The Cairo Initiative
Investing in Egypt’s Development

October 2011

"Education and innovation will be the currency of the 21st century.” President Barack Obama

OVERVIEW
In his June 2009 Cairo speech, President Obama announced a new direction in American engagement with the Muslim world with a vision to strengthen and build human capacity building enhanced exchange, training and scholarship programs, as well as by promotion of science, technology, and entrepreneurship. The resulting Cairo Initiative focuses on the USAID-Egypt partnerships in five critical areas that offer opportunities for the Egyptian people.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT TARGET AREAS

PROMOTION OF SCIENCE AND MATHEMATICS
USAID is supporting the Ministry of Education in creation of exemplary secondary schools specifically focused on science and mathematics education to allow a diverse group of students to progress into higher education and become proficient workers capable of meeting the demands of a science-based workforce and able to continue the research and development that is central to economic growth.

SUPPORT FOR PRIVATE AND PUBLIC SECTOR TRAINING
USAID funds short- and long-term training opportunities in Egypt and the United States for Egyptian mid-career managers to address improving leadership and management skills – a primary constraint to institutional performance in Egypt.

PROVISION OF SCHOLARSHIPS AND HIGHER EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES
The Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research and USAID signed a $22 million agreement to provide more than 170 scholarships to the U.S. for Egyptians to obtain Master’s, Doctorate, and Post-Doctorate degrees. Scholars are selected based on their ability to fill crucial skill-gaps needed to increase ministry efficiency and facilitate overall economic growth. Upon their return to Egypt, the scholars have committed to serve their ministries in positions pre-identified and defined as needing their newly acquired expertise.

DEVELOPMENT OF TECHNICAL EXPERTISE FOR EMPLOYMENT
In order to better equate the supply and demand needs for skilled labor, USAID has promoted activities that include literacy, numeracy, technical and vocational elements in nearly 117 Agricultural Technical Schools in Upper Egypt, Sinai and the Delta benefitting more than 160,000 students. USAID has also supported these types of improvements in the quality of Industrial Technical Schools.

GROWTH OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP
Working with Egyptian private and public sector stakeholders, USAID promotes the establishment of a business-friendly environment and the development of entrepreneurial skills with emphasis on small and medium-sized firms with potential for rapid growth and job creation. Areas of intervention include access to finance, business-related training, research and development, and innovation.

HIGHLIGHTS

Scholarship Program Kick Off
- 14 participants will begin, in November 2011, post-doctorate programs in the Universities of Alabama, Pennsylvania, Kennesaw, and Virginia Tech.
- One participant will join the Department of Civil, Construction and Environmental Engineering at the University of Alabama. Research will focus on advances in the area of Construction Management, an area in need of capacity building identified by the GOE.

Science and Math Schools
- USAID recently sponsored a study tour to the U.S. for a Ministry of Education delegation to see first-hand American science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education.
- Delegation visited scientists, researchers, educational leaders and practitioners at various STEM schools and learned about strategies, approaches, technical aspects and requirements to promote this type of instruction.

For more information, contact the USAID/Egypt Public Outreach Office at tel: (202) 2522-6543 or visit http://egypt.usaid.gov