

Community Libraries for Adult education in Egypt



Transformational point

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Basic Data: Illiteracy

National population 90 million

Percentage of illiterates: 27.9%

Number of illiterates: 17.5 million

Woman: 11 m; Men: 6.5 m:

18.5% males compared with

33.6% females.



Why Community Libraries?

- The adult education programs in Egypt do not have a sustainable plan to meet the learners' needs
- We face a risk that many of the learners especially youth and woman become illiterate again because they do not practice reading after their graduation
- A study showed that 2 out of 5 had weakened reading and writing skills due to the lack of practice
- Some of the graduates do not develop their skills by reading newspapers, magazine and books, and sometimes this could hinder their participation in the society by being active citizenship

What the Community Libraries look like?

Located in Upper Egypt, community libraries are like cultural centers established to promote communication between the literacy classes graduates.

The community libraries are like assembly points, where the graduates meet with diverse groups from society. Together they read, do research, analyze a cause and turn it into a community project.

By doing the community project, the literacy graduates become productive members in their societies, thinkers, and change makers.

Our aim is to have those groups say: **WE DID IT (the change) BY OURSELVES**

What the Community Libraries look like - cont?

- The library activities help them to continue their learning and not return back to illiteracy. The project empowers the participants by involving them in social issues that could affect their lives.
- Through dialogue, group discussion, research, thinking and reading the groups can come up with activities that could help them to deal and solve their social problems.

When did we start this experience?

The idea started in 2000 to keep the communication among the graduates and to prevent them from bouncing back to the illiteracy state once again and to promote their reading skills and providing them with a place to meet, think about their community issues and find solutions.



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دايرضه تكرار لما تم ذكره في مرات سابقة ويمكنك قوله بالكلام

Nawal Ghatas; 02.06.2015

Number of Community Libraries

Number of libraries : 52

9 libraries transformed into associations

5 libraries transformed into women associations

Also Horus Foundation, established in 2009,
has its roots in community libraries



Community Library Activities

There are two types of activities:



Activities within the library

Regular activities: Free reading, book displays, book - wall magazines and newspapers, etc.

Other activities take place from time to time, such as: seminars on various topics (Human rights, health, environment, etc.

Concerts or national or international days, like the International Literacy Day



Outreach Community Activities

- The team studies and assesses the needs of the their community
- Find all the possibilities of material and human resources to support them to serve the community through two activities

1- Awareness seminars in a relevant and important topics

2- Development projects



Examples of projects carried out by the Community Libraries

- Planting trees in the streets
- Building toilets & bathrooms for some families
- Clubs for children and girls
- Bridging the ruined pools and swamps
- Literacy classes led and taught by the graduates



Community Libraries transforming to local NGOs

This step may take five years from the date of founding the community library, opening it and finding out community needs

It is configured to work as a team. The coach has experience and the team shall be as board members of directors.

Knowledge and awareness of associative work, organization and this is, of course, during the previous stages.



What is the new idea of this experience?

- To help the literacy graduates to continue their learning and prevent them from bouncing back to illiterates.
- To spread culture, political, and human right awareness among the individuals in the society, especially among women.
- To spread awareness among people and to empower them practicing their rights.
- To provide an independent and suitable place for the community to meet, have dialogue, and to contribute to problem solving.
- To prepare the literacy graduates to become community leaders by leading official associations or local NGOs.



The Community Libraries phases:

- Location selection
- Provide equipment for those places
- Choose the coordinators
- Training for the coordinators
- Follow up the implementation inside
- Training sessions for the coordinators to develop their leadership skills
- Assign teamwork
- Conduct a regular evaluation for the implemented activities and to measure the achieved results



Outreach Activities (cont.)

- (Community Projects)
- Training for the team
- Transforming the community libraries to local NGO



Where are we now?

The number of community libraries is 52 in three areas in upper Egypt:

9 became civil associations, including Horus Foundation and we are proud of it!

Three literacy graduates in our community became board members of the Horus foundation.

The background of the slide is a scenic landscape. The top half is a bright blue sky with scattered white clouds. Below the sky is a range of rolling green hills. In the foreground, there is a body of dark blue water with a small island of green reeds in the center. The overall scene is peaceful and natural.

What is the next step ?

We plan that by 2020 we will have 100 community libraries and we plan also to cover all of upper Egypt.

We will support 20 from these libraries to become associations by 2020.

What is the next step – (Cont)?

- In the next 4 to 5 years, the community library graduates team will be able to establish and lead a local association.
- This means that they will become an association¹ during these years led by the graduates (men and woman).

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Nawal Ghatas; 02.06.2015

Thank You

