PROVISION FOR POST PROJECT EVALUATIONS FOR THE UNITED NATIONS DEMOCRACY FUND
Contract NO.PD:C0110/10

EVALUATION REPORT

UDF-EGY-07-162: Building Democratic Spaces

Date: 2 May 2012

Table of Contents

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....1
II.

I. Executive Summary

i. Project Data

This report is the evaluation of the project entitled ´%XLOGLQJ GHPRFUDWLF 6S implemented by EACPE, the Egyptian Association for Community Participation Enhancement, based in Cairo, Egypt, between 1 September, 2008 and 31 March, 2011. The project benefited from an UNDEF grant of $230,000, with a project budget of $88.4 [5200B(oe)12 osBT 1 0 0 1 188.18 662.623g EMC /P <</MCID 6/Lang (en-C7)>> BDC BT 1 0 0 1

DOO SURMHFW DFWLYLWLHV WKH SURMHFW¶V SHUIRUPDQFH and taking gender equality as a cross-cutting theme was somewhat disappointing.

Overall, the project made a series of modest short-term contributions to meeting the organizational and knowledge needs of designated stakeholders and beneficiaries, and

- As a support to organizational learning, it includes in the design of all activities a process to enable participants to provide feedback on their experience

In order to live up to its name as the "Egyptian Association for Participation" it is further recommended that:

- EACPE works with other organizations with expertise on methods for engaging actively and systematically with stakeholder and beneficiary groups;

- Particular attention be given to acquiring technical skills to enable EACPE to undertake participatory needs assessment research as a basis for defining project results and shaping programming.

ii. Logical framework

7KH FKDUW LV EDVHG RQ LQIRUPDWLRQ LQFOXGHG LQ WKH S
WKH LQLWLDO DQG ILQDO UHSRUWV $V QRWHG DERYH WKH
degree, at least, in that the project lacked a coherent logic, linking activity sets as a basis for design and implementation. The results statements used are all taken from project documents, or are paraphrases of statements given.

Preparing and holding
3'HPRFUDWLF)RU
and seminars, along with annual conferences;

Continuing Participation by a broad range of

IV. Evaluation findings

The evaluation is based on a set of Evaluation Questions or EQs, designed to cover the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability; plus the issue of UNDEF value added. The Evaluation Questions and related sub-questions are presented in Annex 1.

i. Relevance

7KH GHYHORSPHQW SUREOHP LGHQWLILHG WKURXJKRXW WKH SURMHFW GRFXPHQWDWLRQ is certainly a relevant concern in terms of the prospects for Egypt to move towards developing an effective, participatory and responsive system of governance. However, the problem defined is vague and somewhat abstract and is not sufficiently focused to give direction to project design.

The principal concern of the project was to bring together different political and social groups, often in conflict or disagreement with one another, to develop a common position, or an agenda, for working towards a functioning democracy. In practice, the range of political opinion represented in the project was limited mostly to secular forces, with those from secular leftist and social democratic parties and groups predominating.

The following groups were identified as both beneficiaries and stakeholders in the project:

- Parliamentarians;
- Political Parties;
- Political and Social Movements;
- Trade unions and professional syndicates (associations);
- Youth organizations, other civil society groups and the media.

First Forum: Dynamics of Democratic Change

Based on an examination of project documents, materials on individual events and lists of participants in them, as well as data collected from interviews, it is difficult to determine who the actual beneficiaries were. Members of the groups listed above were involved to some degree, with academics, public figures linked with leftist political parties, those from the trade union movement and others involved in the effort to form independent professional syndicates, and representatives from human rights NGOs, playing the most prominent roles.[2]

[2] $Q LPSRUWDQW IHDWXUH RI WKH ³(J\SWLDQ 5HYROXWLRQ´ KDV EHHQ WKH class technical and professional personnel form state-supervised leadership in elections within national LQVWLWXWLRQV LQFOXGLQJ XQLYHUVLWLHV DQG SURIHVVLRQDO DQG W

:RPHQ¶V /HDGHUVKLS 7UDLQLQJ :RUNVKRS

In the second phase of the project, from January 2010 to March 2011, there were 4 **Democratic Forums** and 2 **Training Workshops**:

Forum 4: Future of Syndicates in Egypt;
Forum 5: New Media and its Role in Democratic Change;
Forum 6 & 7: Vulnerable Groups in Society, between rights of Citizenship and Marginalization;
Forum 8: The Association Dilemma in Egypt;

Workshop 3: Blogging and Syndicates.
Workshop 4: Post Revolution Organizational Structure

The Second Annual Conference , on the theme of Whether Elections Could be a Mechanism for a peaceful Transition to Democracy , was held in July 2010, after the Fifth Forum. Its timing was unhelpful, if it was to be a mechanism to build on other activities. Rather, its timing reflected what was perceived by EACPE as an urgent need to discuss the limitations of the value of elections under conditions current at the time.

spoke to the concerns animating the organizers of the project. Yet, it was a special, one-off activity. There was little in the project's formal activities to pave the way for such a meeting, and many of those who took part were new to the project.[3]

The list of activities undertaken by the project, listed above, reads like a menu of topics of interest to the stakeholders and beneficiaries listed above. Some topics for activities were very broad in character, while others were tightly focused on the more immediate interests of a particular group. All activities, whatever the range of their coverage, were relevant in a general way to the project's objective of separate and self-contained events. The project scattered its resources in such a way

makers. In other words, they had an advocacy role. However, if the aim was to influence policy, the effort was not furthered by the adoption of only the most vague and general recommendations at the conclusion of these events.

Such events may have been effective as judged by the standards of conferences and seminars organized by academic organizations, think tanks or research-oriented NGOs. However, it might be noted that, in the Project Document, the list of Democratic Forums and Conferences were placed in the FDWHJRU\ RI ³$FWLRQV IRU &
Despite this, as contributions to bringing about or encouraging social or political change, or as components of a results-oriented project, they cannot be judged to have been effective.

Social Media Forum

Social Media Forum, May 2010: As became so apparent in the Egyptian Revolution, the emergence of Social Media has played a critical role in enhancing the dynamism of Egyptian civil society in recent years. New social movements have used Facebook, Twitter, blogs and websites, to debate and refine issues, build support and organize demonstrations, strikes and other mass public events.

7KH SURM Forum focused on New Media. It brought together 30 participants, including activist

The Project Document led the reader to believe that the Democratic Forums, together with the 2 Annual Conferences, would provide the hub for ongoing debates leading to the adoption of a shared agenda among a wide range of social and political groups. This did not happen.

For the most part, the project was isolated from ordinary Egyptians and from those who ZHUH PRVW DFWLYH LQ ³WKH (J\SWLDQ 5HYROXWLRQ´ ,W ZD movements, but (with a few exceptions) rather the existing leftist political parties and ³SXEOLF LQWHUHVW´ 1*2V ZKLFK ZHUH PRVW SURPLQHQW DP of speakers, facilitators and writers in the project. The project seems to have taken place largely within this network.

Workshops and 30-60 in Forums) in each case, and little continuity of participation from one activity to another, the difference made to the group in question will have been quite limited.

One sphere where the project might have been expected to have some impact was in Gender Equality , defined as a project priority. There is no doubt that EACPE is committed strongly to gender equality. Its CEO, Dr Afaf Merei, is well-known for her work as an advocate for gender equality and a supporter of women workers through ($&3(DV ZHOO DV ZRPHQ¶V RUJDQL]DWLRQV +RZHYHU VK ZRPDQ LQYROYHG FRQVLVWHQWO\ LQ SURMHFW RSHUDWLRQ terms of ZRPHQ¶V HQJDJHPHQW ZDV VRPHZKDW GLVDSSRLQWLQJ

The Project Document also referred to the importance to the project of the involvement RI ZRPHQ¶V 1*2V ³WR HQVXUH WKDW ZRPHQ KDYH WKHLU R SUDFWLFH ZRPHQ¶V RUJDQL]DWLRQV play a prominent role in project activities, except in the consideration of Vulnerable Groups in Democratic Forum 6/7.

In the First Annual Conference, 17 of 102 participants were women, For the Second Annual Conference, 27 of 99 participants were women. In a Forum focused on Challenges of Student Participation in Democratic Change, only 12 of 52 participants were women, while women make up at least 50 per cent of students enrolled in major universities. In the 8th and final Democratic Forum, on Dilemmas for Associations in Egypt, women accounted for 11 of the 56 participants, and 6 of these were journalists, a profession where women are strongly represented. The project was more successful

any additional impetus towards democratic development at a time of political upheaval, where others were taking the lead in pushing for regime change.

The grantee has continued the publication of the Monthly Report, and continues to publish an Annual Report, funded by the EU, which, in part, at least, duplicates the Report supported by the UNDEF project. EACPE is an organization which has been successful in the past in raising donor funds, and may well be able to continue to organize activities such as those undertaken through Building Democratic Spaces.

In terms of financial sustainability, like all the other Cairo-based public interest NGOs, and unlike Islamist organizations, EACPE remains entirely dependent on support from international donors.

vi. UNDEF Added Value

EACPE valued the UN label which came with UNDEF support. At a time when funding from other donors is coming under scrutiny by the state, being able to point to support from UNDEF may have been helpful. Beyond this, there was no particular benefit derived from UNDEF support. Despite the promise of the topic and relevance of the

V. Conclusions

All conclusions are derived from the findings of the Evaluation, presented above.

i. The development problem L G H Q W L I L H G W K H D E V H Q F H R I ³ D G H P R F U D W L F P D V V ´ L V F H U W D L Q L Q W H U P V R I W K H S U R F H V V I R F R Q F H U Q Egypt to move towards developing an effective, participatory and responsive system of governance. However, the problem, as defined, was no t sufficiently focused to give direction to project design .

ii. The principal concern of Building Democt

participated in particular activities, but no effort was made by the project team to engage with them on a continuing basis.

vii. A central concern of the project was to bring together members of new social and political movements with existing secular political parties and civil society groups. However, it was not the new social and political movements, but (with a few exceptions) rather the existing secular leftist and s ocial democratic political parties D Q G ³S X E O L F L Q W H U H V W´ 1 * 2 V Z K L F K Z H U H P R V W who took on the roles of speakers, trainers and experts in the project. The project seems to have taken place largely within this network.

viii. The Knowl edge Production component of the project was also likely to have been of most value to the members of this network . The Monthly Reports (which continue to be published after the conclusion of the project) published over a 24-month period, performed a service for researchers, NGOs and political groups, in documenting current developments relevant to democratic development.

ix. In considering the relationship between the resources used in the project and the results achieved, it must be concluded that the r elationship between results achieved and resources expended was discouraging This was, in large part, because of the inappropriate design, with the project unfolding as a series of separate, unconnected events, which reduced any prospect of impact. Secondly, the way project resources were employed did not suggest that the grantee exercised care in ensuring cost-effectiveness.

x. The effort to track and assess impact was further complicated by the lack of interest by EACPE in conducting simple end -of-event evaluations to enable participants to provide their response to what they had gained from taking part in any project activity. In addition, no attention was given to tracking utilization of documents produced and distributed by the project.

xiv. One sphere where the project might have been expected to have some impact was in Gender Equality, defined as a project priority. However, while there were women participants in all activities, W K H S U R M H F W ¶ V S H U I R U P D Q F H L Q W Z R P H Q ¶ V H Q J D J H P H Q W D Q G W D N L Q J J H Q G H U H T X D O L J MD Q J a

VI. Recommendations

If EACPE is considering applying for future funding to an International agency, which, like UNDEF, seeks to support efforts to make a difference in contributing in a concrete way to democratization and strengthening civil society, It is recommended that:

i. It seeks expert advice on how to shape an integrated project design with both practical results and impact in mind; (based on Conclusions i-vi, x, xi and xvi-xvi)i.

ii. It prepares project budgets with careful attention to cost effectiveness and deployment of re sources in service of results . Particular care should be taken in ensuring that project resources are not utilized to cover regular organizational costs (based on Conclusion ix)

iii. As a support to organizational learning, it includes in the design of all activities a process to enable participants to provide feedback on their experience (based on Conclusion x)

,Q RUGHU WR OLYH XS WR LWV QDPH DV WKH ³(J\SWL
3DUWLFLSDWLRQ it is further recommended that:

iv. EACPE works with other organizations with expertise on methods for engaging actively and systematically with stakeholder and beneficiary groups (based on Conclusions ii, iii, vii and xvi)

v. Particular attention be given to acquiring technical skills to enable EACPE to undertake participatory needs assessment research as a basis for defining project results and shaping programming (based on Conclusions ii, iv, v, vi and xvii)

VII. Overall assessment and closing thoughts

Building Democratic Spaces was a disappointing project. There was a legP f1 0 0 1 g0.h1 g sappo

sustained participation by many of the groups

Annex 2: Documents Reviewed

Al-Ahram Weekly

$ P D U 3 D X O ³ (J \ S W D The National, 5 May, 2011N´

$ P U D Q 0 R K D P H G ³ 7 K H 1 H Z 0 H G L D D Q G L W V 5 R O H L Q 6 X S S R U W L Q J 3 D U W L F L S D W L R Q ´ X Q S X E O L V K H G S D S H U

$ V K R X U 2 P D U ³ (J \ S W ¶ V 5 H Y R O X W L R Q D Brookings, 7 February, 2012H U 0 X E D U D N ´

% H U P D Q 6 K H U L ³ , V O D P L V P 5 H Y Respectively American Political Science Association), Vol.1, 2, June 2003, pp. 257-272 (available at apsa.net)

& R R N 6 W H S K H Q ³ (J \ S W ¶ V 5 H Y R O X W L R Q ´ The Times, 12 February, 2012

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Annex 4: Acronyms

CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
DAC	D