

**Executive Summary of the
Egyptian project on**

Effective use of Children's Council in Schools

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1. Summary of the final project implemented by the Egyptian group

Introduction:

Our project is a training course to help students have a serious election for their school council; it means that children, as rights holders, are entitled to know what those rights are and how to exercise them, in accordance with their evolving capacities. In other words, children are entitled to play an active part in the realization of their rights and in making decisions and choices in matters that affect their lives. and we give them different lectures and workshops to raise their awareness about their rights and the importance of the leadership. At the end of the training course, we have a questionnaire that distributed to two groups, a control group and the experimental group from a preparatory stage.

Besides that, we helped our experimental group to practice the process of voting in their school and to choose the right persons to represent them in the school board and now they are having their meetings regularly every 2 weeks, THIS MAKES US VERY PROUD OF THEM?

The programme

The workshop lasted 9 days (8 sessions + 1 day for Evaluation) each day designed to equip the participants with understanding, knowledge or skills in different aspects of children and young people's participation. Overall, the training provided participants with the following key lessons:

- Understand what is meant by children rights in the convention
- Aware and disseminate information on the convention and the optional protocols
- Analyse the actual situation of children in Egypt.
- Ensure that they need changes to have their full rights.
- Understand the role of the leader
- Appreciate the role of the members of the school council
- Plan the actual process for voting for the Ss council of year 2005 – 2006
- Understand what traits and skills are most relevant for effective leadership.
- Understand how traits and skills are related to leadership behaviour.
- Understand how the relevance of a trait or skill depends on the situation, type of organization. And national culture.
- Understand why charismatic leadership can result in undesirable consequences for followers and the organization.
- Understand what research methods have been used to evaluate theories of transformational and charismatic leadership.

Evaluation

- The course had a positive effect on students' understanding of leadership in comparison to students who did not attend the lectures, as they still see leadership as the role of one person. More activities among students should conduct on a

regular basis that would enable them to perform different roles and to experience the meaning of effective leadership.

Recommendations

- There is a need to implement similar courses to raise the awareness of students and help them to be citizens that are more effective in the political life in the future.
- There is a need to implement similar courses for teachers and school directors to allow students to perform their role through students' union more freely. This would encourage more students to participate in the school board because they would experience real benefits from the election process.
- Regulations of the election process need to be clarified to all students to increase the sense of credibility and encourage more students to participate.
- We are going to plan & help to implement it in another 13 governorates in Egypt as change agents Mrs Wafaa Dawood has included the training program in the Annual training program of the ministry of Education for year 2006/2007 according to the Recommendations of Mrs Safaa Elghazally undersecretary Director of Central Directorate of in-service training.

2. After our Mentor Mr Bereket Yabo visited Egypt in July 2006,

We considered this process a great opportunity to finalize our project and start to spread our beliefs and concerns about child rights in our schools in Egypt which is the main field to implement our goals.

As we together visited some key people in government departments and the Regional Coordinator for Sida in the Swedish Embassy and her assistants, report the outcomes of our pilot project and appeal for support for the continuation of the activities initiated by the pilot project. It was a great step to take a promise to start to spread our goals in 14 governorates in Egypt "Alexandria & Behira in North of Egypt , Gharbia, Sharkia & kafer Elshiekh in Delta, Port said in Northern East, Fayoum south Cairo, Benisuif, Assuit, Sohag, Qena & Aswan in upper Egypt. In addition, to adjust budget for this training course in these governorates "appendix 1 a plan of Egypt high lightening the governorates".

2.1 On the personal & professional level

Ms Wafaa Dawood: Sida's program has a great impact on me as a human being and on my professional development since I shared my group in 2005:

It was my first step to concern about human rights especially Child rights, to aware and understand the importance of listening to children and young people and taking their views seriously. I have been introduced through the program to 11 different regions of the world some from Asia other from Africa and Sweden this experience supply me with huge amount of knowledge about children all over the world, and the main conclusion is, that the child is the same everywhere with his/her needs of protecting, education, food and love. Since then I consider these issues my goals, as I think with these we can achieve better life for our society and for our world. That's was clear in our project in an expression to this right of participation in school board.

One of the most important lessons arising has been recognition that, in addition to the importance of participation as a human right, it is also vital to listen to children and young people and take their views seriously because of that I take some steps, which help me greatly in developing my professional career

- I design training course 5 days, 25 hours for 300 hundred teachers of primary stage to spread the concepts and issues of the convention of the child rights Appendix 2 Agenda of the training course with the Objectives and outcomes.
- I design 3 days training course, 15 hours for 25 Trainers of trainees to deliver the training in 14 governorates with the help of my colleagues this was in my annual plan for Central Directorate for in-service training appendix 3 Agenda of the training with objectives and outcomes.
- I develop the Training Materials with the help of my colleagues appendix 4 topics and activities

Ms Samah Hassan: There's no doubt that SAID's program had a great influence ,I find that it is truly unique:

- A chance to be among this number of different nationalities to share experience about one of the most important and recent issues. Actually, It was the first time to be abroad
- Getting the value of dealing and working with the concept "think globally but act locally".
- Changing & broad concepts:
 1. Before, I used to see the child rights - especially in education - as it is class, book and teacher, But now I see it as raising awareness and achieving the skills that guarantee the sustainable development of the student.
 2. With your child it is important to discuss the rights as well as you discuss the responsibilities.
 3. Through our project I get that the human rights culture fostered by the human rights act.

2.2 On the organizational level "School"

Our project and the training course that delivered in the 14 governorates succeed in:

- Empowering and supporting the participation of youth and teenagers, which include a variety of activities such as:
 - Encourage, bid and back up investment in youth.
 - Listen to youth's voices and enable them to participate in formulating the policies that involve their present and future.
 - Facilitate dialogue opportunities between youth, teachers and headmasters on one side; and decision makers on the other side in order to devise alternative policies for youth empowerment.
- enhances their development into active and responsible citizens
- Provides stronger protection leadership and change concepts.
- builds understanding of and capacity for engagement in democratic processes

- Besides one of the project challenges is to widen children's thinking through facing and discussing the school problems and in planning the actual process for voting for the students' council for the next year.
- The participants were keen to go back and inform colleagues about the workshop and to start applying child participation in their lives and classes. The final session of the workshop provided an opportunity for all participants to develop action plans for future work in their own settings.

2.3 On the country level:

We are trying to create a continuous mechanism for a broad dialogue between decision makers, planners and researchers focusing on the developmental dimension of spreading the child rights through conferences, training courses, meetings and forums.

We intend to follow up by creating governmental and country level partnerships for the participation of children and young people through the development of national level action plans with the help of the Canadian project with the Ministry of Education.

Involve civil society including children themselves – in the process of implementing and raising awareness of child rights.

Action plans implemented within groups of participants in their schools and presented by them on December 2007 workshop for 2 days