

**Steps on the Road**

**By Medhat EL Zahed**

**Issued by**

**Better Life Association for Comprehensive Development in Minia**

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By: Medhat El Zahed

Team: Hanan Nabil – Milad Naguib – Maher Bushera

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53 Adenan EL Malkey Street, Ard Sultan, Minia

Telephone & Fax: +2 086 2330661- 2329575

Web site: [www.blacd.org](http://www.blacd.org)

Email: [info@blacd.org](mailto:info@blacd.org)

## **First: background**

In its relation with public, executive and governmental organizations, Better Life believes in establishing partnership relations between the civil society organizations and the local governance bodies in order to achieve the target development goals.

Better Life believes that sound partnership is based on democratic basis as a prerequisite for the success of the civil society in general. However, this partnership should be more important.

Better Life represents an initiative for civil activity based on local work and grass roots activity. It believes in community participation in order to achieve tangible positive goals for the interest of the citizen.

The partnership relation between Better Life and the other civil society organizations, executive and public bodies is based on a principle, proved to be true. This principle is that neither the government with all its bodies nor the civil society with all its organizations is capable of solving community problems in the absence of the people of interest.

We don't consider people of interest as target groups. Rather, they are partners with BLACD and with the local and governance organizations in setting and achieving goals. Moreover, they aren't only partners but they are the reason and wheel to achieve success.

The literature of civil society sheds light on this meaning. It considers that one of the criteria of civil society work success is seen in its ability to put an end to the job of the delegate or the steward. This is also clear in its ability to empower people of interest to participate in inducing positive change in their status not working on their behalf as stewards and delegates. In this regard, our reference is the parable that says if you see someone who is hungry, don't give him a fish but teach him how to fish.

Charity with all its shapes may temporarily provide help in pain relief but it never succeeds in healing an illness or combat a disease.

We think that the role of civil society and local governance bodies is to enhance linkages with the local people and work with them to change the

environment that causes their pains and create a new environment that meets their needs.

Civil work, in its essence, isn't organizations that play the role of the ultimate legal representative of people of interest. Rather it is a process that empowers the different categories to express their opinion, be organized, change and participate. All of these are goals that couldn't be achieved by a civil work that takes one direction while the other local governance organization takes another direction. The sound relation between them could be similar to the relation between the two wings that no bird can fly without.

This is affirmed by the belief of the association to focus all its efforts in working with marginalized groups. Solving their problems needs joint efforts of all the concerned parties by creating cooperation frameworks, establishing networks with the different bodies and coordinating efforts in order to achieve the goals of the association.

It could be said that Better Life succeeded in establishing partnership relations with different authorities and creating communication channels that helped in implementing activities. The response of the concerned parties towards Better Life efforts was limited.

It is noted that these networks are created on different levels. There is good coordination on all levels. This, at the end, serves the goals of the association to be achieved through the efforts of: The association of environmental and health development, Development Support Center that provides technical assistance for Better Life, Salama Moussa Association, Minia University, the National council for women and the National council for maternity and childhood and also on the level of the local authority and the local assembly in the village.

On the level of the local leaders, the Association realizes the major role played by these leaders and their ability to deliver the mission of the association to the beneficiaries.

The association's role isn't limited to convince people with the importance and usefulness of the project but it also seeks to gain the necessary knowledge on the local communities, build the capacity in order to encourage individuals to work together as a team, stimulate them to

participate, follow up and take the necessary procedures to implement projects.

May be the most important is the relation between these leaders and the executive authorities whether religious or tribal which help in overcoming the difficulties and barriers to implement the project.

The work of the association receives the support of these leaders because it serves the whole community through being concerned with the categories that need support.

Accordingly, such leaders express their willingness to work and cooperate with the association. Sometimes, the association may invite people to gather, if necessary, in order to facilitate the association work and advertise the projects among villagers and help in providing a place for the gathering of the attendees.

On the local assembly level, the association works on opening communication channels and finding ways for cooperation with the local council members as an authority that has a role in the process of decision making. The efforts of the association in this regard, led to activate the participation of the council's members, maximizing their role and building bridges of trust and cooperation.

This is due to the quality of activities implemented by the association and the target groups. It also provides evidence that these activities cope with the needs of the communities it serves.

On the level of the trade union leaders, the association created communication and cooperation channels with those leaders. Most of them aren't official leaders but they are fully aware with the professional laws and problems because they are at the end working in this profession.

Thus, the association provided the leaders with knowledge and experience on the meaning of the trade union work, its role to improve the conditions of workers and achieving a number of gains. It also connected them with the general trade union, Minia workers union and the quarry division. It also succeeded in mobilizing those who work in fishing and quarry to ask for the same issues.

## **Second: Mission**

The success of Better Life in achieving its mission is linked with the development of community participation in developing local communities, partnership relations with the local people assemblies, local governing bodies and all the other concerned parties on the regional and national levels.

“Better Life for Comprehensive Development” is a non profit and non governmental organization. It was established in 1995 in Minia governorate as an organization focusing on local issues.

The association focuses on the east of the Nile villages affiliated to Minia and Samalot districts, the poorest districts in Minia governorate.

The association started as a company in commendams. Then it was registered in the Ministry of Social Solidarity as non profit civil association according to law 184 for year 2002.

The association headquarter is in Minia. The association works on establishing relations and cooperation networks with other active NGOs in Minia. It provides these NGOs with technical assistance. The activity of the association focuses on:

- Meeting the basic needs of the poor.
- Organizing, raising the awareness and connecting poor with available local resources.
- Advocating rights of the marginalized groups.

## **The goals of the association:**

The association is based on philosophy and vision that form its goals and activity. It believes that the targeted deprived categories are active members in the development process. They are able to assess their needs and bear responsibility. They aren't just recipients and beneficiaries of the association programs. Accordingly, changing and improving their conditions won't be achieved except through supporting and maximizing their participation. Thus, the main goal of the association is to find ways to empower the marginalized poor categories in order to ensure the programs and activities success and sustainability.

## **Programs and activities:**

The association works on achieving its goals through a number of programs and activities:

- Improving the working conditions of quarry workers sector.
- Putting an end to child labor in quarries.
- Improving the working conditions of fishermen.
- Providing small loans for women.
- Connecting potable water and latrines to the poor villages' inhabitants.
- Combating female genital mutilation.
- Improving housing conditions.

As for the advocacy and awareness program, it is a major component in all the association's programs. Raising the community and decision makers awareness with the needs and problems of these categories and raising the awareness of the target groups with their rights are partial parts of the association's goals.

## **The target groups:**

The association seeks that its services and activities reach the deprived and marginalized groups in Minia especially in east of the Nile villages because these are the poorest areas. This includes:

- Quarry workers and their families.
- Fishermen and their families.
- Poor villages inhabitants especially women.

The total number of beneficiaries of the different programs is 14538 among whom are 10000 quarry workers and 600 fishermen. The number of families that benefited from the projects of connecting potable water, latrines and housing is 4498. The association works in 14 villages east of the Nile.

It could be said that Better Life Association with all the other organizational shapes succeeded in achieving its goal in this relative short time. It was also able to define the target groups using scientific ways. It provided different services for such target groups. Light should be shed on its role in providing carefully selected activities to empower and encourage these categories to participate. The association also played an important role through its efforts

in advocacy and mobilization campaigns to raise issues and problems of the marginalized groups on the persons in charge and the decision makers on the local levels in order to adopt such issues. The association was able to raise the awareness of the target groups, providing new concepts in addition to its contribution in building the capacities of the target groups by providing the necessary trainings, technical and financial support in the phases of selecting the organizational shapes that most suit their needs taking into consideration their independence and ensuring effective participation of each group in this selection.

The mission and programs of Better Life Association are related to the nature and demographical formation of Minia governorate taking into consideration that Minia and other southern governorates are exposed to the passive effects of the known threefold namely poverty, unemployment and illiteracy. These problems play a role in defining programs, target groups, the attitudes of the partnership relations with other NGOs, leaderships and local peoples' assemblies. This will be discussed later in details after extensive presentation for the nature of the social and economic formation of Minia governorate that is the scope of work of Better Life activity.

### **Third: The economic and social status of Minia governorate**

Minia is located in a middle point between Upper and Lower Egypt. Thus, it works as a linking point. Regarding its boarders, from the north is the governorate of Bani Suef and Assuit from the south. The total size of Minia is 56587 squared km. As for the inhabited area it is 211118.05 squared Km. The population density is 1410/ squared Km. The total population of Minia is 3.8 millions (year 2002). Females represent 49.1 of the total population. 79% of the population live in rural area that represents 1837.8 squared Km. The percentage of natural increase is 2.5%. The governorate is divided into 9 administrative districts namely Magaga, Edwa, Bani Mazar, Matai, Samalout, Minia, Abou Korkas, Malawi and Dier Mawas. It has 57 village local unites followed by 346 villages and 1429 small villages.

Minia is one of the poorest governorates. Most of the statistics point that the ratio of poverty increases in Upper Egypt especially in rural areas. Poverty is the main barrier for human investment and raising the economic growth rates. The available statistics of year 1995 show that poverty ratio is 25% among Minia population between 15 – 29 years old. This ratio increases in rural areas compared with urban. There are fears that poverty may increase

due to the continuity of applying the economic reform program and the structural adaptation. This may push thousand of farmers to work in quarries or as cleanliness workers in cities after the issuance of the law that defines the relation between the owners and renting farmers and leaving the land they were cultivating.

One of the other problems in Minia, and national wide, is unemployment. Since 1948, the government wasn't able to appoint graduates. This led to the aggravation of unemployment problem especially among university, high institutes and technical secondary schools graduates. Unemployment among these categories is almost 50%. Unemployment ratio increased due to tourism recession in the governorate.

There is a high ratio of illiterates especially among females in rural areas. Minia ranks one of the top governorates on the national level in the quality gap of education. The illiteracy ratio among the population is 55%. The ratio of child labor (6 -14) years old is about 31%. Thus, it ranks second on the national level after Fayoum governorates.

East of the Nile villages are the poorest areas regarding the agricultural resources due to the nature of the land that is surrounded by the Nile from the west and the desert from the east. The narrow agriculture land and the poor ownership in these villages pushed people to work in quarries in the surrounding mountains.

#### **Fourth: local development**

In order to improve the condition of this environment and empower citizens to participate in the development process, Better Life works with local communities since 1997. It focuses on strengthening and empowering the target groups in order to have better quality of life. The association follows a number of strategies among which calling upon the targets rights by establishing entities that express their opinions or strengthening the existed entities in order to express their interests and advocate their rights.

One of the strategies used by the association is partnership with the local people's assemblies as one of the major connecting points between the executive authority, the local population and the elected monitoring authority responsible for monitoring the administrative authority whether from the efficiency of management or the justice of resources distribution.

## **People local assembly in Egyptian law**

It is a monitoring body. It is formed through election to monitor the establishing and management of the local utilities. It also contributes in implementing national plans and monitoring the different administrative authorities relevant to the local unit represented by the local assembly.

### **The scope of work of the local people's assemblies in villages;**

- Developing a plan for the village from the housing, social and economic points of view.
- Developing a budget and closing account project.
- Suggesting people participation methods through efforts and self potentials within the village boarders to raise its level.
- Spread agricultural awareness to improve and diverse agricultural production.
- Suggesting the establishment of public utilities in the village.
- Working on combating illiteracy, family planning and youth sponsoring.

### **The rights and duties of members:**

First: the right to present suggestions: “to ask the chairman of the assembly to insert certain issue in the agenda of the assembly a week ahead.

Second: the right to raise questions and issues in discussions.

Third: empowering the local assembly members to practice their scope of work and facilitate this for them by:

- No member is asked about his opinions or statements during meetings and discussions in the assembly or its committees.
- The concerned authorities are to notify the local people's assembly with any procedures against any of its members forty eight hours after taking any procedure.
- If the local peoples assembly member was a staff member in the government administrative body, the local people's assembly should be notified before transferring him from his job.

- The authority to which the local people's assembly member affiliate should facilitate performing his membership duties including attending the assembly and committees' meetings and paying field visits.

Fourth:

- The local peoples' assembly members aren't to be appointed in the jobs of local administrative units or transferred to such position while being members except by the approval of two thirds of the specialized local assembly members.
- Contracting between the local unit and any of the members is banned.
- The local assembly member shouldn't attend any of the assembly or committees' session if he or any of his relatives or kins of the fourth class have any personal interest in the raised issue.
- If a local people's assembly member is absent from attending the sessions or committees for three successive times or four of the sessions in one round without any accepted excuse, the assembly should issue a decree to invite the member for a hearing session. If the assembly isn't convinced with the reasons behind his absence, then the assembly is to issue a decree that such member is resigned with the majority of third of the assembly members.

#### **Fifth: local development and leadership through participation**

In his election program, President Hosny Mubarak called for expansion in applying decentralization in management. He also called for authority transfer to the localities in order to reduce burden of the central government and expand citizens' participation in the process of decision making.

Mr. President pointed that the steps towards political reform includes issuance of a new law for local development... Mr. President once again repeated his election promise in other statements.

The main known reason behind postponing the election of localities is the government desire to elect according to the prejudices of the new law.

In fact many of the civil society organizations, activists of the political work, leaders of local development and local peoples' assemblies have seriously criticized the present law affirming that any other new law should prompt

interaction and independence of the elected local people's assemblies. In this context, they focused on:

- Local assemblies' elections should be supervised by juridical authority in order to ensure transparency and availability of equity chances to all citizens and that administration doesn't interfere in the process of election.
- Allocate some chairs for women in the local assemblies according to the rule of positive discrimination that target protecting all the weak and marginalized parties and maximize their participation.

In fact there is a final crucial request, some of the concerned parties think that allocating some chairs for women violates the principle of equal chances while another group, including Better Life Association, thinks that modern international legalization applies the rule of positive discrimination in order to apply this principle in particular. The Egyptian legalization itself uses it in the elections of sports clubs and some syndicates when allocating some chairs for young men.

- The right of the elected local councils to present interpellation and motion of non- confidence from the executive officers if needed (in case of fatal mistakes resulted from mismanagement, deviation or corruption).
- To separate between local executive councils, as governing authorities and elected local people's assemblies as people monitoring authorities so as that it is not allowed to gather between occupying positions in high administration and local assemblies position to prevent conflict of interests. It is illogical that big officers wear two masks: the mask of government and administration and the mask of monitoring.

## **Sixth: Better Life perspective to local development**

It has been mentioned before that BLACD believes in partnership relations between civil society organizations, local development and people monitoring associations. It also calls for expansion of the scope of decentralization, focusing on the principle of self management based on people participation. BLACD thinks that progress in this regard is a necessity for both executive authorities and people monitoring authorities.

*First on the executive authority level:*

The concept of decentralization points to the general process by which the political authorities and executive operations are transferred to the governmental authorities on local level.

*Decentralization has three main benefits*

First: the local administrative leaders provide better and more comfortable environment. They put the governmental authorities directly in reach of the citizens they serve.

Second: decentralization creates more opportunities for citizens' participant and contribution

Third: the local governments could be more responding and adopting with the local situations which will lead to more interaction.

Better Life adopts this attitude that calls for developing decentralization and expansion of local governing authorities, and people monitoring as the best means to achieve development and community participation.

Scholars have divided decentralizations into four general parts

Surrendering, delegation, no centralization and divestiture

Surrendering: is transferring authority to the self dependent or semi self dependent local governments.

Delegation: is to transfer responsibilities, services and management to the local governments and organizations.

No centralization is to delegate the implementation of national programs to the low branches in the government

Divestiture means transferring the services and governmental organizations into companies or private organizations.

A few number of governments in Arab countries think or implement any of the decentralization for the interest of localities.

*On the local people level*

Localities are the first step towards democracy practicing. Monitoring is the first step towards democratic development. Most of the developed countries

rulers started as elected rulers in states in their countries. There are states parliament that have genuine monitoring authorities.

The essence of democracy is to allow all citizens to participate in the decision making process, empower the weakest parties to effectively participate in political life and monitoring the performance of executive authorities. Also the essence of democracy is to empower community to achieve justice in resources distribution and mobilizing all its powers for the sake of development.

One of the common mistakes among Arab elected is that this task couldn't be achieved except through central levels. This mistake is relevant to neglecting work on grass root levels, weakness of initiatives based on local work. The experience gained through history shows that maximizing the citizens' participation in affecting general policy is relevant to their power to affect the process of decision making in low levels.

The safety and fair election, competitiveness, building cadres and discovering natural leaders could be successful if started by localities. It should be added that strictly facing corruption couldn't be started without localities.

Moreover local activity based on working among inhabitants provides good opportunity to develop new models of leadership depending on creativity, innovation, team work, empowerment, transparency and accountability. Better Life is bias all these attitudes working on achieving them

Better Life Association for comprehensive Development  
encourages local communities on political participation.

### Leadership models

In order to understand the characteristics of leadership that fully supports the innovation and learning abilities, it is useful to compare between the traditional leadership and the promising leadership

<b><i>Traditional leadership</i></b>	<b><i>Promising leadership</i></b>
Tends towards authority	Tends towards participation
Tends to hierarchy	Tends to empowerment

Elective	Democratic
Tends to monopoly of information	Encourages accessibility and participation
Concerned with outcomes only	Concerned with people
Tends to individual work	Tends to team work
Vertical concerns	Horizontal concerns
Manipulative	Transparent
Believes in natural characteristics towards leadership	Its leadership comes from practice.

Traditional leadership uses the authority over organization and members. It creates an environment based on orders and domination. On the contrary, the promising leadership uses authority to empower organization and members to participate and contribute to the top of their efficiency. This creates an environment that encourages cooperation and learning.

In addition, the promising leadership believes that thinking, renovation and communication are necessary in order to build intellectual and spirit resources necessitated by long term nature of the campaigns that affect policies. It is essential for leaders to be creative, supportive in order to take initiatives, create an environment that supports advocacy and other campaigns.

(See the governance manual issued by the Development Support Center for Training and Consultation).

## **Sixth: Local development and governance**

The perspective of Better Life on local development and community participation belongs to adopting the criteria of governance based on expansion of group participation, monitoring and bridging the gap between the administrative bodies and the people of interests, and the authority in top of hierarchy that isn't subject to accountability and a group that takes orders.

The types and shapes of governing and the relation with GOs and civil society organizations became an urgent issue while trying to inspire a model of governance that practices authority and accepts the principle of accountability in addition to commitment to transparency and empowering parties of the community to be able to contribute in policy making in order

to achieve highest efficiency in management and fairly distribution of resources.

In our Arab communities there is no need to seek to embody these values in GOs only, but in all the community organizations. This may constitute an impetuous in the development of Arab communities, owning political, civil, economic and social freedoms on top of which is the right to participate in policy making through wide representing, empowering and effective shapes that could respond to the interests of the weakest parties.

Governance (according to the manual issued by the Development Support Center, written by Dr. Alaa and Hala Shoukeralla and the scholars in the center) is an expression of equity between two parties the ruler and the group. It is any ruler who practices authority and a group that owns the ability of accountability. There is a list of indicators on governance that includes: fairness, transparency, accountability, monitoring, respecting human rights, participation, legalization, diversity, different shapes of effective and valid representation, having an efficient and effective civil authority. The center has mentioned these definitions.

Some definitions:

Oxford dictionary: [check the dictionary](#)

Developing countries center for researches and studies

Ruling, in its essence, is managing the government affairs. It consists of mechanisms, processes, organizations used by citizens in an individual or collective way to support their interests, expressing their concerns, fulfilling their commitments and settling their disputes. In order that such mechanisms and authoritative organizations to be effective from the community point of view that should have the following characteristics:

Participation, transparency, equity, law domination, response (to the interest of all parties) concern with consensus, accountability, strategic view, efficiency and effectiveness

Professor Mostafa Kamel El Sayed

Ruling: the political part of development

Developing countries center for researches and studies – 2003

Arab Human Development Report

The good governance, from the humanitarian development perspective, is the governance that supports, enhances and protects human welfare. It is

based upon expansion of human abilities, choices, opportunities, economic, social and political freedoms especially for the most needy and marginalized individuals in community.

The good governance systems, representing all people's categories completely seek to ensure the interests of all people's interests through poverty alleviation and combating deprivation.

Poor empowerment requires the government that is keen on all citizens' interests means endorsing policies and programs that provide poor with abilities to give them the right to vote in all decisions concerned with their lives.

Good governance is that governance characterized by participation, transparency and accountability. It should be effective, fair, enhancing law's domination and ensures good governance.

According to this definition adopted by the center, the Arab group, participation in the project of good governances highlights the concept of participation as a third pivots in relation between the ruler or the representative authority that practices authority and the group that practices the rights of accountability.

The relation between the models of good governance should be sharp relation between two parties where one part chooses their representatives (the governing authority). Then every party goes on its way till the hour of accountability after the end of the representing round

The importance of participation is shown in the principles of accountability. It should be taken into consideration that despite the fact that accountability is important, it isn't enough to achieve good governance. The efficiency of leadership is not concerned with this party alone. It is concerned with the ability of policies and mechanisms to mobilize the power of the group to achieve goals, the ability of the used policies to enable permanent participation and continuous monitoring in order to ensure the efficiency and fairness of resources usage and distribution.

The concept of participation seeks to bridge the gap between leadership, group, inventing other shapes that are not hierarchy to practice authority that is not based on delegation or summoning a group to casual outward

participation. But to invent shapes and mechanisms that ensure group participation in decision making, implementing plans on other words ensure levels of participation in authority.

## **Mechanisms that ensure accountability**

### *Transparency*

It means making all information of practicing leadership available for the group members, stakeholders and public opinion. It is the ability of these parties to access freely to information of the activities of certain organizations. Transparency couldn't be achieved through good intention. It is based on legalization and bylaws that ensures the freedom of information rotation, tools and mechanisms through which this rotation is achieved as newsletters, magazines, reports and information published on the website of the organization.

Activating the transparency principles isn't limited to financial issues regarding budgets and expenditures only, but it includes all that is relevant to the association or organizations activities whether public or formal

### *Effective participation*

It ensures the participation of the group members in making and monitoring policies through contributing in the qualitative activities, newsletters, general assemblies, developing strategic plans and other activities.

### *Empowerment*

It targets the scope of the group to empower its members to effectively participates in policies. It also aims at the association activity with the target groups that deals with these categories as effective partners in the community capable of expressing their interests in addition to being able to own mechanisms and tools of expression.

The highest shapes of empowerment could be achieved through the ability of those categories in affecting policies and participating in distributing and benefiting from resources.

Empowerment is to work with people not on behalf of them, working with them as a partner not agent. It is working with them to change social conditions that caused problems and working with them to induce the target

change without imagining that one could induce this change on behalf of them.

Among the main principles of accountability:

- The type of authority distribution: it includes structure, principles, mechanisms of decision making, shapes of interaction between leadership and members, types of interaction within leadership and rotation.
- Fairness and prevention of conflict of interests: it means no manipulation and not attaining one's own interests depending on his power.
- Preserving resources: it includes perseverance of human and materialistic resources, good management and developing

It is one of the rights of the local peoples assembly to raise questions and issues for discussion

## **Seventh: Agenda of joint work with local assemblies**

Based upon Better Life perspective for local development, public monitoring, community participation, it has translated its vision into acts. It sought to expand the partnership relations with local peoples' assemblies as the natural entities in the local communities.

BLACD established deep relation with local peoples assembly of Nazlet Hussien and Bani Khaled as partners in development. The people's assembly is the citizen voice, eye of the community that follows up governmental resources and management.

Due to the importance of this entity, BLACD started since 2005 to work with these two people's assemblies that represent 12 villages east of the Nile in Minia and Samalout in order to activate and develop the role of the local people's assemblies to express problems and interests of the marginalized communities and categories in order to empower them to access resources, monitor and involve women as members.

The idea was that to train and hold workshops for the local people's assemblies "a monitoring entity that represents the communities, it lacks the

mechanisms to be able to play an effective role. BLACD was the first to deal with this category and empower them to play their real role.

## **Goals**

The cooperation started with meeting to discuss joint fields of cooperation, assess training needs and discuss the goals of working with them. These goals could be summed up in raising members' awareness in the target communities with their roles and issues, being acquainted with the law of localities, discovering the space of available activation, train the members on its usage, select and start a number of advocacy campaigns in participation with local assemblies in communities. These campaigns should be implemented and followed up annually. It also aims at studying the available governmental resources of the local communities and how to reach them. Another goal was to develop a mechanism for accountability between communities and local assemblies and be acquainted with the necessity of political participation of women. In addition, the idea of women participation in local assemblies should be spread.

## ***Workshops***

A number of workshops have been conducted on issues like needs assessment, planning, advocacy, localities law, women political participation, available governmental resources and how to use them and governance.

These trainings were convened by a number of specialists each in his/her own field. It resulted in developing dialogue and discussion in assemblies sessions, focusing on community issues. The two assemblies adopted activities like campaigns that are important to the local communities to be represented by every assembly.

Based on the recognition of both assemblies with the issues of interest for citizens, training were directed to the culture of peace, tolerance and accepting the other. These are the hour's issues. Every assembly should hold a number of community, youth and leaders meetings in the attendance of specialized speakers, executive and public leaders. Part of these sessions was dialogue between participants and speakers. The level of dialogue varied between explanation, disagreeing, asking for rights. The response was impressive.

In the framework of governance, an executive plan was developed in order to apply the mechanisms of governance, issue a decree by the name of Nazlet Hussien assembly on these concepts and developing an action plan to activate public participation. In a distinguished pilot initiative, the women of the local communities were invited to attend the meetings of the sub committees in order to tell their opinions, without having the right to vote, in order to activate women role in community and political participation.

The joint work between BLACD and both assemblies still in action in order to develop the target local communities in order to activate and develop the role of the local peoples' assemblies in order to convey their problems, the interests of the communities and marginalized categories and empowering them to access and monitor resources.

In this framework:

The members of the local peoples' assemblies of Nazlet Hussien and Bani Khaled are trained on needs assessment, planning, localities law, advocacy, women political participation, available governmental resources and how to use it and governance

In addition a magazine titled “Bassema” smile was issued. Part of it handled the local peoples assembly of Nazlet Hussien.

Two action groups during the training on rights' module

Work strategies and trends

- Raising the awareness of the local assemblies in the target communities with their roles and community issues

Working with local people's assembly, this structure formed by community without any help, strength or concern, BLACD started to work with Nazlet Hussien assembly members in order to benefit from their experience, activate and strengthen their roles in community. It also used this experiment in order to finalize work by involving Bani Khaled assembly through meetings and trainings in order to discuss problems and needs that will face their communities and how to activate their role. These meetings and trainings were conducted by Mr. Sameh Sief and Mr. Maher Boushera

- Being acquainted with the law of localities and exploring activating available fields and train the assemblies members on its use

The assembly was trained on the law of localities provided by Dr. Bahaa Fakry, chairman of the local assembly in Minia. It aimed at introducing the law of localities and its real role to the assembly. Then the following issues were raised and discussed: law of localities, bylaw of local people assembly and how to activate the role played by the assembly.

The aim behind such training was to establish deep relations between the governorate local assembly and the two assemblies east of the Nile. It also aimed at building strong links with the local assembly chairman. The discussion was rich and the trainer added useful information to the assembly members.

- Studying the governmental resources available in the local communities and how to reach and make use of them.

The members of the local assembly of Bani Khaled met with General Ali Mohamed, chairman of Samalout city. He defined the resources of the governmental income in general and Minia governorate in particular focusing on Samlout and how to distribute the budget on projects and turn quickly to the system of the emergency plan. Then an interactive dialogue took place between members and the general who gave them time to discuss with him.

The members of Nazlet Hussien local assembly met with the manager of the financial administration in Minia governorate Mr. Khalil Ibrahim. He explained the financial plan of Minia governorate for year 2007, the top ranking project, the services fund, how to use it and other practical examples. He focused on the role of the assembly's members in following up the requests presented to the governorate. Then there was a dialogue between attendees and the speaker who gave practical examples.

- Selecting, building, implementing and following up a number of campaigns in participation with the local assembly

The assemblies were trained on the nature of advocacy by Mr. Maher Boushera in April. Training aimed at introducing advocacy campaigns and its effect on policies. Then the assemblies were empowered with a number

of mechanisms of preparing advocacy campaigns. Actually, the assembly took actions in many urgent issues in the community east of the Nile.

The training included differentiating between the issues that need many steps for advocacy and the problems that could be solved in one step. Then, it was followed by training by the end of June in order to set definite issues for advocacy. A list was developed to include:

- The most urgent issues and the central point of the campaign.
- Logos, long and short terms.
- The stakeholders and how to be faced
- The comprehensive available opportunities including weak and strong elements
- Mobilization and build a grass root.

In August, training was held in order to develop an action plan to the advocacy campaign by Mr. Mokhatar Aziz. He trained the participants on mechanisms such as fourfold analysis. The participants were divided into groups in order to develop action plan. A workshop was planned to follow up the two assemblies in order to define an issue for advocacy campaign and develop the action plans.

#### *Local campaigns*

In the framework of implementing advocacy campaigns prepared by the local assemblies in participation with local communities and BLACD, an action plan was developed for every assembly. Both assemblies select the issue of tolerance, accepting the other and renouncing violence that started in May 2006. A public meeting was held in the village of Bani Khaled on democracy and introduction to the role of local people assembly. In this meeting Mr. Bahaa Fekhry the chairman of the local assembly in Minia and the chairman of Samlout spoke. Then it was followed by a discussion.

In Abou Felou a meeting was convened between Dr. Khalaf, chairman of social division in Faculty of Arts, Minia University on culture of peace, tolerance and accepting the other.

In Zawiat Sultan, a meeting for youth and local leaders was convened. In this meeting, Dr. Mahmoud Abd EL Rashid, the deputy of the faculty of

Arts for environment affairs, Minia University handled “Democracy and renouncing violence”.

In EL Hawarta, a meeting was held with youth on the integration of religions for the interest of the human being in which Sheikh Awad and Pastor Istafanous talked on tolerance of religions and deep relations.

The chairmen of the local units participated in these meetings which added a practical dimension to the discussion due to raising a number of issues, problems and solutions.

These meetings were followed by the participation of the local units to decorate villages' entrances. Heaps of wastes were removed. Trees were planted. The youth of the villages participated voluntary in these campaigns. Affirming the concept of tolerance and accepting the other, a football match for young who participated in the camps was held. Happiness was so clear on the participated teams whether the winner or the looser.

- Developing a mechanism for accountability between communities and local assemblies

This training was distinguished by having women representatives from local communities. Nazlet Hussien assembly was introduced to the necessity of capacity building, changing development from being charity to empowerment. Then they raise the issue of good governance and its mechanisms. A discussion was opened on these mechanisms in groups. By the end of the workshop, the members of the local assembly developed executive steps to implement the good governance in the coming period.

- Spreading the idea of women participation in local assemblies

Due to the view of east of the Nile communities to women namely that women couldn't participate in political aspects, women absence from local assemblies membership directed the association to introduce and raise issues that face women east of the Nile. BLACD also explained the role played by women in community an essential member. This training was conducted by Ms. Azza Soliman, lawyer and consultant in the center of new women issues. She presented the international agreements relevant to women rights, the necessity of involving her in all fields of life and political life in particular.

The training of the local assembly of Nazlet Hussien on the principles of good governance resulted in having an initiative to invite women elements, women representation, attending the sessions of the assembly's meeting and sharing opinions without having the right to vote, deepen women participation and being sure that her voice could reach the concerned parties.

- Training on human rights agreements and rights curricula

In working with both assemblies, a number of training needs, that weren't planned before, emerged. These needs were relevant to the assembly and the community like the curriculum based on rights. This training was prepared. In February and March 2006, the two assemblies were trained on the rights curriculum. The training was provided by the social and political activist Mr. Saber Barkat.

The training aimed at introducing human rights based on international agreements, stimulating the spirit of human rights among the assemblies' members and directing their attention to advocacy. So, it was conducted to meet a dire need in order to know what human rights are.

The entrance for the training on human rights was participation, development and human rights emerged due to the interaction between man and man and the rights are rights to all without discrimination.

The international covenant on social, cultural and economic rights was presented. Also the international covenant on political and civil rights through groups work to conclude to the rights mentioned in every article.

Then a discussion was held on the government obligations, the mechanisms that should be used by citizens to request their rights like monitoring, mobilizing, awareness and raising cases.

### **BLACD perspective towards women issue**

BLACD works with woman at different ages out of being convinced that women have the right to live as a human beings. She has many abilities and talents that make her capable of participating in different fields of life. She has sound intellect. She has the ability to work for long hours in various tasks without complain. She is equal to man. She is able to learn and work because woman reached the highest positions in learning and jobs.

So BLACD looks forward to make women a main partner beside man. Accordingly, BLACD believes that community with all its elements east of the Nile is fully aware with women rights in life especially political rights. The good environment should be available so that women could participate in politics. Women should be a basic member in local assemblies. If we say that the local assembly, with its men, is the voice of the community, where is the voice of woman in the assembly to express women problems east of the Nile? Where is this voice that translates her needs and expresses her opinion?

It is possible that woman becomes a member in the local assembly because she is a doctor, teacher, surgeon, lawyer, minister and judge. In spite of all these positions, the community still prevents women from participating in local assembly.

BLACD has two types of challenges. First is to convince the community with all its categories with women potential to help and encourage her to work in all fields.

The second is that; the cultural inheritance of East of the Nile doesn't give her confidence in her potentials and success. So BLACD supports women in order to affirm her confidence in herself, potentials, know her rights, responsibilities and fulfilling her mission in life. Woman is the main pivot for the success of the family and development of any community.

BLACD believes that women participation in community should be positive especially in political life. This by its turn will lead to the enhancement and development of community.

### **BLACD perspective to support campaigns**

BLACD adopts the definition provided by "Development Support Center" for advocacy, support or affecting policies. In spite of the different terminologies used, the essence of this definition points that advocacy or support campaigns are:

- The type of work that aims at changing policies, situations, governmental, associations or organizations programs.

- Systematic methodology process in order to maximize the impact and power in issues relevant to public interest.
- Developing a problem on top of the agenda, providing solution for this problem and building capacity in order to phrase both the problem and solution.
- It is a social changing process that affects the trends, social and power relations that support civil society and open new democratic horizons.

In the outset, it should be affirmed that the methodology of advocacy campaigns in order to affect policies that touch the interests of categories or individuals in order to save gains for them or to prevent harm that could infect it by new policies is an ancient methodology as old as the existence of different categories that have interests or stances to defend.

Egyptian history is full of campaigns conducted by different categories starting with Azhar scholars when they complained the governing of Mamluke to Mohamed Ali till Orabi, Mostafa Kamel, Saad Zhagloul till all the students and workers movements that phrased and expressed requests through advocacy trying to achieve them.

### **The historic development of the methodology:**

It is natural that this concept has more developed in the western communities because of the ancient history of parliamentary democracy. For example the term advocacy is driven from the Latin word advocate namely the lawyer or advocator. The term lobbying is driven from the word lobby which means reception or entrance. It could be recognized that this term refers to the waiting of the disadvantaged different categories and lobby groups waiting for Parliamentary members while entering the Parliament in order to present their request and gain legalizations that achieve their requests or stop others that may hurt them.

(for more information see the advocacy manual issued by Development Support Center).

According to this perspective advocacy curriculum is one of the methods that aims at the end to induce positive change in the status of one of the community categories. This methodology is different than others for it focuses on changing the surrounding circumstances of the concerned category instead of focusing on this category. Accordingly, this

methodology differentiates between “condemning the victim”, as being disadvantaged and the responsible for this problem. So light is shed on raising their awareness or changing their trends.

## **What's new?**

Dr. Alaa Shukrallah believes that the new isn't having or using what we will call “advocacy campaigns”. The new is the quality development to the extent of being concerned with this methodology and expansion in usage by multi literal parties in the civil society, social movements all over the world and in the development countries. These parties are weakest historically. But now they are presenting themselves as an effecting party, adopting increasingly this strategy as a means to affect and express themselves. Thus, giving attention to work on its understanding and evaluating their experiments for the sake of development and maximizing its effect.

It is useful to analyze some of the changes going on in the international arena that contributed towards this trend. It gave some new characteristics. In spite that some of the civil society organizations adopt the strategy of advocacy, and the rights methodology instead of the service and charity, still the concept of deputy and elite penetrates in these organizations whether on purpose or without.

Even within adopting the concept of rights and advocacy instead of service and charity concept, the question that should be raised is how to do it, what is the position of this category, or the wide categories that have interest?

Should we do this on their behalf? (delegates)

Should we do it through them? (using them)

Should we do it with them? (participation)

Success in applying these alternatives is not easy. Many factors affect it among which are the maturity of the social movement, its ability to express the categories they represent.

The main challenge, from our point of view, is this trend or methodology applied by CSOs towards social categories that depends on or leads to empowerment? Or does it increase their marginalizing, robbing its independent power whatever are the good intentions? The concept of empowerment doesn't depend on helping these categories to gain rather it focuses on the process that helps it to be aware, organized and capable of expressing itself.

Any way, we could say that:

First: there is good experience from leading advocacy campaigns, some achieved success. Others failed. This experience didn't get genuine evaluation effort to get use of the learnt lessons.

Second: the operations and advocacy campaigns in general were spontaneous, without methodological frames and tools that enable such campaigns to achieve definite successes.

### **Ninth: introduction to the leaders and achievements of the local assemblies of Nazlet Hussien and Bani Khaled**

The leaders of Bani Khaled local assembly

The local assembly of Bani Khaled includes the villages of (El Sararia, Bani Khaled, Gabel EL Tir, Dir Gabel El Tir and the affiliated villages)

Name	Role in the assembly	Job	Village
Saad Mahmoud Mohamed Rostom	Chairman	General manager in Samalout secondary	Bani Khaled
Mohamed Hussien Maheny Youssef	Deputy	Retired	EL Sararia
Nagy Abou EL Ala Abd EL Ghany	Secretary	Local unit	El Sararia
Anter Abd EL Fatah Abd EL Reheman	Member	Peasant	Gabel El Tir
Anter Abd EL Razek Nada	Member	Peasant	EL Sararia
Gad Ahmed Ibrahim	Member	Business	Bani Khaled
Fayez Welson Maksimous	Member	Local unit	Dir Gabel El Tir
Singar Abdel Neem Abd EL Ghani	Member	Iron company	Bani Khaled
Bassem Fergany Zaky	Member	Iron company	Bani Khaled
Ali Mohamed Mohamed Ali	Member	Bani Ghany village council chairman	El Sararia
Mohamed Adawi Ahmed	Member	Local unit	El Sararia
Ali Ibrahim Hassen	Member	Peasant	Gabel El Tir
Said Bassem Mohamed	Member	Local unit	El Sararia
Mohamed Hassen Ahmed	Member	Peasant	El Sararia
Essam Othman Afify	Member	Business	Bani Khaled
Nady Kassab Abd EL Ghany	Member	Teacher	EL Sararia
Youssef Abd EL Naiem Abd EL Wahab	Member	Iron company	El Sararia
Samir Mohamed Ismail	Member	Business	Bani Khaled
Fisal Abdallah Ahmed	Member	Business	El Sararia
Fasieh Mahmoud Ahmed	Member	Teacher	Bani Khaled
Nageh Abd EL Hafiez Ali	Member	Supplying inspector	El Sararia
Gamal Helmy Ibrahim	Member	Teacher	Gabel EL Tir
Mohamed Mohamed AbdEL Razek	Member	Teacher	Gabel EL Tir

Sabah Habib Eid	Member	School principal	Dir Gabel EL Tir
Nabil Kamel Hassen	Member	Supervisor	El Sararia

There are 24 members in the assembly. Its venue is the premises of the local unit of Bani Khaled. According to the general policy of the government and the jurisdiction of laws and monitoring regulations on different public utilities and works that are in the village and following up the plans of local development, there is no bylaw to the system of work in the assembly

### Achievements of the past two years

Potable water	Supporting the villages nets with more than 5km of pipes. Establishing a big water container from Dir Gabel El Tir to Gabel El Tir
Roads	Finalizing the road that links between the villages of the local unit south Gabel EL tir to the end of El Sararia in the north to the road that leads to the desert highway Paving the roads of the villages of this local unit
Sewage	Purchasing a tractor and scavenging
Education	Establishing schools (basic education school in Bani Khaled) A basic education school in northern Gabel EL Tir will be built
Electricity	The housing expansions and the deprived area will be equipped by street lamps.
Other buildings	Establishing a development center in El Sararia village Establishing an administration building to the rural youth center of El Sararia.

### The futuristic plan of year 2006 – 2007 the emergency plan

Village	Projects	Cost in LE
EL Sararia	Finalizing the replacement of the 5 inches water pipe by 6 inches plastic pipes, building rooms, installing fire taps and purchasing 4 inches plastic pipes to support the deprived areas (new)	75000
	Purchasing electricity stuff	75000
	Paving the road that leads to the new cemetery of Muslims east of the	70000

	administrative building of the youth center. Finalizing the pavement of the road that leads to the north of the village in front of the home of Mr. Mohamed Mahmoud Maroafe	
Bani Khaled village	Finalizing the school of Bani Khaled for basic education and the surrounding walls	150000
	Purchasing 4inches plastic pipes for support making rooms and installing of fire taps	50000
	Purchasing stuff to light the main streets in the village.	20000
Dir Gabel EL Tir village	Finalizing the pavement of the road that leads to the Swiss school	50000
	Making a collective septic tank outside the village	10000
	Purchasing lamps for streets	50000
	Supporting youth center	20000
Gabel EL Tir village	Potable water of the northern and southern Gabel EL Tir village	80000
	Purchasing plastic pipes of 4 inches, making rooms, installing fire taps, purchasing lamps for the village	40000
	Paving roads: To finalize the pavement of Gabel El Tir road that is 350 meters starting from the bakery of Faleh Abou Taleb till the house of Abd EL Rehaman Abd EL Fatah Finalizing the pavement of the road of Abd EL Ghani village starting from the village entrance. Its length is 200 meters Paving the road from the front of Sheik Mohy EL Din Omran, In Gabel El Tir to the mosque. Its length is 250 meters	100000

The projects that are inserted in SHAROUK plan for year 2006 /2007

1. Renovating and establishing an educational building in El Sararia primary school.

2. Providing 40 street lamps with stuff and lamps + 150 lamps for the street lamps in the main streets of the villages affiliated to this local unit.
3. 2 km potable water pipes (4 inches) + 2 Km iron pipes with stuff + 1 6inches plastic pipe with stuff in order to provide the deprived areas.

Needs of the villages of the local unit of Bani Khaled Samalout	
Education	<p>Establishing a secondary school</p> <p>Establishing a technical school</p> <p>Establishing a basic education school for El Sararia village or an education building</p> <p>Finalizing the school of ezbet El Abid affiliated to Gabel EL TIR</p> <p>Finalizing the basic education school in Bani Khaled</p> <p>Finalizing the southern Gabel El TIR education</p> <p>Doing all the necessary maintenance works in the old schools of the villages and providing them with new furniture.</p>
Electricity	<p>Replacing the uncovered wires of the electricity net with safer wires.</p> <p>Finalizing the installation of the lamps in the deprived areas and the roads that lead to the deserts highway.</p> <p>Installing electric cells with engines and providing an engine for every village</p>
Bridges	Building bridges so that cars could pass on the flood plain in Gabel El Tir and el Sararia
Health services	<p>Establishing a hospital in El Sararia in order to serve a number of villages.</p> <p>Make the necessary renovations for the units of the villages</p> <p>Providing the necessary medication and vaccines against scorpion and snakes</p>
Youth and sports	Establishing a developed youth center in each of the local unit village
Transportation	To have a bus that links between the villages of the local unit and Minia
Communication and computers	Establishing a computer training center
Religious	Establishing Azhar institute (primary and preparatory) to

affairs	serve the villages of this local unit and to provide imams to the mosques of the village
Environment	Providing waste and scavenging tanks
Security	To provide 2 equipped fire engines
Supplies	To increase the quota of flour in order to meet the needs of the citizens.

*Following are some of the general problems in the villages of the unit:*

- Disapproval on connecting utilities (electricity and water) to the houses built on the government properties implementing article 19 stipulated in the bylaws of rules of using the government properties, local units issued by local people's assembly of Minia, legal affairs committee and endorsed according to resolution no 303 for year 2004 issued by Mr. General. Hassen Himada, ex Minia governor as follows: Not to agree on connecting utilities "water and electricity" for the pieces of land occupied by houses that don't pay fees for the sake of using. Such relation is not renting. The local unit could take this piece of land at any time in case of need to establish public interest project after the approval of the local people's assembly.

Approving to connect utilities is carried out in case that the person who uses this land, purchased it. All the villages are with the scope of Bani Khaled local unit. Most of them are pieces owned by Minia. All these houses should pay fees that preceded the issuance of decree number 303 for year 2004 and its bylaw.

Accordingly the procedures to connect utilities in the local unit villages stop because all of them are owned by the government.

The assembly called on the concerned parties and persons in charge in the governorates on top of whom is Minia governor and the chairman of the People's local assembly to approve connecting utilities as what was used before. Till deciding on the purchasing requests with the concerned authorities and working to solve the complains of the citizens on this regard, forming a committee to enlist these pieces of land and estimating prices, facilitating the procedures of selling for those who are living on it because this is urgent.

Members of the local assembly of Nazlet Hussien

Name	Role in the assembly	Job	Village
Abd EL Salam Ali Kafafi	Chairman	School principal	El Hawarta
Gamal Mokhtar Abd EL Aleem	Deputy	MOE	Sawada
Ahmed Riad Assem	Member	Peasant	El Hawarta
Hussien Mohamed Abd EL Halim	Member	MOE	El Hawarta
Mohamed Shehata Abd EL Aziz	Chairman of the housing committee	Local unit	Zawiat Sultan
Shehata Mahfouz Hassen	Chairman of supplying committee	Grinding company	Zawiat Sultan
Hasanien Abd EL Hakim	Member	Waqf	Sawada
Essam Kamel Sayed	Chairman of planning and budget committee	MOE	Nazlet EL Shorafaa
Abd EL Kafy Mohamed Ali	Chairman of the social affairs committee	Social solidarity	Abou Flaw
Gamal Mohamed Ali	Chairman of the national security committee	Monuments	EL Dawadia
Mahmoud Mohamed Zaki	Member	MOE	Nazlet Hussien
Mahmoud Mohamed Ibrahim	Member	MOE	Tehna El Gabel
Badawi Shehata Mohamed	Member	Cement factory	Nazlet Hussien
Mohamed Abd EL Hakim Youssef	Member	Agriculture directorate	EL Dawadia
Makram Ayad Barsoum	Member	Local unit	Nazlet Hussien
Adly Kaliny Henien	Member	Peasant	Nazlet Ebied
Ayad Awadallah Khalil	Member	Peasant	Nazlet Fargalleh
Zaid Mohamed Tolba	Member	MOE	Sawada
Ahmed Khalaf Mohamed	Chairman of the industrial development	MOE	Sawada
Hanna Lawis	Member	MOE	Zawiat Sultan
Fathy Mohamed Abd El Aal	Education committee chairman	Agriculture directorate	Arab EL Sheik Mohamed
Malak Kamel Abd EL Malak	Chairman of	Health Directorate	Tehana EL

	the health and housing		Gabel
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*A brief on the achievements of Nazlet Hussien local assembly*

The chairman, Mr. Abd EL Salam Kafafy achieved the following:

*First: Infrastructure*

- Establishing a meeting and sessions room, information and technology center in Nazlet Hussien
- Establishing a building for the civil registration authority that serves the people in east of the Nile
- Providing the services of the local unit of Nazlet Hussien with equipments to serve the citizens.
- Paving a number of roads in the villages like Sheikh Yassien, Sawada, TV building and Nazlet Faragallah roads.
- Establishing bridges to facilitate transportation in the villages of Tehna EL Gabel, Zawiat Sultan, EL Shourafa).

*Second: Human development*

- Connecting potable water for the deprived areas in the villages of the local unit of Nazlet Hussien
- Supporting most of the local unit villages with electric engines especially Zawiat Sultan, Sawada, Tehna EL Gabel
- Providing most of the streets with lamps
- Providing the highway with street lamps
- Installing lamps for all the main streets in every village

*Third: organizational development*

Some NGOs supported nursery and public interest projects.

*Fourth: Implementing economic projects for youth through Shorouk program in the local unit*

Problems of east of the Nile inhabitants

- No health or social insurance on quarry workers.
- No solid wastes management
- No stop for the microbuses that transport the villagers from the village to city and vice versa
- Some villages are deprived from services and utilities

1. No youth centers in Nazlet Hussien, EL Dawadia, Nazlet Fargallah and EL Shourafa.
2. No health unit in Abou Flawo
3. No general or technical schools east of the Nile.
4. No sanitary sewage in all east of the Nile villages.
  - No election committees in the villages of Abou Flew, Nazlet el Assaker.. so that inhabitants could practice their political rights in election
  - No market to promote the products of this area
  - Providing the villagers with bread with healthy specifications

*The future plans to solve the citizens problems*

- A plan for wastes management in all villages and to make the village clean, beautiful full of greenish.
- A plan to provide a loaf of bread for every citizen in the village
- A plan for health and social insurance for quarry workers and the future of their families.
- A plan to find microbuses stop in order to facilitate transportation of villagers from the village to the city and vice versa

*The mission of Nazlet Hussien local assembly*

To make every citizen east of the Nile enjoys comprehensive health, social, cultural and economic care to make him/her feels that s/he is a human being who gets all his human rights.

The achievements of the local assembly in the previous four years

- Installing more than 700 lamps in the village using the emergency plan
- Installing more than 450 street lamps to light the villages that have no street lamps in addition to the highway from Tihna EL Gabel to Zawiat Sultan from Shourak
- Installing more than 4.5 km of water in the villages through the emergency plan
- Extending Sawada village canal and Nazlet Faragalleh. The canal of EL Hawarta, Nazlet Hussien and EL Shourafa with a covered sewage system from the emergency plan and finalizing Sawada's canal.
- For the first time five years ago, there was just a NGO that works in the sector but due to the good relations the assembly established with

the NGOs, more than 10 NGOs are working in this field. This resulted in benefits in the educational field, the comprehensive development of the village like electricity, water, latrines, loans provided to Sawada, Shourafa, EL Hawarta, Nazlet Hussien from BLACD. The members of the assembly believe that BLACD is a pioneer in the field of development not in Minia but nation wide. Many NGOs have provided many services to this sector like Salama Moussa for education services, World Education, Future Eve, San Mark and others.

- Many pieces of land are allocated for schools, youth centers, Azhar institutes and NGOs in the villages of Nazlet Ebied, El Hawarta, Tihna EL Gabel, Sawada, Nazelet EL Shourafa, Arab EL Sheikh Mohamed and Zawiat sultan.

Water station was built in Tehna EL Gabel, Abou Flew and a well was dug in Sawada after being closed for a long time due to its incompetence.

- Water lines were replaced with bigger size in order that it won't be affected by water in stations.
- More than a road was paved especially the road between Minia and Tehana EL Gabel with the length of 12 k and also the roads of EL Hawarta, Nazlet Faragallah, Nazlet Hussien, Arab El Sheikh Mohamed and Nazlet Ebied entrance.
- Replacing some of the water lines of villages with bigger sizes in order that it wouldn't be affected by the pressure of water.
- In spite of the fact that the emergency plan has more than 10 years, no one thought about purchasing services equipment like loader, 2 trucks, 1 scavenge, 1 truck for scavenge in the four years, or a fire engine for the assembly so as have every village contributes with the sum of LE 20000 in these services vehicles.

- All the villages from Tehna EL Gabel to Nawiat Sultan were provided with electricity engines due to the increase of electric pressure in every village.
- Increasing the flour quota allocated for every bakery since 2002 upon the request of the local people's assembly of Nazlet Hussien and approving collecting subscription from the bakeries so as to have a system. The members of the assembly regularly visit these bakeries. It should be mentioned that the assembly chairman and the supply office manager have suddenly visited these bakeries at night starting from 2.00 am till 6.00 am more than once a week.
- Important: the assembly is holding a conference biweekly in the villages that it represents each by succession. These conferences started 4 years ago namely from the beginning of this round according to an agreement with Mr. ex-chairman of the local unit Mr. Mohamed Adel Latif Ahmed. These conferences were successful. It solved a lot problems in the village in the local unit. If any person has a problem with any of the GOs, the members go to this authority and try to solve it.

*The problems in the villages of the assembly*

- First problem for all the villages in this area is solid wastes, how to manage it, collect and get rid of.
- Second problem is a problem with multifold namely potable water especially the new station that was placed in Tihna EL Gabel. It is the biggest station east of the Nile. Unfortunately, the station was placed in a swamp of dull water full of microbus because of the dead animals and the dull water. It should be mentioned that all the officer on the governorate level are aware with this problem but no one thought about how to save us from this danger. These diseases infect the children of this area from Tihna EL Gabel till EL Shourafa.
- The local people's assembly of Nazlet Hussien is the biggest on the level of Minia city. A vehicle for scavenging was purchased. Then another tractor for scavenging was purchased to from the budget of the emergency plan. Then a problem rose between the local units and persons in charge of water and scavenging which resulted in the stop of these vehicles to operate. It is now required to take these vehicles

from the local unit to where, no one knows. It was stopped to work completely. Then, it was decided to rent it to one of the NGOs in order to serve this area with reasonable fees. But then this decision was abolished. Now, the status is very bad in homes, mosques and churches, is it right?

- Another problem is of gas pumps. The local people's assembly of Nazlet Hussien is the biggest. It has 8 villages and every village has three affiliated villages. Accordingly, the assembly has 14 villages. There is no more than 7 carts for the new graduates to sell gas pumps and this is not enough. Unfortunately, the officers of supplying in Minia districts orders to have three out of the seven vehicles to Arab EL Sheikh.
- There is also the problem of the loaf of bread in the east of the Nile villages. There should be some consideration to this problem. Yes, most of the villages have bakeries. But unfortunately, these bakeries are not enough whether their number or the quota of flour it got.
- Tihana EL Gabel: it just have one bakery and it got 5 packs or less of flour. This village is big. It needs another bakery. The packs of flour should increase.
- Nazlet Ebied: it is one of the biggest villages in Minia governorate. It has three bakeries and the quota of flour it got is not enough. It was an agricultural village but now it becomes industrial. It has factories and quarries. It has a big number of labors. It should be considered to raise the quota of flour in these bakeries.
- EL Hawarta: it is one of the villages that got enough of every thing.
- Nazlet Faragallah: it has one bakery and it isn't enough. There is also another bakery that doesn't work. This bakery should be given a permission to work till this problem is solved.
- EL Dawadia: it has one bakery that isn't enough. So the bakery needs to get enough flour quota in order to meet the needs in the village.
- Nazlet Hussien: it is a mother village. It has more than one village affiliated namely EL Shorafa, Arab EL Sheikh Mohamed, El Shabsha. There are only three bakeries; one in the main village which doesn't meet the needs, another in Arab El Sheikh Mohamed and it is also insufficient and a third one in EL Shorafa. This one of el Shorafa is enough for the area in spite of the fact that this area is an industrial area opened to new Minia city. Accordingly the main village of Nazlet Hussien needs to have enough quota of flour or to establish another bakery.

- Sawada and the affiliated villages (Abou Flew, East of Manshiat, Sawada and Dir Sawada). These villages don't have enough bakeries or flour quota.
- Zawiat Sultan: There is also some affiliated villages to Zawiat Sultan. The number of bakeries in southern Zawiat Sulatn are enough but in the northern side, it needs more bakeries.
- One of the problems that should be considered is the problem of quarry workers. We should do our best in order that they got health insurance and have a hospital for them. It should be one of the biggest hospitals in Minia in order to include everything relevant to them.

*The assembly wishes the following:*

First: To implement all the decisions relevant to its role in any project in the sector and for the service of the sector.

Second: To provide services to the sector when the local people's assembly, the local unit and active NGOs play their roles to serve this sector.

Third: To give the assembly the ability to perform its duties imposed on it towards every organization in the assembly especially those organizations that don't play the required role.

Workshops, meetings and activities:

Training on legal reference to women rights

Meeting to develop action plan

Training on localities laws

Training on handling media

Training on advocacy

Cultural activities to the youth and leaders

Meeting with women leaders

Action groups

Cleaning and planting trees in the villages' entrances