



PROJECTS IN SOHAG GOVERNORATE

U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) makes an effort to extend U.S. assistance to each Governorate and geographical area of Egypt, and provide support in a broad spectrum of fields. In Sohag Governorate, USAID has helped increase access to education, financed both public and private sector trade investments, and worked on public health improvement and private sector development. Currently USAID works on a range of nationwide projects, which benefit the Governorate indirectly. However, there are also a number of USAID projects in Sohag, including:

- Health
- Education
- Small and Micro Enterprise Development
- Private Sector Commodity Import Program
- Clinical Services Improvement Project
- Family Planning and Reproductive Health Project

HEALTH

Takamol Integrated Reproductive Health Services Project:

- **Family Planning/Reproductive Health:** The national family planning/reproductive health program, which USAID supports, extends family planning and reproductive health services to approximately 242,000 married women annually in Sohag through 324 Ministry of Health and Population clinics. USAID has provided staff training, community outreach worker training, equipment and contraceptives. In addition, USAID supports nine Clinical Services Improvement Association (CSIA) clinics which serve approximately 22,000 married women annually. The CSIA is a long-running USAID-supported project which recently became an official Egyptian NGO. Its 91 clinics in 19 governorates offer high quality family planning and reproductive health services, including post-partum and antenatal care services.
- **Maternal and Child Health:** USAID assisted in upgrading 34 OB/GYN-related units and 11 neonatal care centers in Sohag. Clinicians and managers were trained; an anemia prevention program was launched; 11 small grants were awarded to NGOs to assist in raising health awareness; and USAID-supported vaccination teams vaccinated children in the Governorate during national polio campaigns. The national Integrated Management of Child Illness (IMCI) program has been implemented in 9 districts (187 health facilities) in Sohag.



EDUCATION

Leadership in Education and Development:

In 2004-2007, this program annually awards full scholarships to one male and one female student from Sohag to pursue university level education at the American University of Cairo.

Alam Simsim: Supports school readiness for pre-school children through the production/broadcast of a television series modeled after Sesame Street. The project includes a parent education outreach program on how to promote healthy habits/healthy families and early childhood development.

The School Team Excellence Awards Program: motivates teachers and education school-teams to contribute to educational reform efforts through governorate level and nationwide educational competitions between schools based on the National Educational Standards recently adopted by the Ministry of Education (MOE). During the course of a of guided self-evaluation process, the teachers, students, and the local communities will assess their school's problems, strengths, and weaknesses and to propose ways to address problems identified, specify annual targets for student and school performance, and assess progress in achieving planned targets. Additionally, the program is designed to reward individual teachers for high achievement in demonstrating student centered instruction.

The goal of the program is to attain significant improvements in student learning achievements and to bring about school-wide reforms in a short period of time. Beyond this immediate goal, there is a strong focus on empowering schools and their communities to do their own self-evaluation for high educational standards, become accountable for the achievement of results, in a manner affording schools and their communities the flexibility and autonomy needed for performance.

The National Book Program for Schools aims to provide books and supplementary educational materials to all 39,000 government schools in Egypt. In many cases, the library provided through the National Book Program is a school's only library resource. In others, the Book Program's library doubles the school's prior book collection. Working closely with the Ministry of Education and the Integrated Care Society, this program will provide training for librarians and teachers to ensure effective use of new books and materials. In addition, the Book Program's social marketing program focuses on changing attitudes, particularly of parents, towards literacy and reading. The National Book Program hopes to build up a generation eager to read not only for knowledge but also for pleasure. The books are printed in Arabic (80%) and in English (20%).

Distribution of the books throughout the Sohag Governorate is expected between January and April of 2007.



POLICY AND PRIVATE SECTOR

Micro-credit financing: With USAID support, Banque Du Caire, Sohag Community Development Association (SCDA) and Assiut Business Association (ASBA) are active in implementing sustainable microfinance activities in Sohag. To date, the three institutions cumulatively extended more than 115,167 micro-credit loans valued at LE 91 million to about 62,000 low-income entrepreneurs with a default rate of less than 4%. At the present time, through 9 specialized micro-credit branches, the institutions are managing an outstanding loan portfolio of LE 17 million and serve 20,000 active borrowers. More than 65% of these borrowers are poor female heads of household assisted to start or expand current businesses in Sohag's economically disadvantaged areas.

Commodity Import Program: Since 1975, the Commodity Import Program has been a large part of the U.S. Economic Assistance Program to Egypt. In the early years, the program provided much needed balance of payments support to the Government of Egypt, funding vital imports for public sector entities. Sohag University accessed over \$6 million of Public Sector CIP funds to import sophisticated medical equipment for the Medical Faculty, and the Sohag Governorate used \$1.5 million of CIP funds to import fire fighting equipment.

In recent years, USAID has been a partner in the Government of Egypt's restructuring efforts aimed at establishing a strong, private sector-led, market-oriented economy. In order to stimulate private sector investment, the Private Sector Commodity Import Program provides short- to medium trade and investment financing to Egyptian businesses to import U.S.-made goods. Since 1997, four private sector companies in Sohag have used over \$1.7 million to finance capital equipment and raw materials purchases.



PRODUCTIVE SECTOR DEVELOPMENT

Agricultural Exports and Rural Incomes (AERI): Under the AERI Agreement with the Government of Egypt, USAID is implementing four programs whose common objective is to increase the incomes of rural small scale agricultural producers: Smallholder Horticulture; Dairy and Livestock; Business Development Services; and University Linkages. Total estimated investments in Sohag are about \$5 million.

Small Holder Horticulture: Through a cooperative agreement with CARE, USAID is assisting farmers to produce and market higher value crops that have the potential to significantly increase farmer incomes. Assistance includes introduction to new, high yielding varieties, improved cultivation practices that conserve scarce water resources, and linkages to export and urban markets. Approximately 13 associations in 8 districts have been assisted in the Sohag Governorate. Total farmer members are 2560. They grow green beans, cantaloupe, watermelon and onion for export, processing and the local market.

Dairy and Livestock Production: In Sohag USAID is working with one dairy processing association with a total membership of 186, and another 8 livestock associations whose members total 1412 farmers. The objective of this assistance is to increase yields and improve quality. Women make up the majority of the members of participating associations. In addition to technical assistance and training for members on improved production techniques, USAID is providing refrigerated trucks and other equipment to increase product life and quality.

Business Development Services: provides training, technical assistance and business linkage facilitation to input suppliers, veterinarians and smallholders to accelerate the use of high quality inputs (seeds, pesticides, fertilizers, tools, equipment, feed and medicines) that will result in higher quality output and increased incomes. BDS also provides training and technical assistance to financial institutions willing to extend agricultural production credit to smallholders in Upper Egypt. In cooperation with the Assiut Businessmen's Association, the project has recently launched horticultural production and animal fattening credit programs to over 300 small farmers.

University Linkages: USAID is supporting the University of Sohag's Faculty of Agriculture in establishing a Student Career Center and Extension Outreach Center. The activity is also working in providing the faculty with computer lab and audio-visual material in an effort to increase the dissemination of the latest technology to both farmers and secondary technical schools.

The Egyptian Antiquities Conservation: Through a LE 50 million USAID grant to the American Research Center in Egypt (ARCE), USAID has contributed to the conservation of some of Egypt's most important cultural heritage sites, including two sites in Sohag: one at Abydos and the second at the Red Monastery near the city of Sohag. At Abydos, USAID has



has funded the conservation of the funerary enclosure of Khasekhemwy, the last king of the 2nd dynasty, who died ca. 2686 BC. It is the world's earliest surviving free-standing masonry building; its massive mud brick walls are still standing more than ten meters high. The work, which lasted from 1999 to 2006, was conducted by a team of archeologists from the University of Pennsylvania, Yale University, and New York University with a budget of LE 1.33 million.

At the Red Monastery, USAID is helping to clean and conserve the wall paintings in the monastery church, one of the best surviving examples of this type of church architecture. The dramatic late Roman architecture of the sanctuary interior is embellished with architectural sculpture and painting which is being restored by a specialized Italian conservation team. The work, which began in December 2002 is expected to cost about LE 5.73 million.

Integrated School Sanitation and Hygiene – Towards Better Health and Education of Children: This three-year, \$2 million program works with the communities and the government to help children in six districts, in Assiut, Sohag and Qena governorates, to have healthier toilet facilities at schools and better hygiene education.

The USAID and UNICEF partnership with the Ministry of Education aims at improving the school sanitation and environmental conditions for children, through repairing water taps and bathrooms and training teachers to help children learn about hygiene.

The School Sanitation initiative promotes community responsibility and involvement. Children actively take part in clean-up campaigns that raise the awareness of their neighborhood on sanitation, hygiene and environmental issues. The project aims to help villagers have water taps and improve their sanitary facilities, through establishing a self-financing fund.

The program benefits some 200,000 children and 1,200 school teachers working in 300 primary schools in the three governorates.