COMMUNITY SCHOOLS AND SOCIAL CAPITAL FORMATION: A CASE STUDY OF COMMUNITY SCHOOLS IN ASSIUT, EGYPT

by

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ABSTRACT

In the majority of developing countries access to schools in rural areas is very limited, and when they are available, conventional schools do not address the needs of rural communities. Often traditions prevent girls from attending school and the rural lifestyle is not compatible with the rigid school schedule and curriculum offered. Consequently, many rural communities reject government schools as part of their social institution. The result is that these communities have limited access to education and cannot fully utilise the benefits that would otherwise arise, including the formation and expansion of social networks, knowledge, values and social cohesion (social capital), which may lead to greater local development.

This research employs a case study of community schools in rural communities in Assiut, Egypt to address the question of whether these types of schools are more likely to lead to greater social capital formation in rural communities. Utilising participatory observation, formal and informal interviews, and literature reviews, the research looks at the role community schools play in creating better quality relationships and networks in communities that lead to an improved capacity to build and participate in civil society.

The research shows that community schools fill the void left by conventional government schools and allow a greater arena for public participation. The process involved in establishing community schools results in more active participation from the community as a whole. Volunteerism increases, school committees are established that encourage community members to take on a managerial role and the quality of relationships and networks in the community increases. As a result, communities feel more empowered to collaborate on other local development initiatives.
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACDA  Assiut Childhood and Development Association
CEDPA  Centre for Development and Population Activities
CIDA  Canadian International Development Agency
CS  Community School
CSI  Community Schools Initiative
EFA  Education For All, Jomtien Conference 1990
MOE  Ministry of Education
NGO  Non Government Organisation
OCS  One Classroom Schools
UNESCO  United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNICEF  United Nations Children Education Fund
USAID  United States Agency for International Development
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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Over the past decade there has been much written on the "education crisis." Amidst concerns of over crowded classrooms and lack of certified teachers, the question has turned from "Are our children learning enough?" to questions relating to the actual substance of educational material and "What are our children supposed to be learning?"

The current mass education system evolved out of a western context in which it became necessary to transmit certain kinds of knowledge and skills to the general population in order to serve particular economic needs of an emerging industrial society (D’oyley et. al, 1994; Nielsen and Cummings, 1997). And, while it has led to the greatest expansion of formal education opportunities, its limitations are becoming more apparent particularly in reaching out to peripheral groups. These are groups with limited access to basic goods and services due to their small numbers or geographic isolation and low status within the social hierarchy. As a result, these groups become further alienated and marginalised because they are not given an opportunity to participate within a social system that they can relate to. The aim of this research is to examine an alternative form of education i.e., community schools, and evaluate its role in increasing social links and bonds, thereby, enhancing community participation in civic society.

Educational systems must not only provide universal access, but must also contribute to functional life skills development of those involved, and produce citizens who are fully capable of participating in civil society. In many peripheral communities in developing countries, the opportunity to develop such skills through educational systems is severely limited due to lack of access to schools and to rigid conventional educational programs that do not allow space for individuality or community involvement. As a result, many communities shy away from these schools and prevent their children from participating in what to them seems an activity far removed from their everyday life. However, examples of the BRAC community schools in Bangladesh and The Escuela Nueva Program in Columbia (www.brac.net.edf.htm; Harber &Davies, 1997; Colbert et. al., 1993; Torres, 1992) show that if parents and community members are encouraged to participate in the
development and take ownership of the schools in their communities, they are more likely to take an active interest in their children’s education and develop this participation to enhance other community initiatives.

Community based education (CBE) is rooted in the notion that education should not only be used as a tool of individual development and academic learning but as an asset of community development as a whole. It is accepted in more peripheral areas than most government initiatives since it is more flexible and affords more community involvement, and is more sustainable due to the commitment of communities involved. Its success is due to the emphasis on the individual as a member of both community and state, providing an overall purpose of socialisation into national and local cultures. CBE provides a very strong contribution to the quality and quantity of relationships, networks and norms amongst people and organisations, and builds confidence and cohesion in a community that facilitate collective action and positive community development.

1.1 RESEARCH FOCUS
The purpose of this thesis is to examine how community schools can be a viable alternative to the current model of education prevalent around the world, especially in peripheral rural communities. Community schools, based on principles of community based education (CBE) are viewed by their proponents as a method not only to improve access to schools and increase participation in education for students, but as a way for the whole community to participate in a process of building networks, asserting values and guiding local community development. In other words, community schools are one avenue to building social capital. While much research has been done on the positive impact of the community based education model in increasing enrolment, minimizing the gender gap and providing quality education (UNICEF 2000; Cummings 1997; World Bank, 1995; Little et. al., 1994;), little has been written on the indirect effects on the communities which house these schools. This research aims to contribute to an assessment of the outcomes of the CBE model on rural community development initiatives, and the role the CBE model can play in enhancing social links and dynamics within these communities.
Community schools in Egypt are used as an example of how CBE can elicit positive change and increase community participation, even in a nation that has a very centralised and bureaucratic administration. The research uses community schools in rural areas of the governorate of Assiut Upper Egypt as a case for study. Currently, there are two NGOs, one international and one local, working in Assiut to manage community schools in collaboration with the Ministry of Education. The research gives particular attention to the community involvement component of the schools, as well as the improvement of school-community relations including the various local community initiatives that have evolved due to increased community awareness and development of networks and links in these marginalised rural communities. The paper focuses on CBE at the primary education level because this is the level that most communities are currently dealing with. The thesis is guided by the belief that creating collaboration and co-operation at the foundation levels of the educational system, where most children are taught to focus on individual potential and capacity, will foster a habit life-long learning and teaching that children can carry into adulthood.

1.1.1 RESEARCH QUESTION

The main question addressed by the research is:

What are the potentials of community based education programs in enhancing local social capital? How is the stock of local social capital affected when communities engage in local education programs?

The research uses a case study of community schools in rural communities in Assiut, in Upper Egypt to address this question. However no social problem can be addressed without an adequate understanding of the context in which it occurs, therefore several secondary questions also need to be asked:

A: What are the weaknesses, strengths and other influencing factors in the current education system in Egypt that affect the formation of social capital?

By addressing the current nature of the education system, it is possible to understand the level of participation by the community, and whether it empowers respective
communities into action. It is necessary to look at the historical context of the highly centralised Egyptian bureaucratic system, and examine the extent of civil participation within that system and how this affects community involvement in local education programs in local education.

B: What are the ways in which community based education programs overcome the shortcomings of the government school system?
What is different in the set up and recruitment in community schools?
How do community schools fill the void left by the conventional school education system?

The scope of this research calls for qualitative rather than a quantitative analysis of the achievements of the community schools. The aim is to assess the ways that the process of establishing and managing the schools differs from conventional government schools. It is necessary to speak to the pedagogical approach of the community schools and the nature of the skills developed by students within that approach. It is also important to look at the extent of community involvement and how that impacts its willingness to support the school.

C: How do community schools promote greater participation of the community in other social programs beyond educational issues?
Does this participation spill over into the community to enhance social cohesiveness and opportunity for positive community action?

The process of establishing a community school is different than that used in establishing a regular government school. It elicits a higher degree of participation and requires ongoing involvement for the success of the school. It is interesting to examine the effect this process has on the communities’ self assessment of its own capacities and willingness to engage in other local development initiatives that are borne out of the same process.

D: What dimensions of local social capital (i.e., social networks, trust, cooperation, strength of community organisations, gender based cooperation and solidarity, etc) are directly or indirectly enhanced by the community schools and in turn enhance the betterment of the community?
While assessing the process, the outputs and outcomes of the community schools, it is essential to develop a sense of how the relationships, attitudes and values within communities have been affected. For example, how have women's social networks previously limited to immediate, and to a certain extent extended, family members grown as result of their inclusion in education, and as facilitators of the education process in these schools?

In each of the following chapters, these questions are addressed. The rest of the introductory chapter describes the methodology of the research, the theoretical approach to the study and examines participation in the current Egyptian education system and presents a brief background on Assiut. Chapter Three goes into more detail on the alternatives offered by the community schools program and details how the schools are established in Assiut. Chapter Four describes the outputs of the schools and how they impact the community, as well as some challenges faced in the process. Chapter Five describes indirect outcomes of the community schools on community action and related local development initiatives and draws together some conclusions on the role of community schools in enhancing social capital and positive community action.

1.2 METHODOLOGY

My interest in this topic developed out of a short contract held with the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) Program Support Unit in Cairo (PSU) in 1998-99. At the time, I was only aware of the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) Community Schools Initiative (CSI) and most of the work contracted revolved around that project. Consequently, the research was only to focus on the CSI which began in 1992. Since the UNICEF pilot projects were in the governorate of Assiut, I had planned to use them as case studies as they offered the longest timeline to assess. At the time of research I was introduced to the Assiut Childhood and Development Association (ACDA) and their community schools program, designed in 1995 to replicate the CSI. As I was still awaiting responses from UNICEF, I began visiting the ACDA schools to gain more background information and get closer view of the project implemented by a local
Egyptian non-governmental organisation. When I finally gained access to the UNICEF schools I was very interested in the similarities and differences that I saw between the two programs. I decided to include both community school programs to gain a better understanding of the lessons learnt and best practices in order to complete a well-rounded assessment of the impacts of the schools in a number of communities spanning the whole governorate of Assiut.

The nature of the research is qualitative. Field work was completed during a three month visit to Egypt between February and May 2002. Data gathering involved analysing documents and reports, formal and informal interviews, and site visits and participant observation. These methods complemented each other in various ways. While secondary sources provided a good background on the projects and intellectual preparation for field research, the participant observation method provided the main themes for my research. By observing the staff at ACDA and UNICEF, I was able to gain an informed understanding of the dynamics within the NGOs and how they impacted the relationships within the communities. The formal interviews with supervisors and MOE staff provided a greater insight into the relationships between the various organisations. Informal interviews in the field provided greater detail on the anxiety and excitement of community members relating to the schools, and the expectations of communities on future developments. Open-ended questions allowed interviewees to be more emotionally involved in their responses instead of just providing data, and provided valuable insight that might have been overlooked with more structured questions. For that reason, a list of guiding questions was prepared to structure the interviews, however it was often necessary to rephrase or divert from those questions to elicit more comfortable responses (See Appendix 1 for a list of guiding questions). Simple observations during the days in various sessions and meetings allowed me to critically assess the information I was receiving and to evaluate actual practices.

Time was divided between Assiut and Cairo for research. I spent five and half weeks in Assiut (with a few intermittent days in Cairo) attending training sessions, visiting the schools, visiting families and conducting semi-formal and informal interviews with NGO
staff and school facilitators. Regular work days at the NGO’s were six days a week from 8.30 am to 3.30 pm, including travel time to the hamlets. Informal evening interviews were conducted at times and places specified by interviewees. Interviews were held in Cairo with CIDA, UNICEF, and MOE staff. The majority of secondary research was done at the USAID library, with supplementary material from CIDA-PSU and UNICEF.

1.2.1 LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH
There were several limitations in conducting the research, some were easier than others to work around. The language barrier was one limitation. Although I am fluent in spoken Arabic, I cannot read or write it well. This limited the primary and secondary sources I could use. However, while I could not consult complete texts published by the MOE or other formal publications, I was able to use internal NGO documents that were written in point form and related directly to the topic at hand. At no point during my research did I use an interpreter as I felt this would further alienate me from the communities I was dealing with. However, sometimes NGO staff from ACDA and UNICEF clarified questions and responses. As well, after initial interviews where I sensed hesitation from interviewees, I stopped using a tape recorder. I am grateful to all the interviewees who spoke at a pace that allowed me to instantly translate conversations into English on my note pad!

One major limitation I felt was in the transparency of the agencies I was dealing with. It was almost impossible to get any formal statements from the MOE regarding the status of community schools and one-classroom schools. Although published information is accessible, to get the information from the MOE directly requires security clearance that is not easy to obtain, and even then, the information to which access is permissible is limited. As a result, sections of the thesis that deal with the current state of education in Egypt are based on secondary sources. This did not cause a major problem since the nature of information I needed was not statistical and generally the state of mass education has changed little in the past decade. Changes have been made to basic education that is delivered through community schools and the one-classroom model, but
general public mass education remains mainly unaltered (Personal communication, MOE employee, 14 March 2002).

While ACDA was very helpful with the literature search and access to information, even allowing me to attend a general heads of department meeting, I felt very pressured in time when dealing with UNICEF. Since only one person, the Education Program Manager, could grant the permission I needed, I had to wait for her to return contacts, which took a while. Even when I tried to contact the office in Assiut, I was told I would have to get permission form Cairo first before I could be allowed access to information and the schools. Once I got permission, time was limited, and I had to set a structured schedule of visiting, unlike the one I had with ACDA where I could opt to travel with either a technical or field team on any given day.

Members at the Mishkat Research Centre, an organisation that publishes field research relating to development trends in Egypt and the Middle East, informed me that overall research and access to information had been severely limited since the arrest and charge of Saad El Din Ibrahim, and American–Egyptian sociologist. Ibrahim was charged with conspiracy to tarnish Egypt’s image abroad and of trying to meddle with elections amongst other charges. This made it difficult to contact other NGOs and simply request information, especially since the information was for research going abroad. It was a time consuming process. Overall, the field research did go smoothly despite some minor set backs that were expected when dealing with bureaucracies.

1.3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK - A working definition of Social Capital

During research, community members expressed what was happening in their communities using various local words and idioms. These included mahaba (love), musharka (cooperation), mogtama (community), takaleed (traditions), sikaa (trust/confidence), kudrat (abilities/capacities) ta-awon (cooperation) and esit-nafs (self-esteem/pride). The emphasis was on showing pride in their new found abilities to direct their own community’s development and to participate in an effort from which everyone benefited. I have found that the best term to encapsulate all these words and the feelings
behind them is “social capital.” While I cannot argue that the term encompasses all the idioms used, it is the closest phrase that I can use to convey the ideas behind them, without listing a dozen phrases and words.

Social capital has a long intellectual history in the social sciences that is almost half a century old. The earliest usage of social capital in the contemporary sense can be attributed to Lyda J. Hanifan (1916), who employed the term to explain the role of community participation in shaping local educational outcomes. The concept then disappeared and was reinvented by Jane Jacobs in the late 1960s and subsequently elaborated upon by Glenn Loury in the late 1970s and then James Coleman and Pierre Bourdieu in the 1980s (Woolcock, 1998). In the 1990’s the work of Robert Putnam gave social capital major scholarly and popular attention with his thesis that Americans in the late twentieth century had become increasingly disengaged from active participation in public life (Putnam, 1995). Each of these writers agreed that social capital did extend existing notions of the resources available to communities and society as a whole.

One of the limitations of the literature however, is a lack of an agreed upon definition of social capital. The main contention seems to be whether social capital defines the qualities and quantities of productive relationships, or whether social capital is what emerges from these relationships. There are however some agreed upon traits of social capital that have emerged. They define social capital as:

- Relational rather than being the exclusive property of any one individual
- Mainly a public good that is shared by a group
- Produced by societal investments of time and efforts, but in a less direct fashion than is human or physical capital.


In reviewing the available literature, particularly that sponsored by the World Bank, one gets the distinct impression that targeting poverty and defining social capital within the framework of economic restructuring “was extrapolated from one strand of thought in the field of poverty alleviation in mature capitalist economies, without due regard to the character of social formations in poor countries” (Fergany, 1994:14). Consequently, critics of the theory have also remained within the framework of economics in their criticism. And while there are flaws in the theory of social capital as the “missing link”,

Chapter I: Introduction and Overview

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the underlying fundamental conception of building social networks and expanding knowledge to lead to collective social action is a strong spring point for further discussions. Certainly, the social capital concept should not be an excuse for failed economics "to supplement the economic with the social" (Fine, 1999: 172), nor should reliance on greater civil society be a substitute for reassessing existing economic policies. However, it can be a starting point for the empowerment of various societies in the face of failed economics, and a plateau where individuals and groups in communities can find the capacities and capabilities to act and tap into support from other institutions for their own development.

This thesis offers a definition of social capital that is based on the more comprehensive definition offered by the OECD which includes social and political environments that shape social structures. It defines social capital as networks and shared norms, values and understandings that facilitate co-operation within and among groups, and bring about positive social change and not necessarily nor exclusively economic growth. As such, all activities that play a role in the positive enhancement of these attributes, as a product or a process, form valuable community assets which produce social capital, and which in turn are reproduced by it. It is a concept in which the whole is more than the sum of the parts.

1.3.1 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Education is more than just literacy:

From an initial, minimalist viewpoint, the objective is simply learning to perform one's social role in accordance with established sets of rules. This job is one for basic education, where the need for civic instruction is viewed as elementary 'political literacy.' The aim is not to teach precepts as rigid rules, which could slide towards indoctrination, but to make school a model of democratic practice so that children can understand, on the basis of practical problems, what their rights and duties are and how their freedom is limited by the exercise of the rights and freedom of other people" (Delors, et. al., 1999; 62).

Such understanding is strengthened through healthy inter-relationships within families and communities. When examining the role of education as being pivotal for other local
development initiates, it becomes apparent that using social capital as a theoretical base is well justified.

A study by Runyun et. al (1998) examines the extent to which social capital is associated with positive developmental outcomes. Although the study does focus on urban high-risk pre-school children, the conclusions are interesting and relevant to the topic at hand. A total of 667 children with a mean age of 4.4 participated in this study, and all were characterised by unfavourable social or economic circumstances. Social capital was defined in the study as the benefits that accrue from social relationships within communities and families. The findings suggested that social capital may have an impact on a child's well-being as early as the pre-school years. The authors suggested that

those interested in the healthy development of children, particularly children most at risk for poor developmental outcomes, must search for new and creative ways of supporting interpersonal relationships and strengthening the communities in which families carry out the daily activities of their lives (Runyan et. al., 1998: 17)

Community based education provides not only a "new and creative" way of forming social capital, but due to the constant involvement of the community, also provides a sustainable, long-term avenue of social capital. If this model is implemented at the elementary school grades, it can begin to take a more concrete form for those students involved, sustaining a habit of co-operation and mutual aid that students can continue to develop well into adult-hood. It becomes not only a school model, but a life style model that can grow and help students and community members alike "to acquire... the ability to interpret those things in life that mainly affect their personal future and the future of society as a whole" (Delors, et. al., 1999; 61).

In analysing the impact of community schools (CS) on enhancing the formation of social capital within the scope of this research, it is possible to use the following Figure 1.1 as an analytical guideline. It shows the various inputs, process, outputs and outcomes associated with community schools and the interactions between these elements.
Constant feedback alters the component of each stage to maintain an evolving cycle of increased capacities and higher potential for community development.

**Figure 1.1: Analytical Framework**

**INPUTS**
- Community knowledge
- Resources (labour, time, space, etc.)
- Values, norms
- Alternative school model (CS)
- Attitudes, traditions

**PROCESS**
- Community school established
- Training of facilitators, supervisors, community members
- Capacity development
- Assessment
- Evaluation
- Monitoring

**OUTCOMES**
- Attitudinal changes
- Behavioural changes
- New ways of thinking
- Different awareness and perception
- Changes in traditional outlook

**OUTPUTS**
- High participation
- Stronger community networks
- Training materials
- Policy changes at MOE level
- Other local development initiatives
- New programs

Throughout the paper, these inputs, processes, outputs and outcomes are highlighted in an effort to determine if indeed community schools do lead to enhanced social capital, and if so, how this materialises in the communities under study.

**1.4 THE ROLE OF PLANNING**

The aim of this paper is not to make the case that social capital indeed contributes to community development and well-being. There has already been enough literature documenting arguments that support and expand different aspects of this theory, the most notable of which have been works by Pierre Bourdieu (1985), James Coleman (1988,
The aim is to show that community schools do provide a valuable opportunity for marginalised communities to enhance their social ties and networks and move towards more positive collective action. In effect, community schools are a tool of social capital that contribute to overall community development. Planning has a very important role in enhancing and maintaining this tool and strengthening the growth of social capital.

The raw material for social capital lies in the assets and capacities that are available for mobilisation and development in communities. There have been several publications noting the importance of planning in generating and enhancing social capital. Woolcock (1999) pointed to three main attributes of planning that produce strong social networks, namely bonding, bridging and linking activities. These concepts are similar to what the Social Planning Network of Ontario (SPNO) had identified as the three main strategies that communities could utilise to enhance their well-being and create social change (shown in Figure 1.2):

- **Bonding** strategies that build trust and co-operation among individuals and within communities
- **Bridging** strategies that break down barriers across groups and communities and enable collaborative action for positive community outcomes
- **Scaling up** strategies that connect communities in collective action for policy and systems levels social change and development.

(Woolcock, 1999; SPNO, 2002)

Bonding strategies work to create more cohesion within communities that may then be used to bridge communities together through seeming social, cultural, and spatial barriers, based on collective efforts towards positive actions within those communities. Once the network develops, the strength of the collective can be used for vertical networking rally for greater system changes.
Although there are many positive feedback loops that are not included in Figure 1.2 (social capital as a component as well as outcome of community capacity, planning linkages between social capital and social change), there is a clear relationship between the development of social capital and social planning practices and activities. These activities contribute to the development of community capacity, which strengthens the networks, trust and values or social capital of the community involved. This is also augmented by various connecting/linking strategies that result from social planning practices and lead to community change and development.

Social capital by definition necessitates social cohesion, and is dependent on interpersonal trust and relationships. These relationships can be weakened, or even broken, if individuals see each other as participating in completely different activities that are not directly or evidently mutually beneficial. It is therefore important, particularly in peripheral or marginalised communities with restricted tangible and financial resources, that all members of the communities feel that they benefit from the activities that occur and are able to seek each other’s support in capitalising on these benefits.
Social capital is both a process (of bonding, bridging and scaling up within the community) and a commodity that is a “public good” which will “increase with use and diminish with disuse” (Putnam 1993:170). It is a pre-requisite for social change and development. It is therefore in the interest of communities to continue with such social planning activities that are likely to contribute to all of the connecting and linking strategies. These strategies will produce and enhance the various attributes of social capital that enable people to act together, create synergies and build partnerships. A community school is one of those activities. It provides the opportunity for children and adults to form stronger bonds, cohesiveness and solidarity than under previously administered rigid education systems, by providing a larger arena common grounds and for participation in the system. It also allows all those involved to take more ownership over the resources and products of their school, and provides an opportunity to get involved in scaling-up strategies that bring together individual communities in collective action for policy level change and community development.

Social capital can have a negative impacts if for example only bonding strategies are involved that produce cohesion between homogeneous groups, or produce vertical dimensions of patronage and hinder the expansion of social capital (Putnam, 1995). While it is important not to overlook the possible negative impacts, planning certainly has a strong role in seeking and sustaining practices that contribute to the formation of social capital. The role of social planning and the role of community schools is to make space for the longer-term perspectives in policy-making that focus on long term solutions, not quick fixes, that truly bring about social change and development from within a community by fostering and enhancing its capacity for action.
1.5 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Below is a summary of the major findings that are detailed in the body of the thesis:

1. Community schools provide access to education to children in rural communities that have never been enrolled in, or have dropped-out of, government schools.

2. The process of establishing a community school is very participatory and pays particular attention to specific needs of rural communities.

3. In the process of participating in the community schools programs, community members experience greater social cohesion. They also form networks outside the community boundaries.

4. As a result of the networks and capacities developed, communities feel empowered to participate in other local development initiatives.
CHAPTER 2: CONTEXT: EDUCATION AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN EGYPT

2.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter aims to highlight problems with public participation in the current educational system, particularly in rural areas of Egypt. The first section provides a background on problems in education in developing countries. The chapter then describes the history of public participation in the Egyptian government structure before detailing problems within the Ministry of Education and the shortcomings of educational delivery in rural areas. It should be noted that this chapter sets the context for an alternative method of education i.e., community schools, that would increase participation in educational and other programs in rural communities. It does not aim to provide a quantitative institutional analysis of the Ministry of Education and the schools associated with it, but rather a qualitative analysis that parallels the field research done on the role of community schools in increasing participation and community involvement in social development.

2.1 PROBLEMS IN EDUCATION

When assessing education in developing countries, the historical context that shapes the roles of the school has to be examined. In the colonial era schools were viewed as tools for the induction of skills and knowledge necessary to support Western governments and economic systems, with little value and thought given to the traditional knowledge and skills of the colonised societies (D'Oyley et al., 1994). As more colonised countries gained independence in the 1950s and 1960s, one of the first tasks of nation-building was to assume responsibility for the institutional structures that had been established, and make them more suitable to their new independent nation-state status. Schools were viewed as a central element in the legitimisation of the new government structure, and education expansion policies grew as did compulsory enrolment (Rondinnelli et al., 1990). However, it soon became clear that the quality of education was severely lacking. During the 1980's, amidst world wide economic recession, education spending in virtually all countries stagnated or deteriorated. Industrialised nations faced alarming decreases in the quality and relevance of educational systems, and developing nations
faced with high population growth and growing debt, were unable to sustain the mass educational expansion programs that had been initiated in the 1960s and 1970s. In many developing nations the general average share of government spending on education fell from 16 to 11 per cent. Dropout rates increased and eventually the enrolment curve evened out (D'Oyley et al., 1994 (Rondinnelli et. al., 1990; UNESCO, 1990a).

In an attempt to address some of the major problems with worldwide delivery of education, the executive heads of UNESCO, UNICEF, UNDP and the World Bank organised the World Conference on Education For All: Meeting Basic Learning Needs (EFA) which was held in Jomtien, Thailand 5-9 March 1990. There were representatives from 155 governments, 20 intergovernmental and 150 non-governmental organisations present at the conference that highlighted universal basic education access to children, youth and adults. The preamble to the Conference monographs painted a dim picture of the realities of education in the 1990s:

- More than 100 million children, including at least 60 million girls, [had] no access to primary education;
- More than 960 million adults, two-thirds of whom are women, [were] illiterate;
- More than one-third of the world’s adults [had] no access to the printed knowledge, new skills and techniques that could improve the quality of their lives and help them shape, and adapt to social and cultural change, and
- More than 100 million children and countless adults [failed] to complete basic education programs; millions more [satisfied] the attendance requirements but did not acquire essential and skills

(UNESCO, 1990a:1)

The Conference focused on three main roundtable themes, namely the purpose and context of basic education, that dealt with the basic learning needs that education must meet; an expanded vision of basic education that addressed key problems in provision and quality of basic education and; the requirements necessary to transform the expanded vision and commitment to education into a reality. The Conference reaffirmed the right of all individuals to education which had first been affirmed in the United Nations Universal Declaration on Human Rights in 1948, and established a framework by which goals could be achieved. It highlighted the importance of relevant education, and expanded the scope of basic education to include early childhood care, the inclusion of
family and community in education provision, and diverse delivery systems to meet the multiple and varied needs of individuals and societies. As such, the Conference noted "education must have value not just as an end in itself, but as a facilitating force for the empowerment of individuals and the development of societies. The policy context for education must not focus exclusively on the employment outcome for learners" (UNESCO, 1990b: 1, emphasis added).

This expanded scope of basic education becomes even more applicable when viewed in a rural context, where often times the school is the only representation of government services and could have great potential to act as a pivot for community mobilisation and development activities. Unfortunately, in the majority of rural areas, the opposite occurs and the schools often suffer from lack of attention from central authorities and lack of trust from local communities. Peripheral schools are dependent on a healthy economy for financing and are usually the first to suffer when there is a lag (OECD, 2001). When schools are made available in these communities, the content and activities are usually far removed from the everyday social practices and process of the communities. As a result, the school does not provide a bond between the periphery and centre (local-national links), nor does it provide an opportunity for community members to form ties with it (school-community links). In the majority of developing countries the established educational programs are based on:

- A system of centrally funded instructional and infrastructure support that considers schools as the major unit for planning rather than the communities which they serve, and treats all schools as equal, independent of the school’s resource base or the challenge it confronts;
- A centrally devised curriculum, typically authorising instruction in the metropolitan language, centrally produced textbooks;
- A school premised on separate classes for separate grades;
- Teachers trained for standard settings, and rewarded by salary schedule and a promotion ladder that culminates in the central bureaucratic office;
- Principals appointed from the centre who have authority to operate independent of the community will (Cummings, 1997: 21)

For all practical purposes, in the majority of rural areas, the school is regarded as an entity separate from the community, over which community members have no control or attachment to. Parents, teachers, and students are rarely, if ever, asked for input or
opinions. And the result is disinterest in the educational system and no support for students to attend. The tensions between balancing the national and local interests continue to present some of the biggest challenges to authorities in the design of and implementation of development strategies. However, unless education is seen as being instrumental in fulfilling aspirations and contributing to the quality of life of a community, then it will have little beneficial effect. It is important to view education as a transformative tool, and aim to provide a model of education that will indeed facilitate community development as a whole by harnessing the raw material of social capital that lies in the communities involved.

In the year 2000 the World Education Conference was held in Dakar to reaffirm the vision of the Jomtien EFA Conference. The participants acknowledged the seriousness of the challenge represented by the world’s nine high population countries (E-9) comprising Bangladesh, Brazil, China, Egypt, India, Mexico, Nigeria and Pakistan (UNESCO, 2000). These governments simply lack the ability to fund every community with a school. Even when they can provide that, they often fail in providing the children with adequate education. UNESCO (2002) reports that in the E-9 countries, the main factors behind low enrolment and high drop-out rates include: high poverty; economic hardship; loss of child labour that raises the cost to send a child to school; distance from school, irrelevant curriculum and teaching-learning process; harsh teaching attitude especially against female students, parental misunderstanding of the value of education and cultural norms hostile to the norms of formal education. These problems are not only aggravated by lack of financing, but also by the management system in place, which has been designed following most colonial education systems, to serve more homogenous and less dispersed populations (Williams, 1997).

As one of the E-9 countries, Egypt did attempt to focus on educational reform and EFA goals during the 1990’s. The government, through the presidential reform effort known as “Mubarak’s National Project for Developing Education” was intent on improving access to basic education, improving equity across gender and social groups, and maximising the contribution of education to national development (UNESCO, 1996). However, despite
significant breakthroughs that had been made in the last decade, there still remain a large number of children youth and adults without access to any form of education necessary for their personal and societal development (UNESCO, 2002). A model that is more in line with the rhetoric produced at Jomtien and Dakar would enhance the potential values of education, over and above literacy benefits. Rural areas in particular still lag behind urban centres in enrolment, and have a higher gender gap. It is clear that the current education system cannot fulfil the needs of many peripheral communities, and alternative methods have to be considered.

2.2 UNDERSTANDING GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE IN EGYPT

In order to understand the current level of public participation in the educational system in Egypt and the structure of the Ministry of Education, it is important to include some background on the history of education in the country and provide a brief description of the governmental structure (See Appendix 2 for general country information). This will help in the understanding the level of community participation generally applicable to public education, and in understanding the participation at village level. An in-depth analysis of the local government/administration is beyond the scope of this research, however it is necessary to highlight some local administrative functions to foreshadow the function and structure of the Ministry of Education, and the implications this has for public participation in education at various levels.

2.2.1 THE EVOLUTION OF LOCAL ADMINISTRATION AND EDUCATION IN EGYPT

Egypt has historically been defined as a hydraulic society, and “like other hydraulic societies has a very centralised system of government .... to guarantee the domination of rulers, landed aristocracy and very small urban entity, over large rural communities.” (ECC, 1995: 36). Interest had always been in the sovereignty of rulers, the majority of whom were foreigners, and not of the people of the country. As a result, the system of rule reflected a very strong administration and rigid centralised political system.

In ancient Egypt, the centralised system of power was best symbolised by the dominant role of the Pharaoh as the only ruler, with unlimited power. In 642, with the invasion of
the Muslims, the administrative capital of Egypt became Cairo. The unprecedented period of economic prosperity that followed required a highly developed system of administration, and supervised and coordinated bureaucracy. “Again, as in Ancient times, the central bureaucracy was controlled from the top, received its mission and assignments from officials in Cairo ... demanding obedience and acquiescence from those below” (Mayfield, 1996: 52). In order to convert the Egyptians and teach them about Islam, mosques were built in every village and each mosque had a school. In these schools young boys learnt to read and write Arabic and the teachings of Islam. Al Azhar University was founded in 970 (it is the oldest institution of Islamic higher learning in the world), where exceptional religious students could go. The rural schools were run by the mosque clerics with general instructions from Cairo.

In July 1798, a system of local councils was first introduced to Egypt by Napoleon. After 4 years of French rule, Mohammed Ali, a Turk, came to reign in 1805 and he sought to solidify and centralise his rule over Egypt. Rural areas were divided into 14 provinces, each with a local council, lacking any funds or powers of discretion and directly responsible to the central administration.

In his effort to “modernise” the country and expand his armed forces, Mohammed Ali began to focus on education. He sent many young Egyptians abroad to be educated and established schools of engineering, accounting and administration. However, these institutions of higher learning came before any primary or secondary schools. The students came from the network of religious schools already established. Eventually secular elementary education was introduced to meet the growing demands of the population, in effect creating a “reversed educational pyramid system” (Cochran, 1986:4). The administrative system that had been built had been designed to support Ali as the supreme ruler and gave no opportunity for public participation. However, at the time of his death, Mohammed Ali had created a new class of education for middle-class Egyptians.
Mohammed Ali's successors, wary of this new class as a threat of rebellion, closed many of the secondary schools and secular education institutions. However, the foreigners residing in the country had their own schools, conducted in their own language and run independently of the state by embassies or missionaries. In 1874, there was an attempt by Egyptians to place the growing number of foreign schools under government control. However, this was not approved by the legislature, the majority of which was still foreign elite.

In 1883, the British began rule of the country, although they kept the Ottoman King as a puppet ruler. The administrative system of the country was once again reorganised. Provincial local councils were formed. However, they were restricted in their funds and functions and essentially were limited to duties such as garbage collection, street cleaning and sanitation, and even these functions required approval from central authorities (Mayfield, 1996). This was an attempt by the British to formalise or legitimise Egyptian rule while keeping it rigidly under control in fear of a revolt. “British education policy in Egypt was conservative and showed little progress” (Cochran, 1986:19). There was little effort made to construct schools for the masses and there was limited government intervention in foreign and religious schools.

After the Revolution of Independence in 1952, a new constitution was drafted that attempted to put into place a more consolidated system of local government. The idea was to decentralise power and establish a form of local government that allowed the people more control over their affairs, and less need to contact central authorities for minor issues (ECC, 1995). To make local government more manageable, the new system divided Egypt into 26 governorates, 134 cities and towns, and 4222 villages (ibid.). Of the 26 governorates, 22 were classified as rural, that is they contain villages. This is the system that exists today. Each rural governorate is divided into marakes (districts) and may contain an independent town that has no villages under its administrative system, and is divided only into neighbourhoods. Each markaz (district) compromises a main town - which serves as its capital and is divided into neighbourhoods – as well as village units. Each village unit is compromised of a central or mother village that contains the
Egypt is currently divided into 26 administrative units, or governorates. Of the 26 governorates, 22 are considered rural: Aswan, Assuit, Beheira, Damietta, Daqahliya, Sharqiyah, Kafr-el Sheikh, Ismailia, Fayoum, Bent-Suef, Sohag, Minya, North Sinai, South Sinai, Red Sea, Menufiyya, Qalubiyya, Matrouh, Gharbiyya, Qena, New Valley, Giza.)

(Source: http://lib.utexas.edu/maps/atlas_middle_east/egypt_division.jpg)

Although the first draft of the new constitution did attempt to confer unprecedented powers to local government units and outline a framework of local decision making autonomy, the final constitution adopted in 1956 erased all those powers and referred to local government under the section outlining presidential and executive authorities. The Nasser government indicated that for reasons of state security, local power had to be
restricted. And so in 1960 Law 124 was instated which called for a completely different system of local government that created the basics of the existing system. Local government was to be in the form of a hierarchy of local councils composed mainly of elected officials, some appointed members, and some ex-officio representative members (ECC, 1995). These local councils existed at the governorate, the town and the village levels, and were delegated administrative functions pertaining to areas such as education, public health and social activities (ECC, 1995, Mayfield, 1996). It is important to highlight the fact that these councils had only administrative functions, and had no legislative or executive powers. In addition, their funds were dispersed as part of the national budget, and were not collected from local activities.

Meanwhile, the Nasser government was trying to nationalise education in the country. All foreign schools came under the administration of the Ministry of Education, and there was a huge attempt to provide education for the masses, particularly in rural areas. The existing education system was a hybrid of years of foreign occupation and religious and secular schools. There was no unified curriculum or even a unified language. Lack of financial resources limited the government's efforts. For the first time, foreign schools came under the administration of the MOE, however the only real change that occurred was the introduction of the Arabic language into the existing curriculum of these schools (Cochran, 1986). The MOE and Provincial Councils administered rural schools. The financial burden to maintain these schools fell to the provincial budget but this was not a consideration when the funds were allocated from the national budget. In short, provincial and local councils were given limited budgets and restricted legislative functions, and yet were expected to contribute to an overhaul of the mass education system in the country. Needless to say, this failed miserably, the result being that rural drop-out rates increased dramatically and many of the rural schools were closed (Cochran, 1986).

Changes in the laws surrounding local government came in 1971 with Law 57 was issued to supposedly provide more leniency for the people to become involved in the political government by having elected local council at all levels. Two councils were established
at all governorate levels, a Popular Council, and an Executive council (ECC, 1995). The governor of each respective governorate, appointed by the President, chaired the Executive council. Local government was presented at the governorate, the town and the village levels, through Local Popular Councils (LPCs): elected bodies that had been designated by the government as the agent for the promotion of popular political participation (Radwan, 1994). This system dispersed the administration of state functions through a vast network of local government. In many cases there was a process of deconcentration, whereby personnel were transferred from central ministries to rural areas in an effort to decentralise administrative functions using trained employees. However this deconcentration provided very little powers of discretion to local units. The authority of each Local Popular Council was limited to recommendations and execution of the national plan at a local level. In effect, this established a parallel system of popular elected officials and professional appointed officials who had to report to their ministerial counterparts in the centre.

In 1998 an important change was made to the system of local government. Law 145 was passed, clearly changing the designation of local units from “local government” to “local administration” (Radwan, 1994). This was a better reflection of the duties performed by local units, and was supported by government officials and academics who argued that “Egypt does not posses a local government structure in the strict definition of the term, since all governorates are subject to central control” (Radwan, 1994: 22). Indeed, a closer analysis of the decentralisation structure proves that none of powers conferred upon any of the local units defines policy making authority, they only delegate powers of implementation and allow the local administrative units to make recommendations regarding policies. The formal authority of the centre is not decentralised, just the administrative functions associated with it.

Although the laws of decentralisation did call for the creation of various local and executive councils, and did attempt to disperse several functions away from the central ministries (ECC, 1995), they were far from providing true democratic power outside the central government. Law 145 was a loud exclamation by the government that
decentralisation was of administration, not of power. It emphasised central control over fiscal and legislative matters, and was an indication of the government’s position on decentralisation. The Egyptian laws on local government/administration have created a complex hybrid of local units that reflect the rigidity and hierarchy of the central government. They have created a system that is neither one of local government, nor one of local administration; rather it is "some sort of de-concentration of central administration" (ECC, 1995:41). What the laws have enabled however, is active communication and contact between the rural population and the government through local representatives. The significance of this becomes important when evaluating the degree of influence that the LPCs, as representatives of their towns and villages, have in making recommendations, particularly in the case of education and community development initiatives in rural areas. Throughout the history of Egypt, education has been used as a tool to control the population and mould it to the needs of the various foreign rulers. What these changes meant was that although the Egyptian government was not allowing educational planning/policy to occur outside the central Ministry, it was open to suggestions, and that was a definite step forward.

2.2.2 THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
The introduction to the Egyptian local administration system has indicated just how centralised power really is, despite numerous local government units. This centralisation is evident in all Ministries, particularly the Ministry of Education. “In a government bureaucracy noted for its vastness and complexity, the Ministry of Education (MOE) is the largest and most complex ministry.” (Toronto, 1990: 10).

Since the revolution of 1952, mass education facilities have grown enormously. From 1952 to 1972 the number of primary and secondary students tripled, and the number of university students quadrupled (Adams, 1986). The result was an inability by the private sector to absorb all the graduates, and so the government initiated a policy whereby each high school and university graduate would get a government job. The intent was to avoid mass unemployment, but the result was a vast number of employees performing menial and unnecessary tasks in an already overly bureaucratic system.
Approximately 644,000 civil servants work in the MOE, 480,000 teachers and 164,000 staff members and administrators (Toronto, 1990), and yet observations and informal discussions with employees during visits to the MOE show that there is rarely any autonomy in decision making. The managers of the various departments report directly to their supervisors even for the smallest details. In one observed instance an employee interrupted an interview to tell his supervisor that the telephone area codes in a particular governorate had changed and asked how to proceed. The supervisor had to place a call to find out what the new codes were! This attitude prevails throughout the Ministry. Employees do not wish to make any decisions that they can be held responsible for, and any deviation from the norm is not encouraged. Moreover, new directives come in almost daily and are changed just as frequently (Personal communication, Ministry Employee #2, 14 March, 2002). The central offices are responsible for all policy formulation. Directorates at the district and sub-levels are responsible for administration only. And, except for the Minister, the employees who hold the majority top positions in policy formulation are life long employees. Promotions are made on a seniority basis and “relatively little attention is given to personal merit, job performance, or previous experience” (Toronto, 1990: 12). As a result, there is no great incentive for creativity or innovation within the system.

Figure 2.1 provides a quick reference to the organisational structure of the MOE. Each of Egypt's 26 governorates is divided into various administrative directorates that are generally parallel to the Ministries in the national government such as education, health, agriculture, transportation, etc. The governor is seen as the president of his governorate and presides over these directorates. Local councils, at the city, town and village levels as discussed in the previous section, aid the governor in local administration. However, the role of these councils as it pertains to education is mainly the implementation of existing policies and transfer of school data and information to the Central offices. Even this role can be further restricted if the governor decides not to share his or her powers. Generally “the flow of information is bottom-up while communication and decision making are top-down” (Toronto, 1990; 16).
Chapter II: Context: Education and Public Participation in Egypt
In his assessment of the MOE James Toronto states that "among the most serious barriers to effective decision-making identified ... are the autocratic style of management and lack of communication among the various units and levels of the educational system (1990: 94). As such, it is easy to understand how this ministerial structure would seem even more impregnable to public participation in the development of educational programs and policies, particularly for populations living in rural areas where access to government offices is even more restricted, both spatially and socially.

2.3 EDUCATION IN EGYPT
The following section provides a brief overview of the current primary education system in Egypt and its implementation in rural areas.

2.3.1 PRIMARY EDUCATION
The education system in Egypt currently consists of five years of primary, three years of preparatory, and three years of secondary education. There are two parallel systems working in the country, one run by the MOE and another by Al Azhar, which operates a network of religious schools parallel to the state system. The institution is private in that it has its own curriculum and does not fall under the auspices of the MOE, however, it does receive government funding. Statistics collected for the MOE do not include Al Azhar data, unless otherwise indicated.

Although the country has rules governing compulsory education, they do not extend beyond primary education. The average class size is 35-40 students, and the majority of students rely on after school tutoring (at extra cost) to get through the school year. The percentage of students who repeat the school year due to failure is quite high and many drop out. School survival rate up to Grade 5 is of particular interest because this level is commonly considered as a pre-requisite for sustainable education (UNESCO, 2002 http://UNESCOdoc). The final examinations for promotion from primary to preparatory levels are classified into three categories: first round, second round, and promotion by law. The last category encompasses those students who have failed two consecutive years, and are promoted to the next grade by law. Students who do not pass the second
round of examinations, are classified in one of three categories: repeaters, dropouts and transferred to preparatory vocational training. This last category applies to students who fail the final grade of primary school, in which automatic promotion is not allowed. The children transfer to preparatory vocational training, which still allows them to continue their education up to high school, but is not sufficient for university enrolment (Fergany, 1996).

Dissatisfaction with the adequacy and performance of the state’s bureaucracy has been a theme for several decades. Egypt displays all the characteristics of an administrative state, full of red-tape, administrative elite, inaccessible institutions and a highly centralised government (Mansfield, 1996). Typically, the state has not left room for community participation when setting educational or other programs. The curriculum has always been viewed as the property of the central Ministry of Education and changes to the curriculum, or even insinuations of change, have not been welcome (Ahmed, et.al. 1998). Hamza (1992), in a study of community participation in three urban shelter projects in Egypt, came to the conclusion that any community participation in the nation’s service delivery is only technical in nature, and extends only as far as is bureaucratically necessary to fulfil international funding conditions. Even then, the “community” usually refers to community leaders, and more often than not, involves the same people who have been indoctrinated into the internal operations of the system. This study by Hamza is an accurate reflection of the operations of the state in general. Local outcomes, rural and urban are influenced by the broader context of the political economy, not by methods of community participation or objectives. In education, the curriculum is set for the nation as a whole and no local considerations are made. The MOE is in control of the curriculum and of the delivery of education. The result is a vicious cycle that continually ignores local needs, and fails to address gender and rural-urban enrolment gaps.

In addition to qualitative indications of the efficiency of the educational system, there are several quantitative indicators:

- Only 30% of primary school students attend full day schools.
• Approximately 48% of the total primary students attend one of two morning and evening school shifts.
• Classes have an average of 45 students with some urban schools reaching 100 students per class.
• Dropout and repeater rates are estimated to be 25-30%.
• Existing school buildings are insufficient in number with an estimated shortage of 5911, and are insufficient in structure.
• Teachers are unqualified, poorly trained, and there is an estimated shortage of at least 5000 primary school teachers.
• Studies using the Criterion Referenced Tests (CRT) have shown that the acquisition of basic literacy skills is very low, especially in mathematics. Competency has been steadily declining since the late 1980's when the primary cycle was reduced to five instead of six years.
• The majority of primary students receive additional private tutoring
• Most classrooms rely on rote and teacher centred methods.
• School has been viewed as push centre for girls, especially since physical punishment is often reported.
  (Zaalouk, 1995b)

These are only some indicators suggesting that alternative methods have to be introduced into the system. Problems are further compounded in rural areas where financial limitations and social factors require considerations of community specific conditions and particular needs.

2.3.2 EDUCATION DELIVERY IN RURAL EGYPT

Information on actual enrolment rates is not readily available and even when it is, its accuracy cannot be guaranteed (Fergany, 2000; Hartwell, 1995). In a public statement, the Minister of Education admitted that figures on access to primary education might be inflated by up to 20% percent, largely due to the "paper-enrolment" factor (Hartwell, 1995). This is when students register but do not attend school, thus inflating actual enrolment rates. However, a study on access to schools in Egypt has identified Upper Egypt as a problem belt, being the most deprived of access with lowest enrolment rates in the country, especially for girls (Fergany, 1996). Upper Egyptian rural hamlets have average girls' attendance of 57%, with some hamlets showing enrolment for girls as low as 15%.
According to a UNESCO report on the state of educational reform during Mubarak’s National Project from 1990-1995, school spaces have increased in rural areas. Government spending on education reflected an unprecedented 440% increase over expenditure on education in the three decades prior to 1990 and enrolment of rural students increased from 56%-58% of total MOE primary enrolment (UNESCO, 1996). A more in-depth study by Fergany, commissioned by UNICEF in 1996, shows that although primary enrolment rates did increase from a total of 6.911 million in 1990/91 to 8.045 million in 1995/96, the actual rates of enrolment did slow down in 1993/94 and declined further in 1995/1996. During that same period, Fergany (1996) indicates that girls’ enrolment rose at a higher rate than boys. This may be that in rural areas, reform was allowing access in areas where previously there were no girls enrolled at all, and so the initial enrolment rates reflect a narrowing of the gender gap. This is an indication that when schools are accessible, girls will enrol as well as boys in rural areas, however, there is a failure in the system to keep enrolment rates steady or rising. Still, in the mid-1990s approximately, 1.3 million children were out of school and two thirds of them in rural areas and nearly half of that number were rural girls (Fergany, 2000).

There are several cultural factors that affect decisions about sending children to school in rural areas. One of these is the traditional notion that it is inappropriate to have girls and boys interact without proper familial supervision. “The fact that there are relatively few women teachers in rural primary schools tends to discourage many families from enrolling their daughters” (Allemano, 1995:6). Keeping girls enrolled in the upper grades, when children enter puberty, becomes a greater challenge. Male teachers are not viewed as suitable chaperons for girls outside the home and the issue becomes aggravated in rural schools that are co-educational. Within the school buildings, girls often feel intimated by teachers, and face harsh punishment. In some areas corporal punishment is still exercised in schools. The decrepit state of the buildings, unclean washrooms, and lack of privacy further alienate girls. “These attitudes are reinforced by the curriculum’s dearth of knowledge and skills directly related to rural life, particularly in areas traditionally ascribed to women” (Allemano, 1995; 6). Distance from home to school is also a factor in keeping rural enrolment low. When children, especially girls, have to
travel more than 3.5 km to school, their completion rates drop significantly. In addition, a teacher centred pedagogy, lack of qualified teachers and what parents view as a lack of return on an education investment plays a further role in keeping children from enrolling or completing primary education (Fergany, 1996).

The approach of community schools discussed in Chapter 3, addresses many of the shortcomings of the current system. The pilot communities of the CSI fell in one of the governorates within Upper Egypt’s educational problem belt, Assiut. Before commencing an explanation of this alternative approach, a brief description of Assiut will provide some background on the place and people.

2.4 THE GOVERNORATE OF ASSIUT
The governorate of Assiut occupies a stretch of land of approximately 120 km along the river Nile bank, covering a total area of 1553 km² (0.15% of Egypt’s total land area). The capital of the governorate, bearing the same name, is 375 km south of Cairo. The city of Assiut is home to the University of Assiut, the first secular academic university in Egypt, as well as a branch of Al Azhar University. The governorate is comprised of 11 districts (Abnoob and Fatah are considered one large urban district), and 238 villages, of which 49 are mother villages with local village councils. In addition to the villages, the population is dispersed amongst more than 880 hamlets. Within the governorate, there is a great range of economic and social conditions (Fergany, 1993).

The population of Assiut is approximately 2.9 million, 1.5 million males and 1.4 million females, accounting for 4.82% of the total population of Egypt. The rural areas of the governorate are inhabited by approximately 72.4% of the total population (www.aun.eun.eg/assiut.htm).

In ancient Egypt, during the middle Kingdom, Assiut was the capital of the 17th province of Upper Egypt. Before the name was adapted to the Arabic language, it was pronounced “Seut”, meaning “guardian of the road”. The name referred to the location of the city that
was the frontier to Upper Egypt (www.aun.eun.eg/assiut.htm). It was the birth place of Plotinus (205 AD), the father of the Neo-platonic school of philosophy, and the birth place of John of Lycopolis (as Assiut was known), the Christian mystic who spent his lifetime secluded in the mountain range that stretches across the governorate. The importance of Assiut grew with the increase of commerce, as it became the terminus of caravans that crossed the Eastern and Western deserts. Assiut has always had a very large Coptic Christian community, and this is still true today. One of the most ancient Christian sites, Saint Mary’s Monastery, is built on Mount Qusqam. It is on this site that Mary, Jesus and Joseph are reputed to have spent six months in a small house on their final stop on their flight to Egypt before returning to Israel. Local legend has it that the Blessed Virgin Mary still appears in the Monastery (Wissa, 1994).

Currently, Assiut like other governorates in Upper Egypt, is suffering harsh economic conditions. It has long endured underdevelopment due to its lack of natural resources and distance from the centre of the country (Fergany, 1993). Nader Fergany (1993) undertook a study on the state of development in Assiut and to date it is the most detailed study available. In assessing the level of basic services available in the villages and hamlets, the study looked at water and electricity from main lines (government installed), and the presence of a primary school. It was found that approximately 50% of the villages and hamlets had no running water, one fifth had no access to primary school, and two-fifths had no electricity. The smaller the community size, and the more remote it location, the more likely it was to lack these basic services. The study does note that it is important to look at the number of people affected and not the number of settlements themselves, and that in total 15% of the population of Assiut lacked water and schooling services and 8% lacked electricity. This was due to the fact that remote small communities were harder to reach through conventional methods and could not be supplied with these basic services without extremely high costs to the governorate.

In the 1991-1992 school year, primary education in the governorate had 270 thousand students enrolled, less than 40% of which were female. The highest percentages of non-female enrolment were evident in the districts of Abnoob, Manfalout and Fatah.
respectively. Drop-out rates were at an average of 12.5% until the beginning of the fifth grade, then they increased dramatically. In the district of Ganayim, they were highest at 20%, followed by Abnoob at 17%. The district of Assiut had the lowest drop-out rates of 8% (Fergany, 1993). Although the figures may seem outdated, they provide a reflection of a pattern in the governorate. The district of Assiut, with the highest urban population and the University in its centre, has the highest number of enrolled students in primary education. The rural districts fare much worse with enrolment decreasing and the gender gap widening. Much of the governorate is greatly lacking basic services, including schools.

The people of Assiut are known for their humour and exaggerated anecdotes. There are numerous tales that recount the ingenious ways Assiut’s people have outsmarted invaders, how a local magician, Sheikh Selim, was able to make objects appear out of thin air, and tales that boast the shrewd business sense of the local population. Communities in Lower Egypt recount some of these stories as their own (Wissa, 1994)! Hardships have made people weary in their spending and education is not a priority. A man is said to be more likely to worry about his cattle, that can feed and clothe a family of six, than about sending his child, particularly a girl, to school and waste money on an unnecessary activity that contributes nothing to the household (Interview, ACDA Technical Supervisor, 9 April 2002). In addition, centuries old traditions dictate that boys and girls be separated in public places at puberty, and this further prevents most girls from attending local primary schools that are co-educational.

While community members are willing to help each other out in certain situations, they rely on these acts being reciprocated in times of need. Volunteerism per se is not a popular notion. When donations are made they are of a nominal nature, such as food or clothing. In the majority of cases, financial compensation in expected in any major undertakings (Interview, ACDA Field Coordinator #1, 17 April). It is interesting to view how these attitudes may have changed with the process of establishing community schools.
CHAPTER 3: PROCESS OF BUILDING COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

3.0 THE COMMUNITY SCHOOL RATIONALE

It has been reasserted to the point of being trite that schools, particularly those in the periphery, should reflect a curriculum that is relevant to the community, its needs, its goals and aspirations. Indeed, the 1990 World Declaration on Education for All held in Jomtien (UNDP et al., 1990: Article 5) maintains that “primary education must be universal, ensure that basic learning needs of all children are satisfied, and take into consideration the culture, needs and opportunities of the community” (emphasis added). Nevertheless, mass education continues to fail in addressing the values of community and seeing them as essential in the development of the children in the school system, as a legitimate source of knowledge, and as an opportunity to expand community networks.

In marginal communities, changes in the roles of schools and the community are of particular importance. First, any problems that occur in urban centres, whether of management, finances, access or quality, are usually much more severe in the periphery. Second, communities in the periphery tend to play much more active roles in children’s lives than do communities in urban centres. Community values and perspectives tend to prevail over compulsory school attendance laws, particularly if the government does not extend the resources to monitor or reinforce these laws (Williams, 1997). It is therefore of great importance that the type of education offered in peripheral areas be compatible with local values and knowledge and offer relevant skills so that communities are willing to take a more active interest in their schools. The way to do this is simply to engage the community and encourage participation in the development and management of the school and its resources.

Where a school exists in a rural area that supports a centrally planned curriculum that is irrelevant to the community, the support from the community will not be strong. Many community members may regard this type of compulsory education as a nuisance since they are probably not prepared to send their children onto the next level of education for financial, cultural or other reasons. School teachers, with a mandate from the central education ministry, can turn their backs on development initiatives such as immunisation,
family and skills programs, with the narrow standing that the school’s purpose is for academic learning only. The community comes to see the school as a “building” where the children have to spend several hours a day, removed from their realistic surroundings, and not really “learning” skills that would be useful. The result is a detachment from the building and its activities, with no home support for doing schoolwork and a lack of understanding of the connection between school activities and life activities.

If however, this school was to become more of a community centre combining academic learning with life skills, and family programs, and the students were given an opportunity to participate in community development activities as part of their curriculum, then the education process can be promoted as the foundation for local development (Cummings, 1997). The relationship between the school and the community grows and becomes a reciprocal one. As the school offers more to the community by providing services and mobilising the students to help with community initiatives, the community reciprocates by providing financial support, labour or space. This is the premise of community based education, i.e., a school that meets the needs of the community and a community that invests time and effort into making the school a growing central part of the community. Children and adults participate and learn from each other, drawing on resources and networks that may not have necessarily crossed paths otherwise, while increasing their community capacity for societal growth and change.

3.1. THE COMMUNITY BASED EDUCATION MODEL

Community Based Education (CBE) provides a model where both the community and the Central Ministry of Education participate as equal partners in the planning of children’s education and making decisions regarding the most important aspects of local schooling (Nielsen and Zeynep, 1997). By definition, this implies relying on community networks to define and collate local knowledge and information and incorporate that into the public school system.

A CBE model is inherently a needs-based model that requires responsive policies and a balanced local and national curriculum content. It also requires planning for new roles
both within the local and national communities and allowing for a broader network of relations and development of capacity for collective change. Increased levels of community participation in establishing community schools, lead to more commitment on the part of the community to sustain these schools, even if the costs are slightly higher than in the centrally planned model.

Table 3.1: Models of the School and Community in the Provision of Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose of Education</th>
<th>Traditional Community-Based model</th>
<th>Government-provided Education</th>
<th>Collaborative Government-Community Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Socialisation into community; survival of community</td>
<td>socialisation into national culture; political, economic development of state</td>
<td>Socialisation into national and local cultures; serves local and national “improvement”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nature of Knowledge Acquired</th>
<th>Transmission of local economic skills and community norms</th>
<th>Transmission of state-approved knowledge</th>
<th>Negotiable: usually state-approved knowledge adapted to local needs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emphasis</td>
<td>On community</td>
<td>On individual and state</td>
<td>On individual as member of both community and state</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vision of Community’s Role</td>
<td>All-encompassing</td>
<td>Passive recipient; potentially disruptive of government’s project</td>
<td>Negotiable: ranging from community as focal point of development effort to community as an important arm of the government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role of Government</td>
<td>None to the extent that government does not interfere</td>
<td>Assumes complete responsibility for provision of education</td>
<td>Negotiable: ranging from source of support for education defined by the community to virtually complete control</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Nielsen and Cummings, 1997:38)

Table 3.1 summarises the characteristics of the three prevalent models of education, two historical and the third emerging as a result of the inability of existing systems to meet
the needs of communities. The historical model of traditional community education was prevalent until the middle of the 1800's, when the responsibility for educating children rested primarily with the community (LeVine and White, 1986). Communities provided young people with the necessary education for transmitting local norms and economic skills. However, while fostering social cohesion and networks at the community level, this model provided little room for integration at the national level, and meeting the specialised needs of an industrial economy. It was eventually largely replaced by government provided education, first in industrialising nations, then in the colonies, and finally adopted by newly independent states. This particular model emerged in Egypt in the 1950s with the socialisation of education and the emergence of mass education attempts. Recently however, as the limitations of government provision have become more apparent, there has been a shift towards a more collaborative model.

The characteristics of a collaborative model are more likely to foster a sense of ownership, of self-governance, and a relevance to community life, qualities that the existing models have long failed to deliver to the majority of marginal communities. All these traits lead to more vertical and horizontal links as the community invests more time in sharing and expanding its experiences with other communities and government contact.

The role of the community in improving the quality of education is being re-evaluated. As numerous studies (UNESCO, 1991; Williams, 1997, Clark, 1997) indicate, parents and community members can reinforce the work of a school, if they believe in what the school is doing. The collaborative model, that forms the basis for most CBE models, recognises the importance of both state and community involvement in education. It allows the government to establish conditions that will foster parental and community support by ensuring that the fears of the community are addressed, opening avenues of participation and inclusion that allows the community to monitor the education and development of its children.
Ideally, a well rounded well balanced collaborative CBE model is one in which “education would be not an escape from reality, but an enrichment and transformation of it” (Morris in Clark, 1996:13). It is a model that is all encompassing and generates strong social bonding within the community, and “the creation of an increasingly strong sense of security, of significance and of solidarity within and across systems” (Clark, 1996: 90, emphasis added). The students within the system benefit on a number of levels. Usually community schools consist of multi-grade classrooms, where children learn from and teach each other through independent inquiry and peer teaching. They also benefit from unique multi-age peer socialising patterns not available in other schools, and form strong bonds with their teachers (Williams, 1997). And, the community benefits by participation in educating its children on the values and culture it holds dear, and forms vertical and horizontal ties to other educational institutions and communities that are willing to share their knowledge and experiences. Community control is increased as it becomes more active in providing financial and other resources for the school.

Obviously, there are various levels of community based education, at the very peak of which would be schools that are completely community owned and managed in all aspects, including the curriculum content and assessments, with functional ties the Ministry of Education, enabling student promotion to preparatory and secondary levels. The type of community schools currently operational in Egypt, do encompass many of the elements of a community based education model with joint community and government collaboration. However, it can be said that the Egyptian model is still new, exploring new relationships and pushing existing boundaries. It is still in its developmental transformative stages with very strong potentials already clear. Ownership over schools and community-school relations are much more improved than they have been in decades, but other steps need to be implemented at the management level, and more relinquishing of control by the MOE needs to be attained in order to continue the success of the community schools. The following section looks closely at the implementation of community education in Assiut, Egypt, and details the aspects of community involvement.
3.2 CASE STUDY: APPLICATION OF COMMUNITY SCHOOLS IN ASSIUT

In Assiut, community schools are delivered to the communities through two non-government organisations: UNICEF and the Assiut Childhood and Development Association (ACDA). In an attempt to provide a more complete picture of community schools in the governorate of Assiut, this section will detail the workings of both organisations in the field. In the early 1990's UNICEF initiated the community schools project in Assiut, and it provided the initial training to get the ACDA project underway in 1995. As a result, the basic approach for both organisations is very similar. The aim is not to provide a comparison of the organisations, but rather to generate a complete picture of the background behind the creation of the community schools in Assiut and how these schools are established. Another aim is to get a more detailed picture of the opportunities and challenges faced in the field in order to assess how these activities affect social interactions in their respective communities.

The community schools program of both organisations have the same essential tenets: (1) The local community is very involved in the school establishment process; (2) The schools are established on donated space and built by the community; (3) Each community has a school/management committee consisting of local community members that is formed to aid with the advocacy and day-to-day management of the schools at the hamlet level; and (4) There are teams of technical and field assistants/coordinators who visit the schools on a weekly basis providing assistance to the facilitators.

The pedagogical approach of the community schools is much different from that of traditional education that exists in Egypt. Everything from the method of delivery to the skills development is an effort to provide a much more participatory learning process. Unlike conventional classrooms in the Egyptian school system that can have 40-45 children per classroom, each community school has a maximum of 30 children. Each school has two female facilitators that aid the children in the learning process through a participatory, active curriculum incorporating many visual and learning aides; and who encourage paced learning according to each child’s abilities. The children are encouraged to be creative, to ask questions, to monitor and evaluate their own and each
other's work and to support each other thorough peer tutoring in the classroom, and where possible outside the school. The schools are situated in remote hamlets and villages to provide maximum access to children, particularly girls, who would otherwise not have access to government schools. Table 3.2 highlights some of the problems that the community schools aim to counter-act providing viable solutions that elicit community involvement and interaction.

**Table 3.2: Adapting Schools to Meet Community Needs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons for Low participation</th>
<th>Measures to Address Problem</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School attendance prevents children from attending to household tasks</td>
<td>Schedule school or morning or afternoon only; schedule school year around growing seasons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children pass the prescribed age of entry</td>
<td>Develop second chance programs; provide ways for children to join formal schools later</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunity costs too high</td>
<td>Incorporate income-generating activities into the curriculum; Combine work with academics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little potential for further education</td>
<td>Publicise education opportunities; Provide support for further education and work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Method of delivery conflicts with local values related to gender roles</td>
<td>Provide female teachers; provide girls-only classrooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schooling ignores or devalues local culture</td>
<td>Encourage development of curriculum to increase awareness, pride in local culture; Encourage community to become active in curriculum development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum is of little apparent use in the children’s present and projected future lives.</td>
<td>Include material that is visibly useful in village life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of appropriate role models as teachers; lack of sufficient numbers of teachers for peripheral schools</td>
<td>recruit and deploy female and local teachers, train locally, subsidise teacher-training, recruit and train educated community members as teachers.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Adapted from series of tables, Williams, 1997: 44, 47, 54).

There are differences in the funding and managerial structure of each organisation, which are discussed in the sections specific to the two organisations. Field research proved that the basics are indeed the same (with some differences in technical terms), and so unless there are major differences that apply to outcomes and are so indicated, it should be understood that for the purposes of this section, information that details the
performance of field and technical assistants/coordinators and the process to establish the schools applies to both ACDA and UNICEF. The next section first provides a background on each community school program, and then goes on to detail the establishment of the schools.

### 3.2.1 UNICEF: THE COMMUNITY SCHOOLS INITIATIVE

The 1990 World Conference on Education for All outlined a serious need for change in the way basic education was delivered particularly in developing countries. With the vision outlined at the Conference taking shape, UNICEF saw a need for a change in the way its programs were structured. Up until that point education had been peripheral, and the focus was on child welfare programs in general. The UNICEF office in Cairo, Egypt saw education was going to have to become a priority and approached Dr. Malak Zaalouk to design an education program that would deliver effective basic education (Interview, UNICEF Education Program Manager, 29 May 2002).

Dr. Zaalouk came on board in 1991 with three related education projects under the Community Schools Initiative (CSI): community schools; early childhood and care; and literacy and information. In the design phase she concentrated on putting these projects in an Egyptian context. She had read about the successes of the Nueva Escuela programs in Columbia and the BRAC experience in Bangladesh and wanted to design an effective Egyptian program. The first priority was to identify and target the areas most in need. Access to basic education was a huge issue in the majority of the country. Approximately 25% of the country’s population was living in rural communities without access to services such as health, sanitation and education (Zaalouk, 1995). In addition to access, quality of education was also an issue. The teacher to student ratio in some schools was as high as 1:45; teachers were relying on a rote method of teaching, teachers were not highly qualified; and school buildings were far from inductive to learning, lacking in the number of classrooms and quality of learning spaces. In rural areas, the problems were further aggravated by the lack of funds to build sufficient schools in all the communities, and in many cases, the mother villages housed only primary schools that were meant to service all the satellite villages and hamlets.
After substantial research, it was decided to target the hamlets of Upper Egypt. UNICEF data indicated that primary enrolment rates in Upper Egypt were amongst the lowest in the country. Furthermore, data highlighted high drop-out or non-enrolment rates for females in those hamlets. While the attendance rate ratio for girls in Lower Egypt was approximately 78%, for villages in Upper Egypt it varied from 65% to 57% in hamlets, with some of these ezzbas displaying a ratio as low as 15% (Zaalouk, 1995). Parents were particularly resistant to enrol their daughters in schools because of the travel distance, and the unwillingness to have the girls spend the days away from the watchful eyes of their families and communities. Economic hardships also limited the number of children sent to schools, and in the majority of cases, boys were favoured over girls, although many of the boys did not make it past primary school.

Assiut, a governorate in Upper Egypt became the site of the first pilot community schools. A national survey by Nader Fergany (1993) had indicated that the most deprived areas were the governorates in Upper Egypt, and Assiut is the northern-most governorate in rural Upper Egypt, in closest proximity to Cairo. In addition, contact with community members in hamlets in Assiut through the UNICEF sanitation and health projects carried out in 1991/1992 highlighted a strong desire for girls education, but only if it could be provided locally. Initially the CSI was planned as a wide spread community initiative, however, in implementation it was realised that there was much training and community trust-building that needed to be done for the projects to go full force. And so, the team decided to go with a pilot phase to test the community reaction, and iron out unforeseen challenges.

**PHASE I: Pilot Phase 1992-1994**

The conceptual and planning phase for the project took close to 8 months to complete. It was necessary to focus on quality education delivery that was affordable, girl friendly and community oriented to diffuse any parental fears. Visioning for the project at the onset held a two-pronged approach that:
1. modelled for the country at large how to reach the “hard to reach” that is girls, and marginalised areas (this was picked up in some ways by the MOE in the OCS concept discussed later)

2. was to highlight the best practices of quality learning and community participation. This would sit at the heart of all those involved to establish elements of sustainability.

From the onset, sustainability issues were at the forefront of planning concerns. UNICEF worked very closely with the MOE, with community NGOs and community members (See Box 1) in the visioning, training and conceptualisation of the project. The preliminary stage was not an easy one. “It entailed the creation of partnerships between both the deprived communities and local government officials” (Zaalouk, 1995: 14). People were resistant to change and suspicious of involvement with officials and it was long and arduous task to break through some of the mental and social barriers of community members and officials alike. Although the idea of some sort of community school program was evolving in the planning stage, it was hard to delineate whether the result would be a community school or a community centre that would also offer basic education services. “Finally it was decided that it would be a community school with similar aspects to a community centre since activities and services would centre on the school” (ibid).

The CSI was focused on reaching rural children between the ages of 6-12 (after which they would be too old to begin primary education), with a particular focus on reaching girls. “Ultimately, it [was] intended to be a multi-sector project in which education [would] be one aspect of an integrated strategy to develop basic services: health, water and sanitation and women’s literacy, reinforced by income generation activities” (Allemano, 1995: 8). The project strategy was to eliminate as many barriers as possible, focusing on traditional cultural barriers as well as economic ones, that prevented the enrolment of children from low-income families in rural areas in primary education, This meant an emphasis on short travel distances to the schools, the hiring of local female school facilitators, a “girl-friendly” curriculum and environment, a flexible school schedule as well as a reduction or complete elimination of costs to parents (Allemano, 1995; Zaalouk, 1995).
BOX 1: CSI Project Sustainability Objectives

- The initial objective of the Community School Project is to develop a sustainable model for providing quality basic education – particularly appropriate for girls but also including boys in rural communities in Upper Egypt.
- The program serves to empower the communities to establish and manage their own schools with the supervision of the Ministry of Education.
- The program aims at mainstreaming the lessons learnt from the Community Schools Initiative into existing primary learning and teacher training.
- The program is based on a partnership beginning with the initiative of the community supported by UNICEF through a non-governmental organisation, and with material resources and policy direction from the Ministry of Education.
- The program identifies facilitators form the local community to avoid absenteeism from school. Facilitators will have obtained intermediate education and will move from unemployment to employment through the Ministry of Education.
- The program evolves on the basis of the best existing research on effective “girl-friendly” schooling, but draws on the experience, values and inputs from local communities, program staff, district and governorate leadership, the service organisation (NGO), and the Ministry of Education staff at district, governorate and national levels.
- The program takes into account local conditions; intensive child labour seasons, market days, agricultural seasons when planning the school day, week and year.
- The program incorporates a process of organisational learning, and requires continual self-evaluation, monitoring, communications, and improvements in operations. This reflects a development strategy committed to human resources development (in contrast to a singular focus on ‘systems’ or material infrastructure development).
- The community schools provide the equivalent of a full primary school program – yet the methods and organisation are based on modern instructional research and practical experience, adapted to Egypt’s needs for rural, multi-grade schools. The school schedule, the organisation of space and furnishing within the classroom, the use of a wide variety of instructional materials, and the training of the facilitators maximise the children’s opportunity for self and peer learning.
- The facilitators are young women with at least an intermediate education, selected from the hamlets and are accepted by the Community School Committee (to be discussed in the next section). They are provided both pre-service and in-service training and support. Their learning, development and continual generation of insights, methods, materials and ideas are the core of the program. They form an important part of the training and supervisory staff as the program expands.
- The program aims to establish an approach that can develop and go to a large scale, serving rural communities throughout the country. It thus seeks to establish recurrent equivalent to current MOE per pupil (LE 200). It also seeks to involve education officials, policy makers and leaders at all levels in the development of the program. In this it serves as a method of policy dialogue and advocacy based on concrete, positive experience.

Negotiations began with the MOE to draw up a document that would outline responsibilities and details. This was not an easy task. The MOE was not convinced that pilot schools would be sustainable in the long term even if they were proven successful. And, in a rigid system that had long relied on rote learning and conventional methods of teaching, the idea of quasi-professional facilitators was not readily accepted. Finally, on April 29 1992, a Memorandum of Understanding between UNICEF and the Ministry of Education was signed detailing the responsibility of each party (Interview, UNICEF Education Program Manager, 29 May 2002). The next step was to do house to house canvassing in the hamlets to identify those with most potential to participate in the pilot project. Convincing the various communities of the benefits of community schools was a long process, and involved many hours of interviews and discussions to test the waters, to explain the long term benefits and the development concept behind the program, and to convince families to donate the space and materials for the schools. At the end of the first summer, there were 15 commitments made by families to donate space, however, by the time construction was due to begin, only 4 of those places were secured (Interview, UNICEF Field Supervisor, 24 April 2002).

Recruitment of facilitators from the community was underway, and in June of 1992, a training program was operational for the first nine facilitators, three managers and supervisors of the CSI pilot project in Assiut. The Director of the National Basic Education Planning Unit was assigned as the trainer by the MOE. The facilitators had been chosen from the pilot communities. The managers and supervisors were a group of “well-trained and experienced extension workers” local to the communities, and who had previously worked on UNICEF projects in their communities (Zaalouk, 1995:15). They understood the rational behind the strategies employed and already had existing networks within the communities at large, although not necessarily in the hamlets that would house the schools (Interview, UNICEF Field Supervisor, 24 April 2002).

In September of 1992, the first 4 pilot community schools were opened in the district of Manfalout (the northern-most district in Assiut), signalling the operation of the first phase of the UNICEF Community Schools Initiative. The pilot schools were developed as an
illustration of how various factions of the community, MOE and UNICEF could work together to provide quality basic education to marginalised areas, focusing on enhancing the enrolment of females and building community support (Interview, UNICEF Education Program Manager, 29 May 2002).

Phase II: Development Phase 1995
The development phase saw the growth of community schools in Assiut. For the 1994/1995 school year there were 21 schools operational in Assiut (NGO document #1, accessed May 2002, translated). As well, the project expanded to two more governorates in Upper Egypt, Sohag and Quena, providing a total of 38 classrooms in 34 hamlets. There were a total of 1037 pupils enrolled at the community schools, 69% were girls (Allemano, 1995; Hartwell, 1995).

Phase III: Going to Scale 1995+
With the lessons learnt in the first two phases, UNICEF and the MOE expected the project to go to large scale expansion in the three governorates. In assessing the end of phase II, Hartwell estimated that

As the program moves to large scale expansion, growth is to be exponential, with classes and enrolments doubling each year. The principal governing this rate of expansion is that the quality of the program requires the building of individual and institutional knowledge, skills and commitment by facilitators, support and management staff, and consultants. At each new classroom and site, staff and program effectiveness is based on internalised values and learnt behaviours (1995: 6).

Although the rate of expansion was not realised as foreseen, it was still quite high, with a total of 104 schools established in Assiut alone by the beginning of the 1999/2000 school years.
Table 3.3: Number of UNICEF Community Schools and Students in Each Grade in the Governorate of Assiut, 1992-2001.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Year</th>
<th>Total No of Classes</th>
<th>No Classes for Each Grade</th>
<th>No of Students</th>
<th>Success Rate (promotion to next grade)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>3&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992/1993</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993/1994</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994/1995</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995/1996</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996/1997</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997/1998</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998/1999</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999/2000</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000/2001</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: NGO document: “Schedule of number of students and number of classes for each grade, including the number of students and the success rate from 1992-2001”, accessed May 2002, translated).

There are now a total of 202 UNICEF community schools in the three governorates in Upper Egypt (Assiut, Sohag and Quena) with 104 of those schools spread in two districts in Assiut: Manfalout and Abu-Teeg. Table 3.3 provides a summary of these schools and the number of students in each.

Local NGO

Pivotal to the success of the community schools program is close partnerships with the local community and local consensus. For this reason UNICEF has contracted regional NGOs to do the actual implementation and on-site management of the community schools in the three governorates (Interview, UNICEF Education Program Manager, May 29 2000). In Assiut, the Integrated Care Society (ICS) was contracted in 1993 by UNICEF to implement the project and provide the necessary technical support. A memorandum was signed between the two agencies outlining the objectives, goals, and financial and organisational issues concerning the project. It took almost six months for the details to be finalised, and the framework was applied to contracts with the regional

Chapter III: Process of Building Community Schools 50
NGOs in Sohag and Quena. The Memorandum of Understanding between UNICEF and the MOE gave UNICEF the following responsibilities:

- Provide technical leadership in regular consultation with the MOE
- Organise and Finance:
  - consultants and technical support staff
  - school furnishing and equipment
  - staff training
  - supplementary materials for teachers and children
  - the evaluation of the project

(Hartwell, 1995:11).

The ICS took on much of these tasks, overseeing the contracting of all support field staff, administrative staff and local consultants, and organising all in-service support and training. In effect the local NGO took over the management of community schools in Assiut. Prior to the UNICEF contract ICS had the institutional capacity to support the income-generation and health aspects of the project however, the organisation needed funds and training from the UNICEF team regarding the philosophy and concept of the community schools, and advocacy for the model in the field (Allemano, 1995).

In 2000, UNICEF had a disagreement with ICS over its handling of funds, and did not renew its contract. A new local NGO was sought out, and a contract was signed with the Assiut Businesswomen’s Association to act as the regional manager for the project. The NGO had only been recently formed, and so UNICEF took on a more central role in planning and management, but the UNICEF Project Director sees this control dissipating as the NGO becomes more established in the field, especially since many of the project administrative and field staff have had substantial experience in running the project (Interview, UNICEF Education Program Manager, 29 May 2002)

Since the inception of the project, the total number of staff working at the UNICEF education department in Cairo has ranged from 3-6. Currently there are two full time staff (Project Manager and Assistant) and one intern. The increasing burden of work associated with the management, development, training and expansion of the project has shifted to the regional NGOs.

Chapter III: Process of Building Community Schools
Funding
The UNICEF community schools are absolutely cost free to parents and students. The project costs are carried by the three main partners in the initiative: UNICEF; MOE; and CIDA. The MOE is responsible for the salaries of the facilitators. It is also responsible for the provision of textbooks, and a school snack made available to the children daily.

The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) became involved with UNICEF project in 1993 with financial assistance through the Local Initiatives Fund. At the time CIDA had an Africa wide program. In 1995/96 negotiations began between the two organisations and CIDA expanded its financial assistance to include technical assistance and policy dialogue. A year later CIDA came on as a full partner in the project, not just as an external funder. The contribution agreement ended in 2000, and although it was agreed to extend the agreement, the final terms of the relationship between the agencies for phase three has yet to be determined.

UNICEF is responsible for much of the educational management activities carried out in the field by the regional NGOs. This includes staff and Field Supervisor costs, supplementary learning aides and materials, as well as administrative costs.

Management
Figure 3.1 below shows the current management structure of the community schools. The MOE and UNICEF are equal partners with regards to the policy, curriculum development and finances necessary for the operation and development of the community schools (Interview, CIDA Social/Program Advisor 11 March 2002). At the second tier are the regional NGOs. In Assiut, the Assiut Businesswomen’s Association plays a largely administrative role. It is responsible for administering funds to the community, for the hiring of necessary personnel and day-to-day running of the schools. This is done through the community schools manager in Assiut. At the next level is the Village Education Committee (VEC), which is formed of parents, and community members who are interested in managing the schools at the local level. They are the community members to whom facilitators and parents bring their concerns and the ones that manage
immediate school issues as well as advocate the program in their respective villages. There is constant feedback and flow of information that goes from the Village Education Committee to the regional NGO and onto the MOE and UNICEF.

**Figure 3.1: UNICEF Community Schools Management Structure**

(Source: Interview, CIDA Social/Program Advisor, 11 March 2002).

Each of the two districts in Assiut, Manfalout and Abu-Teeg, where UNICEF has community schools has its own separate teams of technical and field assistants. Each district has one Technical Supervisor and one Field Supervisor under whom 7 assistants work, all female. These are the people that go on weekly school visits. The technical team is concerned mostly with facilitation, curriculum and learning issues in the classroom. The field team is responsible for initial village visits before the school is opened, follow-up on donation promises, absenteeism and maintenance of the schools. Essentially, the technical team deals with in-class issues and the field team deals with
community issues, although often times there may be overlap in the work such as meeting with parents if a child is persistently absent, or if the facilitators wish to hold a meeting with a parent.

Although the teams from each district do meet in some training sessions, and are ultimately responsible to the Assiut project manager, they essentially work independently of each other. The management structure is strong and efficient and runs smoothly without having to report daily to the project manager. Each team works with its supervisor to work out weekly visit schedules and arranges its meeting and visit time as is necessary with contracted drivers who take the teams out to their respective districts. The field and technical assistants do not coordinate their visits to coincide with each other's schedule unless there is a specific reason for both to be at the same hamlet. The teams work from 9am until 2pm, when the school facilitators leave the school.

Ultimately, UNICEF realises that its goals are to create a strong independent regional management structure that can be sustained once UNICEF is no longer in the field. Responsibility falls not only on the regional NGO, but on building a strong community structure that can maintain the community schools program on its own at a very localised level.

Much of the system that applies to UNICEF schools was adopted by the ACDA in its implementation of community schools. There is some difference in the terminology and structure and this is detailed in the preceding section.
3.2.2 ACDA: THE COMMUNITY SCHOOLS PROJECT

In 1995, the Assiut Childhood and Development Association (ACDA), a local NGO decided to start a community schools project of its own, after hearing about the success of the UNICEF program (See Box 2 for a profile of the organisation). The association had literacy classes that were operational for females aged 14 and over. The community schools seemed like the ideal complementary program to the literacy classes. Instead of waiting to recruit girls that had missed their opportunity at primary education to their classes, they decided to try and make an attempt to reach the younger girls, and provide them an opportunity to complete their basic education (Interview, ACDA Field Supervisor, 19 April 2002).

After doing an initial survey of communities to access the acceptance of the concept willingness to participate the Association applied to the Social Development Fund (SDF) for a start up grant. When the funds came through, ACDA contacted the UNICEF Education Program Manager, Dr. Zaalouk, in Cairo to arrange for training and technical aid for its project team.

PHASE I: 1995-1998

The first phase of the project started as a participatory project, that incorporated several aspects of community development. As well as the community schools, the ACDA education program included health centres, micro-credit, vocational skills, and technical skills such as carpentry and textiles (Interview, ACDA Field Supervisor, 6 April 2002).

The aim was to intensify the network and development in one community. The first schools were opened in the two hamlets in the districts of Abnoob and Badari. There was an agreement between UNICEF and ACDA that they would not operate in the same districts (Interview, ACDA Technical Supervisor, 6 April 2002). And so UNICEF was in charge of community schools two districts in Assiut, and ACDA was in charge of six districts. As with UNICEF, ACDA focused on getting females between the ages of 6 and 12 in their schools, although not exclusively. However, priority is given to the girls in
the older age bracket so as to give them one final shot at basic education before they get to old to enrol.

**BOX 2: Profile of ACDA**

The association first began as a process of volunteerism by a local doctor, Dr. Galal Zaki, and his friends doing small health related projects around the governorate. In 1991, they formalised the work and officially formed The Association for Mentally Challenged Children, initially funded by the Swiss Fund. After that funding period was over, the association expanded their criteria of work to be more inclusive of overall development initiatives and not just child health, and changed its name to the Childhood and Development Association. Currently, the association gets funding from local and international sources through the Social Development Fund, The Swiss Fund and CIDA among others.

**ACDA Activities**

- Community schools project started in 1995
- Integrated family care project for poor families and the development of NGOs in Upper Egypt. The project began with the care for mentally challenged children, with the inception of ACDA. Beneficiaries of the project:
  - 5000 mentally challenged children receive health, social and financial services
  - 33790 social awareness personnel in the communities and the association
  - 517 females in illiteracy eradication classes
- Legal Rights Awareness for females, with 1000 beneficiaries
- New Horizons Program with 375 beneficiaries (discussed later)
- Environmental awareness project completed in Al hawatika village and two of its satellites
- Institutions network program for NGOs involved in the Family Development Fund, with three participating organisations
- Income generation for mentally challenged children and their families with 360 benefiting families
- Clothes and Crafts project actively training 60 females, half of whom are mentally challenged
- NGOs development project, aiding 10 NGOs through technical training, experience exchange, and grants
- Street Children project (external) with a total of 100 child beneficiaries.


Chapter III: Process of Building Community Schools
There are three main partners in the project: The ACDA which is responsible for implementing the projects; the MOE which is responsible for policies, salaries and text materials; and the community that provides the space, the building and local level monitoring and maintenance. In addition, the MOE is involved with the curriculum development, and does intermittent monitoring of the schools, however there was not much interaction between ACDA and MOE in setting up the school establishment policy as it was understood that they would adopt the same approach as UNICEF.

PHASE II: 1999-2002

Unfortunately, after the initial funding from the SDF, there was insufficient money to continue with the program and the project was put on hold for a year. In 1999 the ACDA, under community pressure reapplied for another grant from the SDF. After reviewing the report of the first phase, the SDF decided to continue with funding, but it restricted this funding to community schools only, the other components of the project had to be dropped (See Box 3 for the project goals).

Although the health centres were much needed in the remote ezzbas (hamlets), they were not very successful. The project was coordinated in partnership with the ministry of health. The health centres failed because the Ministry of Health did not provide the proper monitoring it was supposed to. Visits to the hamlets were based on volunteerism, although doctors were assigned certain sites. With graduating students already getting very low pay, their meagre salaries did not cover transport costs for the weekly visits and the health centres were ill equipped. Eventually the doctor visits stopped and the health centres ceased to function. The ACDA has taken up the issue with the Ministry of Health once again, and they hope to get a better plan in place so that the health centres can be reinstated in the next phase of community schools (Interview, ACDA Field Supervisor, 19 April 2002).
BOX 3: ACDA Community Schools Project Goals

Main goal
Completion of primary education for 3491 children who have drop-out or not enrolled in school through the association’s community schools for the next years and initiating new cycles for those schools that have completed their first cycle in primary education.

Objectives
- The education of 3491 children during the 4 year cycle of the project
- The continued employment of 348 facilitators employed in the 150 community schools established by the association
- Development of the facilitators’ teaching and personal skills
- Continued employment of the 60 field and Technical Supervisors responsible for monitoring of facilitators
- Development and enhancement of local community capacity to fund and maintain the community schools (through the efforts of the Village Committees)*
- Continued funding for schools that have completed one cycle of primary education in order to begin new cycles for new students
- The participation of the parents and community in sustaining the project by donating school spaces, and volunteering.

*(Role and structure of Village Committees discussed in next section)


Currently, ACDA has a total of 150 schools operational in 6 districts in Assiut. Table 3.4 provides data on the number of students in each grade.

Table 3.4: Number of ACDA Schools for the Academic Year 2001/2002

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>No students 1st grade</th>
<th>No students 2nd grade</th>
<th>No students 5th grade</th>
<th>No of schools</th>
<th>No of facilitators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abnoob</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>584</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dayrout</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>419</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Badari</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>315</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alsahel</td>
<td>233</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fatah</td>
<td>779</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>303</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gayanim</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1462</td>
<td>775</td>
<td>1416</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: ACDA internal document, accessed April 2002)

Many of the staff that were with the project at its inception, and who received much of the philosophy and concept training from UNICEF were let go when the funds ran out.

Chapter III: Process of Building Community Schools
As a result, the team that started working at the beginning of the second phase was almost all new.

The ACDA is a strong long established NGO in the field. Prior to the community schools program, it had many other community development initiatives already in progress, some long-term and some short term. No new additions are made to the staff unless the position is going to be permanent. Instead, ACDA expands the roles of existing members, based on their work records, and willingness to work on other projects. As a result of this, many of the staff that were hired to work on the community schools projects are often cross posted on other community development initiatives within the association, enhancing their abilities and experiences and allowing for greater networking.

Funding
The Social Fund for Development (SFD) provides the money for the majority of associated costs including administrative and learning aid costs. The educational aspect of community schools and associated community development initiatives fall within the goals and objectives of the SFD (See Box 4) and are strongly supported. Facilitator salaries and school essential materials are paid by the MOE.
BOX 4: The Social Fund for Development

Since the creation of the SFD in 1991 by Presidential Decree No. 40 it has played different roles within the development arenas of Egypt, and pioneered in most. Initially it was designed as a social safety net associated with the government of Egypt’s agreement to undertake its extensive Economic Reform and Structural Adjustment Program (ERASP), and the SFD was considered essential to the actual success of the reform program. Now the SFD has expanded to also become a vanguard of economic empowerment, quality human resources, and an enabling environment for human development, heading now to become a full fledged development organisation, therefore it adopts a new development orientation that could be integrated within government programs to improve their own performance.

Within the publication of the Government of Egypt’s "Vision 2017" in 1997, the definition of development took on a new dimension and the role of the SFD was also redefined. By strengthening partnerships to manage the impact of globalisation and minimize social exclusion, the SFD was now setting the pace for the new patterns of development. It consolidates its mechanisms for better understanding of the impact of globalisation and mobilise its efforts to minimise the risks of social exclusion, to help alleviate poverty and unemployment by creating job opportunities through financing small enterprises and providing them with technological know-how and expertise both Egyptian and international.

Objectives
To fulfil its mission, the SFD aims at achieving the following specific objectives:

- The provision of employment for new graduates, the unemployed youth, and workers that may be displaced as a result of public enterprise restructuring.
- The channelling of additional public investments towards social services, such as health, education and environment.
- The creation of mechanisms to protect vulnerable population groups such as women, elderly and children and improve their living standards.
- The support of NGOs / PVOs’ participation in the planning of implementation of projects serving the target groups.
- Creating jobs for low income groups through the support of new and existing small enterprises.
- In the age of globalisation, the SFD seeks to equip people with the capabilities needed to succeed in the global economy, and provide support mechanisms where they are required, and to strengthen its partnerships with the government and all the major players in the decision-making process.
- Providing technical assistance and expertise to other similar social funds programs in different parts of the world.

Although the schools were initially free, the ACDA has started charging an annual fee of 10 Egyptian pounds for each student (exchange rate as of June 2002 is 3.33 LE per CD). The students are not required to pay the full amount at the beginning of the year; in fact they have the entire academic year to pay the money in as many instalments as is financially comfortable and feasible for the families. ACDA decided to instil the fee for two major reasons. After the first phase of the project, the program had to shut down for a year due to lack of funds from the SFD. The Association hoped to accumulate funds to offset the situation from reoccurring. Currently, there is enough money to keep the program running for one complete year if money from the SFD discontinues, until another source of funding is found. The other main reason for charging students is to offset high rates of absenteeism.

“We honestly do not believe that the 10 pounds is a hardship for many families, but we do think it is enough of an incentive for parents to make sure that the children attend. If they feel that they paid for the schooling they will be more strict in making the children attend so that they feel they got something back for their money” (Interview, ACDA Field Supervisor, 6 April 2002).

However, Mr. Abdel-Aziz Mohammed, the Field Supervisor is quick to point out that there are many exceptional circumstances that prevent families from paying, and that does not mean that the children cannot attend the school. None of the orphaned children have to pay the school fees (in Egypt a child is considered an orphan if the father is deceased), as well, many families send more than one child to the community schools and cannot pay fees for all of them. Rather than lose children, the ACDA waives the fee.

Management
ACDA is responsible for all aspects of its community schools, and all the personnel are ACDA employees, with the exception of community members who donate their time. While the SFD does provide funding, it is not involved in the running or administration of the schools.

The organisational structure for ACDA is slightly different from UNICEF in that as the managing NGO, it does not contract out any work. Within the ACDA, there are many community development initiatives and the community schools program has its own
employees that are ultimately responsible to the Executive Director. There is one Field Supervisor and one Technical Supervisor for all six districts in which ACDA schools are established. Each supervisor is responsible for team of 30 coordinators (akin to the assistants at UNICEF schools). The technical team is all female, but there are 5 males in the field team, including the supervisor. Figure 3.2 shows the management structure of the community schools as it is understood within ACDA. Although the MOE is not indicated on the chart, it is generally understood that the MOE holds the defining policies on the community schools curriculum and has a monitoring role (Interview, ACDA Technical Supervisor, 6 April 2002).

The ACDA teams all gather at the association daily and go over their schedules in their respective divisions. Each team is divided into a sub-team that is responsible for two or three districts. Each morning, based on a pre-set schedule (which changes if necessary) the members of the field and technical teams assemble and head out to their designated districts. Both technical and field coordinators may be in the same hamlet at the same time. However, the technical coordinators usually spend the whole school day in the classroom with the facilitators and the children, while the field coordinators may visit more than one school.
Chapter III: Process of Building Community Schools
The technical coordinators visit the schools and discuss curriculum issues with the facilitators, they spend the school day with the children participating in the lessons and engaging with the children. They are also responsible for collecting birth certificates of children who wish to enrol, and completing the necessary paperwork for those children without birth certificates. The field coordinators have several issues that they deal with on their visits to the schools and the hamlets. The Field Supervisor outlined the following as the major aspects with which the field team deals with:

1 **Locating a space**: The field team are the first to enter hamlets and try to elicit donations for spaces. They get to know the hamlets, present the ideas, and assess the community capacity to participate. They also spread the word that local facilitators are needed.

2 **Forming Committee for Village Affairs**: In each hamlet where there is a school, a Committee for Village Affairs is formed. (UNICEF schools call these School Management Committees). The committee meets once a month, or more if necessary, with the field coordinator to discuss problems that come up.

3 **Absenteeism**. There is one member of the committee who is designated for follow-up on absenteeism and who works in tandem with the field coordinator. There are house visits often as 2-3 times a month to meet parents and discuss problems. There are also children who are absent because they move to an area or hamlet where there is no community school. In this instance, the field coordinator will try to make arrangement with the nearest government school so that the child can enrol.

4 **Fee collection** is also the responsibility of the field coordinators. Although there is a Committee member who follows-up with families, it is sometimes necessary for the field coordinator to monitor this follow-up.

5 **Health insurance**: ACDA coordinators register children for health insurance with the government. It is not an obligation, and it does cost 4 pounds per child and is done
through the local branch of the Ministry of Health. Approximately 75% of the children register for this, and the association pays for those children who wish to join but cannot afford to. The health insurance covers both and life insurance.

6 School maintenance is the responsibility of the committee. If there is money available from ACDA funds then it is applied towards necessary up-keep. However, the Committee and field coordinators advocate in the community for donations of building materials and labour. The school foundation itself however, is the responsibility of the community.

7 House visits. These are different to the absenteeism visits. The purpose of these is to remain visible in the community, to maintain contact with community members and get to know people. Sometimes, the ACDA coordinators can determine which families are in need of extra financial or household help so that when donations are received, whether through the community schools program or other ACDA initiatives, the coordinators can assess those who can benefit.

8 Solving community problems. There are school related problems, and there are general community issues. These may include lack of sanitation facilities, or lack of electricity or water. The ACDA coordinator acts as a non-official liaison to help community members mobilize. First the community is directed to the government office or official who should address the specific problem, helping fill out forms or making contacts. If the problem persists, the ACDA provides an official letter indicating that the community is attempting to improve a facility and that it houses a community school and would appreciate help in expediting their request. If there is still no action, then the field coordinator goes with a community member and makes direct contact with the government official and tries to work on a solution.

"At first, community members were reluctant to go to officials, and were reliant on the association to do the leg work. Now, the government officials realise that the NGO will get involved if the problem is not resolved and so they have started to be more cooperative with individual community members who present them with issues. They take the time to explain the process, how it will be implemented,
This is the strongest link that the ACDA can provide the communities outside their immediate locales.

3.3.3 ESTABLISHING COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

The steps towards establishing a school in any hamlet are outlined in this section. Both UNICEF and ACDA follow the same basic steps, carried out by the field assistants/coordinators, and provide similar training for the facilitators and technical assistants/coordinators. For the sake of repetition, information is referenced to the organisation from which it was gathered, but it does apply to the field operations of both organisations.

Village “sweep”

As indicated in the previous section, there are many people involved in the process of establishing a community school. Community involvement is absolutely essential to the success and sustenance of the schools and it is important that the community becomes involved at the very beginning. The very first step to establishing a school is to conduct a “sweep” of the village to collect data. Entering a village for the first time is not an easy task, and the field personnel try to find the right person to make introductions to the rest of the community. Often times this key person is the hamlet representative at the Local Popular Council (LPC), or the village Omda, or chief. In some cases, the field staff opt to include Muslim and Christian religious leaders in initial discussions so as to address any concerns that community members may have regarding religious instruction at the school and to assure the community that the schools would in no way interfere with religious practices in the community. The field staff spends many hours establishing a rapport and explaining the whole development/educational concept behind the community schools, and what benefits and responsibilities the hamlet would incur through the process. Once access to the village has been gained, the arduous process of data collection begins.

Chapter III: Process of Building Community Schools
The sweep entails visiting every household in the hamlet, collecting data on the number of school age children, those enrolled in government schools, and assessing parental and child interest in attending a community school if one were to open. The field staff gets information on the level of education in the household, on the family size and occupations within the household and get an accurate count of the children who attend school. This information becomes an invaluable tool for many government institutions. Often times a census has never been done in these remote hamlets, and there are no official records of the services and households within these communities. The data collected by UNICEF and ACDA can aid many development initiatives that may be carried out by government agencies that would otherwise not have the necessary time, funds or human power to conduct such detailed surveys. As well, often times the field staff may discover that children do not have birth certificates at all, and begin a process of helping the families obtain these.

"In many instances the families do not have the money for transportation to the nearest government office, or for the paper wok. Sometimes, the male head of the household may be abroad working, and the wife will await his return before getting a birth certificate issued. There are also some unfortunate incidences where one child dies, and the parents just use that birth certificate for the next child, or for a child who has not been issued one yet" (Interview, ACDA Technical Supervisor, 19 April 2002).

The problems with non-existent birth certificates are slowly dissipating, as families begin to realise the value of obtaining them. Many families are now connected to more services (e.g. health care for the children, schools, illiteracy classes) and are more understanding of the importance of having birth certificates issued immediately for their children.

The Technical Supervisor at ACDA also stated that there is an additional child assessment before the final selections are made. It is a form of aptitude test to determine the mental capacities of the children. While she does admit that they do not like to leave any children out who wish to join the schools, they have take the best course of action for all the children involved. Some children suffer from mental illness that the facilitators are not equipped to deal with yet, and no child is ever asked to leave the school once they have been admitted. Due to limited space and limited facilitator training the association
cannot integrate mentally ill children into the program. This is also the case for those children with severe learning disabilities. While the learning at the community schools is multi-level it is not multi-grade and the children have to have similar capacities because there is no option to stay at a particular grade level for more than one year.

The main aim behind the village sweep is for the organisations to get a detailed picture of the community before establishing a school. They need to know that the community is indeed committed to the project, and that there are a sufficient number of children who will attend. This prevents establishing a school in one community, only to discover that another would benefit more. While the field personnel are conducting the sweep they also try and assess the level of interest and education of potential female facilitators. They let them know that they are required to have a high school diploma and that a test will be held to select facilitators from the village if they are interested. At all times the organisations try to hire at least one of the two school facilitators from the hamlets and villages in which the schools are to open. If this is not possible, then facilitators are selected from the nearest village.

Once the village sweep is completed, the field staff then assess whether it is feasible to open a school based on the following criteria:

- The village should have a population ranging from 1,500-2000
- The site is at least 2 km away from the existing government school
- There should be 25-50 children from the ages of 6-12 not enrolled in government school but interested in attending the community school
- The community must be willing to participate in the management and maintenance of the school

(Interview, ACDA Technical Supervisor, 6 April 2002; Zaalouk, 1995).

However, the Field Supervisor at ACDA indicated that the distance factor may be relaxed if the community is eager to house a community school, and there are a large number of girls who are not enrolled for social/cultural reasons such as financial inability to send the girls to school or an unwillingness to let them travel to the government school and be out of the community for extended periods of time. In the majority of cases the government schools that service rural areas are co-educational and the parents are not willing to have their daughters be with boys in the classrooms and on the playground all day long.
A household within the community donates the actual site of the school depending on available space. However, many of these communities are quite small spatially, and the children do not have to travel far to reach any particular site. The main stipulation is that the children can easily access the space and that its location does not prevent girls in particular from attending.

**Building of school**

The actual building process involves creating the classroom space and assembling the necessary furniture. There is a general rule of 1.25 m$^2$ for each child. Therefore based on most spaces there are between 18-15 students in each class. UNICEF is much stricter on this rule than ACDA which usually has about 25-30 children in the classroom. If there is enough interest two schools may be built in the same community to accommodate the children. Children are selected from the ages of 6-12, but the older children get priority and the older girls get highest priority.

The dimensions of the school depend on the space donated, which may be a room in a house or a separate building. Since the community donates the material, the quality depends on the financial abilities of those involved. Some schools are built with plain mud or red brick, and some are more refined with stone walls and cement flooring.

Once the space has been acquired, the furniture is readied. This consists of:

- Desks and chairs for the children
- Cubbyholes for learning centres
- A bookrack for the library
- Cubbyholes for the students' personal belongings
- A pharmacy cabinet that is replenished every three months
- One wall mounted blackboard, and one mobile blackboard

Sometimes space allows for a separate reading/library area that is augmented with tables and chairs, and quiet reading space, but in many of the schools the library rack is placed along a wall in the room where the children can access the books.
Formation of Community Committees

Once it is agreed that a school will be established in a community, the field staff then begin to assemble the School Management Committee/Village Affairs committee.

The first person usually admitted to the committee is the land donor, the person who provides the space for the school to be built. Other members on the committee are persons who are interested in the concept, and are willing to volunteer their time. There is great effort to ensure that the skills and occupations of those on the committee are complementary to the development of the school such as a person with construction skills who can help with building maintenance, a teacher from the village if that is possible, a representative on any local or popular committees who can aid with bureaucratic functions and so on. There is also effort to ensure that there is a flexible age range between the committee members and that they do not all come from one extended family (Interview, UNICEF Field Supervisor, 24 April 2002). The school committee numbers range from 7-13, always odd for voting purposes. However, other community members sometimes approach a committee member or a field assistant and ask to join. They may indicate that they cannot participate on a regular basis or the quota of members may be full so rather than be turned away, they are given the honorary title of "friend of the committee." The "friends" offer services and help when needed and add to the network of people involved with the school.

Once formed, the committees begin their role in advocating the community schools and eliciting donations. In addition, the UNICEF School Management Committees are also active in selecting facilitators and students.

Facilitator Training

Many of the facilitators only have a high school diploma and almost none are trained in education. Consequently, the training provided ensures that they are introduced not only to facilitation skills, but also academic subjects and development concepts associated with community schools and active participation.
Box 5: Training for Community School Facilitators

PRE-SERVICE TRAINING:

Session 1: Philosophy (10 days): This provides an overall introduction to the philosophy of the project, the concept of participatory development and the notion of community schools as a divergence for other community development initiatives. The training session is held outside Assiut, in Cairo or Alexandria. Often times this is the first time that facilitators have left their villages or hamlets, and it is an opportunity to meet new people and experience new places. The facilitators are introduced to communication techniques both verbal and non-verbal, self-evaluation, child psychology, and self-directed learning, problem solving and team work. The trainers are UNICEF personnel and psychiatrists.

Session 2, Practical teaching methods (10 days): During this session, held at the University of Assiut the facilitators are introduced to a variety of teaching methods. They are encouraged to be innovative and creative in producing learning aides and sharing their ideas, and to understand the different learning abilities of the children. Members of the MOE, UNICEF and the National Centre for Examinations and Educational Evaluation (NCEEE) present ways in which the arithmetic and Arabic can be adapted into active learning, and discuss the learning goals for each grade in detail. Classroom scenarios are envisioned and the facilitators learn different ways to respond to difficult classroom situations. There is a focus on training the facilitators on the actual content of the curriculum so they are well equipped to deliver the information to the class. As well, environmental concepts such as the three R’s are introduced.

Session 3, Observation (3-5 days): After the concepts and teaching methods are introduced, the facilitators then experience the community schools first hand. They are assigned to established schools and observe in the classroom. Methods, questions, and routines are then discussed in detail when the group reassembles.

IN-SERVICE TRAINING:

Weekly training is held for all facilitators. Fridays are the weekend, however in addition, each district has a weekly market day, and since most children are absent on this day for household obligations, it was decided that the day would be used for professional development. During this time facilitators discuss any issues that have come up during the week and share ideas for lesson plans and learning aides. The training is held at the University of Assiut, and is directed by the technical assistants.

REFRESHER TRAINING:

During the summer months, the facilitators get a 3-5 day refresher session to review curriculum content, and receive information on new innovations in the field of education. This is usually delivered by UNICEF and the NCEEE.

(Sources: Interview, UNICEF Technical Supervisor, 24 April 2002; Interview, UNICEF Assistant Project Officer, Education, 24 May 2002; Zaalouk, 1995).
The females who are interested in becoming facilitators first take an exam that evaluates their general aptitude and knowledge on the academic subjects taught. Then they undergo a personal interview. At ACDA the Technical Supervisor conducts the interview or one of the coordinators assigned to the district the facilitator is from. At UNICEF, the School Management Committee does the first interview and the Field Supervisor is present. The interviewee has to demonstrate a willingness and aptitude to learn, an interest to be involved in the project for at least one whole school cycle (so as not to disrupt the children’s familiarity), a sensitive attitude and disposition towards the children, and an openness to the philosophy of the project (Interview, ACDA Technical Supervisor, 6 April 2002; Zaalouk, 1995). Once a female has been selected, she begins the process of training. The phases and process of training are described in Box 4.

Initially, UNICEF provided the training for both their facilitators and those of ACDA schools when their project first began. However, when the second community school phase began for ACDA, their contact with UNICEF had ceased and they had to implement their own training. They hold the same training sessions. The pre-service training is held outside Assiut for 15 days and delivered by MOE and NCEEE. The weekly and summer sessions are held at a facility adjacent to the ACDA, and led by MOE supervisors (Interview, ACDA Technical Supervisor April 6 2002). Whereas the UNICEF weekly training focuses more on participatory and creative methods of facilitation, the ACDA sessions are more of an attempt to strengthen the facilitators’ knowledge and information of the curriculum and its content, and their capability to effectively deliver the information to the children (Interview, ACDA technical coordinator #2, April 17 2002). The district technical coordinators are present at all weekly sessions.

Facilitators from both organisations are also shown how to conduct household interviews similar to those used in the village sweep, and how to interview the children. This is to aid them to prepare individual child reports that assess the child’s interest in education, his/her mental abilities, their goals and what they hope to achieve by attending the
community school. Facilitators then have a report file on each child in the school and use it to assess progress and help the child achieve his/her goals. This training allows the facilitators to be active in the summer months to aid with village sweeps (ACDA, internal document, accessed April 2002, translated; Interview, UNICEF Technical Supervisor, 24 April 2002).

**Educational Delivery**

The school schedule is set up so as to provide flexible hours to allow the children to combine school and their agricultural and house chores, in an effort to reduce absenteeism. The academic year follows the regular MOE calendar that goes from October to July. The ACDA schools begin two weeks before the regular academic year to allow the children a chance to get used to the routine of attendance (Interview, ACDA Technical Supervisor, 6 April 2002).

The school day revolves around a number of group and pair exercises designed to enhance the children’s creative and learning abilities. Cooperative learning and teamwork are an essential part of the day’s activities, and in for every group exercise the children chose a team facilitator and a team leader to direct the group through the activities and report to the rest of the class.

Box 6 below provides a description of a classroom. The setting and the contract between the students and facilitators is a reflection of the cooperative and democratic process undertaken. Each child works at his/her own pace. Neither the UNICEF nor ACDA schools have a multi-grade system, however if there are a significant number of children who excel in one class, they may prove a case for the organisation to try and provide multi-grade teaching within the classroom. On the whole, the classes are based on a multi-level learning system where the children all use the same grade academic curriculum that is supplemented with a variety of activities geared towards different learning capacities. In the UNICEF schools the children are grouped together based on their academic abilities, and each group chooses a name for itself (a name of a flower, a plant or an animal). Each group is then given appropriate level activities based on the
same lessons, and the children are unaware that they are working at different capacities, since they are all dealing with the same subject matter at the same time. "The key is to give each child an opportunity to shine, and be active, not a just a recipient in the educational process" (Interview, UNICEF Technical Supervisor, 24 April 2002).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box 6: Description of a Community Classroom (UNICEF school)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ALEXAN #1 in District of Manfalout</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On the wall a contract is displayed, signed by the students and facilitators indicating the goals they wish to accomplish for the year. The list includes:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To keep the class clean</td>
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<tr>
<td>To have perfect attendance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To better treat classmates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To better respect the building and its facilities</td>
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<tr>
<td>To respect and listen to the facilitators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To finish school work as it comes up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To respect the schedule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Also on the wall is a list of things accomplished during the last summer session:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Library open to the whole community</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Enhancement of the kitchen facility</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Enhancement of ideas for recess P.E session</td>
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<tr>
<td>• The formation of a journalism group and the production of a newspaper</td>
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<tr>
<td>• A visit to surrounding community schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• A cleaning festival for the village</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Literacy classes held for community members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Skills development for the students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Preview of coming curriculum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Revision of essentials in maths and language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is a kitchen area in the classroom. This classroom is too small to have a stove, but there a small counter on top of which are a water pot, utensils, and produce to make a salad. The community kitchen is a way for the children to learn about the nutritional values, and cooperation in making food. In the larger kitchens, some of the mums come in and share food recipes with each other and the children.</td>
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<td>(Source: School visit, 24 April 2002)</td>
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</table>

The school day is regularly from 9-1.30 (See Appendix 3 for school schedule) however; sometimes children are called home, or are absent, especially during seasonal harvests. Instead of penalising the children for absenteeism, the facilitators ensure that any missed
work is made up during the centre activity period. One facilitator will take the child/children aside and work on activities that can review the missed work, and which the children get to present to their classmates.

Curriculum

There is no difference between the curriculum used in the community schools and that used in regular government schools. After the first couple of years of the CSI, the UNICEF technical assistants put together an activity book to accompany the curriculum that basically translates each lesson into active learning. It focuses on group work and cooperation between the students to complete the exercises. It was readily adopted by the curriculum development department of the central MOE (Interview, UNICEF Technical Supervisor, 24 April 2002). When materials were given out to ACDA for phase two of their CS project, they received a version of that activity book for use in the classroom. This does not necessarily change the curriculum content, states one lead coordinator from ACDA, it is still up to the facilitators to use appropriate examples from the children's immediate surrounding environment, but it is a good step towards providing more interactive learning (Interview, 17 April 2002)

One complementary aspect to the curriculum in community schools has been to elicit the help of community members in the classroom. Often religious leaders will come in to talk to the children, or village elders will come in to provide oral histories of the community and give the children a stronger sense of identity. "Many of these hamlets are nowhere on a map. Not even the nearest mother village may be on a map, so it important that the children know the history of their communities, so they feel a sense of belonging and importance" (Interview, UNICEF Field Supervisor, 26 April 2002). Some community members may come in the classroom to teach the class about particular vocational skills, or agricultural techniques. All the community members feel that they can contribute to the children’s learning process even if they are not literate, and this leads to a strong sense of ownership over the school.
**After-school Work**

The ACDA schools give no homework work, except at the grade 3 and 5 to better prepare the students for the national exams. Homework is called “practical application” and it is designed to help the children connect the academic work with the practicalities of their everyday lives. It may require children to do certain observations when they go out to the field, find out some piece of information about the community, or interview a community member on a topic of relevance (Interview, UNICEF Technical Supervisor, 24 April 2002).

**Summer Sessions**

The UNICEF schools also have a summer “school” component wherein the students revise the past year’s work and get introduced to introduce the new curriculum so they know what to expect and not be too anxious or apprehensive. During the summer sessions the children also work with volunteers from the community on agricultural or other community projects. It is an effort to maintain the school routine and involve the entire community in the school’s activities by using the space a community centre.

There is a “reading for all” program in the summer and the library is open to the whole community. The students hold sessions to help adults learn how to read, and pass on health and community issues through art and theatre performances. (Personal communication, UNICEF Field Assistant #1, 24 April 2002). Once a week the children choose a particular topic they wish to advocate, it may be hygiene or education on the dangers of Bilharzia, and they go around the community gathering information and disseminating what they learn (Interview, UNICEF facilitator #1, 24 April 2002). There are weekly competitions held that involve activities inside and outside the classrooms. In recent years parents have slowly become more involved in the summer sessions, and are willing to share experiences and skills, even joining in the weekly competitions.
ACDA is now in the process of implementing summer sessions; the first is to begin in the summer of 2002.
CHAPTER 4: OUTPUTS AND OUTCOMES

4.0 INTRODUCTION
If social capital is defined as values, knowledge and relationships that are developed and built upon to bring about positive changes, then it is essential to examine these different elements as they are produced through the process of community schools. In establishing a community school, community members undergo a process that encompasses a high degree of involvement and commitment that necessitates strong ties between community members that would not exist if the community were served by a conventional school. The advocacy, land donation, facilitator recruitment and participatory nature of the process foster a complex web of relationships within the community that often leads to a variety of other development initiatives. The outcomes of community schools in rural Assiut, Egypt can be identified as those directly resulting from the community school system, and those that have developed indirectly due to increased participation and people’s greater interest in their communities. It is important to realise that the benefits to the communities are not just educational, but encompass a variety of inter-related processes and networks that work to augment the benefits gained from the community school process.

When trying to evaluate the impact of the community schools on their local environment, it is essential to view all the inputs and processes as well as the outcomes. Douglas Windham whose central concern is evaluating the economic efficiency of the educational process, provides a model of educational process by which to assess schools (Table 4.1). In his evaluation of certain concepts relating to primary education, Windham makes a distinction between the outputs of education as a system, that is the direct effects of schooling, and the outcomes of education in general which tend to be more long term and less clearly defined.
Table 4.1: A Model of Educational Process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inputs</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Student characteristics</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Teacher characteristics</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Instructional Materials</td>
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<td>• Facility characteristics</td>
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<tr>
<th>Process</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Forms of instructional organization</td>
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<td>• Alternative technologies</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outputs</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Cognitive achievement</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Improved manual skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Attitudinal changes</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Behavioural Changes</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcomes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Employment</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Earnings</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Attitudinal changes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Behavioural changes</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Windham, Douglas in Cummings & Dall, 1995:55)

Although, the above model was not intended specifically for community schools assessment, it does provide a good framework by which to examine the outputs and outcomes of these schools since it does include behavioural and attitudinal changes which are often ignored in educational assessment (Cummings and Dall, 1995; Lockheed & Verspoor, 1991). In the case of community schools, inputs would also include community knowledge, volunteerism and ownership. Therefore, the process, outputs and outcomes would relate to the community as a whole not just those individuals associated with the school.

The focus is on outputs and outcomes that relate to the networks, social ties and civic action resulting from the introduction of community schools into rural communities. Further community initiatives that have been associated with the community school processes are discussed in the next chapter. The scholastic effectiveness of the schools themselves is not the focus of this study, although they have shown high merit in
evaluations by national and international assessments (National Centre for Examinations and Evaluation, 2000; Hartwell, 1995; Allemano, 1995).

OUTPUTS, OUTCOMES AND COMMUNITY PROCESSES

4.1. ACCESS

Access is a vital issue without which any other discussion on the community schools benefits would be futile. "It is impossible to provide a relevant education or to ensure that young people achieve a mastery of various skills if these young people do not get to school" (Cummings & Dall, 1995; 58). There are 255 community schools in hamlets around Assiut (150 ACDA schools, 105 UNICEF schools). Between UNICEF and ACDA, six districts of the governorate have community schools that provide educational access to over 6700 young children, almost two thirds of whom are female students who would never have had the opportunity of an education (Internal documents, UNICEF & ACDA, accessed April 2002). In some instances, there is more than one community school in villages that are large, or where tradition is strict enough to restrict movement even within the village, so that children who live at both ends of the community can attend school.

The community schools programs are indeed successful as far as providing access. In an evaluation of the UNICEF CSI, Hartwell (1995) makes the statement that the communities which currently have schools are still those that can afford to donate land and labour as an investment, and it is possible that the most needy communities have not yet been reached. During research, this researcher did notice a disparity between the apparent level of wealth between UNICEF and ACDA communities. The UNICEF schools were mostly larger and in more accessible parts of the hamlets than their counterparts. This observation is based on a visit to a small fraction of the UNICEF school in one district. However, the extensive visits to ACDA schools showed a wide range of economic abilities between the hamlets and the families who donated space. This would provide a fair indication that the community members are indeed willing to donate the space and time to have a school in their community because it is relevant to
their lives and traditions, regardless of their collective wealth. Education is a valued asset to many of these communities, if is provided in the right way.

This notion was reinforced by one of the parents at an ACDA Village Affairs Committee meeting who made a short speech on the importance of, and access to, education, in response to a question relating to girls and their access to education. The young man of about 30-35 years old was pursuing a Masters degree at Al Azhar University, however he had prevented his younger sister from going onto government preparatory school when she graduated from the community school. He spoke at length on the importance of community schools and indicated that education began in rural areas when people used to send their children to the Bedouins to learn Koran and the real properties of the Arabic language. He stated that tradition had created the foundations of community schools and was why in the majority of hamlets education was not a matter of social status, but a cultural aspect that is tied to traditions. The point was made that the whole community participated in educating the child. Conversely, the current school system removed children to distant government buildings, where there was no familial supervision or control over what they learnt and who they associated with. While money is scarce for many families, education brings a great sense of pride, however not at the compromise of propriety and tradition. And while the community was very proud of its educated young girls, it could not allow them to break through certain barriers. If community schools taught preparatory grades, there would be no issue in allowing girls to continue their education (Interview, ACDA Committee Member #1, 16 April 2002). The type of access provided by community schools not only addresses the spatial and temporal factors that physically prevent children from attending school, it also addresses the cultural factors that define spatial mobility.

Providing access in one community may also affect the want of schools in other communities that lack them.

"While large numbers of children in one community may go to school, it is possible to have an adjacent community where very few go .... It may be possible through a social campaign to heighten social pressure in the second community for increased access. Studies of social contagion and diffusion have
helped create an understanding of the conditions that lead to the incidence of a phenomenon.... Remarkably, in the field of education, such studies do not exist " (Cummings & Dall, 1995: 63).

There is an example of two adjacent villages in Manfalout that have schools so close together they share the resources of the same Committee members of (Alexan #1, #2, and #3 are UNICEF schools). One large village in the District of Badari has three schools spread throughout (Shan Shan #1, #2 and #3 are ACDA schools), and two adjacent hamlets in the district of Abnoob that have one school each (Awama #1 and #2 are ACDA schools). These are only a few examples of villages and hamlets in close proximity that requested community schools once they saw the positive impacts in neighbouring communities (Field visits, April 15, April 20, April 28 2002). While this does not provide conclusive evidence that access in one or more small communities can enhance diffusion of the community school phenomena, it certainly warrants further studies in the field.

4.2. PARTICIPATION

It is undeniable that the community school model had resulted in a level of participation that previously had never been associated with any formal government service such as education. Parents and students are able to make decisions they would never be party to in a conventional public school system. In an educational system that is highly noted for its centralisation, the community schools have shown that empowering communities to deal with their own affairs can be a more successful approach than centralised control and management. Participation is fostered in two main ways, by promoting active learning in the classroom, thus allowing students to have control over their own progress, and by encouraging community involvement at all stages and aspects of schooling. In effect, the pattern of democratic and participatory learning that the children practice in the classroom can be continued outside the classroom since parents and community members share the same processes.
4.2.1 ACTIVE CURRICULUM

Although the actual content of the national curriculum has not been changed for the community schools, the approach has been amended to be much more creative, student-centred and learner-paced (Interview, ACDA Coordinator #3, 19 April 2002; Interview, UNICEF Technical Supervisor 26 April 2002). The children learn through a variety of activity centres and methods such as song, theatre and art as well as traditional reading and writing methods. Community members share their skills and oral histories with the children and in turn learn lessons from the children.

Every attempt is made for the facilitators to relate what the children learn in the classroom to the environment surrounding them. The classroom is seen as an arena where valuable information and life skills, as well as academic material can be successfully transferred to the students. When dealing with lessons on cleanliness for example, the children discuss the implications on personal hygiene and on the environment and it is not a rare sight to see the children picking up garbage and explaining to their school neighbours the importance of keeping their village clean. Lessons on agriculture involve the children actively planting in the fields with volunteer community members, and bringing back information to share with classmates. As well, the children are involved in various duties inside and outside the classroom. There are several “brigades” formed with responsibilities that range from monitoring classroom cleanliness and student personal hygiene, to checking up on absent classmates and advocating educational issues such as first aid and primary health care that they learn in school. While the children do not have to perform these duties everyday and some are more diligent than others, the aim is to give them responsibilities that tie their school and home life in a practical and applicable manner. The children take pride in bringing their classroom lessons to life, and the community is supportive of the children’s roles (Interview, UNICEF Technical Assistant #3, 25 April 2002).

4.2.2 VILLAGE COMMITTEES, VOLUNTEERISM AND MOBILISATION

The establishment of village or school committees allows the parents and other community members an opportunity to be directly involved with the education of their
children. It is an ideal manner by which to dispel the fears of parents who do not wish to relinquish control over their children’s lives. In addition, the manner in which the committees are formed and the meetings are run provides an excellent mirror example to parents of how their children are treated in the classroom. As one male parent on a UNICEF School Management Committee remarked “it is like the centres in the school, our leadership roles are defined in accordance with what we like and what we shine at. Each one of us has something new to add” (Interview UNICEF Male Committee Member #4, 28 April 2002).

The idea of the committees has brought the notion of volunteerism to many villages. One parent stated that now the benefits of the schools and all the related activities are visible, volunteerism has increased. Prior to this, many community members assumed that volunteerism meant donating money and so many shied away. Now they can see that all it costs is a little time. Everyone donates what is affordable for them, whether it is labour, materials or just enthusiasm and advocacy. The important thing is that everyone realises that the benefits are communal and require everyone’s effort to continue (Interview, UNICEF Male Committee Member #1, 28 April 2002). By volunteering directly on the committees or indirectly helping out community members in need, people have slowly come to realise that they have the capacity within themselves to make changes in their own lives and villages. With the variety of skills of the community highlighted and pooled, there is more collective capacity to take action. There is an example of one village in Manfalout, where a school was built, but it was only accessible through a dirt road. Conscious of the potential danger for the children and visitors to the school, community members came together to pave the road. At first, the discussion was heated since a paved road meant cutting into the fields at either side, and it would involve paperwork at the local village council. Eventually, both families decided to donate a little of their land. Committee members did the paper work and legwork, and one committee member contributed the money (Interview, Male Committee Member #2, 28 April 2002). Landowners are beginning to negotiate with municipalities over extensions of electric wires and water pipelines to extend across their properties and into their hamlets. Community members are increasingly entering into dialogues with NGO’s,
municipalities and governorates over the betterment of their communities (Interview, CIDA Social/Program Advisor, 11 March 2002). As the ACDA Field Supervisor stated, the NGOs have given the communities a way to realise their own potential and now they can act on their own (Interview, 17 April 2002).

Box 7 below provides brief notes from an ACDA Village Affairs Committee meeting. It is a good example of the issues tackled by the Committee members, which can vary from general school or community issues to specific personal issues of any one member or student. The nature of the work performed by the Committee members requires that they be quite familiar with the situation of all the students, and more importantly that they form close ties with the families in their villages. One UNICEF committee member indicated that it was important that the school committee have members from different quarters of the village or hamlet because even small village have “neighbourhoods” and people need to have a familiar person they can contact if a problem comes up (UNICEF Male Committee Member #5, April 28 2002). Having a number of localised committee members, even in a very small community, can affect the level of participation, particularly in villages where extended families live in the same sections and mostly deal with their own relatives, and in villages where females may especially shy away from bringing up topics with males they are not very familiar with.
Box 7: Village Committee Meeting

District of Badari, Village of El Namawis, Ezzba of Manshiet Hammam  April 9 2002

Present: 6 members; 4 males, 2 females

Issues Discussed:
1 the school situation: absenteeism, maintenance: absenteeism is being monitored by one of the committee members and it is down to 0%

2 Field sweep, and donations for new site for a new school to start in the fall, a new primary cycle: names were presented of village children who wished to attend, some want to switch to the CS, others have dropped out of government schools, and some never started. Some of the children do not have birth certificates so some people from the ezzba have come together to help the families acquire these certificates, but need some guidance from ACDA.

3 Koran teaching at the local mosque: as of yet is not available, so the committee discussed the necessary steps to put in an application to Al Azhar to get a qualified teacher.

4 There was follow-up on a particular case of a girl who wished to transfer from government school to the CS. She started attending the CS without giving proper notice to the government school that she would discontinue attendance there. There have been some complications and the single mother of the girl may be charged a penalty for absenteeism by the government. The committee is helping the illiterate mother get things in order.

(Source: Field visit, 9 April 2002)

Field research shows that the majority of the committees have all male members. In the two witnessed incidences where females were on the committee, they were school facilitators with specific problems to address. It is not clear if they would attend all other meetings when they may not have a topic on the agenda. Some of the UNICEF schools now have two sets of committees, one female and one male. One member of the ACDA field team stated that it is often difficult to get males and females in the same room because tradition still advocates separation of non-related males and females. As well, the ACDA field team does have male members, and it would be awkward to have one male field coordinator holding a meeting with an all female group (Personal communication, ACDA Field Coordinator #7, 19 April 2002). However, there has been an attempt to try and get more females involved on the Committees, and slowly the
female facilitators and female CS graduates are beginning to attend more Committee meetings. Both the ACDA and UNICEF Field Supervisors indicated that there is now more of an effort to encourage CS graduates, especially the females, to sit on committees and become more actively involved in advocacy.

4.3. NETWORKING

There is increased networking at both the community and regional level. At the local level, people are getting to know their neighbours more and are meeting more regularly to discuss school and village issues, while at a larger scale female facilitators, committee members and even NGO staff are in more regular contact with government officials and others in the field of education.

For many of the female facilitators, this is the first job they have had. Social and professional circles are expanding as they meet more facilitators at training sessions, meet with neighbours and parents and come into contact with local government offices to conduct school related business. Says one UNICEF school facilitator:

“I came from the mother village, and I was a very apprehensive at first of how I would be welcomed into the hamlet. After a couple of months, parents started coming in to get to know me. I now know so many of the village women and men, and am frequently invited into their homes. I have been in this village for almost 6 years now. They trust me with their children and I trust them with my safety” (Interview, 28 April 2002).

Another ACDA facilitator indicated that she had much more confidence when dealing with the local education office. Since she started making regular visits to submit student forms and collect school snacks, the employees have identified her as community school facilitator and offer more help. She has regular contact with one particular official who has helped her with several difficult issues. “I never thought that one day I could walk into an office, call an official by name and get work done.” As an after thought she adds, “There have to be networks and good ties with others in the program… it forms sort of family ties that encourage people” (Personal communication, ACDA Facilitator #2, 15 April 2002). The work conducted during the summer activities session further encourages continued contact with the various communities that have communities
schools. The schools hold competitions, share the work they do, and attempt to learn about their partner schools. During the summer of 2001, UNICEF schools in Assiut each produced a newspaper that described a little about their communities, had interviews with community members and displayed information on certain health related issues, among other things. The children worked all summer to complete the projects, then several schools came together to exchange their school papers and meet each other (Interview, UNICEF Technical Assistant #2, 27 April 2002).

In describing the relationships between the community schools and the mother villages the UNICEF Field Supervisor stressed that relationships were growing stronger.

"We have established strong relations with the government facilities in the mother villages where our schools are. All the department heads from the various government facilities meet with the school committees, and discuss information, policing, sewage, electricity, health and so on. That way there is a link between those in charge and the villages, so that the community members can go directly to the person in charge if they need a service" (Interview, 26 April 2002).

Both ACDA and UNICEF supervisors agree that the NGOs have given the communities the guidelines and capabilities to develop their own capacities, and while they are always willing to help any community member with any problem, it is important to allow the communities the space to initiate their own contacts and solve their own problems and not rely on a third party to do the work for them.

At the NGO level, the technical and field staff are also benefiting from increased networking. "The best practical experience this program has offered me is the chance to be around different people, and learn how to deal with them. You learn that you have to approach people differently and talk to them at their level, whomever they may be" (Personal communication, ACDA Technical Coordinator #2, 16 April 2002). Work necessitates extensive travel within the governorate of Assiut, and within the small communities that the majority of NGO employees have never seen or heard of. Each village and hamlet is different and each district has its own traditions and cultural attributes that the field and technical teams have to learn and adjust to.

"The result is one exerts a real effort to connect with the people. Initially, we are trying to sell them on a concept that they may find strange and we have to be
sincere in our efforts to show them how much this can benefit the community. To do that, we have to learn to be a part of the community, otherwise there is no trust and nothing to build on” (Interview, ACDA Field Coordinator # 5, 14 April 2002).

Another ACDA field coordinator stated

"The importance is not in dealing with colleagues ... we all deal more or less on the same level, the importance is being able to talk to someone at their level in a hamlet, and then turn around to a municipal officer and be able to do the same. This requires a great degree of flexibility and learning that you as a person are wholly responsible for developing” (Personal communication, ACDA Field Coordinator #6, 18 April 2002).

In an extensive interview, one ACDA field coordinator expressed his views on the level of networking that occurs within the community schools program. As a university graduate who had been with the NGO for several years, he felt that although much work still needed to be done in terms of advocacy, the program was bringing together people at various levels, in an unprecedented manner.

The field coordinator drew the diagram below (Figure 4.1) to better illustrate how he viewed the linkages between the different partners in the program. Each partner in the program has to coordinate at some level with others in order that benefit for all is achieved. To enter the village the NGO has first coordinate with the funding agency and the MOE, then it has to contact the mother village representative at the Local Popular Council. Once the schools are established they have to maintain regular contact with the village committees and the NGOs. As well, their contact with MOE local officials increases as they negotiate policies for CS graduates to enter preparatory government schools, and as they become more involved in training sessions given by Ministry employees. Participation and networking between individuals continues to increase as more programs associated with community schools expand and as community members realise that they can become more involved in their own affairs. Working with such a great program also offers an opportunity for NGO staff to enhance their own abilities when it comes to community development. “We feed of each other, the communities learn more and they want more, and we have to learn more in order to help them better” (Interview, Field Coordinator #1, 17 April 2002).

Chapter IV: Outputs and Outcomes
In addition to dealing with others at a regional level, communities receive field visits from central MOE officials and various educational staff at the national level. The UNICEF schools have also received many visits from international scholars and researchers interested in the community school concept and its development. One school proudly displays a photograph of a visit from the Canadian Ambassador to Egypt. The
community members are proud of their achievements and see them as a way to link with others nationally and internationally who are undergoing the same experiences. Often, at education conferences and seminars, UNICEF may select committee members and students to attend. At the Education Fair held in Cairo March 7-9, students from Alexan #1 all went to Cairo and spent the day modelling how their community school was run. The students ran the classes themselves and received very favourable remarks from the Minister of Education who was present. This kind of exposure allows the children to see different parts of the country and links them to the different aspects of education that are around the country, but more importantly it shines a light on the efforts exerted by communities to enhance their own services and abilities. It puts these previously unknown small communities on the map and opens a larger gateway for interaction with other communities, NGOs, and officials.

Efforts by committee and general community members to further expand networks are continuing. Some UNICEF committee members have indicated an interest in forming an NGO comprised of CS graduates who are familiar with the issues at hand, to develop stronger advocacy at the regional level (Interview, UNICEF committee member #3, 28 April 2002). This type of vision would certainly aid in bringing the community school model to a national scale, and would be tantamount in building stronger links with the various communities who have CSs and are willing to take further action to maximise the benefits that can be offered through these models. With every new contact that community school members make, they enhance the number of people who can potentially aid in the betterment of their communities.

4.4 GENDER IMPLICATIONS
Not only are traditional views on girl-child education and mixed gender classrooms being reassessed by many communities in the governorate of Assiut, but several other changes are occurring in established gender relations, gendered education patterns and the traditional delineation between private and public sphere activities. The participatory nature of the community schools necessitates involvement at various levels by the entire
community, male and female, and community members are beginning to re-evaluate some customary practices.

4.4.1 CHANGES IN GENDERED EDUCATION PATTERNS

On a visit to a UNICEF school in the days prior to Mother’s Day (March 15 in Egypt) one MOE official asked a boy if he was not embarrassed to be seen beading and sewing a gift for his mother with all the girls. The boy calmly remarked that the majority of famous designers and tailors were men, and he might one day be one of them (Personal communication, UNICEF Technical Assistant #2, 27 April 2002). This is only one example of changes that are occurring in communities around long-established gendered activities. Some of the schools also have small kitchens in which the children learn how to prepare a nutritious meal with simple ingredients brought from home. It was very strange for community members to see some boys walking to and from school carrying various vegetables and dishes, but eventually as the children started to bring more recipes home and educate their families on the values of a well-rounded meal, the parents began to view the process as part of the children’s education. Parents then started asking the facilitators for the recipes and now some communities have recipe books at the school that is available to anyone who wishes to consult it (Personal communication, UNICEF Technical Assistant #1, 27 April 2002).

Other changes in traditional gendered patterns have challenged the notion of the female domain being the private sphere. In addition to facilitators proving that they can ‘successfully run the schools, other females are bringing their skills and experiences together and forming more gender based cooperation. As the women socialise more and talk of efforts to improve the school and the community, they come up with various ways to capitalise on their collective skills. In many of the UNICEF and ACDA schools, children were wearing uniforms, even though this is not required. It was revealed that the uniforms were sewn by the mothers, with the help of the students in order to proudly advertise that the children were enrolled at the community school. The women in the villages were able to pool their resources to cover the costs of material, provide the machinery, labour and to teach the children who were interested a new skill (School
visits, April 11 to 28 2002). Moreover, many woman have stated that they can use their own skills to help others by aiding in births, or providing medicinal advice, or by helping making learning aides and toys for the children to use at school and in the home. By encouraging cooperation, and illustrating that every person has something to offer, the community school model has given many women the strength to assess their own skills and capacities that may have been relegated as basic household tasks thereby enabling them to bring some of these activities into the public arena and allowing for greater exchange and support between them.

4.4.2 HIGHER ASPIRATIONS FOR GIRLS

The community schools have opened a door for girls to start education and to realise their full potentials. In an interview, seven female CS graduates currently attending high school shared their aspirations for higher education and careers.

In many of the girls’ families, only boys were previously allowed by tradition to attend the government high school located in the mother village and servicing a number of satellite villages and hamlets. Families made an issue of the transportation to and from school and the fact that girls would be amongst strangers. The fact that the high school is situated in a different mother village than the girls’ hamlets, attests to their commitment to continue education and to challenge traditions that only 10 years ago would not have allowed them to be so far away from their home communities. The first community school in a village overcame the first barrier of getting the girls into the classrooms. “We were able to leave the house and start our education, and that was getting over the hardest problem” (Interview, CS Graduate #1, 28 April 2002). “Slowly, other barriers began to fall as we became more active in the community. Our parents couldn’t really say no because we were helping each other and still within acceptable boundaries” (Interview, CS Graduate #2, 28 April 2002).

After completing primary education, some of the girls struggled to convince their parents to allow them to continue with preparatory school. Not all the girls had a problem though. One CS graduate stated that her father did not have any educated children, and
with her success at the community school, he was proud to see her continue (Interview, CS Graduate #5, 28 April 2002). Adjusting to public school was not easy at first. The girls found themselves in classrooms with male teachers and an average of 45-55 classmates. The attention, freedom and creativity of the community school was no longer available but “the community school was all about cooperation and overcoming difficult situations and different people” (Interview, CS Graduate #3, 28 April 2002). Consequently the girls found that they were mentally prepared to tackle their new environment.

In assessing their own achievements in school the girls generally agree that they did better than other students in preparatory school, but high school is different. There is a wider network of villages serviced by the high school, and there are many different academic levels between the students. Having met more young people their age and with different capabilities, the girls agree, “the difference is our enthusiasm. We had to overcome many barriers to reach this stage. For many of these kids it’s routine to be in government school. For us, it’s a privilege we had to work hard for, and we continue to do so” (Interview, CS Graduates #3, #4, #6, 28 April 2002).

The girls all have aspirations to continue onto higher education. One wishes to be a French teacher, although she only started taking the language in high school, she has become very good at it. Another girl wants to get a degree in Arabic language and another wishes to pursue a pharmacy degree. The fourth girl, whose creativity was encouraged at the community school will pursue a degree in fine arts, and also has several poems that she wishes to publish in a magazine. The Field Supervisor has promised to help with that. The other two girls only knew that they wished to go onto university, but were unsure what they would study.

Upon completion of their studies the girls have indicated that they would like to give something back to their communities, and schools. Having completed the whole cycle of community/government school, the girls feel confident they will have many suggestions and innovations to offer that can help future community school students in their pursuit of
education. They will be able to offer financial assistance as well as policy suggestions. “To begin with” says the budding French teacher “every community school should be a multi-grade classroom. That way, the number of children admitted each year can increase and a much more inclusive system can be developed” (Interview, CS Graduate #2, 28 April 2002).

4.5. ATTITUDINAL CHANGES

One major change has been the approach to volunteering, already mentioned above. The school has become a property of the whole community, and its maintenance is a matter of pride. People are also more likely to donate spaces, with some families donating more than one classroom space.

Major changes are also occurring in traditions that dictated girls should stay at home. The majority of conventional attitudes held that once a girl’s body started to develop at puberty (in some cases as early as nine years old) the girl had to stay at home, help around the household and basically wait to get married. Some girls were married at the age of 11 and 12. Since the girl’s education would be interrupted, many communities felt that there was no point to begin it at all. With the community schools bringing education right into the local community, and retaining the children under the watchful eyes of female facilitators and community members, the number of girls attending school has increased, and with that some changes and relaxations in previously rigid traditions. One male parent remarked:

“One of the best things that has been done is to eradicate the whole concept of no education for girls, it really has done a lot for the rights of the girl. In our hamlets with this generation we can feel that illiteracy has almost been eradicated completely. But it was not easy to advocate for education at the beginning. For example in the village, many of the husbands work in Arab countries. And the mothers did not want to break away from any traditions while the fathers were gone. So we would convince them by way of saying, ‘if she went to school, she could read you her father’s letter, she could write back to him. And you could keep your private things to yourself.’ It is strange that it was the women who were most resistant to this change because they were worried about the reputation of their daughters. Then the attitudes of the kids themselves convinced the parents further. The cleanliness and the politeness were a big push. For those who really resisted, we had visits to those other communities with community schools, and they saw the impact’” (Interview, 27 April 2002).
Increased participation in the community schools is also affecting changes surrounding the issue of forced early marriage. In an informal conversation with some village females, they indicated that the average age for marriage used to be around 13 or 14, with some girls as young as 11 being married. If a girl turned 18 and had not been married, the parents usually got worried and arranged for an immediate marriage. However, things have slowly changed over the past few years, “Girls don’t want to get married before they complete their education. Even the girls that are illiterate now have a say in who they marry and when, there have been changes to some traditions that the community never really thought to address before” (Personal communication, Female Committee Member #1, 28 April 2002). Many ill-side effects had resulted from early marriages, with the young girls’ bodies unable to sustain pregnancies or marital relations. The problem was usually approached with the question of “what is wrong with her”, not what is wrong with the situation. However, with the many life skills and reproductive skills seminars and sessions that have been introduced into communities through the schools, females are becoming much more vocal in their opinions and informed decisions. “We have learnt so much. So many things that are handed down by tradition go unquestioned. It is not till you learn more that you start to see how you should have questioned these things” (Interview, Female Committee Member #2 28 April 2002).

4.6 BEHAVIOURAL CHANGES

Of the most notable changes that have emerged from talking to parents and students are better manners, hygiene and socialisation skills. Many parents have commented that seeing the children picking up garbage, or speaking in a well-tempered manner using “please” and “thank you” is a huge change and in effect has changed how many of the parents and community members relate to the children. The age difference between some children and their mothers could be as small as 12 years, and the boys especially can be disrespectful, interrupting shouting and even cursing at their mothers. At school the children learn never to interrupt classmates, to speak politely, in a pleasant manner and to knock before entering a room and the boys treat the girls with respect. When they leave the school, they continue these practices at home and this is seen as a great achievement.
(Personal communication, UNICEF Technical Assistant #2, 27 April 2002). A female committee member recalls the first time she entered a classroom and saw the facilitators showing the children how to wash properly and brush their hair.

"I laughed and made fun, saying this was a salon not a school. Then over the next few weeks I saw all these well-groomed children walking around. Their clothes were clean, the girls had ribbons tied in their hair and they took real pride in their appearance. It was awakening to see how wrong my first reaction was, and I began to look at the whole project differently" (Interview, 28 April 2002).

Many women have stated that they are now more likely to have better visits with neighbours when they have free time. "Before we never really visited, and even if we did, we didn't observe any etiquette, showing up at any time and much of the talk was non-constructive gossip. Now we focus our attention on positive things we can do in the community, or things we can do for the children and the school" (Interview, Female Community Member #5, 28 April 2002). As well, an overwhelming number of facilitators and assistants/coordinators have commented on the level of self-confidence, independence and creativity that involvement in the program has brought. Patience is a virtue that seems to have exploded since the inception of the community schools. "When you have to deal with children all the time, and deal with them at their pace and level, you have no choice but to be patient. Even my kids at home have commented on the change in my behaviour" (Interview, UNICEF Facilitator #2, 27 April 2002). The combined attributes enhanced when dealing with communities to build relationships and trust in order to establish a school have become permanent in the everyday dealings of NGO staff and facilitators.

4.7 CHALLENGES

Overall, it can be said that the introduction of community schools and the particular participatory processes related to them has resulted in an enhancement of many positive community traits. Both UNICEF and ACDA have worked very hard within their communities to advocate the concept of community schools and the resultant benefits for the whole community. At the beginning there were many challenges and some have dissipated. The general consensus is that communities are willing to make changes as
long as they don’t break too far from certain traditions and as long no person is asked to do more than what is comfortable. However, not all communities have reached the same level of consensus or cooperation and some tough challenges still persist. Some of these are technical and require changes at the NGO and MOE level, and others require some effort on part of the community.

4.7.1 DONATED SPACE

The idea of “donating” space was so alien to the majority of the communities that it was rejected outright at the beginning. Once the teams spent time in the field talking to the communities, there was an overwhelming commitment to donate space (Interview, ACDA Field Supervisor, 6 April 2002). However, there are two major problems associated with this. The first problem is over-commitment on behalf of community members. Households tend to agree to donate a space when the field teams are present because they think it is inhospitable or embarrassing to refuse, or they wish to compete with some other family who has donated space yet, when the process to establish the school begins, the household will negate the commitment. This is a problem when the children have already been accepted and a new space has to be found. Rather than leave the community, the field teams try to find another space, and in the majority of cases do succeed. With the CSI in its 9th year, and the ACDA community schools in their 6th year, these incidences are getting fewer. Community members have to come to know the programs much better and are now more committed to the concept. However, the organisations need to establish a way to secure donations when they are made. By agreeing to donate space, a family sets in motion an entire chain of events from recruiting and training facilitators, to registering children and eliciting material donations. If a space is lost in the middle of these events, everyone involved is affected, and often it is the reputation of the NGO that suffers. This may affect the level of trust and cooperation within the community.

The second major problem occurs when a person who has donated a space wants it back before the full school cycle has been complete. Although both UNICEF and ACDA have donation contracts made out for the period of the school cycle (5 years), they do not
enforce them so as not to alienate themselves from the communities. They try and resolve the problem in a subdued manner through the help of the Committee. Often times donations can be collected from the community so that the donor can find a substitute space until the school cycle is over; other times the Committee has to find a new school space. The donation contract is only enforced if no space can be found and the school’s existence is threatened.

One ACDA field coordinator indicated that if money was involved, it may entice donors to keep their promise (Interview, 17 April 2002), but then that contradicts the whole donation concept, as would renting the space from the land donor, in addition to upsetting others who volunteer time and materials and receive no financial incentive. A better idea may be to offer a gift, or let the whole community know that a space has been donated as soon as that occurs. This would make it harder for families to take back their promise, and would still offer them some gratitude for their donations.

4.7.2 TRAINING
Facilitators receive extensive training as explained in the section on establishing community schools. UNICEF and ACDA use different trainers, and both agencies go about training in a slightly different manner.

The focus at ACDA training is the curriculum. MOE supervisors lead the sessions, which are purely academic and the technical coordinators do not play a role during the training sessions. During one training session, there were 76 facilitators present focussing on the grade 5 curriculum. The session ran from 10 am to 2 pm and covered Arabic, math and social studies. Although to some degree the facilitators seemed familiar with the male supervisor, and there was some level of interaction with trick questions and some jokes interspersed, the session was not a participatory one. The supervisor offered an explanation and posed questions the facilitators were expected to answer. The session was held in a lecture hall, and there were no use of small group activities or other methods that were used in the community schools (Participant observation, 19 April 2002). Conversely, at the UNICEF training sessions, the Technical Supervisors lead the
sessions and the focus is on participatory methods and exchanges of creative learning tools and methods and problem solving. The academic component however, needs more strengthening (Interview, UNICEF Technical Assistant #2, 27 April 2002). The majority of the facilitators only hold a high school diploma and have been out of school for several years. The training does not provide sufficient academic support.

Training for facilitators must contain a balance between creative participatory learning and pure academic content. At the end of the day, these women have to be comfortable enough to provide children with information that will help them pass exams and compete at the national level while at the same time transferring this information in creative and innovative ways that encourage the children to continue learning.

Training issues are also prominent in the minds of ACDA staff. “We used to pass up on training because we didn’t have the funds and now we see the negative impacts of this – time management, participation, planning etc.” (Interview, ACDA Technical Supervisor, 19 April 2002). In addition, when funds are available for training, not everyone gets to participate. Members of the field and technical teams are selected on a revolving basis, and as a result not everyone receives the same amount, type or quality of training. “When we attend training, we want to learn from the experiences of others, and participate. It becomes an issue when we get a trainer who thinks there is only one way to do something” (Interview, ACDA Field Coordinator #4, 19 April 2002.). Certainly receiving training that contradicts the practice of coordinators in the field can be frustrating and futile for many.

The lack of training is not only affecting staff within the NGO, but also the Village Affairs Committees that are formed. In Phase I of the project, there were enough funds to provide training for selected members of various committees, however, when the project was interrupted and resumed, there was no more training. This is affecting the performance of the committees who are confused about their roles in general. There is no standardised training, so once the field team explains to the committee what it should be doing, they are left to their own devices. The field teams are very active and try their best
to help but there has to be a more concrete formula for committees to follow. (Interview, ACDA Field Coordinator #4, 17 April 2002). “People need training on issues – what is development, what is volunteerism, what are the impacts and returns. There has to be a realisation that not everything has to have a financial return” (Interview, ACDA Field Supervisor, 19 April 2002). During visits to the communities, it was apparent that there were three Village Affairs Committees that had become inactive, and the field teams had to hold meetings to encourage community members to form new committees.

Training develops trust and relationships and assures the communities that they are not out of their depths or being asked to carry out tasks they are not capable of. This is very evident in the high activities of the UNICEF School committees, who receive initial training and then get refresher training every 1-2 years. If the NGOs are going to pass on effective school management to the communities, they have to ensure that they prepare them for that task. This includes greater advocacy and greater skills building that can come from quality training.

4.7.3 TRADITIONS

Challenges can come in the form of inherited attitudes. Although much has changed in the ways communities perceive male-female relationships and established traditions, they still pose some problems. Early marriages are still a problem, and the restrictions on girls leaving their homes are still traditions that are resistant to change in some communities. It should be noted here that not all communities have the same traditions or perceptions, and that these in particular are being highlighted since they form the greatest challenge in the communities where they still persist. Both UNICEF and ACDA staff agree that sometimes there just is no way around certain issues. The teams have to be careful not to push certain discussions too far so as not to risk being rejected by the community. They feel that in time changes to these traditions and other obstacles will occur; the key is to be patient and not take drastic measures that will result in taking steps back instead of forward. The ACDA Technical Supervisor also believes that greater advocacy and enlisting the help of religious leaders and prominent village figures will help. If people can visit other communities with successful schools and active community members, they
can gain a real sense of what the community school program comprises, and they can alleviate some of the anxiety they may feel in letting go of established tradition (Interview, 17 April 2002).

As welcoming as communities are of the schools, the seasonal harvest leads to extremely high absences in many schools. Unfortunately, even if the kids do not wish to participate in harvesting, the parents cannot afford to relieve them of their duties. The view of facilitators and staff of this problem is quite considerate. The community school model is meant to accommodate the needs of the community, and help children who would otherwise be denied access to education. If children are not permitted by their schools to participate in the harvest, or if they are penalised for being absent, then they will simply stop attending school and nothing will have been solved. The solution to these absences is to keep an open door policy at the schools and equip the facilitators with a variety of ways to transfer information to the absent children. Until the community itself can find a more favourable way to deal with the situation and not suffer financially, then the onus is on the schools to accommodate the needs of the children.

Generally traditions of hospitality and generosity differ from community to community. Some are much more receptive and active than others, constantly initiating gatherings and festivals and using the schools as a community centres. Some are much more suspicious of strangers and more sedate in their social customs, particularly hamlets that still have the tradition of vendettas. For those communities, the school is just a learning place for the children and there is no active participation, save for space and maintenance donations (ACDA Field Supervisor, April 19, 2002). Nonetheless, these communities do accept the establishment of schools and forge some sort of working relationship with each other to get the project started. Even though this does not resolve the vendetta issue, it does break down some of the rigid social barriers. As for the children and the facilitators in these communities, they gain much more by being able to have the interaction that the CS offers.
4.7.4 CURRICULUM

As a bureaucratic administration, the Egyptian state has indeed shown remarkable flexibility in allowing for such a wide avenue of public participation in what was previously a state only domain. The time has now come however for the administration to show just how willing it is to allow for policy changes at a deeper level.

In 1998 the largest contention was with the curriculum. Although the state had allowed for some informal changes that would accommodate community knowledge and values, and multi-age, multi-level classrooms, the curriculum for community schools is still mainly based on that which was developed by the central ministry, and has not been changed for years (Ahmed, et.al., 1998).

The community schools need a more balanced local and national curriculum. Egypt, contrary to popular outsiders’ belief, is not homogeneous in its culture. People living in peripheral regions in the north and attune to more West African practices are quite different from those who live in regions of the south and have Nubian and Sudanese cultural ties. Each region has its own traditions and local dialect. Curriculum development that would hope to accommodate these differences has to go beyond initial community input. It will require a different type of research that would enlist the help of local historians, oral traditions, cultural themes and language training. There has to be greater co-operation and joint curricular-design efforts between the various local communities and the national centre for curriculum development that will indeed enable the development of a curriculum that contains local themes, national and international content.

At a different level, the curriculum content in the Departments of Education at national universities, especially those in governorates that have a large village base, should start to include a program on rural education issues and models. Future technical and field staff and even facilitators would gain substantially by being exposed to these concepts before beginning work and relying on in-service training. Even at the high school level, such a program would be beneficial. Currently, students who do not wish to continue with
higher education can opt to get a vocational high school diploma in commerce or agriculture. Since the majority of facilitators only have high school diplomas, then the option of getting a high school diploma in community education should become available, at the very minimum in areas where there are such schools. Should the program prove successful and popular, the MOE may wish to expand it nation wide in tandem with the expansion of one-classroom schools (see next chapter) and community schools. The education of those facilitating the education process should reflect the same processes and models that they will impart in the community schools, and this requires changes in the current delivery of programs to prepare future educators.

4.7.5 INTRA AND INTER AGENCY COOPERATION

UNICEF works in the governorate of Assiut through a regional NGO, the Assiut Businesswomen’s Association. During the research time there was no indication that the NGO served any other purpose than to fulfil a government requirement that an Egyptian NGO had to implement projects that obtain foreign funding. All the staff is independent and confident enough to work without regular meetings or interaction with other staff or other programs at the NGO. While this may be a positive element in that it highlights the ability of regional staff to completely take over the community schools project once UNICEF withdraws, it does pose a question of how much central control is retained by the UNICEF offices in Cairo. The staff in Assiut considers itself UNICEF staff, not NGO staff. The organisation hires the staff, pays their salaries and establishes all the work policies and does all the financing, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation. Although the UNICEF Education Program Manager in Cairo insists that the staff are NGO, not UNICEF staff, she does concede that staff are selected by UNICEF approval. She does state however, and that they are autonomous and need little direction often informing the Cairo offices of certain initiatives after the fact. She clarifies the reason that the current Assiut staff are not very interactive with the local NGO is because it is one that they have only been working with for less than a year, and there is more central control than there would be otherwise (May 29, 2002). However, one staff member indicated that there is not much interaction with other programs within the Assiut

Chapter IV: Outputs and Outcomes
Businesswomen’s Association because they have different funders and are not directly related to the community schools project.

While there is much more intra-agency cooperation at ACDA, it could still be strengthened. A field coordinator stated that often if they are out in the field and are asked for help or think that a family could benefit from one of the many other programs that the association has, such as micro-credit or legal awareness then they bring the name to the proper department at ACDA and ask that they visit the individuals in field to provide detailed information. Still, this only occurs when a field coordinator is working under more than just the CS program, or takes an active interest to be more aware of the programs offered by the association. The association needs to be more active in informing all its staff of its ongoing projects and programs and how they can be related. This issue was brought up at a meeting of department heads. The ACDA general manager indicated that there were increasing reports coming in of people approaching field staff during village sweeps, and asking for certain information or help. It is imperative that the staff all became more aware of all the services being offered both at ACDA and in other NGOs in the various districts, so that they could better direct potential beneficiaries to the places to go. The aim she stated is “to help people, and if we don’t know what is going on, we cannot do that. Our programs are not the only ones available” (Participant observation, April 18, 200).

It seems that there are issues with funds/grants that are directed at a particular project and cannot be shared with any other program. This may be limiting and restricts the integration of different programs under separate funding agencies that would otherwise complement each other. For the purposes of budgeting and evaluation it is important that delineations are made between various programs run under one NGO. However, it should be noted that in the field of community development, it is difficult to restrict the spill over effects of positive outcomes. Indeed, the whole idea is that communities benefit to the maximum from each initiative, and if it should expand into another project then all the better. When drafting policies and terms of references, funders and implementing agencies must be careful not to restrict interaction between mutually
beneficial programs. It is difficult for example, to implement a program of prevention of violence against women, and not include elements from a legal awareness program that would inform women what their legal recourses were. It would prove just as difficult to restrict staff from sharing knowledge and experience from one project to another simply because they are not budgeted under a particular program. Intra-agency collaboration at all levels is necessary for all of the programs to be fully utilised and successfully implemented.

I argue that some of the greatest hindrance to greater success of replicability and scaling up of good projects is the lack of inter agency cooperation between NGOs in the field. It is surprising that after initial contact to aid with the set up in 1995, there has been no contact between ACDA and UNICEF even though they both work in the same governorate doing the same work. When asked why this was the case, several ACDA staff commented that sometimes the field becomes a very competitive place and people do not want to share good ideas and experiences for fear of imitation. In reply to the same question, the Education Program Manger at the UNICEF office in Cairo stated that they are willing to help anyone who asks for help (Interview, 29 May 2002). It is unclear what the reason behind the lack of cooperation is, but it is clear that the problem should be addressed by both parties. UNICEF has been in the field for a longer time and has had many great experiences and innovations that ACDA community schools would certainly benefit from. Combined funds can carry costs of training for village committees, facilitators and technical and field staff. Advocacy can be done in the form of visits to communities with long established schools to show practical examples of what the long term benefits can be, and all the staff and facilitators can learn from the experiences of the others. Interaction between the different districts would also allow for an increasing network of community school advocates.
CHAPTER 5: SPIN OFF COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

5.0 INTRODUCTION

There have been a number of spin-off community initiatives resulting out of the process of community involvement in the educational process. Community members have indicated that since the community schools have opened up an avenue of unprecedented participation in what they view as “official” services, they feel more empowered to develop other projects. The process of setting up the community school, and drawing on community resources has allowed them to assess their own capacities and develop a variety of ways to enhance them through local and regional contacts. The following are examples of community development projects associated with the community schools. Some have been initiated at the NGO level and some at the community level. The various projects are a great example of how well community networks and capacities can develop when given time a chance at participating in their own civil society and governance.

5.1 LOCAL PROJECTS

Several small scale projects have evolved as result of direct action by the UNICEF School Management Committees. The most recent project has been a carpentry skills development youth in the district of Manfalout. Community members expressed a concern for the growing number of unemployed boys, and approached the Field Supervisor with ideas, and asked for help to get something started.

The carpentry skills project was aimed at male youths from communities surrounding the Alexan hamlets so that benefits from training could be linked to community schools and shared by several communities. A group of ten boys enlisted and received 10 days of intensive training on how to make furniture from locally available material. The training was completed in March of 2002. After training each boy received a set of tools and was allowed the opportunity to apprentice with a local carpenter. In an interview, the boys stated that they were initially interested in the project because it offered something that was not available to them in their own communities. During the training, which was held
at a government sponsored centre for youth, other skilled labour came to attend, and the Field Supervisor noticed that they were talking ideas and implementing them before the boys had a chance. So she effectively asked that they not watch the sessions anymore. "The boys are young and still starting out. I did not want all these skilled people showing them up in the market and competing with them. I was afraid they would give up” (interview, UNICEF Field Supervisor, 29 April 2002). The boys agree that they have been given a chance to learn something they never thought they could do until they tried. "Now we pay attention every time we walk by a shop or a factory. We stop and ask questions about the designs and think of how we can improve upon them” (Interview, Youth #1, 29 April 2002). Another boy states that the project has brought with it several responsibilities and issues that they have had to learn to resolve, including establishing a distinct style of furniture and learning how to protect their rights to new designs. The youth feel that they have contributed to a new style of furniture in the hamlets and are willing to train others interested in learning. “This is a key that was given to us. If each one of us teaches another person and so on, then we can do our part in keeping this project alive. It is a matter of personal benefit and benefit for the community” (Interview, Youth #3, 29 April 2002). In order to give back to the community, the boys will donate furniture to an upcoming project of community daycares, also associated with the UNICEF community schools project.

The project training was a joint venture between UNICEF and the Association for Motherhood and Childhood (Ministry of Social Affairs). It is an extension of the community schools initiative that focuses on parental awareness and youth development. This is a great example of inter-agency collaboration on local development initiatives that can result when communities feel empowered to take on their own issues and find the support they need from other associations and agencies. At the last round of training for School Management Committees, there was a session on project development to encourage further initiatives in the field. Each committee was asked to establish the plans, budgets, and timelines for one project they would like to see in their communities. “We are ready to take these plans and apply them in reality. We are just working around funding issues” (Interview, School Management Committee Member #1, 29 April
2002). The combination of training, and small-scale project implementation is making many people realise that they do have the capabilities and collective capacities and range of networks to put into practice many of their ideas.

During field research, there was a visit to another project visit, a community shop, in the district of Manfalout, in the village of El Kom. The store is housed in the mosque built by a local family, and which also contains the community school. The entrance to the school and the shop is on the outside of the building. Prior to the shop opening, the hamlet had no shop or market. In order to get sugar or a packet of tea, people had to go the mother village and bear transportation costs. The shop is a cooperative. There are several shareholders in the village. The first, the shareholders were the School Management Committee Members, and each invested 100 pounds (CDN $30). When a large number of other community members expressed interested in the project, the share price was reduced to 10 pounds (CDN $ 3.00). The store opened with a capital of 1000 pounds and has gradually expanded since 1995. The space is donated so there is no rent, and everyone shares maintenance costs. Profits are shared according to the number of shares each member has purchased, with 10% of all profits going to the school for regular maintenance and activities (Interview, Shop Manager, 29 April 2002).

There were several other projects reported during interviews including a bio-gas project, a school canteen project, a school garden where children grow vegetables and use them in the kitchen. All community projects donate at least 10% of the profits to the school.

5.2 NEW HORIZONS PROGRAM – CEDPA
New Horizons is a female awareness program, aimed at empowering communities through a grassroots approach (See Box 8). It is an NGO driven project. The topics covered in the CEDPA workshops, particularly in the second manual, had previously been considered taboo subjects, not open for public discussion. The attitudinal changes and challenges to traditions that have been occurring within the community school process, have helped form a comfortable space in which such knowledge and information can be transferred to women.

Chapter V: Spin Off Community Initiatives
The beneficiaries of the New Horizons program are single or married females between the ages of 9-25, the average age being 18. The focus is on those females who are not in school, or are illiterate. The notion being that those in a school environment will more likely be exposed to many of the concepts introduced by the program, or will have the ability to pursue information on their own if needed. However those with limited literacy skills will not have the available avenues to develop this information.

New Horizons covers an extensive amount of information that is provided in two manuals. The first covers life skills and introduces topics on: Girls' Identity; Women’s Rights and Responsibilities; Nutrition; Health; First Aid; Child Development and Rights; Environment; Little Projects; and Review. The second manual covers more sensitive topics relating to reproductive skills: Adolescence; Violence against Women; Marriage; Pregnancy and Delivery; Family Planning; Sexually Transmitted; and Dangerous Diseases; and Review (CEDPA, 1997)

Local females with high school diplomas are selected to act as facilitators for the sessions. There are approximately 100 sessions, lasting 1 hour each. The facilitators receive intensive training on the topics, including information on nutrition, first aid, family planning, violence against women, environment, child psychology, contraceptives, small and micro parasites identity, marriage, pregnancy. Training occurs in three phases. The first round is 6 days long and introduces the facilitator to the first section of the New Horizons program. Then there is a 3-month period where the information is disseminated to beneficiaries in the field. The second and third training rounds are approximately 5 days long, and it takes 3 month to disseminate the information from each round to the beneficiaries. The whole cycle of facilitator training plus dissemination takes about 10 months. Once it is complete, the facilitator receives a certificate from CEDPA and begins to look for another group of beneficiaries (Interview, CEDPA Senior Program Officer, 11 April 2002).
BOX 8: New Horizons

In 1994, The Centre for Development and Population Activities (CEDPA) received a five-year grant from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to implement the Partnership Program for Girls and Young Women in collaboration with selected Egyptian NGOs. The mission of the Partnership Projects is to combine national level advocacy with community level education an action programs to improve the education, health, literacy and life skills of girls and young women in Upper Egypt.

As part of its first efforts, CEDPA decided to bring its Choose a Future! Program to Egypt – an innovative nonformal education and training program developed for adolescent girls in South Asia, Latin America and Africa. Choose a Future! embodies several key United Nations CRC* principles:

- The child shall have the right to freedom of Expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds;

  States Parties recognize the right of the child to education
  States Parties ... shall ensure that the child has access to information and material especially those aimed at the promotion of his or her social, spiritual, and moral well-being and physical and mental health;

- Parents and children, (shall have access to education and (be)supported in the use of basic child health and nutrition, the advantages of breast-feeding, hygiene and environmental sanitation and the prevention of accidents.

The original plan was to translate the program into Arabic for deployment in Egypt. However, after carrying out a careful needs assessment, the curriculum development facilitator determined that prevailing social and cultural norms necessitated a new approach to core program materials if those materials were to be accepted, and the messages embraced, within the communities for which they were intended.


(Source: New Horizons information booklet, CEDPA, 1997).

The sessions are conducted using a variety of simple learning aids, songs, drama and active participation. “The program is easy to use, effectively communicates messages through a process of learner-centred dialogue, and is a natural springboard for further community work and initiatives” (CEDPA, 1997). A program is currently being designed for boys and young men with parallel information, entitled New Visions.

Chapter V: Spin Off Community Initiatives
In Assiut, the New Horizons program is implemented through ACDA. In September of 2002 an ACDA coordinator was asked to act as the CEDPA Supervisor for facilitators in the community schools. Since the project was new and staff was limited, it was decided that the New Horizons would be taught through the community schools. Twenty-two ACDA schools with girls aged 9 and above were selected to introduce the program into communities. From these schools, 25 girls in the older group range were selected as the initial beneficiaries. Generally, if older females from outside the school express interest in New Horizons, then they are accepted first, and the school-enrolled girls wait for the next round. This is keeping with CEDPA’s notion that the girls in school will have a greater opportunity to learn the material, and the focus should be on those not enrolled. Depending on the number of participants, and the number who are enrolled in school, the sessions may take place during school hours when other children are working in their centres, or after school (Interview, ACDA Technical Coordinator #1, 16 April 2002).

The first cycle of the program is nearing its completion and the results are favourable. Overall, the beneficiaries are very happy with the material and information they receive. The nutritional information is especially popular, however there have been some concerns expressed by the facilitators and their supervisor. The main contention has been with training. Facilitators feel that the training is not enough to prepare them to deliver the material, particularly content in the third unit which deals with traditionally taboo issues such as reproductive and sexual health. In addition, training is held in the city of Assiut, and the facilitators have to bear the cost of transport to and from the sessions. CEDPA used to offer a per diem of 25 pounds (CD $7.50), but this was discontinued. As well, the facilitators have to conduct CEDPA sessions up to 5 times a week to keep up with the funding deadline. This has increased both preparation time and class time to cover both the MOE curriculum and the New Horizons material to those girls involved in both programs. The extra work and no pay have decreased the incentive for many to continue with the program. And although the supervisor has indicated that perhaps in the next cycle there will be less volunteers willing to continue “none have dropped out of the current cycle, or indicated that they do not wish to continue. They would just like to see
some changes in the delivery of the program” (Interview, ACDA Coordinator #1/CEDPA Supervisor, April 16, 2002).

New Horizons is another avenue of disseminating valuable gender information to a population that would otherwise not have the access. Certain aspects of the program should be re-evaluated if it is to be sustainable in the field. Greater advocacy for the program and more information provided to parents on the content of the sessions may alleviate some tensions that taboo topics are being discussed. It might also be wiser not to recruit beneficiaries from the community schools without parental consent. A better approach would be to encourage older females to participate, and invite them to bring the younger ones along to the sessions they feel are appropriate until everyone involved is more comfortable with the material. In time, with communities accepting changes that are slowly occurring, apprehension felt by facilitators of New Horizons may dissipate as they did with the community schools program.

While UNICEF community schools do not have a CEDPA program, they have a similar life skills program. The facilitator is not local, but when she visits the hamlets “she has many local anecdotes and has all the women laughing and learning about the most private issues” (Interview, UNICEF female school committee member #1, 29 April 2002). The results have been very positive with many of the women bringing daughters and relatives to the sessions. The women from the school management committees readily share the information with other community women, and act as advisors on issues that are discussed.

5.3 ACDA TEXTILE AND PAPER FACTORY
As part of its community schools program, ACDA has a textile and paper factory. These factories run as independent entities from the NGO, but support the community schools programs. The paper factory produces paper and books that are then purchased by the NGO for the community schools. The products are also being marketed in local stationary stores and the proceeds go to the community schools budget. The textiles factory is a competitive business that sells clothing hand-crafted items produced by
community members that are interested in the project. Those involved, usually women, are asked to share their talents with others during training workshops. ACDA provides the materials necessary to make the products and a workspace with sewing machines.

Originally, these projects were envisioned as an income source for the community schools project, netting approximately half a million pounds annually (approx. CD $ 150 150,000). However, as of yet, the money generated by the projects is not enough to sustain the schools. The Technical Supervisor feels this is due to several reasons. The costs of raw materials are high, and the new taxes introduced by the government are taking too much of the profits. In addition, there is too much red tape and regulation that many private companies can find a way around giving them more of a competitive advantage.

Furthermore, the quality of the products is not always good. In the first school cycle, ACDA introduced vocational training. Unfortunately, the training was costly and there was not enough of it to show facilitators sufficient techniques to allow them to become trainers. As a result, the final products of the textiles factory were not up to par and did not sell well. "To be competitive requires a real machiavellian attitude, that we as non-profit NGO do not have. In the factory, we ended up hiring those in need of work, not those who are best qualified. It is difficult to make money that way" (Interview, 17 April 2002). The textiles factory now hires trained labour and those facilitators who are skilled. On April 18 2002 at the Assiut National Fair, ACDA had a booth selling products. In my opinion the products for sale were of excellent quality and very competitive.

5.4 ILLITERACY ERADICATION (IE)

In 1991 the government of Egypt established a new organisation, the Agency for Eradication of Illiteracy, to reach its goal of universal basic education. IE programs are implemented in urban areas, although it has been harder to reach areas for the same reasons that regular government schools have had, mainly remote locations and social/economic barriers to student participation in the program. With greater access to
and success in rural communities, community schools have opened greater avenues for the inclusion of IE programs in the governorate of Assiut. There is an illiteracy eradication program associated with both UNICEF and ACDA sponsored community schools.

The Agency for Eradication of Illiteracy pays for the materials used, and each district pays the salaries of the facilitators but the program is supervised by the NGOs and the field staff. ACDA had begun its IE classes before phase I of the community schools began. Currently, the programs are established in the same way as the community schools. They are open to females fourteen and older, and often are taught in the same classrooms after school hours. "Having IE classes in some communities gives even more credibility to the school because parents can see a direct relationship that benefits them, and the mothers are able to practically assess what their children go through during their class time" (Interview, ACDA Field Coordinator #6, 21 April 21, 2002).

The IE program associated with UNICEF first started in 1993. Initially there were only 14 classes with about 15-20 girls enrolled. The facilitators worked on a volunteer basis. As the CS project grew so did the IE program. When village sweeps were conducted staff spread the word that assistants and facilitators were needed for growing numbers of IE classes. Slowly a strong enough base was assembled and many of the previous facilitators became field assistants for the incoming ones. Classes became more regular, schedules 4 times a week, with one day of facilitator/assistant training.

For all other purposes, UNICEF associated IE classes are run in the same manner as the CSs. The facilitators receive the same training with problem solving techniques, team building and participatory methods. The Field Supervisor stated that she does not like to make a distinction between the facilitators. Whenever possible, she includes the IE facilitators in the workshops and sessions that CS facilitators and coordinators attend. "This provides them an opportunity to travel and make their own networks and contacts and gives a real sense of how their work is interconnected with other work around the governorate and the country" (Interview, UNICEF Field Supervisor, 29 April 2002).
The classes complement the CSs, when the girls are at school, the mothers are also at school and there is more support at home for both mothers and daughters who can help each other and share similar experiences at the end of the day.

The IE classes have technical assistants that visit the classes, provide input and help the facilitators. The community donates the classrooms and the facilitators are all female. Teaching methods are also parallel to the CS, using a variety of learning aids. Each lesson has real life moral or experience behind it. The students learn the associated vocabulary, then discuss the issue in greater detail, whether it be health, or nutrition, or micro-credit. In this manner facilitators forge relationships with their students by teaching about issues that are close to home, and encouraging discussion and personal experiences to be related (Interview, IE Facilitator #1, 29 April 2002). For the facilitators involved, this has been a very positive experience building confidence, patience and independence. “When I see IE ads on TV, I realise that I am really contributing to my country. It fills me with pride,” says one facilitator. Another adds “It is like the boys in the army, they do a service for the country, and I am doing a great service too by teaching women to read and write” (Interviews, 29 April 2002).

5.5 ONE CLASSROOM SCHOOLS

In 1993 the MOE initiated the One Classroom School (OCS) model that was patterned after community schools. It was effort to move away from the model of standard public schools to a more student-oriented approach. Unlike the community schools, OCSs cater only to girls and the number of girls in one-classroom may exceed 30 students. However unlike the community schools, community participation is very low and the management structure is akin to that of regular government schools. As one MOE official stated in an interview, “if you want to see participation then go to UNICEF” (Personal communication, 14 March 2002).

The one classroom initiative had been tried in the 1970s when the government tried to reach the marginal areas through the establishment of multi-grade one-classroom schools. The classrooms were established mainly in mosques and other existing buildings. The
-schools followed the same academic year and curriculum as regular government schools, but with 3-12 hours of class time per week. However, there were several problems with the system. Often the activities of the mosque restricted access to females; the roads and remote locations made it difficult for Ministry supervisors to monitor the schools; and the academic schedule conflicted with harvest seasons when the students and children were needed in the field. Although the academic achievement levels were satisfactory, the curriculum was the same as that used in the formal school system. The students had to cover the same amount of material as their counterparts in government schools in almost half the time. Absences, by both students and teachers, who were all para-professional with second jobs, made completion of the work difficult. In addition, the curriculum would prove so impractical to village life that many students eventually stopped attending completely (Cochran, 1986), and the one classroom schools all but disappeared. The lack of sufficient multi-grade training, materials and supervision, as well as deteriorating classrooms and an inappropriate curriculum led to the demise of these schools by the late 1980s (Zaalouk, 1995; Allemano, 1995).

The current revitalisation of the OCS is an attempt by the MOE to reach out to females in marginal areas, using the UNICEF sponsored community schools as a base model for instruction. The current OCSs are meant to act as a basic health care unit and cultural centre in communities, not just as an educational centre. The school day runs from 9-3.30 pm for 34 weeks per year. Each week is compromised of 20 hours of academic instruction, 12 hours of vocational training and 8 hours of income generating activities (Allemano, 1995). Each grade has 7 girls in it, and a new grade is added each year as new pupils come in and old students move onto the next grade curriculum. To date there are 2600 OCSs spread around the whole country (Interview, CIDA Social/Program Advisor, 11 March 2002).
Table 5.1: Contrasts between Standard Public Primary Schools, Community Schools, and OCS.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard Primary Schools</th>
<th>Community Schools</th>
<th>One Classroom Schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subject-based instruction</td>
<td>Boys and girls aged 6-12; activity centred instruction; multi-level format; no</td>
<td>Girls aged 8-15; standard curriculum; plus 12hrs/week vocational education &amp; 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>provided in differentiated programs for distinct grade levels, exams determine passage to next grade; high rates of failure and dropping out</td>
<td>grade repetition; minimal drop-out; school as larger community development strategy</td>
<td>hours income generation activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Furniture designed to stay in place, all students facing teacher at the front</td>
<td>Furniture allows easy re-arranging and mobility; use of 4 learning centres in each room</td>
<td>Furniture very similar to community schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOE regional authorities build, staff, fund and supervise the schools</td>
<td>NGOs identify communities willing to participate in school governance</td>
<td>MOE regional authorities build, staff, fund and control the schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum-centred instruction; teacher directed learning process; double sessions common in urban areas</td>
<td>Teacher training is focused on child centred learning methods</td>
<td>Curriculum-centred instruction; teacher directed learning process; 7 pupils per class; distinct grades, one added every year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fully certified teachers, with 4 years pre-service training, mainly male teachers, not necessarily local</td>
<td>2 facilitators from local community in each classroom with high school diplomas; 9 month salary paid by MOE</td>
<td>2 certified female teachers in each classroom transferred from standard primary school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little if any in-service training, occasional visits from MOE inspectors</td>
<td>Close support and supervision, ongoing training provided by NGO and contractors</td>
<td>2 weeks of pre-service training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reliance on MOE textbooks, use of additional teaching aids rare</td>
<td>Extensive use of teaching aids, made by facilitators and students to supplement MOE books; library; Extra readers from UNICEF (and ACDA)</td>
<td>MOE textbooks and some extra teaching aids; equipment for vocational training and income generation form civil authorities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequent assignment of homework; reliance on extra-curricula tutoring to prepare for exams</td>
<td>All instruction done in school, no extra tutoring</td>
<td>No information available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mistakes and misbehaviour negatively rewarded often by physical punishment</td>
<td>Emphasis on cooperative learning and positive socialisation</td>
<td>No information available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-30% drop out depending on area</td>
<td>No repeaters; very low drop out rates</td>
<td>No information available</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Adapted from Allemano, 1995: 14)
While it is not within the scope of this paper to assess the success of the one classroom schools, several comments can be made. These schools are an attempt to reach remote areas and provide service to females in those areas while trying to eliminate 3 major barriers to girls’ education identified by the MOE: distance between home and school; the need to provide families with extra income; and the rejection of co-education. They entail certain characteristics of the community schools, such as the health care element, the cultural centre and the multi-grade teaching and can provide a great transition in the attempt to bring community schools to scale. However, they also retain some of the central management that is visible in standard public schools and a curriculum/teacher-centred approach (Table 5.1). While the OCS model is one way to begin the replication of CS on a national scale, there are a few problems that should be carefully addressed.

The use of vocational training and income generating activities raises several issues. While integrating these two elements in the OCS model does provide greater incentive for families to enrol their daughters, it should not be the only reason they are sent to school. Tensions within the community are most likely to arise if certain students are denied access to school, or if classes are full since parents may view this as a lost income opportunity. In addition, enticing parents with such potential for financial gain does nothing to change attitudes that prevent girls from getting an education. It also directly links education to income, overshadowing the multitude of benefits that the students and the community can gain from having a school. Moreover, the quality of vocational training received and the quality of final products must be closely monitored. If the products are mediocre quality and do not sell in the local communities, this may result in diminished self-esteem for the girls and even a rejection of the program by parents who decide their girls can be better occupied with other chores in the household instead of producing material that will be discarded.

Another issue that has to be addressed is access for rural boys. Local factors and influences affect both boys and girls’ access to education. Singling out only the females may result in a greater gender illiteracy gap that favours females.

Chapter V: Spin Off Community Initiatives
Finally, the quality and level of instruction within the schools has to be addressed. OCSs lack any attempt at increasing community participation and providing different teaching methods than those used in standard primary schools. If the success of the community schools is based on its involvement of the entire community and providing meaningful skills and practices to the people involved, then the OCS will have to do more than simply provide smaller models of regular government schools that were rejected by rural communities in the first place. Teachers have to undergo special training to be able to successfully implement multi-grade teaching in the classrooms, and more effort has to be made to hire local teachers.

The Egyptian experience of one classroom schools could perhaps learn from the Pendidikan Antara Masyrakat, Orang Tua Dan Guru (PAMONG) experience in Indonesia. PAMONG, an alternative teaching module to conventional government schools in rural areas, was introduced in the 1970s. The design team stuck by the idea that teachers could adequately be trained via a three day informative training session at the beginning of their instructional terms. There was very little follow-up, technical assistance or monitoring and teachers became more disillusioned with PAMONG the longer they worked with it. This was further aggravated by the fact that local education officers removed trained teachers out of PAMONG schools and put untrained teachers in, without consulting the PAMONG team (Shaeffer, 1990). More work was required of teachers to be active managers of the system, particularly in rural areas, but the support and training was not sufficient. This same difficulty is likely to be faced in OCS. The MOE has to do more to establish a department of alternative schools with its own permanent teaching staff, preferably drawn from rural locales, who receive proper and adequate training to equip them to deal with these schools. Otherwise, it is possible that the new OCS expansion will suffer the same fate it did in the 1980s.
5.6 SUMMARY OF CS OUTPUTS AND OUTCOMES

This concluding section links the community school outputs and outcomes discussed in Chapters 4 and 5. Figure 5.1 summarises the types of networks and changes that have resulted from community involvement in the community school process.

Figure 5.1: Impacts of the Community School

Inputs by the community, the NGOs and the MOE have contributed to the process of the community schools. This process has been affected by programatic changes at the NGO and MOE levels, reflected in the various technical training of supervisors, facilitators and
community members and the alternative education method that has evolved. Changes at the institutional level have allowed for more participation by communities in the educational system and have altered certain policies to accommodate the needs of specific communities, such as changing age restrictions for CS graduates to enter preparatory schools and allowing para-professionals to facilitate in community schools. These inputs and changes have been a collaborative effort between communities NGOs and the MOE. Consequently, community members have been more accepting of changes that have occurred as a result of the community school process and have readily adapted personal attitudes to maximise the potential benefits of this process. Collective personal changes have led to greater community level changes in traditional perceptions on gender roles, social interactions and the capacity to be actively involved in community development. All these changes feed into the community school as the central engine of change and in turn are processed back into the community for more feedback and change.

The community processes have resulted in a number of direct and indirect outputs. Some are more tangible and can be easily measured such as increased access to school, greater numbers of graduates and high quality of educational delivery. Others are more visible in changes in interpersonal relationships, greater community cohesiveness, pride and determination to enhance community development. Networks, linkages and relationships have evolved and increased, and perceptions of collective values, knowledge and awareness have developed. This has all contributed to a number of attributes and capacities that have enabled communities to become more active in positive social changes.
CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS

6.0 INTRODUCTION
Thus far the paper has set the context for community schools and their ability to fill the void in rural communities where conventional schools have failed. In examining the process of establishing the schools, it has become apparent that the process does indeed provide greater avenues for community participation and also opens a gateway for other community development initiatives. Like any other project, the community schools programs in Assiut have certain strengths and areas to be improved upon. When looking at the policy implications in the planning for community schools and other associated projects, the sustainability of the project has to be considered.

The project supervisors at ACDA felt that the communities were not yet prepared to manage the schools if the Association pulled out. However, UNICEF indicated that the communities and the local NGOs could successfully sustain the projects. In either case, it is clear that the local NGO has a large role to play in these projects, as does the MOE. It is therefore necessary that both these institutions implement certain policies that would aid in the continued maintenance and sustenance of community schools in Assiut and Upper Egypt, particularly if the model is to be brought to a national scale. This would entail looking at policy implications at various operational levels, and at the roles of the various stakeholders in the project. This concluding section will focus on a number of analytical insights that would provide future considerations of policy requirements to sustain community schools.

6.1 NGO OPERATIONS
During research it has become clear that NGOs are able to achieve much more than government in providing access and quality to education in rural areas. Indeed, Article 9 of the Jomtien conference on EFA states “If the basic learning needs of all are to be met through a much broader scope of action than in the past, it will be essential to mobilise existing and new financial and human resources, public, private and voluntary” (UNESCO, 1990a). The ACDA and UNICEF have been able to do so, very successfully
taping into community resources that the government had previously ignored. Much of this is due to the fact that NGOs have a greater ability to reach marginalised groups and a better commitment to follow-up because of their focused agendas and target groups.

However, NGOs can only be as successful as the government allows them to be. Recent political events in Egypt have restricted international funding and placed many restrictions on NGOs in the country. It is clear that the government of Egypt cannot at the present time commit the necessary financial or human resources to develop educational programs and capacities to their full potential. It is necessary that policies directed at operations of NGOs, while bearing national security and sovereignty in mind, not impede the progress of high-potential innovations. In June of 2002 a bill was passed by Parliament that amended Law 153 restricting NGO operations. The Law was deemed unconstitutional. Although the new bill has sections in favour of NGOs, there are larger issues that should be contested. NGOs cannot accept any foreign funding without prior permission from the Ministry of Social Affairs, and they are forbidden to engage in any activities of a “political nature” (Email communication, Democracy Egypt list serve, 2 June 2002). It is difficult to discern the exact meaning of the phrase, as any activity can be deemed “political”, particularly in the context of education in Egypt which has seen changes with every major political regime.

Non-governmental organisations often have greater freedom to experiment and to innovate than is possible for government. Government support of non-government organisations allows it to take credit for the success without making it responsible for the activities that do not fulfil its objectives. Also, non-government organisations can mobilise a range of non-financial resources that are often not available to government administrators. Labour, materials and land that might be provided only on a fee basis to government is often contributed by individuals, organisations and communities to support non-government organisation activities (UNESCO, 1990b: 13).

At a time when the country is economically troubled and resources are unable to meet the demands of a growing population, there is a need for more relaxed policies that encourage more involvement by national and international organisations in the delivery of education.

Chapter VI: Conclusions
In overall operations, NGOs need to find a more mutual system to work within. While encouraging communications and networks in the communities there is not enough done to maintain the same connections at the institutional levels. There is no centre in the country that identifies all NGOs and their operations, nor one that provides an opportunity for collaboration on projects. The NGO Services Centre, of which there is a branch in Cairo and Assiut, is mainly a fund/grant distribution centre. It also provides some training and awareness techniques to monitor projects, however it does not provide an avenue for NGO networking (Interview, NGO Services Centre Manager, Assiut, 23 April 2002). There has to be more effort on the part of the institutions themselves to build a network of linkages that would enable different organisations to work in partnership and pool their resources to gain the maximum benefits.

6.2 MOE OPERATIONS

In recent years the MOE has perhaps become more flexible and willing to adapt to accommodate the changes brought to education by the community schools project.

There have already been several policy changes at the MOE structural level. For example, the age restrictions for entry to preparatory schools have been relaxed for graduates of community schools, and the fees have been completely waived. This facilitates the transition from community to government school, and shows communities that the government is supportive of their efforts. The MOE now considers community school facilitators employees of the Ministry, even though they are not technically qualified teachers. In addition, the MOE has allowed some changes to the curriculum delivery to be published, showing flexibility and recognition that perhaps a different approach needs to be taken. In 1998, during a workshop session, talks broke down because a member of the MOE declared the curriculum to be the sole property of the MOE and there would be absolutely no allowances for changes or public input (Ahmed et al., 1998). This indicates that the MOE may be slowly willing to incorporate changes that only a few years ago were deemed impossible, and that the community schools are indeed producing effective policy changes.
While there is a department of one classroom schools within the MOE, there is no community schools department. Although there is a liaison officer whose job it is to establish a relationship between the MOE and the NGOs in the education field. This perhaps leads to a perception that the MOE still does not consider community schools totally within its domain. There needs to be a stronger relationship between government schools and community schools. There is too much of a compartmentalization of categories - government, one classroom and community schools - which could be brought together for greater benefit of all. School models should not be viewed as rival, but complementary to essential learning, and the entire concept of learning needs to shift from just illiteracy eradication. This requires that teachers gain some insight into the teaching methods employed in the community schools and the rational behind them in order to better help the incoming students and to continue improving upon the skills they gained. Community school and OCS facilitators receive a considerable amount of training in comparison to their government school counterparts. One reason may be that since CS and OCS facilitators are viewed as quasi-professional, they require more training. However, the type and content of training does not focus solely on the curriculum, it addresses current problems in education and new instructional techniques. A great endeavour would be to include a professional development training session at the beginning of the school year for all government school teachers that focuses on the community schools, and the practical and democratic teaching skills that teachers may use in their classrooms.

Such a task would require considerable financial and personnel resources, however it is something that can be considered in future planning for education. A more accessible step forward would be to introduce a section on OCS and CS in the education curriculum of universities, so that those teachers who graduate are more adept at the philosophy involved. This also raises the possibility of introducing teaching diplomas at the high school level, particularly in rural government schools. Currently, students have the option to graduate high school through a vocational training program, which still grants them a high school diploma, but not the credentials to go onto post-secondary education.
Since the minimum requirement for facilitators is a high school diploma, then it is possible for many to receive a teaching diploma at the high school level, if courses that would prepare the students are introduced. Essentially, until drastic changes are made, the students would not have to learn a different curriculum, just more cooperative and participatory educational methods, and more community oriented approach.

In the meantime, until more structural policy changes can be considered, the MOE can continue to lend its support to the OCS and CS. More steps can be taken towards curriculum changes by inviting open dialogue between the stakeholders. Some changes and adaptations to the curriculum content may not be as threatening to the MOE authority as perceived. It has now been a decade since some of the community schools have been operational. Their experiences need to be drawn upon for further re-evaluation.

There also needs to be a reassessment regarding other benefits and policies within the MOE. Personal relationships play a great role when dealing with the government. The UNICEF Education Program Manager is based in Cairo and is very active in policy dialogue and visits to the central MOE. The impact of the UNICEF name and reputation may result in them receiving favourable treatment from the MOE and other government offices when dealing with community school issues. For example, UNICEF community schools students do not have to pay for health insurance, while ACDA often has to help families pay for the health insurance adding to the costs of the program. The MOE needs to be transparent and equal in all its polices with regards to all the community schools.

6.3 ROLE OF THE LOCAL POPULAR COUNCIL
Chapter Two outlined the main role of the Local Popular Council (LPC) as an administrative rather than a legislative body. It is necessary in light of the innovations introduced by community schools to reassess the role of this council.

The community schools are at the moment a rural phenomenon in Egypt, and it is hard to imagine that any official in Cairo would understand the true implications and impacts of policies that relate to these schools. The LPC has to be given legislative powers that
enable it to design and implement policies specific to the community schools and activities related therein.

The central MOE has to deal with CS matters as they come up. For example, while it is understood that CS and IE graduates often enter preparatory school at an older age than regular government school students, they are dealt with on a case-by-case basis. Such an issue would be easier dealt with if the LPC were able to issue a policy to all preparatory schools that receive CS graduates and reduce the time and red tape involved. As well, many of the community initiatives involved with CS are outside the domain of the MOE, and may involve the Ministry of Youth and Culture or Ministry of Social Affairs. Collaboration may not be necessary between these Ministries at the national level, but a local level partnership is necessary for the community schools and their associated projects. These projects would receive much more credence and support if the LPC were able to issue policies that would formalise these partnerships. Such policies may also form the groundwork for taking community schools project to scale at a national level.

6.4 NGOS AND COMMUNITIES - RELATIONS
The NGO’s play a large linking role in the hierarchical network between the community and other organizations. Scaling up, to some degree seems to be occurring mostly at the NGO level. Community capacity is being developed but is still reliant on the linkages of the NGO. However, the UNICEF schools are showing promise of community members becoming more involved in this particular strategy. Through the LPC members that are involved, there is more recognition of community schools and villages in which they are established at the local council level and there is an opportunity for this scaling up to expand. School committee members and LPC members need to take a more proactive role in advocating community schools and associated benefits in the region as a whole not just in their areas.

Current achievements of community schools and related activities show that people are indeed capable of managing these schools and their own communities when given the
chance to actively participate in civil society. It is important that this participation continues to grow outside the boundaries of any one community.

6.5 IDEAS, VALUES, KNOWLEDGE

"Throughout the world, one purpose of education, in its many forms, is to create social links between individuals on the basis of shared references" (Delors et. al., 1999; 53). The first step is to provide access, so that this process can develop, then provide a model that will continue to enhance these links for the benefits of the community. It is clear that CSs have done that; the question now turns to "what are these shared references?"

In the villages that house community schools, there has been a renaissance of culture and knowledge. With every new concept introduced (hygiene, politeness, nutrition) no matter how elementary, the community begins to build a new plateau of norms. Traditions and values are slowly changing, and yet the system within which they operate still draws on these traditions when dealing with rural populations. Upper Egypt still receives the majority of national jokes in Egypt. Its population is still considered by the majority to be illiterate, poor and unable to think soundly. How will the current system deal with these "new norms?" Structural adjustments must be made. At an educational level, the emerging CS graduates and community members should not be viewed simply as literate bodies without regard for their needs at higher education levels. In due course, the models and concepts introduced at the CS elementary level will be demanded at all levels of schooling. As well, all Ministries will have to be informed of the projects and made aware that they include an all encompassing community participation methodology. At the bureaucratic level, government officials will soon begin to deal with a "new breed of rural population." This will be a population that is more aware of its rights and capacity to participate, as well as its ability to mobilise community networks for change. Already CS communities have branched into many government structures and institutions to implement projects in their communities. And yet the only Ministry that is involved directly with these schools is the MOE. The onus will eventually shift to the government and its various branches to keep up with these communities.
6.6 GENDER EQUITY
Community school programs have really opened up a market for female workers, both at the community and NGO levels. Ironically, in areas where women traditionally only worked in the house, they are now being employed to support a system that is allowing for changes in traditions. In the long run, there will be a large base of females that are educated and qualified to teach.

6.7 CONCLUSION
“At issue here is the capacity of the individual to behave as a true citizen, aware of the collective interest and anxious to play part in democratic life.” (Delors, et.al, 1999 :53). As a social planning practice, community schools have proven effective in enhancing social capital formation in communities. I view the community school as the centre of community life. The community puts in resources, time, money, space, responsibility, responsiveness, ownership, values, knowledge, into this building. The result is a labour of love encompassing community passion, minds and hearts that is inculcated into the students, educators and community members. This new collective energy resource leads to more positive action in community change and local initiative. It becomes a driving force, which planning can capitalise on, and which feeds back into the schools for more interaction and change. Figure 6.1 illustrates this process as compared to the original diagram already shown in Figure 1.2 entitled “Social Capital and Social Planning Practice.”
Figure 6.1 Community Schools and Social Capital Formation

a) Social Capital and Social Planning Practice

Social Capital

Social Change & Development

Social Outcomes
- Equity
- Justice
- Inclusion
- Cohesion

Community Assets and Capacities

Bonding

Bridging

Scaling-up

Social Planning Practice

Asset Base & Competencies of Social Planning:
- Research & Information
- Policy & Systems Analysis
- Strategy Development
- Organizing/Coordinating
- Educating

(Source: SPNO, http://lks.net/~cdc/spno.html)

b) Social Capital and Community Schools

Social Capital

- Changes in age policy
- Para-professional teachers
- Programatic changes at NGO/MOE levels

Knowledge Values
Space
Time
Land
Labour

Community Schools

Attitudes
Behaviour
Knowledge
Cohesiveness
Gender Equity
Spin-offs

Chapter VI: Conclusions
In a country like Egypt, where public participation is still a relatively new concept, there is still much to do. Communities have immeasurable potential and capacity to mobilise and affect their development. The type of collaboration envisioned in the community schools model does not come naturally to those in the current system. Therefore it is essential that people be trained for this kind of extensive networking and team work. The focus has to be shifted from enforcing current regulation to innovation. It is necessary that eventually the community gains more control over the school and its resources, particularly at the management level with the help of technical and other expertise from central education branches, not just piece-meal solutions that address specific problems as they appear.

Personal contacts and networks are those that sustain the community school. Usually there is a core group of people who invest their time and effort in making sure that everyone stays connected, and that information channels and opportunities remain open for all those involved. It is however the responsibility of everyone involved to ensure that contacts are maintained between all parties involved in the system.

It is essential that the community school remains an evolving project. It is easy to address specific community needs at the beginning and then lag in providing other ways of keeping the community involved. The needs of the community have to be assessed and met on a regular basis, and community members must be treated as responsible and capable partners in the community school project.

This thesis has shown that the community school model has done much for social capital formation and enhancement by involving communities, and providing the engine for community development. It can still do much more. In these times of constant change, there is practically no region of the world that has not been infiltrated by the Internet, tourism and/or external influences. It is important that communities are able to face new challenges on their own terms. Building and enhancing social capital provides a successful way for communities to bring about positive change, and the community school is a sure way to start communities on that path. It offers a way for communities to
grow, to network, to support their knowledge and values and educate their children in a co-operative learning system that will foster valuable living skills and habits.

6.8 SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Future planning researchers interested in community schools may explore a number of related topics not covered in this research. There are two main types of possible research suggested here. The first type deals with follow-up studies on the trajectory of current community schools in Egypt. The second deal with issues of bringing the model to national scale.

1. It might be of interest to follow a cohort of CS graduates and examine how the CS model and the various community networks that evolve impact their lives. It would be interesting to discover whether these graduates will draw on community resources in the future, or even whether they will remain in their home communities.

2. UNICEF and ACDA will soon be at the end of their current phases. It will be interesting to find out how communities will be impacted if further funding for the CS projects is not forthcoming.

3. The NGOs in the field can start contributing to a training manual that would serve as a professional development tool for government school teachers. This would entail a closer study of the methods and techniques used to deliver the current curriculum and how they can be adapted to be more student-centred, as well as possible research into major adaptations of the curriculum content to make it more practical and learner-friendly.

4. The MOE needs to start taking more initiative in bringing the CS project to a national scale. It would be interesting to see how existing networks and informal avenues of participation in urban areas will affect and be affected by such a model.

5. A more detailed study on policy implications and implementation will be necessary in the future to deal with the growing number of CSs in Egypt.
6. There have been a number of comparative studies done on CS worldwide. A
detailed comparative study of lessons for Egypt on scaling-up its CS program,
based on those studies would be helpful.

7. A huge undertaking would be to begin a process of curriculum development that
can combine elements of an academic curriculum with more regional concepts
and contexts. This can be used in the future as CS and OCS programs go to
national scale.


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Guiding Interview Questions for Community Members:

1. Do you participate on the community school committee? If so, in what capacity?

2. As far as you know, how does this differ from other school models that have been introduced in your community?

3. Do you participate in any way in activities related to the community school? If so what?

4. What are the different forms of participation that take place, for example fundraising, volunteering, repairs to the school, donation of materials?

5. Do you think that your involvement with the community school has brought you closer to members of your community? If so, in what ways?

6. Have these relationships been expand beyond school related issues? Can you give examples?

7. Have you sought relationships with other communities that have community schools? If so, for what reasons?

8. Do you think that the community school is a good addition to your community? If yes, why, if no, why not?

9. Do you think this form of education can lead to other community development initiatives? If so, in what ways?
Guiding Interview Questions for UNICEF, CIDA and ACDA Representatives:

1. What is the background to the community schools program?
2. In your opinion have communities been receptive to the project?
3. What is the difference between the one-classroom schools and the community schools?
4. What is the management structure of the community schools?
5. What is the range of networking that occurs within the community schools structure?
6. What are some of the greatest challenges that are faced in the field?
7. Will the community schools initiative be sustainable after ACDA/UNICEF pulls out?
Guiding Interview Questions for Technical and Field coordinators/assistants, and facilitators:

1. How long have you been involved with the program and how did you come to hear about it?

2. What work or education were you involved in previously?

3. Do you see the community schools as a good strategy for education? Why or why not?

4. Do you receive support from the community in your work? If so, in what ways?

5. What aspects do you find challenging, or would like to change?

6. Has being involved in the school allowed you to meet more people? In what ways, if any does this impact your life? Could you give examples?

7. Do you think the community life has changed since the introduction of the school? If so, in what ways?

8. What is the aspect you like most about being involved in this project?

9. What is the aspect you like least?
APPENDIX 2: EGYPT, COUNTRY INFORMATION

Location: Northern Africa, bordering the Mediterranean Sea, between Libya and the Gaza Strip

Geographic coordinates: 27 00 N, 30 00 E

Map references: Africa

Area:
- total: 1,001,450 sq km
- land: 995,450 sq km
- water: 6,000 sq km

Area—comparative: slightly more than three times the size of New Mexico

Land boundaries:
- total: 2,689 km
- border countries: Gaza Strip 11 km, Israel 255 km, Libya 1,150 km, Sudan 1,273 km

Coastline: 2,450 km
Population: 68,359,979 (July 2000 est.)

Age structure:
0-14 years: 35% (male 12,260,343; female 11,701,253)
15-64 years: 61% (male 21,111,615; female 20,714,511)
65 years and over: 4% (male 1,131,760; female 1,440,497) (2000 est.)

Population growth rate: 1.72% (2000 est.)

Birth rate: 25.38 births/1,000 population (2000 est.)

Death rate: 7.83 deaths/1,000 population (2000 est.)

Net migration rate: -0.35 migrant(s)/1,000 population (2000 est.)

Sex ratio:
at birth: 1.05 male(s)/female
under 15 years: 1.05 male(s)/female
15-64 years: 1.02 male(s)/female
65 years and over: 0.79 male(s)/female
total population: 1.02 male(s)/female (2000 est.)

Infant mortality rate: 62.32 deaths/1,000 live births (2000 est.)

Life expectancy at birth:
total population: 63.33 years
male: 61.29 years
female: 65.47 years (2000 est.)

Total fertility rate: 3.15 children born/woman (2000 est.)

Nationality:
noun: Egyptian(s)
adjective: Egyptian

Ethnic groups: Eastern Hamitic stock (Egyptians, Bedouins, and Berbers) 99%, Greek, Nubian, Armenian, other European (primarily Italian and French) 1%

Religions: Muslim (mostly Sunni) 94%, Coptic Christian and other 6%

Languages: Arabic (official), English and French widely understood by educated classes
Literacy:
definition: age 15 and over can read and write
total population: 51.4%
male: 63.6%
female: 38.8% (1995 est.)

Climate: desert; hot, dry summers with moderate winters

Terrain: vast desert plateau interrupted by Nile valley and delta

Natural resources: petroleum, natural gas, iron ore, phosphates, manganese, limestone, gypsum, talc, asbestos, lead, zinc

Land use:
arable land: 2%
permanent crops: 0%
permanent pastures: 0%
forests and woodland: 0%
other: 98% (1993 est.)

Irrigated land: 32,460 sq km (1993 est.)

Natural hazards: periodic droughts; frequent earthquakes, flash floods, landslides, volcanic activity; hot, driving windstorm called khamsin occurs in spring; dust storms, sandstorms

Environment—current issues: agricultural land being lost to urbanization and windblown sands; increasing soil salinization below Aswan High Dam; desertification; oil pollution threatening coral reefs, beaches, and marine habitats; other water pollution from agricultural pesticides, raw sewage, and industrial effluents; very limited natural fresh water resources away from the Nile which is the only perennial water source; rapid growth in population overstraining natural resources

Environment—international agreements:
signed, but not ratified: none of the selected agreements

Geography—note: controls Sinai Peninsula, only land bridge between Africa and remainder of Eastern Hemisphere; controls Suez Canal, shortest sea link between Indian Ocean and Mediterranean Sea; size, and juxtaposition to Israel, establish its major role in Middle Eastern geopolitics

APPENDIX 3: COMMUNITY SCHOOL SCHEDULE

Each day the children follow a similar schedule. The schedule below reflects that of lower grade ACDA schools. In Grades 3 and 5 the children have to undergo national government exams, and so the schedule is adjusted to fit in more structured group less time.

**Morning line up** 15 minutes
This is to get the children organised and to take attendance.

**Day introduction** 15 minutes
This is an opportunity for the facilitators and students to exchange any news from the previous day or discuss any problems. The facilitators then take time to give the children a preview of the day’s lesson by introducing a short story, song or activity that is based on the lesson plan.

**Structured Group Activity** 45 minutes
This represents the main lesson of the day. After a facilitator has presented the lesson, each group begins to examine the content more closely through song, quizzes, theatre, or writing. A variety of learning aides help the children in understanding the content and in developing their own presentations of the information.

**Recess** 15 minutes
Often during this time a student will lead the others in song or in short physical exercises outside the classroom. Some children who live close enough opt to run home for a quick break and to check in with their families.

**Planning** 15 minutes
The children plan which centre they wish to participate in and what they wish to accomplish in it. The facilitators ensure that the children rotate and do not choose the same centre every day.

**Centres** 45 minutes
There are four centres offered in the classroom: language (Arabic), arts, arithmetic and general knowledge. Surprisingly, not all children opt for the arts or general knowledge centres. In one ACDA school a girl spent her centre time writing up the times tables that the class had learnt so far so they could all review it together (Participant observation, school visit, “El Awama” Grade 2, 11 April 2002).
Presentations and Evaluations  
**30 minutes**
The children present what they did in their centres, and answer questions from their classmates. A student facilitator, who directs questions from the students to each other and makes sure there is time for all to present their work, leads the session. The children’s questions show an interest in each other’s work and the related questions really test each other’s skills. For example in one ACDA school a girl who had written a poem for her language centre activity, was asked to point out the vowels and grammar structures in her verse by her fellow Grade 3 students (Participant observation, school visit, 12 April 2002). Grade 4 students at “Ezbit Zayid”, a UNICEF school, asked the student who made a flower in the art centre to name a variety of local flowers, and point out the primary colours that were used in the art (school visit, 24 April 2002).

Once the presentations are complete, the student facilitator does a self-evaluation on his/her performance, before being evaluated by the other students. The evaluation is constructive, and complimentary. If a criticism is offered it is preceded by a positive comment and a suggestion on how to improve the next time.

Break  
**30 minutes**

Second Structured Group Activity  
**45 minutes**

Group Presentations  
**15 minutes**
The students present the different activities they worked on related to the structured lesson.

Facilitator Meeting  
**30 minutes**
Once the children leave, the facilitators spend some time reviewing the day, and preparing for the next day. If there are any particular problems the facilitators may ask their technical coordinators/assistants to stay for the meeting. The UNICEF schools have a special “problem box” feature where the students can place issues they are too shy to discuss during the day’s introduction. During their preparation time, they discuss any such issue and decide on the best approach to deal with the child’s problem. The meeting time is also a time for drawing up the daily reports. These provide an opportunity for facilitators to note any problems or innovations that can be shared at the next training session with other community school facilitators.
The UNICEF schools have the same schedule components but in a different order going from the morning line up, to daily introductions, to planning, centres, presentation and evaluation, structured group activity, recess, continued group activity, physical education and finishing off with class clean up. The goal of the physical education component is to gain some exercise while at the same time tying in the day's academic lesson through song or theatre. The children are responsible for the classroom clean up at the end of the day, since there is no employee in charge of the cleaning. This involves a quick sweep of the floor and organising materials in their proper places.