National NGO Committee for Population and Development (NCPD), and the Right to Live Association (RLA). Only one (SCW) focused specifically on women's interests, although two others had worked mainly with women when they began. SAAW was mainly female scientists who wanted to use science and technology to promote development for rural women, and the NCPD began with work for the NGO forum at the ICPD in Cairo, and the population aspect involved many women's issues. Both of these groups now focus more on development in general, with the NCPD working to develop NGOs' capabilities.

While one might expect "women's groups" to be doing social welfare or charity work, this is not generally true. The Right to Live works through a project, a school for retarded children. Yet RLA also advocates for rights and better conditions for the mentally disabled. My Country advocates better health and environment by telling the public and officials to "clean up," and have also supported a community group in getting access to government help in cleaning up their neighborhood. Three other groups advocate public awareness of new scientific developments, women's rights and empowerment, or NGO empowerment through their activities.

In the groups interviewed, women play important roles as leaders and are well-represented as members. The "women's" groups do not focus solely on charity or social welfare work, but have a wide range of activities as described above.

Age and Socioeconomic Status. Boards, officers and members seemed to be mainly in the 40-60 age range. In some groups, like businessmen, it was because one had to achieve a certain status to join. In others, it was probably a group of cohorts who were founders. The exceptions are the two human rights groups and the Association for Health and Environmental Development (AHED). The first two focused more on people around 40, and AHED said the younger group was around 30.

Age is a problem for some groups, and will be more in the future. If there is not a generation of younger members, groups will fade away. However, one constraint on recruiting young members is that they are busy establishing their careers and have little time to volunteer.

It appears that all boards and members are elite and/or professionals; no grassroots or working class people were interviewed. Both officers and members were professionals, some groups requiring a BA, others composed of doctors, lawyers and professors. Yet within this elite there are degrees, either old and new money, or less and more profitable professions. From the interviews it appeared that most groups belonged to the wealthier or higher status elite, with the exception of the Association for Health and Environmental Development and the two human rights groups. While AHED had many doctor members and the human rights people were often lawyers, they may have been first generation professionals.

While having a narrow range of elite actors may seem to be a weakness of these groups, limiting their reach, it is unlikely that less privileged people have the time to volunteer in NGOs, or the ability to create them. Further, being elite offers access to media and important officials through which one can lobby for one's causes. Another way to look for broader class

involvement is to see if the group deals with grassroots or community people; that is examined in the discussion of activities below.

D5. Activities

Activities are presented here in some detail because they illustrate the ways in which groups actually do advocacy. Ten of the fifteen groups interviewed sponsored activities that reached grassroots groups like workers in a polluting battery factory (AHED), youth who cleaned up a working class neighborhood (My Country), or poor women with legal problems (EOHR). The minority that did not focused their efforts on conferences, talks, or lobbying officials personally to promote their causes; many of the other groups also used these approaches. One group that did not work at the grassroots level, the New Civic Forum, had an unusually creative activity: they brought together several interest groups to draft a model national charter based on Jordan's constitution, which would allow all groups' political participation if they would abide by the terms. A unique aspect was that they included Islamist leaders, while none of the other groups interviewed mentioned working with them although they are considered important social actors.

The groups with grassroots contacts had a wide variety of successful activities; the interested reader can find these in Annex B in section 2.d. of each interview. Space allows only a summary of three cases that illustrate varied, interesting and effective approaches.

A current issue among Egyptian NGOs is how closely to work with the government. The majority feel cooperation will get them further than confrontation, but two groups who dealt with female genital mutilation (FGM) differed in their approaches yet both worked effectively to advocate against it.

The National NGO Committee for Population and Development (NCPD) feels that it is best to work with government, illustrated by its current location within the Ministry of Population. They have had many conferences on FGM. At the last one, they got 3 different Ministry representatives to work on it. A leader said you need to get people "inside" on your side, by convincing them, and then work through them. One way to convince them is to give out objective facts to build your case. She mentioned that few people actually lobby on this, because they want to stay on the good side of government and are afraid to confront them. Her group's approach was to write to MOH and have a meeting. They have built a mutual respect, so a high official wants their help, their information helps convince him, and he sends them copies of Government reports on the topic.

A more oppositional approach was taken by the Association for Health and Environmental Development (AHED). The group sued the Minister of Health for allowing FGM to be done in government hospitals, since there is a 1951 law on the books forbidding it. I don't think a ruling has been passed yet, but they have made it clear to the authorities and the public that they oppose FGM, and have made a legal attempt to stop it. Yet in other activities they work with government, like developing a community health curriculum with the Ministry of Health. AHED also had a confrontation with another group at a conference on FGM, when the medical syndicate said FGM was acceptable; we heard that skilled diplomacy averted a crisis. Thus they also advocate their viewpoint to other groups.

In a last case, the Regional Center for Research and Development (RCRD) has been working on a program to encourage agricultural development in Dakahliya Governorate; it is the

process they used and its effects, not the development aspect, that is important here. They planned, ran, evaluated and disseminated information from 21 three-day workshops in various towns on separate agricultural topics (mechanization, poultry, etc). Each was planned by a group of two university staff, one government agriculture official and one farmer who met at least once to prepare, and then led the workshop. Each workshop was attended by about 25 people, with about four officials (including people from popular councils or cooperatives), four professors, and some people from related small businesses; the majority were farmers.

The workshops were all structured around 5 points: the current situation, the desired future, problems to overcome to get there, how to solve the problems and the role of each organization, and recommendations. One of the RCRD leaders said what was exciting was that at the beginning, each person or group felt THEY had the right answer and the others were wrong, but by the end they developed group solutions to problems. This meets one of RCRD's goals: to change people's conception of development, showing them their own powers and the mutual benefits of working together. It was also a great success because attenders set up personally-based work relationships which continued. There were follow-up meetings and projects, which are detailed in Appendix B.

NGO activities varied and included lobbying for a cause through personal contacts with important officials, having meetings and conferences to spread a message to participants and also the media, and publishing brochures, newsletters or books to get across a message. Personal lobbying often accomplished finite tasks, like having an area cleared of garbage or removing taxes on tickets for a benefit, but less often led to policy change, like implementing a university curriculum of special education (despite several high-level promises). Actors with economic leverage seem to be more successful: the Egyptian Businessmen's Association reported influencing government policy through meetings and information. Other activities reached a larger number of people more directly, and thus probably had more lasting impact; these were through projects involving the more grassroots level of the population.

D6. Finances

Most groups had a small paid staff for clerical help, plus operating expenses for office space, utilities and projects like conferences, publications, or field activities; the projects were usually the largest expenses. Many said they had sufficient funding at present, but would have problems when a donor grant expired.

A minor source of income was dues, which ranged from 10 LE (The Egyptian Organization for Human Rights) to 1000 LE (Egyptian Businessmen's Association, or EBA) a year. With usually small memberships and low dues, they did not cover many expenses. The one exception was the EBA, which with its 400 members and high dues could boast that they accepted no outside funding. Another possible source of funds was MOSA, with which ten of the fifteen groups were registered. However, none reported receiving many funds directly from them, and four groups made a specific point of saying they did not take MOSA money; it seemed to make them feel more independent, and one said the small amount was not worth the paperwork involved.

A majority of groups (10) received funding from international donors, either bilaterals or international NGOs, usually for project activities. The only group to give a figure was the New Civic Forum, which is receiving \$120,000 a year for five years from the UNDP. Oxfam supports both human rights and health and environment groups. While proportions vary by year, CEOSS

reported that in 1993 52 percent of their funding was from groups outside Egypt (including Egypt-based bilaterals) and 48 percent from inside. The Center for Studies and Legal Information on Human Rights said they had funding from four bilaterals (Scandinavian and Canadian) and the MacArthur Foundation. The Scandinavians, the Dutch, the Canadians, and private American foundations were the major donors; several people mentioned the difficulty of accessing USAID funding, in terms of both time and conditions.

Groups which had no international funding were either well-off business groups (the EBA and Successful Career Women) or the less-sophisticated and active groups (the Egyptian Society for Health and Environmental Legislation and My Country).

Some groups which accepted international funds also raised their own money, often the majority of it. Examples include the Association for Protection of the Environment, whose composting plant and weaving centers pay nearly all the expenses for their work with garbage collectors, and the Right to Live Association, whose annual gala dinner, bazaar and ad booklet pay many expenses. The latter group also mentioned that Muslims should give 2 ½ percent of their income in zakat or charity, and that when people see a good cause like theirs, they will donate. CEOSS is trying to have more projects like their furniture factory, which provide both employment for local people and generate funds for their other activities, in order to become less dependent on donors.

Thus funds, especially to run projects, can be a problem for organizations dependent on outside donors. While such money may be useful to get an activity up and running, groups should explore more ways to generate their own funds, including employment activities which generate a surplus.

D7. Facilities

Nearly all the groups interviewed had their own office space, usually donated by a member or rented, and at least one phone, fax, and computer. The most poorly supplied groups were My Country and the National NGO Committee for Population and Development, the latter currently using Aziza Hussein's living room as an office, and neither group with a fax or computer. At the opposite end of the spectrum were the spacious offices of the New Civic Forum with large new wooden tables and black leather easy chairs, and the fully owned offices of the Egyptian Businessmen's Association, who are also the first group starting to use email and the Internet. Recall that all but two of these groups were in Cairo, and technical facilities may be many fewer at provincial sites.

Lack of physical facilities does not appear to be a constraint for these Cairo-based groups.

D8. Human Resources

A little over half of the groups said they had no human resource training needs, either among their hired staff or as volunteers running the organization. The seven groups who identified needs were quite sophisticated, requesting training in marketing or quality control of recycled paper (Association for Protection of the Environment), or with speechmaking and the mechanics of organization (National Committee on Population and Development), or with networking computers (CEOSS).

A common weakness was effective internal organization or accurate project identification and implementation. Yet most people seemed to feel their academic or social qualifications gave them general capabilities; workshops on needs identification would be useful. The people in leadership positions are usually the most active and would benefit from seminars to increase the group's efficacy, and offering special skills to other members could increase their level of activity. Paid staff were few and usually clerical; they might benefit from computer workshops.

D9. Networking

Most groups networked both within and outside Egypt. Nearly all worked with or lobbied some governmental group, and many had international contacts through NGOs or donors which funded them, or mutual interest groups like human rights or women.

In another sense of networking, that of contact between similar groups, somewhat fewer organizations were involved. The aim of the NCPD is to encourage networking among NGOs and through it strengthen their capacities, and the sector. Human rights groups networked with similar international groups, and the Center for Studies and Legal Information on Human Rights tries to encourage NGOs and civil society by inviting different ones to their week-long workshops.

Some groups' goal was to build networks, not of similar organizations but of different groups working toward a similar goal: development. CEOSS and the RCRD did this, building government-citizen-technical links.

Networking was done in a variety of ways, from contacts with similar organizations in Egypt, regionally and worldwide, to contact with groups in Egypt that would help one's cause, to building links between groups to work together. Some groups could use help on expanding their work in the last area, which would improve their effectiveness.

D10. Use of the Media

Media here includes press, radio and television coverage, the publication of brochures and regular newsletters or even newspapers. With relatively high illiteracy, printed media will be useful for group members and the elite, but radio and television are essential to reach the masses.

Nearly all groups said a major way to disseminate their views was with press, radio and television coverage of conferences. They were often held at deluxe hotels and high officials were invited because that increased the probability of media coverage. Yet such coverage is fleeting, and the chance for direct advocacy limited. Only two groups described using television in a more focused way. The Right to Live vice president had spoken on television about how one need not be ashamed to have a retarded child, and also on how government schools should include retarded children in special classes in regular public schools. CEOSS did six television shows describing their work with Dr. Saad Eddin Ibrahim, aired on his regular weekly program.

Other groups recognized the potential of television but had not been able to use it. The NCPD wanted to produce a program on FGM, but found that it would be very expensive and they did not have the funds. The Successful Career Women had two potential projects with television. One was to screen a film on the family problems caused by divorce which they had seen at a meeting; they tried to do so through personal connections, but the film was deemed too "bitter" for television. Their parent group, the American Chamber of Commerce in Egypt is

hoping to do a twice monthly television program using USAID funding, and they would like to be involved. The two human rights groups felt they had been denied coverage, or received negative coverage.

Five groups published a free newsletter between four times a year and once a month; others wanted to start or expand such an activity. Nearly all gave us publications describing their work briefly, copies of conference reports, or annual reports; Mr. El-Meehy has these materials.

While most groups made quite good use of printed media only a few were sophisticated about using television, which would be much more effective in getting their causes across to much larger groups. One reason so few do this may be limited access, both in terms of needing funding and of state control. This is an area that could be explored, including whether there are, or could be, public service announcements on television.

D11. Focus Advocacy on Policy Makers or Public Opinion

When asked how they directed their advocacy, six groups said they focused mainly on influencing policy makers, and ten said both them and public opinion, although three added that policy makers came first. This is because many elite actors have personal access to important figures who can influence decisions, and because the policy makers are a smaller, easier-to-reach group. Some leaders mentioned that the public was diverse and harder to convince of things, and one might add that reaching them requires access to media and an organized approach, not just picking up the phone. Further, mobilizing public opinion on issues is not an important part of elections or the political process.

While many groups attempt to influence policy makers, and sometimes do, more attention needs to be paid to working with public opinion.

E. Constraints

We examined factors that limited the effectiveness of organizations originating both within the organization and coming from outside in the form of cultural or legal limitations.

E1. Within the Organization

Most groups felt they had no internal constraints and that they functioned quite well. However, four mentioned a problem attracting younger members, who seem to have less time to volunteer. Two said they would like to be able to pay an office person as their activities expanded. Only two mentioned problems in running the organization itself; the Center for Studies and Legal Information on Human Rights lacked formal by-laws and had trouble coming to decisions, and also lacked volunteers with certain administrative skills. CEOSS mentioned that they had twenty five top level leaders, but needed to develop the competencies of the second level, and also to add more women to the two at the top level.

In fact, these last two groups demonstrate a level of sophistication in admitting their organizational problems. Many other groups could benefit from training on how to run an effective organization; the MOSA by-laws are not sufficient.

E2. Constraints Outside the Organization

General. A commonly-cited problem was the uncertainty or insufficiency of outside funding to continue projects. Two groups mentioned that the ignorance of government officials often hampered their operations, and two others mentioned that sharing information with officials helped advance their own causes. Two groups with a human rights or civil society orientation felt the media ignored them, and the Egyptian Organization for Human Rights said the papers only used their press releases on human rights violations by Islamists and not those against them. The two human rights groups also reported state attempts to discredit them, either by press reports that they were foreign-funded and thus 'fronts', or government agencies saying they were illegal, which was not true.

Law 32. There has been much discussion of the problems caused by Law 32 (see Ibrahim, Sullivan), which requires NGOs to register with MOSA and to have a MOSA representative on their board, at annual meetings, examining their books, and approving foreign donations.

This work revealed the ways groups actually deal with Law 32, which in general seems to be less restrictive than it appears in the literature. While one interviewee suggested that groups would be unwilling to complain about Law 32 to an outsider, speakers seemed frank.

Ten of these groups are registered under Law 32, one is "in-process," three are registered as non-profit civil companies in the Civil Register, and one is under the Ministry of Population. Most said Law 32 is not a serious problem for them, some saying they ignore it; four said it was mainly a bureaucratic hassle, but did not inhibit their functioning. One said it provided a useful legal cover (Egyptian Businessmen's Association), and two others that MSA connections actually facilitated their work. Several said they had no MSA people on the Board or at meetings even though they were registered.

Only one person in a registered group complained of MOSA directly constraining their activities in that it prohibited them from having activities in rural areas. Another said that it puts the brakes on organizational development instead of enabling it. A clue to how Law 32 operates may come from the New Civic Forum, whose leader said the group is registered with MOSA but it's not a problem because the official used to be his student. He hastened to add that he did not mean he had special influence, but that they knew what kind of a person he was and what kind of activities he would support.

In general, it seemed many groups could ignore Law 32, whether because of their connections or the socially acceptable nature of their work is not clear. It was the younger groups with a potentially threatening agenda, like human rights, which tried to avoid Law 32 or had problems with it. Thus Law 32 may not be a general constraint to NGO functioning, but only to certain types.

Legal change. We asked if groups expected any legal changes that would influence their operation, and the majority did not. One said explicitly that he felt Law 32 would not change; he wrote a book proposing a new law years ago, and nothing has happened. Another leader said he thought modifications to the Law would be useful, and one other that she expected de facto if not de jure changes in it—but neither saw an imminent legal change. A third leader said she felt a legally mandated NGO union would be useful, so groups with like interests could network. Finally, one person thought there might be a restrictive change in the law that allows companies to register as civil and non-profit, but he hopes not because it is useful to him.

Although there is much talk in some arenas about changing Law 32 for NGO registration, the groups interviewed did not seem to feel this was likely, nor did most feel the Law was a large constraint on their operations. It seemed groups with high level connections could virtually ignore it.

Disputes with the state. I asked groups for examples of disagreements with the state in order to see which areas they arose in and how they were settled. Ten of the fifteen groups gave examples, which are detailed in Appendix B, paragraph 4.b. of the interviews. The areas were quite varied, but in two cases they threatened the continued existence of human rights groups, and in two more they involved serious irritations. A group for NGO coordination was threatened with domination by the Ministry officials they work with, and a civic group was audited by the State, inappropriate since they are registered with MOSA. Solutions fell into three categories.

- The majority of disagreements were dealt with through personal connections and/or lobbying government officials.
- In two cases, both contact with officials and popular pressure was applied. AHED obtained an official order through connections and encouraged workers to strike, succeeding in closing a polluting battery factory. The other case involved an interesting reversal of the usual pattern of elite control of outcomes: the Association for Environmental Protection successfully lobbied officials to remove the rent they pay on public land which houses their facilities. Yet when the decision reached the local popular council they reversed it, saying they needed the income.
- Three cases used the Law. The two human rights groups and AHED all used legal expertise to show state actions were not legal.

Disputes with the state were usually not confrontational, and instead involved personal lobbying. A few cases involved wider group support, or use of the law.

F. Needs and Acceptable Funding

While it was expected that many groups would oppose USAID funding for political reasons, a few said the “conditions” would have to be acceptable, but only two said a direct “no.” These two were the NCPD and the Center for Studies and Legal Information on Human Rights, which both felt direct American funding would limit their credibility with some social groups. (Given media accusations about outside support against the Egyptian Organization for Human Rights, it was surprising they would accept.) Those two, and all others, could accept funds through an international donor.

Several people mentioned the difficulty of accessing USAID funds, citing both the bureaucratic and organizational requirements, and the long lead time. That may be why most who have foreign funding have it through other bilateral donors, and would also be a reason for USAID to work through an international group or groups rather than to fund groups directly.

Many groups said they could use more computers, email and other software, and a few needed faxes or audiovisual equipment. Some need materials for their projects, like translated books on special education for the Right to Live Association.

In terms of training and technical assistance, many expressed a need for more computer training and some wanted to strengthen their skills in business administration, management, or English. A few wanted support for conference travel, or to see projects similar to their own. Relatively few (including NCPD, the Center for Studies and Legal Information on Human Rights, and RCRD) requested training to improve skills in running their organization, although most groups could use such help. In Appendix B, section 5 of each interview lists specific needs expressed.

G. Recommended Actions

The wide array of Egyptian NGOs which advocate various causes offers USAID the opportunity to work with different types of groups and to see which results best fit their goal of increasing participation in decision making.

USAID should work through an international NGO like CARE or Save the Children, so that all groups would have access to assistance, and to avoid problems with meeting USAID accounting and other requirements. USAID should be wary of working in a special relationship with any one Egyptian NGO, given the current competitive climate. The international group could serve as an NGO support center, offering seminars or workshops to NGO officers and/or members in several areas:

- Needs identification - which would allow groups to choose which of the other workshops would be most useful to them
- Organizational management - including broadening the decision-making process, and expansion of membership in both numbers and involvement
- Fundraising and/or income generation
- Proposal writing
- English, for proposal writing and access to literature
- Project identification and implementation
- Advocacy strategies—including speechwriting, public relations, and work with radio and television
- Networking—locally, nationally, regionally, and internationally
- Computer techniques—networking machines, email, Internet

Some groups could be more effective with access to certain commodities, including computer software, particularly for email, more computers, faxes, and access to literature on the activities of similar NGOs in other areas.

Finally, USAID should also make strong efforts to include provincial groups, even if their advocacy is potential, since these areas are often left out of development. They should also try to include some groups which advocate causes the state can support and which may attract

international funding. Supporting mentally handicapped children is one such possibility. Such groups have a better chance of influencing the state, thus rewarding the efforts of advocates.

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ANNEX A
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR PVOs

1. The Organization

- a. Can you tell me about the purpose of the organization? (advocacy, political, social welfare, human rights? IF civil co, HOW non-profit?)
- b. History: When begun? By whom? Major changes? When and why?
- c. How does the leader (speaker) describe their own position?
- d. Long term goals include: changing public opinion? policy? strengthen role of PVO sector?
- e. How will you work toward long-term goals? (Lobby MPs, speeches, conferences, newsletters).

2. Institutional Functioning and Capabilities

- a. Organizational structure (officers: selection, gender, functions, period served; branches; member recruitment; committees; special services)
- b. Rules: written by-laws? on what?
- c. Members: volunteers? salaried? numbers? ages and soc-ec level? gender?
- d. Institutional activities? frequency? members active (debate) or passive (pay dues)? describe how.
- e. Decision-making process - get example, see role of membership, also perhaps constituency (are they the same?)
- f. Expenses: categories (salaries, supplies), have enough to cover? what need more \$ for? sources (members, MSA, donors?) open to international? annual report available or brochure?
- g. Current facilities: space, phone, fax, computer, etc.
- h. Human resource development: staff skills, provide or need training
- i. Networking: communicate with other organizations? local? international?
- j. Media: use pamphlets, newsletter, foreign broadcasts to reach others? Other ways to get message out?
- k. Do you try to influence public opinion or decision makers? How? What is most effective?

3. Constraints

- a. Organizational: structure, funding, facilities, people's relationships
- b. From outside:
 - cultural values limit support (human rights, women's groups?)
 - legal/political: law 32, state influence, state people in it
 - ignored by mass media

4. The Future

- a. Of their activities and projects. Is there an action plan? (potentially more advocacy?)
[could tie to constraints]
- b. Of the relation between their organization and the state
 - expect legal changes? effect?
 - any disputes with state? If so, get info for case history, including mechanisms involved, like media or public opinion.

5. Needs

If an international PVO had a program to help organizational development, what would you find useful?

- a. Training (speeches, fundraising, computer), travel (conferences)
- b. Technical assistance (expert to help with ___)
- c. Commodities (office equipment, software)

6. Observations

ANNEX B
INTERVIEWS

Interview with Dr. Gamal Gordon (4/6 and 4/8/95)
(Susan Davis with Tamer El-Meehy)

Egyptian Society for Health and Environmental Legislation
13 Mamaleek Street, Heliopolis, Cairo
Tel. 258-5999, 258-8100

1. Activities and projects

a. The organization works to encourage legislation to protect the environment.

b. The association began in 1974 as the Egyptian Association of Medicine and Law, founded by him at Alexandria University. In 1983 it became the current association. Before that, in 1978, he wrote a proposal on how to deal with the environment, including 8 separate offices, and gave it to Mubarak when he was vice president.

c. Dr. Gordon is the founder and president of the Association. The group advocates measures to protect the environment, largely by Dr. Gordon's lobbying with influential politicians (Governors, Attorney General; he was to meet Nasser in 1969, about 3 months before he died). Members of his group do studies (of traffic patterns in a square near his office, of a village 18 km from Cairo) to support their recommendations.

d. Long-term goals are to affect policy concerning the environment, and also to educate the public about the need to care for the environment.

e. The group works toward its goals now mainly by Dr. Gordon's lobbying important government officials to make changes favorable to the environment (see cases below). He also holds an annual conference on June 4 or 6 (the 5th is the UN's environment day, so he leaves that for the government, so those officials can attend his function); it is aimed at policy makers, but also gets newspaper publicity. He has also written letters to the editors of the two official newspapers; he waits until there has already been some discussion, then tries to sum it up. He would like to start a monthly newsletter in Arabic and English on health and environment matters, aimed at the elite (see 4 below).

2. Institutional Functioning and Capabilities

a. The organization now has about 200 members. At first they were limited to doctors, lawyers and engineers (he said for reasons of "maturity"), but people objected, so he allows in liberal arts grads; one must apply and be accepted. He estimates the members are 2/3 male and 1/3 female. The youngest are about 30, but recently he has begun a youth branch, ages 7-teens.

a+. The group's major activity is the conference once a year on a major topic; in 1995 it will be on the Environment of the Egyptian Village; other topics have been smoking and car accidents. About 450-500 people attend the meeting, which is held at a large hotel, to encourage them. There are also monthly meetings of the Board, required by the Ministry of Social Affairs (MSA), under which they are registered. The members elect the board and pay dues, and sometimes participate in environmental studies; they do not appear to be very active.

b. The group's formal rules are those required by the MSA. They have informal by-laws as well; I have no examples. Leaders are an 11-member board (which now has 2 women) who are elected annually. There is no time limit on their service; Dr. Gordon has been president ever since founding the group.

b+. The Association has a president, vice president, secretary and bursar, all chosen from the Board. They approve individual memberships. [Would be interesting to know Orthodox/Muslim composition.] No Board members are from the MSA. It does not seem there are other special committees, but sometimes members are called on to carry out studies for the group, to present to officials.

c. An example of one of the group's decisions is of a topic for the annual conference. Dr. Gordon appears to present the topic, and the Board approves it; they have confidence in him based on past successes. One could say the constituency is the entire population, since they will benefit from a better environment; they are not involved, except perhaps those reached by media coverage of the annual conference or letters in the paper.

d. Expenses go mainly for the Annual Meeting/Conference and for studies. Dr. Gordon said they spent about LE 3000 for a study of Ramses Square, including having photos taken from a crane, which the MSA thought was expensive. The group donated the study to the Governorate. Their funding comes from selling "vouchers" for the organization during a 3-month period each year; he said this was the best and only way, and that other means took too much time and worry, so he couldn't focus on important organizational issues. Of this money, 5 percent goes to organizational staff, which he said is sufficient, and 15 percent to the sellers of tickets (train station employees, others?); he feels the latter should be raised to 20 percent. There are also dues which should bring in about LE 1,200/yr. They are open to donations from international organizations, though they receive none yet; they just must report them to the MSA. They do not have other major donors, though sometimes he spends his own money. Currently the Board meets in his office; they could use more equipment and a larger meeting space; see 5 below.

e. He has a phone and fax in his office, and is not interested in a computer (see 5 below).

f. He is an endocrinologist, specializing in diabetes, and also finished a B.A. in law in the last 10 years, so he could better understand legal questions. His members have the skills necessary to do studies, but he would like an environmental teacher trainer (see 5 below).

g. His group communicates with the Egyptian Environmental Protection Organization (EPA) within the Prime Minister's office, which it tries to influence, as well as other public officials. He did not mention working with other local environmental groups. He is also head of the Danish-Egyptian Friendship Society (or a similar title), and one result is that the Danish Prime Minister met the Egyptian Prime Minister and told him about Dr. Gordon's group, which led to more official action on the issue. He has attended international conferences on garbage with an Egyptian official, and learned a lot, but not been given to chance to communicate it back home. He wanted himself or the official to tell the majlis shaabi or local council of about 30 what they learned about garbage, traffic control, and electricity: the official said "sure," but has done nothing yet.

h. Currently he uses the annual conference and its media coverage, and occasional letters to newspapers to publicize his cause; he would like a newsletter or bulletin (see 4 & 5).

i. His main efforts at change are directed at decision makers, like the three Governors in the Cairo area, the Prime Minister, and the Minister of Justice (see example in 4 below). He used his personal connections to the Prime Minister of Denmark and his acquaintance with the brother of the Egyptian Prime Minister, as well as his offering medical advice to the latter, to enhance his ability to discuss the environment with them. He mentioned that one could go to the press and complain if one's suggestions were ignored (as some of his were recently), but said he felt that was unethical.

3. Constraints

a. He did not mention constraints within the organization except those described in # 5 which limit his expansion in a new direction.

b. He seems to feel that if people are more aware of the importance of the environment, they will protect it more, so their ignorance could be a constraint. He did not describe how law 32 was an encumbrance, though he did sound negative about it at one point; he did feel he could function within the rules. He said that the 1994 annual meeting was called "The Salvation of Greater Cairo," and although the Governor objected to the title, it stayed, and he attended. He used the word "impotence," he said in a medical sense, to describe many officials: they WANT to help, but they CAN'T. Yet in other cases he described getting his case to the highest officials, and expecting change (see #4).

4. The Future

a. Dr. Gordon has several plans for the future. One is to get the current environment legislation strengthened (see 5 below); he feels it currently has no teeth. A second goal is to publish a monthly bulletin (his term) or newsletter on health and environment, directed at the elite. He already has a title ("Prudence") and showed us a "prototype" consisting of International Herald Tribune clippings (it would be such extracts, also translated into Arabic) about health and/or environment. A third goal is to have a center where he would train teachers to teach teachers (volunteers) about the environment. That would necessitate space and supplies (#5).

b. In future relations with the state, Dr. Gordon expects the State to conform to his organization's recommendations. He has tried to influence the State concerning environment for many years, and the description of that situation provides a useful case history of the operation of his Society.

In 1978, Dr. Gordon drafted a proposal for environmental protection (copy enclosed); this was well before the 1983 change of his group's name to include "Environment." It was given to Mubarak when he was Vice President, but no action was taken. In fact, it took 11 years until the Government established an official EPA in 1989, with 6 members; it is now 10. (Dr. Gordon compared this to 11,000 EPA employees in the U.S.; to be proportional by population, Egypt should have 2,200.) He said the establishment was elated to the Danish Prime Minister meeting with Egypt's Prime Minister, and the former telling the latter about Dr. Gordon's work being valuable.

Yet the EPA as established lacks teeth, and only does studies and advises. There was a new law under consideration in 1993 which Dr. Gordon felt was very weak; he sent a fax to the President of the House of Commons, saying that it must be discussed before being voted on. He accomplished that goal, but Dr. Gordon was not one of the speakers; he said only those who

agreed with the status quo were invited. The new law, #4 of 1994, still lacks teeth.

Dr. Gordon says what is needed is a parquet or Attorney General for the Environment, who can impose punishments for violations, and also an "Environment Squad" that has the means to immediately investigate problems. He has proposed such changes, and expects soon to have a meeting with the national Attorney General Riga El Arabi and the Minister of Justice to discuss this. Another provision that is included is that private citizens will be able to sue for environmental violations. He expects a decree to come out of this meeting that will result in rules conforming to his proposals.

5. Needs from International NGO

a. His largest need is for technical assistance and/or training to be able to expand the reach of his organization. He would like an expert to train teachers who would train volunteers to teach about the environment. They could work with different groups, including schools, government offices, businesses and mosques. In the latter case, one could train imams who might put a message on environment into their weekly talks.

b. The goal of expanding the group reached involves the need for more space, so perhaps 60 people could meet together; he felt that an adequate flat could cost 50-55,000 LE. Useful equipment would be an overhead projector, a slide projector, a video projector, a fax and a phone. He mentioned they have the last 12 annual meetings on videotape, with about 6 tapes each. These consist of experts on different topics and could be part of the curriculum. We suggested a computer for the Bulletin, but he felt that would be too complex. However, he could use funding to buy the newsprint for it; he decided glossy paper would be too expensive. He said there are already two newsletters supported by external donors, one by Canadian CIDA and one by the Germans.

6. Observations

Dr. Gordon appears to be very central in his organization, which does indeed influence policy. He is able to do this because of his personal connections with policy makers, prevailing on them to introduce issues or obtain decrees. While this is very centralized and seems to involve limited public participation, it is a way for someone outside the official structure to influence policy, and perhaps the most likely to be effective today. Because of his personal interest in the topic, he provides expertise in the topic that many policy makers lack. He also seems to want to reach out and reach a wider population about the importance of protecting the environment, both through a newsletter or bulletin aimed at the elite, and through training teachers to work with wider groups. At one point I asked him how he could be more effective in this work, and he said he would like to be like Ralph Nader. I asked if that meant people would fear his opinion, and he said not fear, but people would be embarrassed to ignore it.

Interview with Dr. Khalid Mansour (4/9/95)
(Susan S. Davis with Tamer El-Meehy)

Association for Health and Environmental Development
17 Beirut Street, 5th Floor, Apt. 605, Heliopolis, Cairo
tel. 256-5612 fax 256-9427

1. The Organization

a. The main objective is to “criticize existing health and environmental policy” and suggest rational alternatives to policy makers, both in meetings and by sending copies of their reports. They also work as coordinators and give technical support to 15 grassroots NGOs, including training. A third goal is to advocate for good health and environmental services; an example is being a sponsor of a conference stressing the problems of female genital mutilation (with meraa gedida). Thus their advocacy aims to change both policy and public opinion, and they also work toward improving people's health and environment through a model health center they support.

b. The organization was founded in 1987 by a group of about ten from the medical syndicate, the same group that founded Young Doctors. The main founder was Dr. Abdel Refaq Alef, who has since died. One change is that 3 years ago the group began to do strategic planning, including refining the group's structure. There are now two main branches of the Association or AHED: The Center for Environmental Development Services (CHEDS) and the El Waily Primary Health Care Center. The former does mainly research and advocacy and the latter is a model for health care delivery.

c. Dr. Mansour is the coordinator for the Committee running the Health Policies and Systems Program, one of four programs of CHEDS. He also described himself as one of the “younger guard” of those under 30; they sometimes disagree with those over 40, who are the majority on the board. The younger group do less volunteer work in the programs, as they are working to establish themselves and have less time.

d. The group's long term goal is to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the health care infrastructure. They want to encourage health reform on the model of primary health care, working with limited resources and encouraging community participation. One example is that they are working with grassroots NGOs, the Ministry of Health (MOH) and university consultants to develop a curriculum manual for community health workers. Their actions include changing both public opinion and policy.

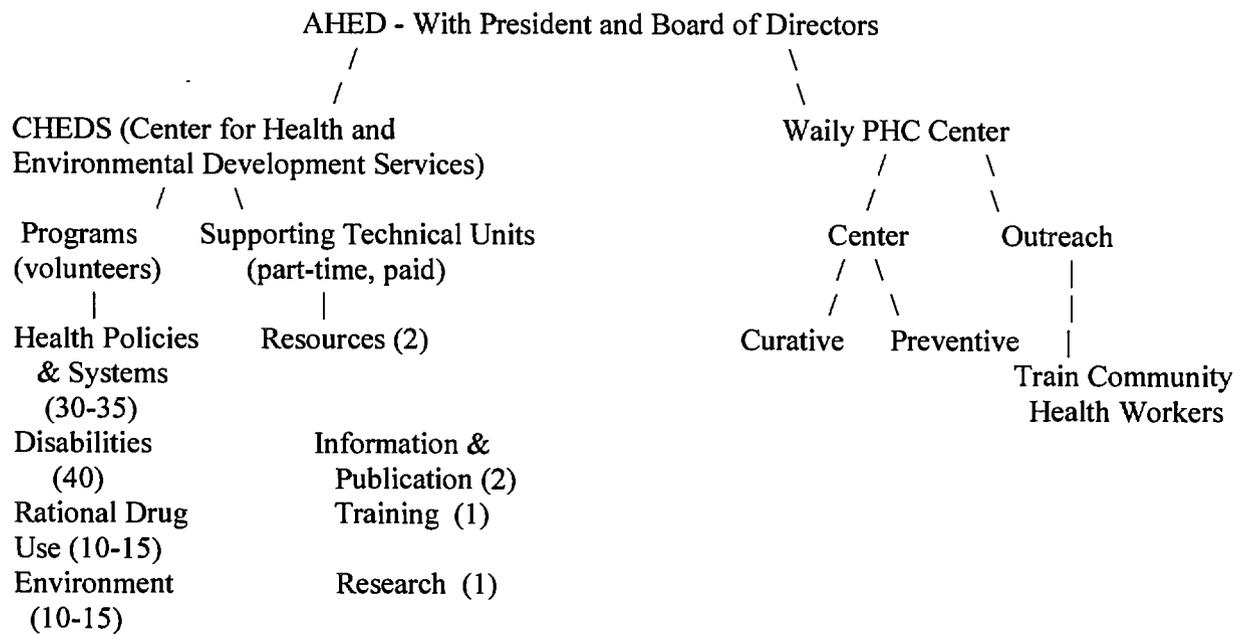
e. Their campaign against female genital mutilation (FGM) illustrates several of the ways they work toward goals. While the Ministry of Health (MOH) outlawed female genital mutilation in 1951, recently a Minister of Health allowed hospitals to do it. AHED took him to court. They also held seminars on the topic, 3 for doctors and 3 for public health workers, plus some for women. They publicized it by mail, using their list plus that of 2 other organizations who co-sponsored the seminar; 1,000 attended. The other 2 groups are el-meraa el-gedida and the Nadim Center (for the rehabilitation of victims of violence). Dr. Mansour said at the seminar the sponsors almost came to blows with members of the medical syndicate, who are Islamist and favor FGM; diplomacy calmed things down. They are proposing to use some of the conference proceedings plus other articles as a training manual on the topic; Tamer got a copy.

Thus they used a conference, legal pressure, and written materials to communicate their

views; besides the manual, they published 8 articles in national newspapers and magazines like Al Ahram and Al Musawwar. Currently they publish a newsletter four times a year with a circulation of about 1,000. They are also trying to form a regional group (including Egypt, Morocco, Sudan, Syria, Iran and Turkey) as a Middle East Forum to collaborate with the international Social Science and Medicine Newsletter. They also want to publish two Arabic regional newsletters, one on primary health care and another on community-based rehabilitation for disabilities. They expect the first issues to be in 1996. They also work with the MOH on developing a manual for community health workers, so they use cooperation and offers of assistance to achieve their goals. They want to work with television directors to produce a film on the problems of disabled children.

2. Institutional Functioning and Capabilities

a. The group has a president who is elected each year; it is currently Dr. Zuhair Noaman, who has been in office five years, and there is no term limit. There are also 7 on the board of directors, some of whom are elected each year; 3 are currently women, and none are from MSA. Other officers are the 4 program coordinators (one a woman) plus one board member and one person working with the Waily Primary Health Care (PHC) Center. The structure is a bit complicated, but also well thought out, as diagramed below.



Each of the programs (like committees) has a coordinator, and from 10-15 members (environment and rational [prescription] drug use), to 30-35 (health) or 40 (disability). Programs also have subgroups, and core teams of subgroup heads.

Both CHEDS and the Waily Center are urban-based, but the group also has begun health care work in a rural area.

b. AHED has written by-laws; they will be sent to Tamer.

c. Most members work as volunteers, with the exception of the 6 part-time paid staff. Dr. Mansour estimated there are 40-50 active AHED members, of whom more than half are women; from a list in the office, it was perhaps 40 percent women. Most members are university professors,

and several are doctors. In addition there are about 75 people who are "friends" of the group (some volunteer services and join later), and another 400 on the mailing list; Dr. Mansour didn't know about the gender breakdown of these groups.

d. The whole organization meets twice a year, once to discuss its policy and once for elections. An executive committee of 4 (from the board) meets weekly about ongoing business. Each subgroup of a program may meet once a month; Dr. Mansour says there is a meeting at their facility approximately every other day. It seems the active members are quite active, with frequent meetings, planning and carrying out activities. For example, the group on the rational use of prescription drugs is action-oriented, alerting doctors and the public to side effects of certain drugs by having seminars and giving lists to hospitals. They also work with AHED's policy group, looking at the effect of the drug industry on health policy.

The description in 1.e. on the FGM conference is another example of their activities.

Finally, their environmental group found that in a Cairo slum area there were two battery factories that were the main cause of lead levels being ten times the allowed concentration. At first they got the factory to use buffers to cut the levels, but that was not sufficient. AHED used the policy level by helping someone get elected to the Majlis Shaab, where he raised the issue. They used public opinion by giving local people free treatment, along with education on the issue, at the Waily Public Health Center. The factory workers went on strike to close the factory, and people also talked to the plant manager, and finally both plants were closed down by official order in 1992 or 1993.

e. Dr. Mansour described a disagreement between the older (40s) and younger (under 30) members of the group with regard to how radical to be in their approach to FGM. The older group was more conservative, and were willing to have the Sheikh Al Azhar and the Mufti organize a debate on FGM, but the younger group did not want to leave it to religious authorities; they wanted it to be more secular. The younger group prevailed by telling the elders that they would run for the board and displace them next election, and the result was the FGM workshop they held.

f. Dues are LE 20 a year, bringing in about LE 1000. They are registered under Law 32 of the MSA and could get about LE 100 a year, but do not because they feel it is not worth the extra supervision it would entail. Dr. Mansour first said their main uncovered expenses were for computer operation and maintenance; AHED's well-presented background data suggest they use the equipment to good result. Then he presented information on each of the 4 programs with a "real" and an "actual" budget; the latter is the figure without volunteer labor. For his health group, the actual budget was \$50,000, and \$90,000 if one counted work contributed by volunteers. He also said AHED spends about LE 2,000 for program seminars, including beverages.

About 50 percent of their funding is donated, by members; one donated their office space which is an apartment. The rest is from an English group called Appropriate Health Resources and Technologies Action Group (AHRTAG), which is supported by WHO; Dr. M was not sure if they received the money direct or through MSA. Oxfam supports the Waily PHC Center. Thus they are open to international funding, and also to USAID, if AHED and USAID's policies are in agreement (e.g., needs some discussion, but not totally closed).

g. Current facilities include phones, fax, 3 computers, photocopier, video, TV, and an overhead projector.

h. They feel their human resource needs are filled by members and staff.

i. AHED seems to be in touch with several kinds of organizations, within Egypt, in the region, and internationally. They held the FGM seminars with 2 Egyptian NGOs, and meet with MOH people, and some from other ministries, like insurance; they're working with a similar combination of groups to develop a curriculum manual for community health workers. They work with 15 NGOs for whom they provide training, technical aid and consultancies, including 3 in Cairo slums and 3 in Upper Egypt. He said they meet monthly with twelve NGOs and he would send Tamer a list of their names; their work includes how to work together on a primary health care newsletter, and discussing a workshop on the role of NGOs in the health area. They receive funds from 2 international groups.

j. They produce a newsletter with a circulation of 1,000 four times a year, give doctors and hospitals documents on drug side effects, and have news articles in major papers about their work, like the 8 on the FGM conference. Conferences and seminars are aimed at the professional community and some get public coverage like FGM.

k. They try to influence both public opinion (through conferences, press coverage), and policy makers, through working with many department directors at the Ministry of Health plus some of the top officials, the latter on health policy (prescribing many drugs and tests) and health insurance, or doing a study on risk factors for childhood disabilities. He feels it's more feasible to influence policy makers, through personal meetings, and reports sent to them.

Their role in closing the battery factory (see 2.d.) was based on both on influencing public opinion and policy makers.

3. Constraints

a. Internal constraints include funding: it's hard to get (especially younger) volunteers to do the work, and payment would help, and projects like the newsletter also require funds. They would also be more effective if they could afford more basic staff; they now have a secretary only 5-9 PM. He mentioned briefly that women's interests sometimes led to problems in organizational policy, but didn't elaborate.

b. There are several external constraints. Although they work with the MOH in some areas, there are also some problems. One is the difficulty of access to health data, like research on schistosomiasis done with USAID; they can't get it in order to develop policy suggestions. Another problem is coordination: the MOH, 13 universities and national councils do health research, but there is no body to identify priorities, and no coordination on outcomes.

Law 32 is also a constraint. While MOSA does not interfere directly in their work, it limits them. For example, the Law allows them to work at the model center for primary health care in Cairo, but not in rural areas, where they in fact have 3 centers in Ismailia covering about 4,000 people. Even the Cairo model center needs more effort and staff, but Law 32 prevents their expanding in this way.

4. The Future

a. Many of their plans are described in 1.d. and e. above, including developing two regional health-related newsletters in Arabic, a regional social science and health group, doing a manual for community health workers, using the work from their FGM seminar in a training manual, and producing a TV program on disabled children.

b. He feels the increasing influence of Fundamentalists threatens NGO work. Law 32 may be amended; he feels NGOs should participate.

This group's dispute with the State was a tactical move: they sued the Minister of Health for allowing FGM in State hospitals, since it had been outlawed in general. Thus they took a confrontational stance; he didn't say if the case had been ruled on yet. Thus they used State apparatus to confront the State.

5. Needs

They could and have accepted assistance from international NGOs, and might accept direct USAID help if "their conditions agreed." He feels they have sufficient technical and training skills, but could use commodities like specialized audio-visual equipment, like something that could print pictures from the computer onto slides to use in training sessions.

6. Observations

AHED seems very well-organized into working groups, with a clear organizational structure. They network with the government and with NGOs, operate a model primary health center in a community, and have influenced public opinion and policy makers to close a polluting battery factory, leading to better environmental and individual health.

Interview with Dr. Yosria Loza (4/9/95)
(Susan S. Davis with Tamer El-Meehy)

The Association for Protection of the Environment
5 Hakim Ala-Al, Mansheit Naser, Mokattam, Cairo
Tel. 354-3305, 340-0934, 510-2723

1. Activities and Projects

a. Dr. Loza described the function of the Association as upgrading the condition of the lives of a second generation of garbage collectors in Egypt, allowing them to live a human life, and also to convince Egyptian society of their importance. The latter is an advocacy role, but the group seems mainly to promote social welfare for garbage collectors, especially females in their families. They do this through programs for literacy associated with income generation (girls make rag rugs and recycle carpets), a "club" that functions to educate 150 street children, and health work. Recently they have carried out a study (funded by Ford) of 450 apartment dwellers in Manial and Malak, to encourage them to sort food garbage separately from everything else; 60 percent of families complied. This would serve to further improve the lives of garbage collectors: both the people's and animals' health improved, and women saved at least 2 hours a day in sorting, time they could use to sew and earn money. Another type of advocacy they plan to pursue is to encourage the use of such sorting throughout Cairo.

b. The Association was founded in 1984 under the same name, growing out of the idea of a nun, Soeur Emmanuelle, who lived with the garbage people and saw that after sorting, women were still left with food remains and animal waste. She had the idea of using it for compost and found a Swiss machine to process it in 1982 and 1983, and the Association was begun by Dr. Loza. In fact she had worked with the garbage collectors before that, teaching them accounting (her specialty; she has a company). The main change since beginning is that in the last 3 years four branches have begun, so "markazi" has been added to the group's name.

c. Dr. Loza is the co-founder (the other is the treasurer) and President of the Association, and plays a central role in its functioning, both through her energy and her personal connections.

d. The group's long term goals include having branches in other parts of Cairo and of Egypt, raising people's awareness about the importance and respectability of garbage collectors, and to have separating food from other garbage become widespread.

e. There are currently four nascent branches, in Irgada, Sharmoukh, Wadi Natroun and Toraa (near Maadi). They need to be registered with the Ministry of Social Affairs (MSA) to be official, but Dr. Loza wants each to be generating an income before they have a paid staff; they are not that developed. Currently each is supervised by a committee, and reports are sent to the MSA. They have had some meetings on the topic, and recently some members are publishing books and articles. They have also recently hired a public relations person.

2. Institutional Functioning and Capabilities

a. The organization has a 9-person Board, and officers including president, 2 vice presidents, a secretary and a treasurer. Board members are chosen for what they can contribute; they include Dr.

Lila Kamel, who teaches literacy through income-generating work, Mary Assad who works on health, and she added Aziza Hussein when they needed expertise on women's concerns. They are "elected," with a strong influence from the president; there is no time limit on time one can serve. There are a total of 32 members who serve on committees, both for the new branches and for the functioning of different groups (children's club, rug making, etc.). There is also an executive committee composed of chairs of each committee. Three of nine board members are male, and about 1/3 of members are male; women are about 2/3 of both board and members.

b. The group has written by-laws, as required by the MSA.

c. There are 32 members, including the Board, all volunteers and 2/3 women. Dr. Loza has closed the membership to older people and encourages younger ones. She said "Two things can kill an NGO in Egypt: [having] the same board and president, and stopping getting young members." She has recently added 2 young women to the board. Members appear to be professional or well-placed people; there is no one from the MSA.

d. Members meet at least once a month in committees, to oversee and plan action. It sounds like each committee plays an active role in this way. The activities they oversee include the paper recycling, composting, and rag rug making; people learn literacy, health and income generation on the job in one of these areas, all of which generate income. There is also a "club" for 150 street children and a mechanical training center.

e. One example of decision making in the group occurred when two men joined and wanted to run for election to the board. As president, Dr. Loza suggested they work on committees first, to become familiar with the organization and become known. One never came back, and the other only attended twice. This seems typical of her strong role in the organization. We heard few examples of the constituency (garbage collectors) participating, except that one young man has learned English and speaks to visitors, and that two (?) young women took part in the pre-Beijing meetings and will attend in Dr. Loza's place.

f. The association is entirely self-supporting except for the replacement of large composting equipment. Most funds come from the operation of their projects: 341,000 LE from sale of compost, 250,000 LE from sales of rugs and carpets, and 27,000 LE from sale of recycled paper in 1994, for a total of 618,000 LE. Compost sales covers most costs of running the association, including 70 percent of the cost of a staff of about 11, including teachers. Income from rugs and paper is paid to 517 girls and 20-22 boys who work in those areas. Expenses include 26,000 LE a year to the municipality to rent the land their 3 buildings in Cairo are on, and a Ph.D. in composting to run that facility. They have an annual report including finances which Dr. Loza will send to Tamer.

They receive no funds from the MSA, although they are registered, and 12 LE/member/year as dues. In addition, members may give donations, often in kind, or help with fundraising. One example is that the maintenance of the composting equipment is done by the major maintenance engineer in Egypt at 1/10 his normal price because he admires their goals. They are open to international funding, and have a grant from Ford to do research on separating garbage (see above). They are also open to USAID, which has funded replacement of the 1.8 million LE compost equipment; see details under 4b below. Dr. Loza said they can cover costs of up to 100,000 LE, but need help with really big expenses like the compost equipment.

g. They seem to have quite adequate facilities. They have three buildings in Cairo, where they do their activities and also have Association meetings. They have phone, fax, xerox, computer

and printer, and machine tools for car repairs, three cars, and two garbage loaders, many of which were donated.

h. They have limited human resource needs, including someone to help with marketing of rag rugs and recycled paper (which they have requested from “the French,” and an expert to help improve the quality of the paper they make.

i. The example of networking Dr. Loza gave was with the head of the government's environmental branch, the EEAA, Saleh Hafez. She called him their “godfather,” for one thing because he suggested them as beneficiaries to USAID. They are also involved with planning for Beijing.

j. Dr. Loza feels she was too quiet about her work in the past. In the last few years, board members have pointed this out, and they have had two conferences and hired a public relations person. She feels they could use newspapers and TV more, to press for household garbage sorting.

k. Dr. Loza has worked influenced decision makers via her personal connections; see 4 below. As an individual she encourages people she speaks to about the value of garbage collection, but there is no concerted media effort.

3. Constraints

a. There do not appear to be constraints within the group. However, Dr. Loza noted that a static president could be a problem; she has held the office for 10 years. However, she has convinced Dr. Lila Kamel to take over for her next year.

b. Outside constraints include people's disdain for garbage collectors, although Dr. Loza did not mention it as a constraint. She did not care for law 32, mainly because of bureaucratic problems; she did not seem to fear any confiscation of funds. She also approved the policy that if the MSA does not answer something in 15 days, one can go ahead—which she does. Law 32 does not seem to constrain her much; she doesn't pay too much attention beyond the letter of the law, and also mentioned that she does them favors, like loaning cars or rugs. Other dealings with the state have constrained the group's activities; see 4b below.

4. The Future

a. They plan to continue current activities, and to expand them all over Egypt. Dr. Loza is currently much involved in the start-up stages of similar work in the Toraa neighborhood. They also plan to do more public relations, which would include advocacy for sorting food and other garbage at the household level.

b. They are not really expecting any legal changes, but would LIKE to have things reorganized so they fell under the EEAA instead of the MSA. This would make their lives easier, since the EEAA understands and supports their activities, rather than imposing bureaucratic brakes.

They have had two disputes involving the state. One was about trying to have the 26,000 LE annual rental for the land they use removed. Dr. Loza went to the local governor, who agreed, and he sent it to a committee, who agreed and issued a decree. That went to the local popular council of the municipality, and they refused, saying they needed the money, so a year of work came to nothing. The appeal was based on personal connections, not opinion. In fact, it seems that the refusal might

illustrate more popular participation, since the local council did not cave in to higher authorities, and in fact could use the money.

Another dispute involved whether they could accept 1.8 million LE given by USAID to replace the composting equipment. The Association had no ideological problem, but the state bureaucracy passed it from Ministry to Ministry, and she pursued it, again through her own or her family's personal connections. It still is not cleared, but she's vowed to pursue it "until she dies;" she thinks it will eventually work, but it has wasted lots of time.

Dr. Loza also tried to influence decision makers by tell the head of the EEAA about her group. He had never heard of them, but in this case there was a positive result: he recommended them to USAID, which allocated funds for the composter.

Dr. Loza said one could influence decision makers via newspaper articles, but her actions suggests personal influence is more salient.

5. Needs

They could use help with a marketing expert (who seems already promised by France), and the capital cost of the composter, which is in process. Finally, she said they have a good proposal from EQI on encouraging household separation of garbage, which would lead to better recycling, and wondered if USAID could fund that.

6. Observations

While this group seems to have been very effective in running a project that largely supports itself, their advocacy is limited to encouraging a better public image of garbage collectors and having people sort their garbage.

Interview with Madga el Shafei (4/16/95)
(Susan S. Davis)

My Country Association
47, Ramses Street, Apt. 43, Cairo
Tel. 574-3813

(Mrs. Shafei and several officers of her group were present, including Mrs. Hasham, whose husband had been Minister of Education, and her daughter Hoda who had gone to Smith on scholarship in the late 50s, Fadela, a quiet woman who designed the flowers to be embroidered on towels, and a more outspoken woman in a turban, Amina. Mrs. Shafei did most of the talking, but Hoda helped often with English.)

1. Activities and Projects

a. Mrs. Shafei initially said their goals were "awareness and education" and added that it was hard to attain them. She went on to say that they want to "give people the knowledge, skills and attitude" to maintain health and cleanliness, and to change people's behavior, and that they needed to work with the government [though it sounded like they didn't very much, or very closely].

b. The association began in 1973, and was the first in environment. At that time, Mrs. Shafei's husband was Vice President of the Republic, and she and 20 friends began the group; after 3-4 months, there were 400 members. At first they "experimented" with different approaches, including having an exposition of products they sell, which they still have.

c. Mrs. Shafei is one of the founding members, and President.

d. Long-term goals include continuing their current work, plus perhaps manufacturing the plastic garbage bags they now sell themselves, and doing more on environment and ecology. They would also like to have branches in all governorates; they now have them in Port Said and Maadi.

They want to influence both public opinion (to have people and places be cleaner) and policy, so government would support them; they said they can't do it alone.

e. They have tried various approaches, including sending out an "appeal for help" to clean up public spaces to about 700 government officials; THREE answered. The Governor of Ismailia answered that his area WAS clean (and they agreed), and the Governor of Suez said he was busy with other problems after the war but would get to it when he could.

They have another letter on the importance of cleanliness which they give out to various people like neighbors, shopkeepers, and the secretaries hand out [one hears a subvocal to poorer people]. They have posters and decals with their symbol which have phrases encouraging cleanliness, and they stick them up in public.

Thus they have tried to "lobby" or influence policy/officials and public opinion via printed materials. They also work at schools, saying you have more influence on the young.

2. Institutional Functioning

a. There is a Board of 9, and officers including president, secretary and treasurer. Mrs. Shafei's mother was vice president, but died, and there seems to be no replacement; the mother also founded the Maadi branch of the association. Three board members are elected each year [seems to be an MSA policy; nearly all do this], and there is no term limit for officers: Mrs. Shafei. has been the only president since 1973. The Board is all women (always was).

b. I think they have written by-laws (because of law 32).

c. There are about 200 members, about 5 percent of whom are male. In the Maadi branch there are more male members, perhaps 20-25 percent. Mrs. Shafei described the members as "ordinary people," but this group was quite elite. They are also in their 60s, and described problems with young members having time to volunteer (see 3). All are volunteers.

d. The active core appears to be about 10 members.

They have sent out letters to government officials and to some people to appeal for clean public space, and they make plastic garbage bags that they sell to friends and neighbors at cost, which is about half the usual price.

One of their main activities is to go to schools; about 10 of them do it mainly about once a week. They have badges (metal pins with a rose, their symbol) and give one to the cleanest child in a class; they said "the kids are so proud!" They also give a poster or banner to the cleanest class. They have worked at a school in Roda for the handicapped.

They have gone to public spaces like the train station, post office, zoo, movies, cancer research center and hospitals to encourage cleanliness. They would meet important people there and talk to them, to make them aware of a new way of working. It worked fine when they were present, but they don't feel it continued. They have also worked in gardens in Maadi.

Once they designed a uniform for government "sweepers," and gave out several hundred. The Giza governorate copied it.

They speak before different committees at the Ministry of Health on things like ecology, pollution and sanitation. They also speak in clubs, and on radio and TV.

While at least some thought their best projects were with the schools, they had another that sounded very good in about 1990, and like it better encouraged advocacy. In the low-income housing area of Hayy el-Khalafawi in Shoubra district, some youth (students of about 16-25) came to the association and told them there was an awful dump there, with old cars, bugs and rats, among other things. They asked for help in cleaning it up, as they were poor and lacked means. The association called the Governor, and he had the garbage removed. Then the youth worked with Baladi to plant trees and grass and put up a playground and a fence. The Ministry of Agriculture donated trees, and Baladi bought hoses, and provided rubbish bags and bins. The Association had a conference with the youth and told them to keep things nice, and they HAVE. There was something similar in another area, Zeinhum. In another case, about 5 university student groups (medicine, liberal arts) asked for trees, after they cleaned up the classroom and garden areas.

e. Didn't get example.

f. Their expenses include rent for office space (about 4 rooms, an apartment) and a staff of 2 secretaries, a maid, two dressmakers (they sew aprons, etc. for the annual bazaar), and a driver and van. The latter 2 are for the volunteers, not the staff, since traffic and parking are difficult. They are registered with the MSA and took their money once, to buy office supplies. They said they don't need more funding now, but might for a project in the future. Their annual bazaar provides most of their funds; it will be at the Semiramis on May 6, and they said things sell very well.

g. They have a 4 room office, one room of which has (2?) sewing machines. They have a phone but not a fax or computer, nor do they want them; Mrs. S. felt even a fax was very complicated to use and not necessary. They are open to USAID or international funding.

h. They didn't say they needed any human resource development of staff or volunteers, but I think some training might help them better plan and execute their activities.

i. They said there are many environmental associations, and sometimes several get together. I asked for the most recent example and they said last June or July about 10 groups got together and discussed their experiences and problems.

j. They put up signs and hand out letters and give kids badges to get the message out. They have a brochure in Arabic on cleanliness, but not a newsletter.

k. They meet with people at ministries, and speak to clubs. Mrs. Shafei said in 1973 she invited the Governor to her home and suggested he impose a fine for littering. He laughed and said there was already a law, but it wasn't enforced because a lawbreaker would pay the finer 10 piasters not to impose the 50 piaster fine. I suggested this still could work; people would avoid paying 10 too. They agreed, saying the subway fines ARE enforced, and that the subways are clean.

When I asked what was most effective, they said public opinion was more valuable than influencing decision-makers, since it can "give you a push." [It seemed not really well thought out.]

3. Constraints

a. They mentioned that one big problem for many associations was that most women now work outside the home, so don't volunteer like they did in the past. Of the 20 members who are active, only 2-3 are younger.

Although they did not say so directly, they mentioned being discouraged that they had to keep repeating their messages about cleanliness; they didn't seem to stick.

b. While not mentioned specifically, the lack of cultural values or fines supporting clean public spaces hinders the effectiveness of their work. While people are receptive, they feel they have to keep at it. It's a big burden to have to repeat so much, and they feel unappreciated too. They did not mention any legal problem with law 32. Earlier they said they'd like more government support, but get little.

4. The Future

a. Their activities are about what they were.

b. They don't expect any legal changes. They said the government would like to help, but the MSA has other problems. The Minister opens their bazaar, which is like free publicity, even though they don't ask for help. They didn't mention disputes with the State, though they would like more "moral" support, not funding.

5. Needs

They don't need travel funding or commodities like computers. They would like technical expertise, like someone who knows about recycling plastic, or who could teach them how to "make their ideas stick", egg help them be more effective.

6. Observations

This group is basically a core of 10-20 well-intentioned elite women trying to promote better health and a cleaner environment. They were eager for feedback, and said they were tired, from telling people to "clean up" and having it be effective, until they, as observers, left the site. They realized people were poor and had other concerns, but seemed baffled about how to be more effective.

Their project involving helping youth (college age) to clean up their neighborhood seems a promising direction for future work. It involved contact with a grassroots group who participated in the cleanup and maintained the site, and the women contributed services (garbage clearing) and goods (free trees to plant, hoses) through their connections. With some organizational strengthening on project planning, they could work more in this direction.

Interview with Dr. Farkanda Hassan (4/17/95)
(Susan S. Davis)

Scientific Association for Arab Women (SAAW)
National Research Center
Tahrir Street, Dokki, Cairo
(Dr. Hassan's office at AUC: 357-5290)

1. The Organization

a. The goal is to promote science and technology being used in development.

b. SAAW was launched in Rabat in 1978, in response to a UN conference at which Dr. Hassan was a delegate (thus probably a founder). They wanted the organization to be international, and scheduled the next meeting in Jordan in 11/78; they thought as women they could avoid political problems. But three days before, Sadat went to Jerusalem, and Jordan revoked the invitation. Thus, they are registered and working in Egypt. (She also said about 8 years ago Princess Basima of Jordan tried to begin a group there with the same name; they sent a cable and said please don't, and hers just works in Jordan now.)

Dr. Hassan said one thing that's changed is that initially they had projects in the field, but as they've gotten both busier and older, they instead have more conferences and seminars.

c. Dr. Hassan is the vice president, and one of the founders.

d. Their first goal was to use science and technology for REAL development, in rural areas, through working with women. Now they also want to raise society's awareness of the positive and negative aspects of scientific and technical achievements. For example, they're planning a conference on bio-ethics.

They want to influence both public opinion and policy.

e. They plan to raise awareness of the pros and cons of new science and technology, mainly through conferences and seminars, and then other groups like doctors and scientists will use and spread the information.

Conferences can influence opinion, plus they invite NGOs, specialists and public figures to help spread the word. If the first lady or Ministers attend, that increases press and TV coverage. Dr. Hassan is a member of the People's Assembly, which gives her access to policy makers.

2. Institutional Functioning

a. There is a Board of 14 that meets monthly, though sometimes they skip it. The Board includes Dr. Mohamed Kamel, Director of Science and Technology, and Dr. Anayn, Director of the National Research Center—thus they work closely with government. There is a general assembly once a year when 1/3 of the Board is elected. About six Board members (all women) have been on it since it started; there are no term limits. Four of the 14 members are men and the rest women. Officers include a president, two vice presidents, a secretary general and a treasurer, all elected by the

Board annually; they usually stay the same. There are no standing committees, but the Board can appoint a group to work on special tasks. The President is the Minister of Social Affairs, Dr. Amal Osman; she wanted to resign, but was a founding member and they won't let her.

b. They are under MSA, so have those by-laws.

c. The group began with a closed membership of about 100; now about 30-35 attend the annual general assembly, and women predominate. The average age is 45-50; they haven't added new members because they work well together. Members are physical and social scientists, and doctors and journalists, e.g., professionals. They are volunteers.

d. Dr. Hassan described several of their activities:

- There was a lab at the National Research Center working on renewable energy (wind, biogas, solar), and SAAW took their achievement to a "solar village" in 1979-80. They used solar energy to heat water, including in the mosque, to power a microphone for the mosque, and to provide lighting for a clinic in the mosque. They also installed the first biogas units in some villages.
- They raised social awareness of artificial coloring in food, esp. in candy and ice cream consumed by children. They used the National Research Center labs to develop natural colors, and used them in the sugar that covers chickpea sweets. They had a conference, to get the message to the wider society, and Mrs. Mubarak attended, stressing the importance for children. Two companies, Dolci (ice cream) and BimBim (candy) used their findings. The Nutrition Institute also spread these findings.
- The Nutrition Institute worked with the National Research Center to develop a healthy FTIRA or snack for all school children in 1984 or 85. Bisco Masr, a cookie company, worked with the Ministry of Education on the project, but finally one group said they "didn't want responsibility in case of problems of quality," and the project stopped. A related project tried to have a nutritional "cookie mix" that mothers could make at home; it did not succeed. Dr. Hassan even "fought" with a colleague from university days trying to convince the Minister of Education.

However, a governor in the New Valley DID use their findings, and for years produced snacks fortified with iodine, vitamins, and local dried dates, using a local kind of simple oven. These snacks were given free to all school children.

- In 1988 they had a conference of nine countries in the Nile basin, with 2 representatives from each. They had UNEP (UN Environmental Protection) support.
- Recent activities include planning for the Copenhagen Social Summit, and for Beijing. They have prepared two booklets, one on Egyptian women inventors and one Egyptian women who have won a high State award, and a seminar on "The contribution of women scientists to development in Egypt."

These projects illustrate the group's movement from village and applied work to conferences.

e. Dr. Hassan said they work by consensus, usually after Board discussion; they never vote, except for the Board.

f. Ongoing expenses are minimal: they have office space and a shared-time secretary at the National Research Center, so they have some government help. Conferences and projects are their main expenses, and they seek outside funding. The solar village project was German-financed, and the natural-colors research may have been USAID-funded. She mentioned that conferences at hotels (which need more funds) work better: they have more status, thus get better speakers and attendance, thus publicity. (Dr. Gamal Gordon said the same thing.)

Dues are LE 10/yr, so a minimal source of revenue. They are under Law 32, but she did not mention their funding.

g. They have the shared office space at the National Research Center, which includes access to fax, phone and computers.

h. She says they do not need human resource development for the Board.

i. The group does not do much networking beyond inviting other NGOs to their conferences. Dr. Hassan is co-chair with Bella Abzug of "Women in Environmental Development" in New York, and they funded four Egyptian women to go to the Earth Summit in Brazil.

j. They encourage media coverage of their conferences by inviting important people.

k. They try to influence public opinion through scientists and doctors who attend their conferences, and through media coverage. They also try to influence policy makers, Dr. Hassan through her contacts from the People's Assembly, and also through work with ministries.

3. Constraints

a. The group realizes they need a younger generation, yet earlier Dr. Hassan said that membership is closed. There is also a problem with members becoming very busy as their careers expand. One solution they are considering is rotating of active membership, serving alternate years, but this has not been decided yet. Finally, she said that SAAW has good ideas, but needs better marketing.

b. The Group is under Law 32 and MSA people attend the General Assembly and check their papers. In fact, Mrs. Osman, the MSA minister was on the Board but left. Law 32 causes them no problems. Sometimes their association with Mrs. Osman is useful, for example in quick clearance of foreign funding.

4. The Future

a. They will continue to concentrate on conferences rather than field projects. The next one will be on bio-ethics, to make society more aware of the pros and cons. The Board brainstormed to come up with a proposal, but they have only one person in the field and are looking for specialists outside SAAW.

b. Dr. Hassan described no disputes with the state, but rather a helpful relationship. The "cookie snack" program falling through might be an example; in that case, the group used personal contacts to try and convince people in the Ministry to follow through.

Dr. Hassan said one legal change that could affect SAAW was the formation of a national union of NGOs under Mr. Abdelhakim. She felt that sub-union groups within it could be helpful, in that contact with similar groups could lead to less competition and greater consolidation for benefits.

5. Needs

SAAW would be open to USAID and international funding. For example, for the bio-ethics conference they would ask USAID-Egypt and perhaps WHO for funding for a roundtable discussion to get started, and then an international organization for conference funding.

6. Observations

While Dr. Hassan did not feel the core group needed human resource development, it seems to me that they need help in organization building and with certain skills.

The problem with an aging, overly busy and closed membership needs to be addressed or they will probably fade away. While they seem to be good at fundraising, they need training in effectively marketing their ideas to be more effective in advocacy. Currently their efforts are aimed at elite decision-makers, who can be effective, but they need work on how to get messages beyond that group.

Their relation to MOSA is interesting in that Dr. Osman, the Minister, is President of this group, but often absents herself in order not to cause them problems; she wants to quit, but the group won't let her. This is a good example of how MOSA influence on groups can vary widely depending on personal relationships.

Interview with Mohamed Monieb (4/13/95)
(Susan S. Davis and Tamer El-Meehy)

Egyptian Association for Human Rights
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1. Activities and Projects

a. Their purpose is a concern with human rights (hr), monitoring them, noting violations, calling on authorities to stop. They also publish on general social issues, like freedom of expression, and sometimes opposition to Al Azhar views. They organize conferences or workshops on topics like civil society and the position of NGOs and PVOs; they will also have one late April on training female leaders.

Thus they work to protect human rights, and advocate them and other causes.

b. The group began in 1985, with the Arab Organization for Human Rights (AOHR) in Cyprus and Minister Mohamed Fay. The younger generation wanted an Egyptian group at the same time; Mohamed El Brahim Kamel (the last Minister of Foreign Affairs) and Mustafa Faharet Hayawan (a Minister in the 60s and an important lawyer) were among the founders. The current Prime Minister, Atif Sedki, was among the EOHR's members on paper.

The EOHR has gone through three phases in their development. From 1985-1989 they issued declarations about twice a year which were quite general. From 1989-1993 they had more young people on the board and focused more on field research on actual cases of violations. When I probed on WHY the change, Mr. Monieb said they had been inexperienced at first, and working on trial and error. I felt that wasn't a clear answer and wondered if there was something sensitive. The last phase began in 1993, when there were more hr violations. Thus the volume of work increased dramatically, and the funds from dues (LE 10/yr, and not all pay) were not enough. They began to accept foreign funding. There was a young woman from Oxfam Canada there during the interview; I didn't ask if there were other funders. That allowed them to move from one room in the AOHR offices to their current approx. 3-4 room apartment.

c. Mr. Monieb is on the board of trustees, the vice secretary general, and head of the international relations committee. He is a lawyer.

d. Their long-term goals are about the same as current goals: to establish a civil society that respects human rights.

e. Their mechanisms may change, so they may monitor things in more detail. For example, they have a committee on women's human rights, and may have more resources to address problems. Currently they have a pilot program in a poor neighborhood, (see 2d.).

2. Institutional Functioning

a. The EOHR is governed by a board of trustees of 15 which is elected by a general assembly

of all dues-paying members every 2 years; they serve 2 years and there is no term limit. That board can appoint 4 more members; so far this term they have only done 1 to date. Three of the current 16 are women. The Board selects an executive office of 7 from among Board members; one is a woman. In the by-laws they should be elected, but there are so few eligible and willing that election is not necessary. There is a secretary general and a treasurer, also from among Board members, and both are male.

There are four committees in the EOHR, whose heads are also chosen or self-volunteered from among the Board: administration, fieldwork (by lawyers checking the validity of reported violations), publications and research, and international relations. About 100 people total work on these committees, and not all attend all meetings. All these jobs are held by volunteers. There are also about 20 paid employees, both part and full time, who work in the same four areas as the volunteers.

They do not actively recruit members; people hear about them, often through friends. Any Egyptian can apply to join: you fill out a form and attend meetings and do some work, and two on the Board decide whether to accept you. I suggested this must be quite a lot of work, with 2,500 members, but Mr. Monieb said they are spread out over 10 years. He said they want to be sure people really care about human rights, and I wondered if they also wanted to monitor out certain types.

The EOHR has 13 branches in different parts of Egypt. Four outside Cairo have office space; they don't feel it's necessary for the rest.

They are offering a special service to poor women on a pilot basis (see 2d.).

b. They have written by-laws. They registered with MSA under Law 32 in 1985 and were turned down, so took them to court; the case is still undecided, which allows them to operate legally as "in-process."

c. They began with 35 members and now have 2,500; Mr. Monieb did not know the number of women, but said "many"; the Canadian Oxfam woman said that information was not available (e.g., they've never counted). All work on a voluntary basis, and pay dues of LE10/yr.

d. One activity is conferences or workshops; they will hold one in late April on training women leaders. After two Ministers made declarations against NGOs, they organized a conference of human rights groups; see 4b for details. They have a national campaign against FGM with a big workshop this month.

They have a pilot project with legal assistance to poor women. They have an apartment in Abu Bulaq-n-Dakour, and had people there track local women's problems for one year. They found 5,000 cases where women had been deserted, or there were fights over child custody; they took 220 to court, for free. The final report will be out 6/95, and then they will move to do similar work in another area (Ain Sira, L'Omrani, or Imbaba).

e. There was a recent example of institutional decision making when they held a general assembly last week to discuss changing the by-laws on voting. Instead of all voting, they proposed having a proportional vote, with delegations of 10 percent of local members coming to Cairo for the general assembly and to select the Board. That decision was "postponed" because they needed more consideration; there will be a general assembly in June where the Board will be elected by the old means. The new Board will visit area offices and discuss the issue with members and decide when to have the vote, and then all will vote on the by-law change.

Thus while it seems relatively few members are active in the central committees, it also appears that the Board is not railroading decisions through over their members.

I didn't ask if the constituents are also members, but since most are in prison, it's fairly unlikely.

f. Expenses include salaries of 20 part and full time staff, especially lawyers to investigate charges of violations; they don't volunteer their time. They also have office space and equipment, but seem pretty well covered by dues and foreign money. Yet there's a problem in predicting expenses, since they depend on the rate of violations. Last year the president decided to make all cases against Islamists be heard in military courts, unofficially. This meant lots more abuses, and they don't have the budget to cover them all.

g. They have a 3-4 room office, a "heavy-duty" fax, a computer and printer, a xerox and several phones in Cairo.

h. Their human resources are adequate.

i. They are in touch with other hr NGOs in Egypt, though find a problem in ongoing networking, which they would like to encourage. They are also in touch with more and less famous international groups, and are a branch of AOHR, but can operate independently of them.

j. They have a monthly newsletter which is sent to a mailing list in Egypt including important people, syndicates, Ministers and Embassies, and also to 300 people/groups internationally. They publish pamphlets on certain issues, and use foreign media: Mr. Monieb spoke to a BBC reporter about FGM on the phone when we were there. They send all their statements to all publications in Egypt; the Government ones only use examples of Fundamentalist action against police, never the inverse cases, which EOHR also pursues.

k. They try to influence opinion and decision-makers; both are important. He feels they may not be doing so well, since the number of abuses has increased. He said it's best to influence decision-makers, since they're the ones who could stop the abuses.

3. Constraints

a. There are minor internal problems with whether the board election should be by all members or representatives, and that not all members pay the dues; they are having meetings on these. They could also use more office equipment for branch offices, but this is not serious; funding from Oxfam has met most needs. More funding would allow them to cover more cases.

b. More serious constraints come from outside. Support of human rights in this way is not a traditional part of Egyptian culture. He said Law 32 was a problem, but not specifically how (another person was waiting). The Ministries of the Interior and of Foreign Affairs both have specific people who work with this group, but they never respond to EOHR's questions, etc.

EOHR tried to register under Law 32 when they began in 1985 and was refused, so they went to court. The case is still not settled, but EOHR can operate legally because they have a legal status called "in process." However, 2 years ago the State instituted a new process so that companies "in process" are not legal, but EOHR can still function since they began before; the new law affects all groups since 1993.

The State-run press uses the work of EOHR selectively, reporting cases with Fundamentalist (he used "Islam Al Siyassi") violators, but not with State violations of human rights. They ignore much of EOHR's work.

Mr. Monieb said a serious problem is that "political trends" (or groups; not all are parties, like the Muslim Brothers or the Communists) are discrediting the EOHR by politicizing them (I'm not sure if this is by saying they take foreign money or that they have political goals). He says these groups do this because they are weak themselves, implying they envy the strength of EOHR.

Another problem is that human rights NGOs themselves are weak on networking. EOHR had a workshop on it last year, but there wasn't much follow-through. They plan more workshops, and also to make contacts with individual organizations, to convince them of the importance.

Finally, he described a State campaign against NGOs, in which only EOHR was mentioned by name; see 4b.

4. The Future

a. They will continue the same activities, perhaps expanding numbers if they have the funds.

b. He said EOHR is not pro or con the State; they just want it to stop hr violations. He did not foresee EOHR as pursuing any conflict with them.

He did give an example of a recent dispute with the State. He said the Ministries of Interior and of Foreign Affairs were harassing civil society, publishing articles against PVOs and NGOs in many magazines. The Minister (?) of Interior did an interview with the Arabic Al-Haya in which he spoke against the State Department on human rights and their sources of information. Thus he condemned many NGOs (as sources), but mentioned only EOHR by name. He said many NGOs had improper relations with foreign countries, since they accepted their money, and those countries gave it because they had "interests." In addition, he said EOHR was being pressured by Fundamentalists, yet was controlled by Nasserites and Marxists. Mr. Monieb said it may appear they support Fundamentalists because they report on human rights violations of prisoners, many of whom are Islamists; EOHR also sometimes issues declarations against them. EOHR "defends and attacks, government or non-government" groups.

In response to the declarations of these two Ministries, EOHR organized a conference to which they invited all Egyptian human rights groups. Fifteen groups attended, and 9 signed a declaration which was sent to all Egyptian newspapers. Only Al Shaa (Labor) and Al Arabi (Nasserite) printed it.

Thus they used a conference, and tried the media, to deal with the problem.

5. Needs

They would, and do, accept funds from an international NGO (Oxfam Canada), and Mr. Monieb said they would even accept USAID funds IF they were on EOHR's conditions. (It seems that, with earlier accusations of "international interests," this might not be wise. Also, USAID's accounting requirements, more than any political conditions, might be a problem.)

The EOHR could use training on computers, email software, more computers, and funding for travel to conferences, especially Beijing at this point.

6. Observations

The EOHR seems to be quite active in defending victims of human rights abuses, whether the abuse is by the Government or groups involved in Political Islam, yet they only get official publicity when the latter commit the abuse. The group delayed a reform of by-laws that would involve representatives (instead of each member) voting, which seemed to me an indication of democratic functioning. Dr. Kandil mentioned examples of choosing officials that she said were less democratic, even though the group said they were; Ana Klenicki said perhaps they are moving that way gradually.

Center for Studies and Legal Information on Human Rights
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1. The Organization

a. Their purpose is to "publicize human rights culture" in the wider sense of the meaning, e.g., civil, political, and social and economic, so including the environment, women and children. He wants to publicize and educate people on human rights, to do promotion, beyond protection.

The Center is a civil company, not an NGO. They are registered on the Bar Association, and with a notary public [?]. Mr. Salem said there is a legal status for civil companies to be non-profit, but even many lawyers are not familiar with it. It applies to companies built on mental effort, which is non-commercial by law, not capital; such companies can receive a profit, but it's not their goal.

b. He began the group alone in Aug. 1991, he said after he founded the Egyptian Organization for Human Rights (EOHR), of which he's still a member. He felt they needed a resource and research center.

c. He's the founder, and one of four presidents.

d. He's "dreaming of a real educational institute for human rights." It would be an expanded version of what they do now and serve different ages and groups, and be a school with short-term courses for the informal sector.

He'd also like to have a research unit, to build Egypt's own perspective on human rights, finding the resources within their own society.

Finally, he'd like to expand their newspaper from a mailing-list circulation of 5,000 to a public distribution of 10-20,000.

e. To serve the research unit, he's begun to build a human rights library that he wants to expand. It's also available for outside researchers, since one can't find all the resources grouped together elsewhere. They also began a news archive on certain topics in human rights in 1992, covering 2 government and 3-4 opposition newspapers.

A major means of educating people on human rights is through 3 training courses they give each year (see 2.d.).

He's discussing expanded newspaper distribution with Al-Ahram and government censors.

2. Institutional Functioning

a. There is an advisory committee of 7 (two are women) who meet once a year on policy and to discuss the annual program and review the last year. They aren't very active because they're busy

with other things. Some of them do lecture and come to the workshops.

The organization, which is a civil company rather than an NGO, is run by a board of 4, one of whom is female. She (Marlene) was present, and she and Amir had a lively discussion on the administration of the Center. They described it as having "four presidents," with each person responsible for a different topical area; Marlene is responsible for English work and foreign relations, and Amir is program officer, handling the paper and planning and organizing seminars.

The two we met are younger, and although lawyers, did not seem to be the same kind of elite as those who run many NGOs (though it could be a difference in dress between the generations).

b. They have no by-laws; "every time they try to make them, they're destroyed by the idea of democracy."

c. There are no members.

d. They publish a newspaper and books to educate people on human rights; the paper is aimed more at public opinion and the books more at policy-makers or influencers like judges and lawyers. An English re-translation of a critique and re-draft of Law 32 is aimed at international organizations and donors because he feels *they* could influence the government [as Goma said they did on environment].

The Center has begun a library, with books and some newspaper excerpts.

A major activity is presenting three 5-7 day training courses each year for 50-60 participants from grassroots associations. They have one in Cairo, one in the Delta (Alex) and one in Upper Egypt. They aim at people under 30, from groups working with literacy, development, and environment: they want especially those with outreach, they'd like one per organization. A different person from the same group might attend the next year, and the groups also recommend other groups.

Professionals such as lawyers, writers, academicians, and judges lecture the groups, but they also use other techniques such as working groups on development, women, free association or environment, so they can have more dialogue. The lecturers also learn from the participants, and while there is a budget for them, about half don't take the money. They also do creative activities like sculpture or creating plays, to show that human rights means free expression, and to illustrate it's a pleasure. Each course has a cultural evening with visiting artists, singers etc. who raise human rights issues. They feel another benefit is for the different grassroots groups to be together.

The Center has also been active internationally with human rights NGOs, so they coordinated a workshop for African NGOs and were mandated to organize the second workshop in Cairo in Sept. 1995. In Copenhagen, he was the head of the Arab group of 86 NGOs. He's done joint work with the NY Lawyers' Committee for Human Rights, translated something on the World Bank and Human Rights, and they have a project with Article 18 in London on the image of women in Fundamentalism.

e. Although only 4 people effectively do the work, they seem to have an internal problem with "democracy." When I asked how things were run, Amir said Marlene should answer, and she hesitated. It seems there's been an ongoing problem with whether they have organizational rules, which Marlene feels are necessary to function effectively, or whether they're totally democratic, and it's not clear who does what or if. Amir has been democratic, "running things like a family" and

Marlene says he's "bred monsters." He feels that he needs to protect young personnel from government attacks, but recognizes that he's not a good administrator. He says he's a "fighter" and activist, but not good at finances or personnel.

f. They have a staff of 23, 9 of whom work on the paper part-time. Their funding depends on the law firm and international donors: Holland, Sweden, Denmark and Canada, plus the MacArthur Foundation. A year ago they talked to the Ford Foundation which sounded interested, but they haven't gotten back to the Center, so may not be. [It sounded like they might have been going to offer help similar to that IDS is considering; perhaps they should be contacted.]

g. The Center is based in an apartment, and they have phone, fax and computers.

h. They said they could use human resource development in many areas, including documentation/library skills, and computer training including on Internet, which they hope to be getting onto. They said they also need help with fundraising and accounting. I'd add, from their discussion, they need some help with administration, though they'll have to make some decisions about what they're willing to do first.

i. They seem to network very well with international organizations (see 2.d.), especially African ones, being involved together at international meetings. Locally, they seem to disagree with the many groups that feel it's more productive to work with or within the government. Mr. Salem felt that such an approach could be less effective and do a disservice to both donors and activists.

j. When I asked if they use the Egyptian media, he said the media "ab-use" them; he said it's hard to get publicity, even with the left. He talks to foreign journalists. He's trying to get their 5,000 issue mailed newspaper into general circulation. It's currently sent to grassroots groups and individuals all over Egypt, as well as to journalists, judges, lawyers and intellectuals. It also goes to the Arab region, and about 300 NGOs.

k. He says they aim more at public opinion than at policy makers, with their books and newspaper and training sessions. They're also targeting international groups, thinking they could pressure the government.

3. Constraints

a. The Center has internal difficulties in operation. They began without rules, and without a clear or consensual view of democracy, so have problems agreeing about how to function. Amir doesn't like strict rules, but Marlene says you can't work without them, and have no time to think about the group's policies. Tamer added that they lose the ability to fight outside battles. Amir says he feels like a father to the young people he brought in, especially when the government attacks them. Marlene responded "Sadat's mistake was that he fathered everyone." Amir said he finds it hard to be a director, and that he's not good at writing proposals and financial reports, or with personnel.

b. External constraints include being ignored by the Egyptian mass media, and "attacks" by the government. He said they try to prevent NGOs, including his, from attending world conferences. The Center was very active at the 9/94 ICPD, giving 4 workshops and talking a lot about Law 32 and the development of civil society. After that and before the Social Summit in Copenhagen, the Ministry of Justice issued a "fatwa" saying civil groups like his weren't legal, giving false information to the media and frightening participants in workshops. The government is trying to spoil the many civil companies by saying they work for individual profit, naming them in the papers and

discrediting them by saying “they get foreign money: “they get ‘millions’ and represent the U.S. in Egypt.” Amir said he could sue the government for libel, but doesn't want to spend his efforts there.

4. The Future

a. Mr. Salem would like to expand their training activities and newspaper. He would like to print the paper inside the group, and has begun talks with Al-Ahram about general (street) distribution, and with the Ministry of Media about a licence, and about censorship; he said he keeps getting different answers from the same authorities.

He also sees a need for an NGO support center, based on his work as a lawyer helping to set up 20 civil companies. NGOs could use: legal assistance, and information about international, regional, and local NGOs working on different issues, training for different skills, assistance on local and international fundraising, proposal writing, and how to do needs assessment and set up a program to fill the needs. He feels there's a lack of such services; the ones that exist function as businesses and he feels mislead donors AND activists. He feels they can have serious negative effects: if such work is poorly done it gives a negative picture to grassroots groups, like it's just “a game of business,” and delays the development of civil society.

b. Mr. Salem says the government is trying to change the law that allows the Center and other groups to exist as civil companies.

The Ministry of Justice has said they are not legal, but this is not true; there is a law that allows them to not pay commerce taxes if they are based on intellectual effort rather than capital; they are noncommercial, by law. He says there is a media campaign against human rights groups, focused on civil companies because they have managed to escape Law 32, so the government has no means to control them. He said the tax authorities tried to harass them with a new law, but they're still legally non-commercial. His defense has been to use the law, and he feels it's good protection, and the government can't “get” him except with state security.

5. Need

They could not receive money from USAID, but could through another channel. He said it's “like a machine...trying to harass human rights centers...even some intellectuals [are involved].”

They recognize they need help on organizational functioning; they find it hard to agree on problems, or solutions, or implementation. For example, he agrees there are problems with some staff, but can't bear to fire them.

They have been looking for funding for more space for 2 years, partly to have more room to produce the paper themselves. They would also like to have a press to do this; it would be cheaper, and they would have more control over content, though one wonders about censors. They also need more professional staff.

Current staff could use training in computer skills and document storage and cataloging.

6. Observations

This seems like a very active group, committed to the encouragement of civil society. Their approaches are very broad and they have internal problems in running the organization. Help with

management and focus would be useful. This is a rare group in that it favored working outside the State rather than in cooperation; might USAID want to try some of each? This group also has thought about being an NGO support group, but with their difference of opinion from the many groups who feel working from within is more productive, they may not be well-placed at this point.

Interview with Said el-Naggar (4/12/95)
(Susan S. Davis)

New Civic Forum

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1. Activities and Projects

a. The New Civic Forum (NCF) is a think tank, formed "to promote political, economic and social liberalization." (Professor El-Naggar gave me some documents, and one on their basic objectives makes the same points, but has a majority of material on the economic aspect. This may be because he worked with the World Bank 1976-1984 and focuses on economic concerns, or it may be that it is the least likely to be sensitive.)

b. The organization began in March 1991, as Gamiyat Al Nida Al Gedid, literally Association of the New Call/Clarion/Appeal; he couldn't find a phrasing he liked in English, so called it the New Civic Forum. The founders included professors, businessmen and media people. It was to address the meaning and implications of economic liberalization. That had begun in 1974 with the infitah policy, but it had a limited effect: there was not much foreign or Arab investment, nor role for the private sector. There was still a very strong public sector, left from the nearly Socialist period, with a highly centralized political and economic sector, and he feels this system has failed everywhere; it has not promoted "growth, industrialization, or equity." In summer 1991 there was a change in this atmosphere with an agreement with the World Bank and International Monetary Fund on economic reform, including structural adjustment and macroeconomic stabilization. He felt this was a good time for a group to look at the implications of economic liberalization, and also political liberalization toward democracy. He feels all power is in the President's hands, and other institutions are empty shells, just trappings. The only difference now from Nasser's time is less state terror, so groups like his can be formed and speak out.

c. Mr. El-Naggar is on the NCF Board, and was elected President by them; there is no term limit. He said some feel he is too strongly identified with the NCF, but that he has the most time to work on it since he's retired; he's invited others to participate equally. (I believe he's a/the founder, though he did not say so.)

d. Their long-term goals include policy changes which would involve economic, political and social liberalization. Economic includes encouraging privatization, and a market economy with the necessary regulatory framework: no monopolies, quality control or standards, and laws against conflicts of interest. He feels the State should be in a regulatory, not a production, role. Political liberalization means encouraging democracy. Social liberalization is a code to talk about the relation between religion and society, and how to combine the existence of democracy with religious groups as parties.

e. The NCF works toward its objectives with seminars, writing papers (they publish a series of "Selected Tracts" of which we have copies in our file) and in the press, personal contacts with influential people, and establishing dialogue with different groups. An example of the latter is that they have met with groups of the Muslim Brotherhood (he said not with terrorist groups) to point out the risks of putting religion into political life: they illustrate by using historical examples, like Iran and the Sudan.

An important activity to reach their political goals is their convening a “drafting committee” to prepare elements of a charter that would be binding on all political groups; they have been working on it for some time. It is modeled on the Jordanian national charter, where the Muslim Brotherhood is accepted as a political party. Groups involved include the Brotherhood, the Labor Party, the Wafd, Taggammour, and professional associations.

2 Institutional Functioning

a All dues paying members (about 280) have a general assembly at which they elect an Executive Board of 13, 1/3 of which is renewed every three years. Two Board members are women; one is Mona Zulfaqar. The Board elects a president, vice president, secretary and treasurer from among Board members for 3 year terms which can be renewed; there are no term limits. Some wanted to recruit more younger members, but he was against it and prevailed; he fears it would raise State suspicion.

b. They are registered as an NGO with the MSA and Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), so have by-laws.

c. The about 300 members do work for the group as volunteers. Most are professionals and there are all ages, with more 45 or over. He said there are “a good number” of women members, but had no figures. There are 2 categories of members: associates pay LE 20/yr and active members LE 60/yr. They do not actively recruit new members (see 2a).

d. The group's main group activity seems to be a weekly seminar in their offices, every Wednesday at 7 PM with a speaker on a topic. Anyone can come; most of the 40-50 attenders are members. Mr. El-Naggar also speaks a great deal to various groups which invite him; examples are the association of accountants, union of banks, and university center for economic studies. The groups choose the topics, like GATT, sustainable development and the environment, and economic and political aspects of the peace process. Thus he does not present topics chosen by the NCF, yet often manages to address their goals, especially economic liberalization. He did not mention other members doing extensive speaking.

e. His first example of decision making was that at its monthly meeting the Board makes decisions like approving funding for travel to international conferences, or of the form and quality of NCF publications.

I then asked if there had been any disagreements in the group, and he gave two examples. In one case some members thought there should be more young members, but he did not. He said there were limited resources, including meeting space, which they would then have to rent for the weekly seminars. Also, he was concerned about raising State suspicion if they enrolled many. He didn't describe the process, but it seems he prevailed.

In a second case, one of the founders and a former vice president thought the group should work on laws (like changing Law 32, or writing something for consumer protection) and present them to the National Assembly by giving them to members who are in the Assembly. Mr. El-Naggar did not agree, feeling they lacked the expertise and did not want to present anything amateurish. The matter came to a vote (I think of the Board, but he didn't say), and the majority was with him.

Finally, Dr. El-Naggar mentioned that some members had objected to his hiring a secretary in hegab, but he said only her skill mattered, and prevailed.

f. Their expenses include staff, office space rental, and they spent quite a bit remodeling and furnishing (with BIG leather chairs and nice wood tables) the office. They have a part-time executive director, Dr. Usama Ghazali, a political scientist at Al-Ahram Center for Strategic Studies, and a part-time financial and admin director, plus a full-time secretary and a PR person, and 4 messengers/drivers.

Their funding is \$120,000 a year from the UNDP, on a 5-year basis with a human development project. The money runs out in 1996, and they would like to renew but the fund should revolve, so it's not certain. The dues of LE 60/yr don't help much, but were used for furniture.

The UNDP money has to be approved by the Ministries of Social Affairs and of Foreign Affairs. Both Ministers are former students of his, and he has had no problems. He said it is not influence, but that they know him and his goals, and are not worried.

They would like to have enough money to buy their own office space; the landlord keeps raising the rent. Because of UNDP funding possibly ending, they are considering accepting bilateral aid, which they have not done in the past. Because their economic views are similar to those of the US, they want to be careful not to appear as an American "front," for the CIA. Some members are against accepting USAID money; they want to be neutral. But he said they might take it now, as a necessity, via a trust fund under UNDP management. They could also accept it through an international NGO. They do need Board approval of funding, which he thought would not be hard.

They gave us several publications, but none were an annual report.

g. The NCF has a large office space, including a meeting room that can seat 40-50. They have phones, fax, computer, and a large-screen TV.

h. The staff has the skills they need.

i. They have had meetings of Egyptian NGOs at their facilities for the ICPD, and to prepare for the social summit in Denmark and the meetings in Beijing. Internationally, they exchange publications with the National Endowment for Democracy, which is a possible funder, through other groups, like German and Scandinavian foundations. They also attend international conferences and seminars. One of the publications they gave us lists 30 meetings with other national or international groups between Feb. 1993 and Oct. 1994.

j. The NCF publishes occasional papers and selected tracts, plus a monthly newsletter.

k. They are an advocacy group and work to influence those who shape public opinion, including the media, professors and business leaders. They work through lectures, meetings, and conferences.

3. Constraints

a. He did not mention internal constraints. He disagreed with one woman about his dialogue with the Muslim Brothers, but she resigned from the Board. There are other disagreements in 2e, but none were serious.

b. He feels the State, as a bureaucracy, is a constraint for many NGOs. They are allowed to speak and to publish, but the bureaucratic regulations wear one down. The MSA (or "CIA") has to approve the board and founders, they must send an agenda and minutes of each board meeting, and

each project and publication must be approved. Someone from the MSA comes to their office each week to look at the books. Someone also comes to their general assemblies, but that's not a serious problem.

He said the media ignores this group, though they invite other NGOs to things.

He said there were no cultural values constraining them, but also said they were criticized for their position on women, or his on human rights.

4. The Future

a. They plan to continue their activities.

b. He said USAID would like the group to suggest changes in Law 32, but that he had spoken to Saad ed-Din Ibrahim, who said that group had already worked on it and it would just be a duplication of effort. [Aziza Hussein said the government disliked the "reformists," so this group may be trying to avoid that view.] Dr. El-Naggar said Dr. Ibrahim would like to get rid of Law 32 and return to civil law, but Dr. El-Naggar said it needs more looking into, which he plans to do. He then mentioned that he's going to the U.S. next week, and said he'd call Ana Klenicki before going. [He did not call.]

He described a minor dispute with the State when the NCF sent their budget to the MSA, and got a notice from the General Accounting Office that the group would be audited. Yet only groups with 25 percent government control are audited by the GAO. He called and talked to them some, and they withdrew.

5. Needs

He mentioned they would like to buy their own flat, and that they might seek bilateral funding if the UNDP did not renew. He did not mention specific training, technical or commodity needs.

6. Observations

Dr. El-Naggar seems very central to the group, which focuses on reaching the elite - who in fact can be influential in changing times. While he describes much of the focus (and many seminars) on economic liberalization, they are also concerned with more democracy. One unique aspect is that they are meeting with some Islamist groups, both to discuss the problems other areas have had with a totally Islamic government, and they are working on drafting a "charter" based on Jordan's in which Islamic groups are included as political actors. Given the importance of Islamic groups in the society at large, and their near-absence in these interviews, this effort at inclusion is worthy of consideration.

Regional Center for Research and Development (RCRD)
9 El-Zaher Street, Mansoura, Egypt
Tel. (050) 350431 fax (050) 347900

1. The Organization

a. Their purpose is to find how to “change and activate” governmental agencies, to make them more effective in their role, and to give officials a new concept: how to serve those without power or “voice,” like the poor, small businesses and women. They want to help give the government “the correct definition of development.” The government's conception is that everything is done through government regulations, not personal motivation. RCRD's main role is to coordinate between the government and NGOs (and citizens), to get the groups together and help them discover new concepts of their roles and efforts, and what they can do. They work (or will work) in the areas of small business, agriculture, environment, and women and development.

They provide coordination between groups, and technical assistance.

They are a nonprofit civil company. They are nonprofit in that their costs just pay expenses; if they have a surplus beyond that, they give it back. In their current project work with Canada's IDRC, if there are surplus funds, IDRC takes them back. Researchers often get wages, but many also volunteer. When I asked what percentage of work was volunteered, Dr. Eweida said 50 percent. They also mobilize the public sector to help.

b. They have been active informally for 10-15 years, doing conferences and studies, but just became legal by registering with the Ministry of Justice in 1992.

c. There is an executive office of six, which includes the speakers.

d. They described their goals in terms of possible projects: to work as coordinators and provide technical assistance to a CIDA project on vocational training and advising; doing environmental work with an English group, marketing with the Germans, and women and population with Barbara Ibrahim and the Japanese. Thus the goal seems to be to expand.

e. They will reach it by gaining more projects.

2. Institutional Functioning

a. The main speaker, Dr. Eweida is the Executive Director, and then there are 5 operational units, each headed by one person. The units are research and training, rural development, small business, environmental affairs, and women in development; all but the latter are headed by men. All six are professors, engineers or doctors, thus professionals, and between 40-50.

b. They function on the basis of personal relations, not by-laws (though the brochure says the Director has the authority to sign contracts and has financial, administrative and technical responsibility).

c. There are not members, as it is a civil company; they have staff (2f).

d. They currently have two projects:

- They coordinate government, an NGO (the Businessmen's Association they are both in), and funders to help support "ITSU," the Industrial Technology Support Unit. So far there are 17 "clients" from small businesses of metal workers. Five groups work on this: the Businessmen's Association and the Regional Union for NGOs are intermediaries and get the metal workers to attend. The IDRC is a Canadian NGO which is providing the immediate funding, the Social Development Fund and the Dakahlyia Trade Bank are providing funds for the small workshops to develop, and State agencies like the Governorate and the Ministry for Manpower are helping facilitate on the government side. The RCRD also provides technical assistance. They have had meetings to which government representatives and the workers come, and they work together to settle workers' problems. For example, many small workshops are in homes and there are safety problems; social security is another problem. They planned a special meeting to which they invited about 100 people; 7-8 businesses came, with about 15 workers. After discussion they saw safety was a general problem, so the Association looked for someone in government who might have solutions, and organized a second meeting with him. There were three kinds of problems and solutions. Sometimes the worker thinks a law is violated but it's not illegal, so the official explains. If the official is convinced there's a general problem, he can issue a decree to deal with it. For example, once the business waste wasn't collected at a time that fit the work schedule; the official had it rescheduled. Finally, if the problem is with one individual, the official may meet at his office to try to solve it. One industrial safety person was hassling workers; his superior met with the workers and heard about it, and told the hassler to shape up.
- They have been working on a program to encourage agricultural development in Dakahlyia Governorate, funded by the German Friedrich Neuman Foundation; there are three phases.

- They planned, ran, evaluated and disseminated information from 21 three-day workshops in various towns on separate agricultural topics (mechanization, poultry, etc). Each was planned by a group of 2 university staff, 1 government agriculture official and 1 farmer who met at least once to prepare, and then led the workshop. Each workshop was attended by about 25 people, with 4-5 officials (including people from popular councils or cooperatives), 4-5 professors, some from related small businesses; the majority were farmers. The workshops were all structured around 5 points: the current situation, the desired future, problems to overcome to get there, how to solve the problems and the role of each organization, and recommendations. Mr. El Shirif said what was exciting was that at the beginning, each person or group felt THEY had the right answer and the others were wrong, but by the end they developed group solutions to problems. It was also a great success because attenders set up personally-based work relationships which continued.

After each workshop was done a report was written on the results, and 7 group discussions were held, 3 in district capital towns and 4 in villages, to which about 50-70 came and discussed. Based on that reaction they wrote up the final report (of which Tamer has a copy) and had a final conference held in Mansoura (Nov.



8, 1993) to which about 700 came, including the Governor, government and community leaders, and many farmers (because they had been involved from the start). (Dr. Eweida also said that report was the basis for Dakahlyia being chosen from among five governorates for another development program; the report showed they had a certain level of capacity.)

- The second stage is to establish an institution to implement the recommendations in the form of a Regional Council for Agricultural Development. It's taken more than a year to coordinate all the agencies involved in agricultural development. Eight people from government, the university, and NGOs have been meeting at least twice a month, with the former giving space and tea and the profs organizing and coordinating; all are volunteering the time. They set up 7 committees and a technical secretary. They also established two funds, one each for regular and reclaimed land, and asked the elected Popular Council to allocate the money to finance development. There is a problem: many of the Council want to be on the Board (with perhaps some control over money). The speakers were sure things would be solved, because the governor is a good person.
- The third stage is to implement some programs, with projects or activities to solve agricultural problems. One example is the vegetable and fruit committee, which began working with the coops (which are NGOs, even if the farmers make a profit—the workers don't) to produce improved seedlings which had no virus, grew without chemicals, and matured rapidly. The farmers paid in advance for the seedlings because demand exceeded supply and they wanted to reserve their share; thus they financed it.
- They are planning a new project with the marketing committee, to deal with the bottleneck in agricultural marketing, both for inputs and for produce. It's especially serious after the move from a central to a free economy, in which coops have no experience managing things themselves. For example, both farmers and small sellers of fertilizer do not know how to use it effectively. RCRD has done studies, and will train coop staff on marketing and set up a data base on it, with funding from the Neuman Foundation.
- e. They said they make decisions by discussion and coming to an understanding.
- f. Their expenses include 7 technical assistants and two secretaries who work full time (but sometimes without pay if project money runs out), plus rent, utilities, transportation, computers, zoom lens camera (not video), TV, tape recorder, and they are getting a fax (the number is on their brochure), and project execution. Funding is currently through two NGO projects, both international (Canadian and German), and the government giving space for meetings.
- g. They have a small rented city apartment, and the equipment just above.
- h. They have a little money for training with which they will send the technical assistants, 4 engineers and 3 in commerce/marketing, for training in Canada. The two directors I spoke to said they badly need English training and hope to get some this summer in Canada. They would also like a public relations person to work more with the media, and to understand local people's opinions and needs.
- i. Their work to coordinate NGOs, government, experts and funders is creating networks if not actually using them themselves, like the on-going ties they described after the workshops. The

speakers said they work with two for-profit companies in Cairo, National Consulting and Arab Studies Center, for their expertise in agriculture and social research, and work with each other in their geographic areas.

j. They invite radio, TV or the press to their activities, and the former all need news, so both are happy. In the future they would like to have a public relations person, to be more involved with media.

k. They said they first try to influence decision makers, through meeting, talking, seminars and workshops. They try to influence public opinion through conferences.

3. Constraints

a. They need more experience and training, in the media, and especially in English, to be more effective, and need funding to support it. They would like help developing a data base on the community, and economic resources. They have data from the government and feel that's sufficient, but want to use it more effectively. While they didn't raise it, the problem in getting the Popular Council to release funds may illustrate something more general: when money is involved, people trying to get "a piece of the action" may be a common constraint which requires finding solutions.

b. They don't feel outside constraints, and say the Governor helps them. They haven't experienced legal problems, but felt it was possible; they were very interested when I said Amir Salem was an expert in setting up civil companies and says they ARE legal. One thing they mentioned earlier but not here was that they feel the climate is not right to study public opinion and needs now; only the Television Ministry can do so.

4. The Future

a. There are several ambitious projects they would like to do; (see 1.d).

b. They do not expect legal changes, and have had no disputes with the State.

5. Needs

They have no problem with USAID funding, or international. They could use training, with their first priority in English, and also in office administration, project design and implementation, and coordination of agencies working on one project or in one field. They would like more access to information on projects inside or outside Egypt in similar areas, like small businesses; this could include visits. For commodities, they could use more computers, and things to help in communication; they mentioned a fax, but may already have one. (Maybe Internet access?)

6. Observations

This seems like a very active group, with some solid accomplishments (and lots of plans). Their work in connecting farmers, professors in agriculture, and government people through public seminars on a topic of concern to all is an excellent example of a mutual influencing of both public opinion and policy makers, and then having this relation continue. They are opening paths for "voice" to take, and showing the participants that it can be beneficial.

Interview with Mrs. Odette Skandar (4/11/95 & 4/12 meeting)
(Susan S. Davis)

Successful Career Women

One of 16 Committees of the American Chamber of Commerce in Egypt
18 Nazeeh Khalifa Street, Heliopolis, Cairo
Tel. 291-3133, 661-564, 676-516

1. Activities and Projects

a. Mrs. Skandar described the group as having three main purposes.

- To raise member awareness; they had a speaker on women's legal rights and reform of marriage laws. Once aware, they could fight for solutions.
- To raise women's capabilities in business, including getting them to be bosses instead of stopping at secondary positions
- To create a center offering short-term management training for women.

Some of the activities she described (see 2 below) involved advocacy for women's rights through the media, encouraging female voters to register, or suggesting additions to the reform of the marriage contract. Some goals concerned social welfare, like getting companies with more than 50 female employees to set up on-site daycare, and doing it through talking to top level government administrators, since a law exists but is not enforced.

b. Successful Career Women is in its second year. The Board of the larger group ("Am-Cham") created the committee officially. At first there were informal meetings in women's homes, and then had a meeting and presented the idea.

c. Mrs. Skandar is the Chair of the group.

d. Long term goals include those above, and involve changing public opinion (women's rights, bad effects of divorce [see 2]) and also policy, like marriage law or enforcing laws on day care.

e. They have used a variety of approaches, including lobbying important people (on a personal level), trying to get a film on the problems of divorce for women aired, getting a special issue on women for Am-Cham's monthly magazine and trying to add some women's aspects to it, and publishing articles elsewhere including a more social perspective on business topics.

2. Institutional Functioning and Capabilities

a.-c. The Am-Cham has about 600 members, of whom 64-80 are women. The women's group has 30-40 members, all female; one can belong to more than one such committee. Men have come to some meetings, including one where a psychiatrist spoke on whether working women hurt the family, and one on time use. There are 16 committees, all on a business topic (trade, taxes, etc.) except this and one on environment; two are headed by women. Am-Cham has a board of about 12, elected by all members, and they nominate a chair and vice-chair for each committee. Women can be on the board and one was in the past, but none are now. There is also a treasurer. Am-Cham members are heads of businesses, or associated with them, and at one point she described the larger group as very social, much like a club. Most are over 40 or 35 years old (they've had to work their way up to be a

company head), and quite well-off (also observed at the meeting). Dues for a president are \$750/year, and \$250 for two more employees of the same company. Not all applicants can join; the board chooses them. Work for the group is volunteer.

b. Didn't ask.

d. The whole organization has a lunch meeting about once a month, and often a meeting with a speaker every second month, and each committee tries to meet once about every 45 days; sometimes it's too much. Mrs. Skandar is on the taxation and trade committees based on business interests, and on this one and environment for personal interests.

"Successful Career Women" has its main activities via speakers at its periodic meetings; from the one I attended, participation is lively. At that, there were two speakers (one American, one Egyptian) on time management, at work and at home.

Other activities included having a feminist lawyer talk to them about women's legal rights, and their discussing how the marriage contract should be changed. Evidently if they had all agreed, they might have prepared a paper on it and presented it to the government. They did not, but did add a question to the marriage contract: "Do you give the woman the right to claim divorce herself?." Mrs. Skandar felt the 2-way exchange of ideas was important.

Another speaker was an Egyptian woman filmmaker who presented two films, an especially strong one on the negative effects of divorce on women and children. The group liked it very much and wanted to have it aired on TV, to raise social consciousness about the problem. They tried to do this by having a member who knew someone high in the Ministry of Information speak to him, but it did not work. Perhaps the film was too bitter, or perhaps the filmmaker's reputation as a social rebel prevented it even being considered.

There was also an idea of having each company on Am-Cham (or only the women's group?) take in two young women and give them jobs. Mrs. Skandar said the problem with this was in advertising to find the young women. Usually they get free coverage in the papers, so an ad would seem somehow "below them," and I think the issue of funds for it (with \$750 dues!?) was also raised. So it seemed someone didn't want this to fly.

e. There was some dispute over the title of the women's committee; evidently some felt "successful career women" was too assertive. Mrs. Skandar favored it, and it stayed; don't have details.

f. Am-Cham covers expenses, providing meeting space for larger and committee meetings (at the Marriott), refreshments, and a permanent office and a magazine editor; they also send out invitations to meetings. They do not pay speakers. Their main need is a way to provide women (and men? They are considering the strategy) with short term management training; this could involve a site and staff. They are discussing this with AmMideast, so are open to international funding, and also to USAID, with whom they have begun informal explorations (perhaps with NGO formation group? Mrs. Skandar knew them).

g. They have permanent offices with fax, phones, probably computer and copier; they did not mention any such needs.

h. Members are professional women with varied skills. The one skill they could use is someone to train on women in management.

i. The larger group is the Egyptian branch of the international Am-Cham, and help member-visitors with business needs. Mrs. Skandar would like to know if other groups have “women's groups.”

j. They have a monthly glossy magazine that members only receive; it's free. One issue focused on women, and each month there's a report on committee meetings, so they have input there. Mrs. S. wrote something for them that was later presented as an “interview” in the more general press. It's basically plagiarism, but she was glad to have the word spread. She feels TV is very important, and the whole organization is trying to produce a twice monthly program, partly using USAID money for a business center.

k. They tried to do so with getting the film on divorce aired, but failed. She feels TV would be most effective, with high illiteracy and its broad usage.

3. Constraints

a. One problem is that Am-Cham has so many committees that it's hard to attend them all. She mentioned that an article she wrote for the monthly was edited, taking out her reference to Islamic authorities; the group does not want to antagonize anyone. Another problem is that sometimes other committees say the women's group is taking their topics, like environment, so they have joint meetings. Limited participation was also mentioned, both in the sense that not all members attend, and also that she'd like to have a wider audience attend. The board convinced her that the latter is a problem, in that why would anyone pay dues if anyone at all could attend without paying. There was also the dispute about the name of the women's group, and the problem of not using newspaper ads to recruit young women to work in members' companies.

This group has had the most organizational constraints to date. I'm wondering if it's because it's a women's group, or because it's part of a larger group, while most I've interviewed have been “stand-alone” groups, thus without larger-group constraints.

b. Cultural values are somewhat of a constraint. She mentioned that the divorce film was perhaps too “sour” for state TV, and that some in the group thought “Successful Career Women” sounded a bit pushy. With their American ties, they shouldn't be too American, and in general they shouldn't deal with religion.

They are not under Law 32, since they are an international group.

A general constraint is limited time to do things.

4. The Future

a. They are working on setting up a center for management training, for women or for both sexes, trying to get the AmMideast board to accept the idea, and are working on costs and the program. They've also spoken to Ann Redwan of Fulbright about possible staffing for it. They are considering the legal shape: if it's an NGO, they can't charge people for attending.

b. They didn't mention any legal changes; since they're international, they seem not much concerned. Their dispute with the state concerned the non-airing of the film on divorce. It seems this was pursued by personal, informal means, and did not succeed; they did not involve public opinion.

c. They would work with an international NGO or with USAID. Their biggest need is for

someone to teach women and management and/or how to get to the top levels. They would also like literature from other NGOs, especially in the US, to see what they are doing on these women's issues, and copies of programs of their meetings.

6. Observations

One aim of this group is to advance the causes of women in business, especially through management training. However, other actions have focused more on women in general, like trying to air the film on the harsh effects of divorce, or to amend the marriage contract. These well-placed and energetic women could benefit from training on how to focus their efforts, and are in a position to apply such training.

Interviews with Aziza Hussein (4/12/95)
(Susan S. Davis with Diane Ponasik)
and
Mona Zulficar (4/18/95)
(Susan S. Davis)

(Since both work with the same group, the interviews are combined.
The speaker is noted only if there is a difference of opinion.)

NGO Support Group
(National NGO Committee for Population and Development, or NCPD, is title from Mona Zulficar)
c/o Mona Zulficar
Shalakany Law Office
12 Marashly Street, Zamalek, Cairo
Tel. 340-3331 Fax. 342-0661

(Amani Kandil suggested I focus on their encouragement of the NGO sector, so some of the usual areas may not be covered.)

1. Activities and Projects

a. The Support Group grew out of the ICPD in Cairo in September 1994, when they helped gather and host NGOs for the NGO forum. While they did not plan to work on advocacy, the ICPD meeting showed people that NGOs could help influence opinion, not just deliver services. The Group works to help gather NGOs from all over Egypt, and to let them "evolve" via exchange of ideas. Mrs. Hussein finds that advocacy works best when attached to a concrete cause, like the campaign against female genital mutilation (FGM), which has a special NGO devoted to it. Ms. Zulficar agrees that a cause, like producing an Egyptian document for the ICPD, is essential. They coordinate NGOs, to work together toward objectives, and to be able to produce documents to which all agree. They also function as an intermediary between UN bodies, and international and Egyptian NGOs.

b. The group began as described above, in about March 1993, to prepare for the ICPD, which provided the motivation and (psychological) space for the NGOs to gather. The MSA gave it space but not funding, which Mrs. Hussein said was better, since that meant less control/interference. The group began with 35 (many were invited and that number came; not all work in population) and grew to include 150 NGOs from different areas of Egypt; Ms. Zulficar said they worked with 400 from all over Egypt. At the ICPD there were 500 NGOs at the forum, with 1,000 people, 300 from outside Cairo.

During the ICPD, the NGOs decided they wanted to continue the Committee, and did, to follow up on implementation of ICPD decisions. The new group was made official by Ministerial decree, not by registration with the MSA; see below.

c. Mrs. Hussein is probably one of the steering committee of 12, though she didn't say so. She is obviously central in the Group's functioning; she described how NGOs are always calling her and asking for help, which she has no staff to provide. Mona Zulficar was also central in establishing the committee.

d. A major long term goal is to strengthen the role of the NGO sector, and through it influence public opinion and public policy. Ms. Zulficar said NGOs can be flexible and original and find

solutions when government and international groups can't (based on how this group helped set up the site for the ICPD NGO Forum).

e. Mrs. Hussein feels the Group (and NGOs) will move forward by being left alone. It seems government wants to jump in, and the MSA has formed a their own NGO group; she feels that will just serve to stifle activity. Her approach seems to be to help the groups get together, and meet their needs, and let them develop, not push them in any direction. See below for examples of working with the MOH and Sheikh Al Azhar on FGM. They work by providing information to help convince important (and other) people, not by being confrontational.

Ms. Zulficar echoed this sentiment with another example, that of the group working within the Ministry of Population, doing constructive advocacy from that perspective. They suggest to policy makers, who often carry through (though I didn't get examples).

2. Institutional Functioning

a. The Center has a steering committee of 12, two from NGOs in each of the 6 original areas included in the ICPD forum: family planning, family health, women, environment, population policy, and economic development. These members should also provide a balance of international expertise, geographic distribution (Cairo, Alexandria, Minya), and youth and women; there are 7 women and 5 men. The Steering Committee sets objectives, and a plan to implement them through clusters working together. They coordinate among the NGOs so they can move from plan to projects to a single document that will include the views of all groups. They wrote a work method and an action plan.

There are 6 standing committees, 1 per topic area and "chaired" by a member of the steering committee. They are involved with many groups, and network by special and geographic areas.

Any NGO can belong which has a "legal personality" (terms used to include others beyond those registered with MSA), is independent in administration and setting objectives, and is non-profit. They may have service, research, technical or information programs.

b. Didn't ask

c. All the ICPD work was done by volunteers. They are still volunteers. Mrs. Hussein had an assistant who is a recent Bryn Mawr grad (who I'd met); I'm not sure if she volunteers. People aren't really "members," but of the original 33 or 35 NGOs, there was a mix of women and men. Ms. Zulficar said the ones working in family planning were grassroots types, both as staff and volunteers. I expect the majority are more professionals.

d. Mrs. Hussein described several activities. One was that they helped the NGOs which participated in the ICPD to register officially.

Another was their work against FGM; she feels you must do advocacy along *with* a topic like that, not in a vacuum. They try to influence attitudes in various ways. They have had many conferences on FGM. At the last one, they got 3 different Ministry representatives to work on it. She said you need to get people "inside" on your side, by convincing them, and then work through them. One way to convince them is to give out objective facts [I think AHED said that too; note in report], to build your case. She mentioned that few people actually lobby, because they want to stay on the good side of government, and are afraid to confront them. With FGM, younger people were more confrontational and brought a case against the MOH [that was AHED, maybe among others]. Her group's approach was to write to MOH and have a meeting. They have built a mutual respect, so [he]

wants their help, and their info helps convince him, and he sends them copies of Government reports.

They have also used social workers, who use the channels available to them, and do teacher training on the topic at schools.

They would like to use the media more. They have a brochure on FGM, and wanted to produce a program, but that needs funding.

They also plan to have regional meetings [in Cairo, Alexandria and Minya] on their 6 topic areas, and Mrs. Hussein stressed they will also include the importance and history of NGOs. Ms. Zulficar said each group also has projects, so they have real work to focus them, not just conversation.

For the ICPD they did intensive studies of the 6 topic areas, so they developed specialized networks of researchers. And while it was not their responsibility to organize the NGO forum for ICPD, they did; really Mona Zulficar did, as an individual. They also had consultations before the ICPD to draft the "Egyptian NGO Platform Document," with an all-day meeting in each Cairo, Alexandria and Minya with 150-250 NGOs and the steering committee. Ms. Zulficar said the meetings were very intense, but also democratic; when others said "let's just stop now," she and Mrs. Hussein insisted they continue until they reached consensus.

e. Ms. Zulficar said that many of the NGOs wanted to be independent of the Ministry of Population; many of them were against the government. During a meeting with the Minister he informed them they were illegal (see 4.b.) and appointed a "board" of 5 which included Aziza Hussein, but she rephrased things so the Steering Committee accepted the "board" and added 7 others of their own. Afterward, several NGOs (from the Steering Committee, I assume) were still very upset and wanted to be OUTSIDE government, but Ms. Zulficar argued and finally convinced them that it was politically better to work from within: they could win people over, and have more influence and friends.

f.-g. They are all volunteers. They now have space for the FGM NGO, which the Group could share. But both need a phone and fax and computer; at this point, the Group seems to work through a desk and phone in Mrs. Hussein's living room. She said the NGOs request lots of help that she can't now provide. She and Diane spoke about possible help with an office, and a salary for a coordinator. USAID could help as part of continued support of service delivery, since that's ongoing and accepted. She feels if USAID is visible, it will lessen the group's credibility. She liked the idea of USAID working through an international PVO.

Ms. Zulficar said they had no money at first, but then they got funding from Ford and the Population Council (\$4000 from the latter). That money pays for one secretary and sent some people to the "prepcom" meeting prior to Beijing. They also have an assistant and a part-time accountant, and one room at the Ministry of Population with 2 other secretaries. She also said they would have no problem with funding from USAID politically (in contrast to Mrs. Hussein), but they would have BUREAUCRATIC problems.

h. They could use help on giving speeches, and the mechanics of organization. Funding to attend conferences would also be good.

i. They are a network of NGOs in the population, environment etc areas (see 1b above), and work with international groups too. They network by special interests and within geographic areas.

j. They use pamphlets and newspapers; they would like to work with TV but need more funds.

k. They try to influence both opinion and policy makers (see 2d). She feels all means are important and effective, though the examples she then gave were of convincing important individuals with good information, and working with them.

3. Constraints

a. The Group lacks funding to hire someone as a coordinator, and for equipment; they could also use some human resource development.

b. There are cultural values that limit some of their work, like support of FGM. As a Group, Law 32 limits them by bureaucratic requirements: "You need to go five places for an authorization." Government also hinders when it says it wants to help: both MSA and MOH or MOP have decided to form associations of NGOs after the effectiveness they saw at ICPD. The Group tried to help them, but were not accepted. One government group is the "General Federation of NGOs," with Mr. Hakim as the appointed head. They work top down (opposite to her philosophy), and put brakes on NGO work rather than facilitating it. For example, he didn't want their Group to assist flood victims; he said it wasn't their area.

4. The Future

a. They want to continue coordinating and facilitating NGO work. Mrs. Hussein does not want to confront the Government over Law 32; it would not be productive. She could have been Minister of Social Affairs 10 years ago, but said she didn't because it would "absorb" her; e.g., limit her useful work. She avoids disputes with the State; see example on FGM, and trying to work with and within State offices.

b. Ms. Zulficar also favors avoiding conflict with the State. She gave an example of when the group was at a meeting with a representative of the Minister of Population and he told them their group of 12 were illegal, and that the Minister had appointed a 5-person committee instead, including some/all of their group. Mrs. Hussein and the representative were co-chairs of the group or meeting. Ms. Zulficar spoke up, saying "I believe you meant to say..." and rephrased things to include the 5 within their group of 12, and the man was shamed and said nothing. Ms. Z. afterward drafted a letter to the Minister about the results of the election, which the committee re-did at a meeting at Mrs. Hussein's. She then took it to the Minister, who was pleasantly surprised at their professionalism, which helped win him over.

Although Ms. Zulficar did not say she wanted to confront the government about Law 32, she seemed more in favor of changing it than did Mrs. Hussein. She feels it should be restructured so that it deals with different forms of NGOs, like foundations. Registration should also be simplified, and made a means of recognition. It should be transparent and have groups accountable, but allow for self-regulation and support, not just control groups. In fact, this group's work is technically illegal under Law 32; networking is not allowed. But they're doing it, proving a point. She feels Law 32 WILL change: both Sobhi Abdelhakim and Mrs. Mubarak have already said so. She feels her group can help, by making constructive proposals to bridge the gap between government and NGOs.

5. Needs

Mrs. Hussein said they could use training on giving speeches, and organization and management, and office space and equipment like phones, fax, and computers. Funding to attend

conferences would also be useful, and also for a paid coordinator.

Ms. Zulficar said that other groups, like the UNFPA, would fund facilities. But she would like USAID to recognize the participatory aspect of their work, and the bridging between donors and NGOs. She says they need programs to upgrade the NGOs, like funding for staff or training for projects.

6. Observations

The two central actors in this group, Aziza Hussein and Mona Zulficar, are both highly influential and effective. They favor working within government for change, and want a more open and supportive policy for NGO operation. It seems Ms. Zulficar may be interested in their being an umbrella group for NGOs, but her comment on difficulties with the USAID bureaucracy highlight a potential problem.

Interview with Said el Tawil (4/16/95)
(Susan S. Davis)

Egyptian Businessmen's Association
21, Giza Street, Nile Tower, Cairo
Tel. 5736030, 5723020, Fax 5737258

1. The Organization

a. The group wants to encourage the private sector by working for a healthy business environment, including less government interference.

b. The EBA was begun 18 years ago (1977) by 2 people. (Mr. Tawil did not say if he was one, but I suspect he was.) It was the first such group in the region; he said the African Business Association began later and used this group's by-laws.

c. Mr. Tawil is Chairman of the EBA.

d. Long-term goals are the same as a.; they do this mainly through influencing policy concerning business.

e. Usually they meet with the government officials involved and discuss their interests on a specific issue, like a new law; an committee of experts from EBA members is set up for each need.

2. Institutional Functioning

a. There is a Board of 11, 1/3 of whom are elected each year at a general meeting; it meets once a month. They elect the Chair (Mr. Tawil), and choose a president, VP, general secretary and treasurer. There is no term limit for the Board or officers; officers are usually the same people. There are also two kinds of committees: regular ones by topic (like export), and "action committees", convened for a special purpose, like a new law. They meet as needed. Mr. Tawil chooses members for their expertise. Committees study problems and report to the Board, which also study them. All are volunteers, and pay their own expenses, even to international meetings. There are no women on the Board, but one is a committee chair (export). There is no MSA rep on the Board. Mr. Tawil stressed the difference between this group and the Egyptian Chamber of Commerce (not American-Egyptian), which he says has half its members appointed by the Government, and where a Minister has to approve their decisions. By contrast, his group is totally independent.

b. They have written by-laws; they may be different from those usual for MSA groups.

c. There are about 400 members, who join as individuals, not as company representatives. They apply to join, and should have 10-15 years experience, and be honest and open-minded. He stressed one's economic level was not important, but one's person. One fills out an application, submits a cv, and is recommended by 2 members. The Board investigates applicants, and if one of them says no, you're out. The son or grandson of a member, working with them, can get in more easily, and that's one way to get younger members. The average age is 55, and those around 35 are the youngest generation. There are only 9-10 women members (10/400=2.5 percent). Some members are from the public sector, like chairs of government banks.

d. Their activities include a "joint council" involving 30-120 Egyptian businessmen meeting annually with foreign counterparts, and a special one focused on England called the British-Egyptian Roundtable. These groups discuss mutual business problems, and then each side will discuss it and work toward solutions with their own government.

They also work in regular and action committees to solve problems that arise. For example, there was a problem with export of potatoes to England because of some kind of insect; they discussed and solved it. In another case there had been loans from London with favorable rates, but they stopped for 3 years; discussion got them working again.

Another activity is producing an annual report (we have the 1994 one) describing their activities and meetings, plus reports on financial factors. For example, the 1994 Report says that EBA collaborated with the government to resist pressure to devalue the Egyptian pound, both through media announcements and "communication efforts" with IMF institutions (p3).

e. No specific example of decision-making, though Mr. Tawil said he chooses people with expertise for the action committees, suggesting a central role for him. He also said the Board discussed committee reports, so things may be pretty hierarchical.

f. The EBA has about 11 full-time staff, including secretaries, assistants and accountants, and they own their own office space of 1000 square meters. They are entirely self-supporting (no MSA \$), and thus independent: it costs 5,000 LE to join and 1,000 LE/yr. Sometimes they request donations from members, as for renovations of their office.

g. They own office space with phones, fax, and computers on which they're beginning email and Internet use (the first group I've met doing so).

h. Didn't mention any.

i. They work with business groups internationally through the joint council and the British Roundtable; they meet at least annually. They send the annual report to Ministries, newspapers, banks, and Egyptian embassies worldwide. They also meet with government offices to lobby.

j. They send the annual report on economic conditions to the media, and their meetings are covered by radio, TV and newspapers, both national and international. They also have a monthly magazine for members.

k. He feels newspapers are important in influencing opinion, especially on legal change. The annual report describes many meetings, roundtables and symposia with government policy makers to discuss changes in Egypt's labor law; the report also points out shortcomings of the law.

3. Constraints

a. He mentioned no internal constraints

b. He said the bureaucracy is sometimes a constraint, with a mentality against privatization - especially those who work in the public sector. He said sometimes media have a similar view and publish criticism. He said Law 32 was not a constraint or burden, and in fact works as a legal cover; he saw no need to change it. MSA people are not on their board, and do not attend meetings.

4. The Future

a. He did not mention any changes.

b. In terms of expecting legal changes, he and his grandson (also present, a California college graduate) described the last 3-4 years as having lots of positive changes for business: lower duties, currency exchange and hard currency available. They expect lower customs duties.

A current dispute with the State is on tax policy and rate. The EBA is fighting it; it's the biggest obstacle they now see. They are producing reports and ideas on it, and taking action (didn't elaborate).

Another example is in the annual report, when they discuss the labor law. They thank the government for its willingness to involve them, but also present a point-by-point critique of the draft law. Thus they are using this medium, widely-circulated, to lobby for their views.

Finally, Mr. Tawil said there was disagreement on the leasing law. The government proposed the law, the EBA discussed it with them, and the government agreed to 90 percent of what they suggested. He said sometimes they meet and talk and sometimes the EBA writes on an issue.

5. Needs

He felt their needs are pretty well covered, but then said some transfer of technology might be interesting, and that USAID should discuss with the members what could be offered. He mentioned perhaps training on how to improve quality, or someone working with the agricultural committee on promoting export or increasing production. (These sound more like helping the businesses themselves, not the EBA.) He DID say that if USAID offered assistance, the EBA would pay a share, because that's more effective. Also, the EBA would want no influence on them.

6. Observations

This seems like quite an elite group with Mr. Tawil being very central. However, business interests are very important in the changing economic climate in Egypt, so EBA members are highly motivated (and well-placed) to exert influence, especially on policy makers.

Interview with Dr. Mohamed Eweida and Mohamed Mokhtar el Shirif (4/19/95)
(Susan S. Davis and Tamer El-Meehy)

Dakahlyia Governorate Businessmen's Association
for the Development of Small and Micro-enterprises
c/o RCRD, 9 El-Zaher Street, Mansoura
Tel. (050)350431

1. The Organization

a. They are an NGO which plans to help small and micro-enterprises to function better, and then to link them to larger firms, partly via the business connections of the group. They also work with a civil company in town and other groups to support metal workers in small shops; their role is as "intermediary," and they get the metal workers to attend meetings. They said government regulations also constrain small businesses, and they want to deal with them through research on them, and conferences and workshops (see 2.d. for an example).

b. They began to work together in 1989 and were registered under Law 32 in 1991. There are 15 members, including businessmen, three university professors concerned with development (2 in agriculture, 1 engineer), and local social and political leaders.

c. Dr. Eweida is the Secretary General and Dr. Mokhtar is a member of the Board; both are founders.

d. They want to improve the economic and regulatory environment and set the stage for the growth of small businesses to large, by getting small and micro-enterprises together with larger ones.

e. They will work toward these goals by

- doing research on the business environment in government
- holding conferences and workshops with popular and executive government leaders with business leaders
- establishing a database on all private businesses in the area (not just small ones)

2. Institutional Functioning

a. There is a Board of 11 (with a total membership of 15); they didn't plan to have this structure, but had to with Law 32. Officers are a president (General Sherbil, a local notable who has been Governor and is an MP - it's useful in their work), vice president, treasurer and secretary; all are on the Board and elected by it. They plus one board member are the General Secretariat and do the "daily management." Officers serve 1 year and should change but it's not required; they never have. There are no women, and they seem to be upper-middle class.

b. They have by-laws [from Law 32] but have not used them.

c. The 15 members are all men upper-middle class professionals. They are all volunteers and aged 40-55 except one who's 60 (probably the MSA rep). These members pay dues, and there's another level of 50-60 "friends" who give donations. They are recruited at conferences.

d. They are involved in a couple of projects, and seem to often work together with other groups, especially the local civil company RCRD (see separate interview).

- They are in the process of establishing a link with the Alexandria Businessmen's Association. The latter will establish a branch in Mansoura to help this group develop, and when they do, the link will be cut and they will be one, independent Association. They want to learn how to help small and micro-enterprises.
- They help support "ITSU," the Industrial Technology Support Unit. So far there are 17 "clients" from small businesses of metal workers. Five groups work on this: the Businessmen's Association and the Regional Union for NGOs are "intermediaries" and get the metal workers to attend. The RCRD, or civil company, coordinates between agencies and provides technical assistance. The IDRC is a Canadian NGO which is providing the immediate funding, the Social Development Fund and the Dakahlyia Trade Bank are providing funds for the small workshops to develop, and State agencies like the Governorate and the Ministry for Manpower are helping facilitate on the government side. They have had meetings to which government representatives and the workers come, and they work together to settle workers' problems.

For example, many small workshops are in homes and there are safety problems; social security is another problem. They planned a special meeting to which they invited about 100 people; 7-8 businesses came, with about 15 workers. After a discussion in which they realized that safety was a general problem, the Association looked for someone in government who might have solutions, and organized a second meeting with him. There were 3 kinds of problems and solutions. Sometimes the worker thinks a law is violated but it's not illegal, so the official explains. If the official is convinced there's a general problem, he can issue a decree to deal with it. For example, once the business waste wasn't collected at a time that fit the work schedule; the official had it rescheduled. Finally, if the problem is with one individual, the official may meet at his office to try to solve it. One industrial safety guy was hassling workers; his superior met with the workers and heard about it, and told the hassler to shape up.

e. The group of five agrees on daily matters, and the Board discusses more important things, like new projects. If there's disagreement they put off decisions until they negotiate or the rest can be convinced.

f. They have 3 staff who do accounting, administration and communication, and all are volunteers. Their expenses are mostly conferences, research and administration. Money comes from dues (62 LE/yr each), donations by members, and the majority from international donors. They are registered with MOSA and were given 50,000 LE to start up, but did not use it because they had no office space to furnish; now it's not available - it sounds like the money ran out.

g. They have a donated apartment in downtown Mansoura, and a phone, fax and computer. They hold conferences at the local hotel.

h. They could use help first with fundraising, and also business, communication and marketing. They would like to have a regular staff to do some of these things.

i. They seem to work with many other organizations in carrying out their work (see 2.d.).¹ In their activity to help small businessmen and metal workers, they worked with government officials, government and international financing, and a civil company. They are in touch with the Alexandria Businessmen's Association, and they are also part of the "Regional Union for Cooperatives and Private Foundations," which groups 500-550 local groups. The regional council meets once a month, and all the groups attend one annual meeting. They are trying to establish ties between small businesses, to share expensive equipment, but this hasn't caught on yet.

j. They get media coverage through personal relations, so the papers mention their conferences and they have TV coverage.

k. They try to influence public opinion through conferences and networking, and decision-makers through personal ties and networking; they feel the latter are easier [as a more discrete group?].

3. Constraints

a. Internal constraints are getting enough funding for all they want to do, and that the organizational development isn't keeping up with their activities; the former helps cause the latter. They need staff with admin, finance, marketing, and/or training skills; they will use project money to hire someone.

b. They said "popular NGOs" don't have much faith in international donors because of the complex conditions they impose, including language, accounting and number of staff. They said it also takes a long period of studies before the groups get money. It seems they had been in touch with USAID's NCNW project, but instead of being empowered they were discouraged (yet they are clearly going after international money).

Another external constraint is cultural, in that some people feel banks are HARAM or forbidden by Islam.

They said Law 32 is no problem for them. One of their Board, Si Mohamed Metwali, is from MOSA and was present for part of the interview. They said then, and later when he was not there, that he has a very flexible view of the Law and it's no problem. The government members of their group are helpful rather than a problem, and others help too.

4. The Future

a. They plan to continue and expand their activities. One is to get small businesses to link horizontally (and share expensive equipment) and vertically (so several work together on a final product, in stages: metal, object, polish).

Other potential activities include establishing a vocational training and advisory service with CIDA funds, a local town to produce aluminum cleanly and safely, a Mansoura complex to develop and support small and medium industries, and a Mansoura trade development center.

They also plan to put out a newsletter.

b. They don't have legal constraints or disputes with the State. They agreed that if it was strictly interpreted, Law 32 could prevent associations from functioning (in the presence of their

Board member from MOSA); one said if that man moved, THEN they would have problems with the Law. They said the Dakahlyia administration is very cooperative and progressive, so there is no problem.

5. Needs

The first need is financing for activities; Tamer explained we could not. They need facilities like a fax, computers, xerox, and a projector, and office furniture if they get space. They want to be able to hire managerial staff, and if they do, they could use training. They would accept USAID or international funding.

6. Observations

This group is closely entwined with the RCRD: Regional Center for Research and Development, a civil company. They work together on projects, and I interviewed the two same men for both groups, but on different days. On the one hand one wonders just which group is doing what, but on the other, they seem to be quite active and creative, and go-getters. The explanation in 2.d.2 shows how they work together, as well as with other groups, including government. One of their outcomes is to get businessmen and workers to know to whom in the government to go with a problem, and to work toward a solution, which certainly seems to be a way of people's voices being heard and affecting the state.

Interview with Fatma Sakr (4/18/95)
also with Sahar Ahmed Technical Director of the School
(Susan S. Davis)

The Right to Live Association for Mentally Handicapped
Sheraton Heliopolis Buildings
Tel. 266-1271

1. The Organization

a. They educate mentally handicapped individuals, so they can lead a "normal" life, and also counsel families with such children (not only ones with children here). They provide a service, but also advocate programs for mentally handicapped children in regular schools, jobs for older students, and for parents not to be ashamed. (Currently there are 8 totally separate government schools for these children, which are said to be of low quality and with unqualified teachers.) Although Mrs. Sakr didn't mention it as a purpose, they have a 5-year grant from Norway to train special education teachers (there is no such course at Egyptian universities), for their school and for others.

b. The Association was begun in 1981 by nine women, all mothers or aunts of handicapped children, with 30 students. At first it was a club, meeting twice a week from 3-7 PM at a nuns' "regular" school in Heliopolis, with university student volunteers providing recreation for the children. At that point some of the children attended Ramses College, a private school whose program ended at age 17.

In 1982 they collected money for three prefabricated wood buildings that they erected in the yard of a regular school, and they had classes 9-4 for 10 months a year plus a month of summer school.

In 1987 they moved to their current building(s). A Syrian-Lebanese man who had lived in Egypt for 20 years attended one of their benefit banquets as a friend of a friend, heard of their work, and donated LE 200,000 with which they built the first building. Mrs. Sakr said Muslims should donate 2 ½ percent of their income in zakat, and that when they find a good, clear cause like this, they give money. With the move here, they gradually increased students by about 4 a semester, because they had to train teachers for them.

c. Mrs. Sakr is vice president of the Association and a founder; her daughter Dina is 24 and a student here. The president is also a woman and has 2 daughters here.

d. Long-term goals include both service and awareness. For service, they want one side of the building to become a "home" for the mentally disabled, with sections for 20 men and 20 women, plus two families who will "support" them with services. They also want regular schools to make some provision, like separate classrooms, for disabled children. They also want them to provide programs for learning disabled children, who right now have NOTHING; there is no special school like this, and nothing in the public system. They also want sheltered vocational workshops for older students; one grad of the special education Institute has begun one in her home where young people do handicrafts and earn LE 2 a day. There is also a garden where they grow vegetables and some students work, and they plan to expand it.

They are trying to raise public awareness in several areas:

- They are training special education teachers, but the public doesn't know about them, so they get little respect, even though they have a special degree. The Association is trying to raise awareness.
- They have had conferences with businessmen, to convince them to hire the mentally handicapped.
- They have conferences with parents, to convince to admit they have handicapped children [which could be a first step in developing advocates].

e. They have sponsored conferences with businessmen and parents, to raise awareness of the existence and needs of the handicapped. They sponsored a marathon for the children to raise awareness, and the special ed Institute's alumni association had a press conference to increase awareness of their work. Mothers have gone on TV talking about having handicapped kids, so others will be less reticent about it.

Mrs. Sakr and her husband have lobbied with 3 Ministers of Education (including Mustapha Kamel, now President of the Senate) to request establishing a Special Education program at the university level; all said OK, but nothing has happened [so personal ties don't always work].

2. Institutional Functioning

a. There is a board of directors of 9, all women, elected by members (1/3 each year); they elect the officers. Officers are a president, vice president, secretary and treasurer, also all women, and the board and officers have been almost the same since the Association began. There are at least three committees: school, Institute (for special ed training), and vocational education. Each has 3 members, and some meet each week. I didn't ask, but it appears the board and officers are elite, and probably most over 45.

b. They are registered with MSA and seem to have those by-laws.

c. There are 50 members who attend the annual meeting once a year, and 7 work here as volunteers and others come sometimes. Most are women; they have more time. Some members help by getting donations in cash or kind for the school; men may also help with contacts. Members pay 10 LE/yr. in dues. I didn't ask, but it appears members may be elite. The school has over 100 students, many who are said to have financial aid. The 50 members may be the better-off parents and relatives.

d. The main activity is a day school for over 100 mentally handicapped children, from mildly to severely disabled, including autistic and Down's Syndrome children. I toured the facility, which offers many activities including art, music, cooking, physical activities, and language development and assessment. They have a student-teacher ratio of about 1:2 or better, and seem to be doing excellent work.

They try to provide students with enriching experiences like attending the Special Olympics in Lebanon and the Swedish Games, and the Special Arts meeting. They have had an exchange with Norwegian handicapped children, with two going there and two coming here, each for 2 weeks. This year some will go to the U.S.

AB

They would like the children to mix with regular kids, and to that end had girls around 13 join a regular Girl Scout troop. They met at the school and though it was awkward at first, they are now "pals" and recently presented a program together.

They also have an Institute that trains 25-30 special education teachers each year. They take BA students, preferably with social science or education degrees and a Norwegian-funded and staffed program with 2 people provides a year of training. Trainees come from all over Egypt (including some from public schools) plus Saudi Arabia and the Sudan; they pay 300 LE a year, but the cost is 4,000 LE which the Association subsidizes. Each year 4-5 of their own teachers are trainees; otherwise, they have learned on the job from more experienced teachers.

e. The example of decision-making isn't great: Sahar said they often see neglect of a child at home, so she counsels the parents, and the board knows about it too.

f. Their expenses include a staff of 80 teachers, an administrative staff of 9 (director, assistants, accounting, secretaries, and the Institute. The building is paid for. School fees are 1000 LE/yr, and costs 3,500 LE per student. In addition, there is tuition assistance, from 1/4 to full. About 30 percent pay full fees. Last year they had an 80,000 LE deficit, which they met with donations.

They raise money with 2 functions a year (as allowed by MSA): a charity bazaar where they sell school-produced goods, and a gala dinner and fashion show which costs 200 LE each. In association with the dinner, a press donates publication of a book of ads that brings in 20-25,000 LE/yr.

They also receive many donations, from individuals (who see them as a worthy recipient of zakat), companies like Esso and American Express (who gave money for a gym and a swimming pool at the school), and international donors like the Norwegians (who have funded the Institute for 5 years), the Canadians, Dutch and UNDP.

g. They have lots of space, and phone and fax. They had 2 computers that they used with the kids, but one is broken and the other used for accounting, so could use more (see 5). Next year they want to have a library and computer room for the children.

h. The Director described needs of the SCHOOL, not the Association per se. Those include lecturers in special education, including recreational and art therapy, physical education, and someone to teach teachers how and why to collect data on the use of behavior modification with students. Administrative staff needs training in word processing, accounting, and how to computerize files.

It seems Association members are quite efficient at fundraising.

i. The Association seems to be in touch with international groups with similar goals, and send students to joint events. They did not mention work with groups in Egypt; there may be none. They did mention the First Lady has her own school for the mentally handicapped and advocates their cause, but didn't mention mutual work.

They also lobby high-level people in the Ministry of Education via personal contacts, apparently with little effect.

j. They have used television to speak out about having handicapped children; Mrs. Sakr was on TV saying government schools should have classes for both kinds of children and that both would benefit.

The Institute began a monthly newsletter this year on special education; it's sent to Institute grads and to some schools; not a huge number are sent out.

k. They try to influence public opinion, to accept the mentally handicapped, and decision-makers, to provide space in schools or to hire for jobs. They do the former with television and conferences, and the latter with conferences or personal contacts. It isn't clear which is more effective.

3. Constraints

a. Sometimes parents are overprotective of students and try to limit what they can do at school, but usually they're won over with time.

b. Cultural values limit support of students, probably contributing to their exclusion from public schools. They also limit their working in special workshops: though there is a mandate that businesses must hire 2 percent handicapped people, they prefer physically handicapped. It's a big problem to find some work the older students can do.

The MSA requirements involve lots of paperwork that's a burden. Also, nonprofits are taxed, which she feels they should not be.

4. The Future

a. They will continue the school, and hope to add a "home" for older students in the future. They also want to encourage separate classes for the mentally handicapped in regular schools, to limit these students' social isolation. They want to encourage sheltered workshops too.

b. They would like special education to become a special program at the university level and have lobbied much on a personal level, but with little success.

A recent dispute with the State concerned the taxes on non-profit groups. Currently, the State wanted to charge 40 percent tax on their tickets for the benefit dinner. Through connections, they got the tax removed. But on a general level, they have spoken to people in the House, Senate and different Ministers about changing taxing of nonprofits say they will help, but don't.

5. Needs

They have no problem accepting USAID money. They have many needs, but all are for the school rather than the Association: computers and software, training on them, wheelchairs, small furniture for children, physical education equipment, books and educational games for the children, translation of foreign books on special ed for the Institute and the regular teachers, and teacher trainers in special areas.

6 Observations

The Association seems to be good at raising funds for their special project, the school. They also work as advocates for better, more normal treatment of the mentally handicapped, including

giving them classrooms in regular schools, helping them find sheltered work when they are older, and training special ed teachers. They have approached advocacy via personal connections and not been too effective. Perhaps training the active members in using the media more and in networking with “anonymous” parents of handicapped children would be more effective. As Goma points out, if a cause makes the government look good and attracts foreign money, it's likely to be supported and/or more successful in its efforts—this seems like a case in point.

Interview with Dr. Samuel Habib (4/17/95)
(Susan S. Davis)

Coptic Evangelical Organization for Social Services (CEOSS)
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1. The Organization

a. Although the group has both “evangelical” and “social services” in its title, Dr. Habib said they aren't either one: they do not evangelize (in this context it means Protestant), and they are now more development-oriented than focused on social services. He said their main goal is “human wealth for people”: “to empower people, to open up a wider vision of what they are doing.” They want to get people “out of the ghetto” of serving family to serve the community, and to take responsibility as citizens. The projects of CEOSS serve as means to these ends.

Thus they work intensively with communities to train them to be their own advocates, to seek and find ways to meet their own needs.

b. Dr. Habib began the work that developed into CEOSS in 1950. He began work as the literature secretary for the Church, in charge of publication. He said it was very hard in the 50s, when he began to write against female genital mutilation (FGM); he was the only one doing it. He wrote about that and against revenge between families in literary magazines.

He met an American woman working in literacy with the World Presbyterian Church, funded by the National Council of Churches. She convinced him to do literacy work with her in a village for 5 months; he was reluctant because he was a city boy. Yet after living with the people, he felt they really needed him.

Until 1958 they did only literacy work, but then moved to a broader program. Both Egyptians and expatriates said it was too ambitious, but the Presbyterian Women USA picked up the bill in 1959 for 3 years to give it a try, even though it went from \$12,000 to \$30,000 a year. While it had been a small church committee in the 50s, in 1960 they extended their services, set up a new society, and registered with the Ministry of Social Affairs (MSA).

CEOSS focused on social services until 1980. Although both Christians and Muslims feared they would be evangelical, the group built trust over time. In 1979 they hired an American in Egypt, Roger Hardister, to do an assessment of CEOSS work—and he's still here. That was in preparation to move from social service provision to development work, which they've done, with a focus on the local community.

About 3-4 years ago CEOSS added a new branch, “self-help,” in which they work through NGOs in a community to promote development.

c. Dr. Habib founded CEOSS and is currently the full-time general director with a full salary.

d. Their goal is to empower people to do their own development. Some specific goals include a new office facility and training/conference center, a new furniture factory, and more employment projects (see 4.a.).

- e. CEOSS has a clear process for involving people in their own development.

First, they must be invited to work in a community; the inviter could be a political party, a church or a Moslem group. (They were invited by 50-60 communities this year, but can only go to one. One invitation was from the Governor of Suhag.) Someone from CEOSS goes out and explains their work, and if the community is interested they write an invitation and sign it. CEOSS evaluates the "right" people signed it, e.g., representatives of mosques and churches, and formal and informal local powers. If so, they do a study, locate the influential people, and form a development committee of the community.

The development committee is usually all men, but CEOSS wants to encourage women and "youth" (those under 30, Dr. Habib said) to participate. They don't just put them on the committee, but train them so they can be credible participants, which can take 6 months to 3 years. He said one woman they trained in Minya is now more powerful than the men. The committee is 20-30 people, designed to represent the whole community, including officials; one of their principles is to work WITH government.

2. Institutional Functioning

a. A general assembly elects a Board of nine, one of whom is president, and they appoint the General Director (Dr. Habib). The Board is half male and half female, with a woman president. They should meet every month, but they meet four times a year from 4-8:30 PM. Most are professionals.

b. They are registered with MSA, so probably have those by-laws.

c. There is a general assembly of 70, all Christian. Many of them are couples, and there are a few single women, so there are slightly more women than men. They meet once a year to elect the Board, and to "study" the annual report; they discuss it, not just listen. Most are professionals; doctors, professors, and researchers. Work is carried out by paid staff, who are Christian, and volunteer leaders, most of whom are Muslim.

d. CEOSS has a wide range of activities; when I asked Dr. Habib about them, he said "maybe I should tell you what we don't do," e.g., the list would be shorter! He says they reach 2 million people a year, and work in rural and urban areas. And while many activities seem to be social service they are done with the goal of development and empowering people. Finally, they are done by paid staff, not volunteers.

- *Education, formal and nonformal.* They teach literacy, home economics for women (and a few men), nutrition (both sexes), women's training on the community and the home, husband/wife relations, and youth care (both sexes, ages 20-25).
- *Public health.* They do education, treatment, prevention, family planning, infant care, help the community get water or sewers, and do inoculations of whole communities when there are epidemics.
- *Agriculture.* Extension work, experiments with new seeds, chickens (usually women), and beehives (usually men). He said 7 hives can provide the income of one acre of land, and 7 hives double in 10-12 months. They also sell (sometimes with credit) bulls to communities to improve their cattle stock.

- *CEOSS provides loans to individuals, groups or community or cooperative societies.* For example, they helped people to form a coop to set up a bakery, and paid the shares of the poorest so they would have a say, and a place in the community.
- *Employment and business training.* They have a center near Tahrir in Cairo where they help companies to train people, and teach small businesses how to run; he said this is an effort to work with some of the 4 million unemployed university graduates. They also do other work with rural and urban unemployed.
- *Environmental conservation.* They have a large nursery that gives or sells trees to many parts of Egypt.
- *Housing.* They are helping to upgrade housing by providing loans and grants. They work in New Shobra, Beni Suef, and Cairo, and help with things like painting, dividing rooms, and reinforcing weak structures.
- *Leadership development.* They have a conference center at Itsa, 15 km north of Minya, that can house 150. Community leaders can go on retreat there 3-5 times a year. They might bring 25-30 men and women from one community, or only women if they're working on family planning or against FGM, or have 40-50 literacy leaders from different places. They train these different people in leadership skills like asking for their rights, where to find necessary information, and how to make the right contacts. The trainers include university professors, and CEOSS specifically brings women trainers, to show you can learn from women and they can teach.

CEOSS recently had a conference in Minya to show appreciation of local volunteer leaders. Governors were present and people got certificates, so they would know they're appreciated and feel encouraged. They also had one to recognize 80-90 volunteer leaders in Cairo.

The WAY they work is to start with CEOSS staff taking people in a certain area, like health, to the town or city health facility where they meet people and help the health staff person. They may make these visits for 2-3 years, gradually taking more responsibility, until at the end the staff person observes the community volunteer doing the work. Someone working in family planning might make such visits every month or two. If a project is involved, a committee of 5-6 will be chosen from the larger development committee, and they will work with the professionals (in, say, electricity), and the staff, to plan the project and carry it out.

- *"Self Help"* is a new branch begun around 1991. It works through community NGOs, which could include mosques or churches. The staff does a community survey, sees who's powerful, and trains them to work in and for their own community. It could be via 2-3 days of conferences, or meetings there with discussion of goals, and what could be done.

The WAY CEOSS works involves staff living in a community. The average is 7-8 staff, each of whom has 3 specialties, and rarely the number goes up to 15. There are different kinds of community support: "partnership communities" have 8-9 staff members for a period of 6-8 years; "follow-up communities" number about 20 and have staff visit about monthly; in 50-60 "special communities" people come to the office when they need help.

Paid staff do the community development work, overseen by a Board of volunteers who also find funding, and carried out by community volunteers.

e. Dr. Habib said there were sometimes "issues" that had to be discussed at Board meetings and gave the example of how he made a trip to the U.S. with the Mufti; the Board wanted to know why the Church would do something like that (e.g., some felt he shouldn't). He said building tolerance and peace-making between Christians and Muslims could be a major issue for CEOSS; it seems he convinced them about it. Another issue that entailed much discussion was closing Asiut Province, which some argued about. It isn't clear how decisions are made, but it seems disagreement is tolerated and dealt with.

f. Their largest expense is administration, with 12 percent of the budget including capital aspects, like cars and a new building. Dr. Habib and a staff of 330 are paid full time. There is a furniture factory with a staff of 100 (it's not clear if they're within or in addition to the 330; I think in addition). There are also 250-300 part timers, like doctors who do some work each week and are paid "by the piece." Finally, there are 4,000 volunteers. There are bookshops they run, which publish literacy materials, Christian materials, and some general publishing for Christian and Muslim reader plus books on psychology, sociology, and the first in Egypt on administration. The publishing barely breaks even.

Development money in their 1995 budget was 19 percent from local sources, including contributions in cash (dues are 100 LE/yr) and in kind, book sales, and ½ million LE a year netted from their woodworking shop/factory. The rest of the money comes from other groups, based in Egypt or abroad. In 1993 (the last figures he remembered), 48 percent of the total budget was from Egypt and the rest from abroad, including embassies of the Dutch, Germans, Canadians and USAID in Egypt, plus the same groups abroad and British and Swedish funds.

The MSA sent him a check for LE 5000, but he returned it with a gracious letter saying he was grateful but felt sure others could use it more; he felt that would assure independence. CEOSS also uses government money in some of their projects, but it goes directly to beneficiaries, so there is no need for government control. For example, if CEOSS will help a community pay for sewers, the government may help too, but the sewers go right to the community, not through CEOSS.

Dr. Habib said as far as he knows, CEOSS is the only Egyptian organization of its kind registered with USAID.

g. CEOSS is currently based in a rather run-down building in downtown Cairo in which they own six apartments and use 2-3 more. They have a new building in Heliopolis which will be ready Fall 95, with 6 floors on 1,000 square meters, plus a like area for gardens. Sale of the current flats will pay for the new building, but they will still need operating expenses.

They also have the Itsa conference center in Minya that houses 150; they use it 25-30 percent of the time for training and rent it out to others. They are planning a new conference center on 9,000 square meters they have purchased near Maadi that will accommodate 250 residents and can feed 1,000 for one-day conferences. They still need to do fundraising this fall; Dr. Habib hopes it will be the main conference center in Cairo, so they can rent it out in addition to using it.

They have phones, faxes, and are fully computerized, with a phone link to Minya; the bookshops are also linked by computer. Dr. Habib hopes this centralization will help in decision-making.

h. They need human resource development in terms of computer training, and in academic study for staff. He would like more staff to get MAs and PhDs, but they; a) can't be away for long

from project work, so need to do it a semester at a time, and b) need to do it quickly. They need more specialists in social science and in business administration.

i. They network in individual communities for development, putting people in contact with each other. CEOSS also established a group, but ran into problems. They had a meeting for large NGOs in Egypt, but some had MSA problems, the courts were involved, and they stopped. Now UNICEF deals with this, and his deputy, Nabil Sawil, works to encourage and support it.

j. They have done 6 TV programs with Dr. Saad Eddin Ibrahim. In about 1992, they invited 35 journalists from Al-Ahram (paper) to visit their community groups, and they were so impressed they spent the whole day talking to CEOSS-trained community leaders, skipping lunch and not returning until 6 PM. They ate quickly, then discussed it from 8:30-midnight, and CEOSS has this on videotape. After that, CEOSS got much coverage.

k. Inviting journalists and producing TV programs are examples of trying to influence public opinion, and perhaps decision-makers. CEOSS works with the government, so they influence decision-makers that way.

3. Constraints

a. They need more women in management, at the top levels of staff; they have only two. Staff are Christian and volunteer leaders mostly Muslim. There are 25 top leaders, and they're building up a second level which needs much development.

b. There are several external constraints. The largest is money. The labor law is also a problem: after a three-month trial, you can't fire someone who does poor work, but must buy them off to leave. Bureaucracy is also a problem, so, for example, in housing work it's difficult to find out who owns land; it takes more than a year now. However, this can be eased by good relations with officials like the governor. Relations to the MSA are not a bureaucratic problem, and CEOSS basically do what they want to: MSA is not on the board, don't attend meetings, and don't contribute money (see 2.f).

4. The Future

a. CEOSS will continue their development work. They will work out of a new office in Cairo, and hope to build a new meeting center there (see 2f).

They want to have more projects that provide employment and income, and become less dependent on donor funding for development. An example is that they want to expand their furniture-making operation by January 1996 so it will bring in one half million more Egyptian pounds than it does now, and use this money for development work, while it also employs people.

b. Dr. Habib saw two possible legal changes that could affect CEOSS. One is with GATT; they are examining the influence on their furniture factory, "to be ready for problems." (They seem especially sophisticated in this view.) Secondly, he hopes for more liberty for Egyptian NGOs, which could come from changing Law 32. As it is, it makes NGOs semi-government; they are called "public utility" in Arabic. He feels there should be less government control. A new law could still be under the MSA, but more relaxed and with less control, or it could be under a department, not a ministry.

5. Needs

They need training on computers, including with a centralized system, and networking. They also need training to get staff to the MA or PHD level, and some specialized training. I think they currently send some people for 6 month stints in Canada or Holland, including women.

6. Observations

- CEOSS seems to have a very effective program of work at the grassroots level which train local people to become leaders and advocates for and agents of development in their communities.
- CEOSS work is different than that of many other NGOs interviewed in several ways:
 - They have a trained, paid staff which lives and works with local volunteers.
 - The work is intensive and long term, and teaches skills.
 - CEOSS is training community NGOs; could they also train other, already-functioning NGOs to work in their style?
- CEOSS is registered with USAID so could receive funds as an umbrella organization, but channeling funds to all NGOs through a Christian group would probably be politically unwise.