EGYPT

EU COUNTRY ROADMAP FOR ENGAGEMENT WITH CIVIL SOCIETY

2014 - 2017

Approved at country level by the Head of Delegation and Member States on 04 November 2014
1 STATE OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN TRANSITIONAL EGYPT

1.1 ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

The last 50 years under previous regimes, were not conducive to the development of an open society promoting civil society organisations and encouraging a culture of public debate.

The Arab Spring Revolution of 2011 gave rise to expectations for a more open society. In 2014, the lack of opening and the gradual strengthening of State control have dampened these expectations, thus slowing and possibly thwarting the hopes of the many, especially young and urban, behind the revolution of promoting an enabling environment for civil society.

Relations between in particular governance/human rights CSOs (including iNGOs) and the State have been, also through this period, fraught with tension and mutual suspicion, a complicating factor when it comes to the role civil society can/should play in Egypt. In the current political climate, strongly influenced by security considerations, those suspicions have if anything deepened, including from many in Egyptian society.

Basic legal rights

Uncertain legal framework

Civil society in Egypt is currently governed by the provisions of the law on Non-Governmental Societies and Organisations (No. 84 of 2002) and the Executive Statute on Law 84 of 2002 (Ministry of Insurance and Social Affairs Decree No. 178 of 2002) also known as the 'NGO-law'. NGOs are required to apply for registration as well as to seek ministerial authorisation each time they wish to receive foreign funding to implement a specific project. The existing legislation allows for the creation of associations, foundations, and unions. However registration is not permitted where the authorities assess that the purpose of the NGO includes threatening national unity, running against public order, and receiving funds from abroad or from Egyptian individuals without the approval of the authorities. Violation of these provisions of the law is punishable by up to six months imprisonment. The very restrictive nature of the law provides authorities with considerable discretionary power, thus increasing the above-mentioned difficulties. In addition, other legislation has had an impact on the ability of NGOs to carry out their activities, in particular the penal code and the protest law (see below).

Organisational and financial sustainability

Tense environment: public campaign against foreign funding and Islamist affiliated organisations

In the aftermath of the January 2011 uprising that toppled President Mubarak, civil society actors expressed hope that the situation would improve and that the current law would be revised. However, NGOs have repeatedly said that the authorities’ actions to pressure NGOs who receive foreign funding and on activists who publicly criticise the military, constitute a public campaign targeting civil society organisations.

In December 2011, Egyptian security forces closed down the offices of 10 NGOs, including three US and one German, and seized documents, computers, cameras etc. Staff members were summoned by the prosecutor for questioning. The NGOs were accused of operating without official licenses from the hosting country and receiving illegal financing from abroad to pursue foreign political agendas in Egypt. Foreign citizens working for them were subject to a travel ban,
which was however lifted a month later under heavy political pressure from the US, which threatened to drastically cut or even discontinue hefty –mainly military- assistance.

On 4 June 2013, all 43 foreign and Egyptian defendants were found guilty. Sentences included up to five years imprisonment, fines, the permanent closure of the NGOs concerned and seizure of their property. This landmark ruling increased the uncertainty and risks for foreign CSOs working in Egypt and for local CSOs that receive funds from abroad. It also reinforced the general public’s mistrust of civil society’s work and fears of foreign interference.

Several Christian NGOs suffered attacks by Islamist elements following the removal of the MB led government in July 2013. A large number (over 1,000) of CSOs with links to the Brotherhood have been shut down by court order or seen their funds frozen or closely scrutinized by the government.

In the post-July 2013 context, the media have also often played a constraining role regarding Human Rights and governance NGOs, which have at times been accused of being foreign agents or of generally undermining the country's stability in the face of an existential terrorist threat.

The ability of foreign NGOs to operate in Egypt has been severely limited by restrictive legislation and judicial prosecution. Several prominent iNGOs (HRW, Carter Center, FIDH, ICG) have closed their offices and left the country in recent times.

**Increased operational constraints for CSOs**

The law not only provides CSOs limited autonomy but also contributes to increasing administrative bureaucracy.

Even registered CSOs are facing increasing administrative intrusiveness over foreign funding as well as problems with obtaining the mandatory authorisation from the authorities (including State Security approval) to carry out actions funded. International NGOs requesting registration in Egypt face the same difficulties as in the past, and many experience long delays in obtaining approval. These lengthy bureaucratic processes lead to numerous project suspensions creating significant delays, which lead to a low level of efficiency in the implementation of development initiatives.

Facing constraints in the registration, many CSOs, especially those active in the human rights field, have been registering as civil/law companies or companies with limited liability. On 19 July 2014, however, the Ministry of Social Solidarity in a newspaper announcement urges all 'entities' practising civil society action to register under the NGO law within 45 days, otherwise the current law 84/2002 will be applied. It is widely understood that this call for registration is mainly aimed at those organizations which have evaded the NGO law by registering under the Civil Companies Act. Two days before the deadline expired on 2 September 2014, the Ministry informed that the deadline will be extended for another 45 days. Steps envisaged by the Government towards organisations, which do not conform to the deadline, are at this moment in time not known. Many however fear further restrictions on their activity.
Uncertainty related to an ongoing NGO law revision process

Additionally, Civil Society Organizations continue to suffer from the uncertainty resulting from a lengthy process of revision of the NGO law and the uncertainty related to the provisions of future legislation.

In December 2012 a bill was on the agenda of the since-dissolved Shura Council. This bill, severely criticised by the EU and its Member States during HRC23, contained restrictions on foreign funding and registration of international NGOs and would have further limited the space for civil society to operate. In March 2013, the EU assisted Egypt in revising the NGO law through the European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission) of the Council of Europe; however, the authorities largely disregarded the Venice Commission’s suggestions.

Following the change in Government in July 2013, the Ministry of Social Solidarity reinitiated the process of reviewing the NGO law by setting up a legal drafting committee consisting of ten local NGOs, comprising primarily government-friendly organisations. The draft that resulted proposed to continue limiting the work of NGOs, notably regarding the registration of international NGOs and foreign funding, but appeared to be less restrictive than the draft proposed in 2012.

In July 2014 the Ministry of Social Solidarity presented new draft provisions for a law revision, which provoked the protest of many civil society organisations, who considered that these provisions are as or even more restrictive than the 2012 version. As in 2012, the latest draft provisions foresee the creation of a Coordination Committee, which besides the concerned Ministries formally includes national security actors, and which would authorize registration of NGO and funding, thereby allowing State security to control fully registration and authorization for receiving foreign funds. The newly proposed provisions also allow further monitoring and interference by the Government in the NGOs’ internal management, as all NGO funds would be considered public, thereby further restricting space. International NGO’s receiving funding from foreign governmental agencies, or from foreign political parties or governments, would be banned from working in Egypt. The draft foresees punishment for violations of the law would be under the penal code and criminal sanctions against NGO staff members.

On 12 August 2014 the Ministry of Social Solidarity clarified in a statement regarding recent draft legislative provisions that it is committed to come up with a final draft that is in line with the 2014 Constitution, in which Art. 75 states that the declaration of an NGO is by notification and for an NGO to be dissolved a court sentence is needed. It clarifies that it requested the General Federation of NGOs, an elected body, to conduct a societal dialogue and consultation sessions on the existing three drafts to achieve an agreement among the participants and stakeholders on the key features of the final draft. The Ministry expressed its keenness that the important law is issued and approved by the upcoming elected parliament.

Many local CSOs tend to now refer to the text of the newly adopted Constitution to reaffirm their legitimacy. The new Constitution of January 2014 states that: “Citizens have the right to establish associations, civil institutions and parties, subject to notification only. Such institutions shall operate freely, and be deemed legal persons. Authorities may not disband them or their administrative bodies without a court order, in the manner prescribed by the law”.

The latest proposed draft law combined with the deadline given to all entities practicing civil society action for registration under the current NGO law puts CSOs in a very difficult situation of
uncertainty and risk. Consequently, some international NGOs and politically active organisations have opted to keep a low profile or even close their offices and suspend activities.

Trade Unions

The legal framework regulating trade union affairs poses a significant obstacle for the formation of new trade unions as the current law recognises only one legitimate and legal federal body of labour representation (Egyptian Trade Union Federation, ETUF) under the supervision of the Ministry of Man Power and Migration. This union has functioned as a mouthpiece for State or regime interest.

After the revolution in 2011, new trade unions emerged breaking this monopoly. Bearing in mind that the legal setting was outdated, several draft laws with competing visions for a new and precise regulation of union affairs circulated in the People’s Assembly, but none was adopted. An amendment to the existing legislation on trade unions introduced by Presidential decree in 2012 went in the direction of increased government control of the State-affiliated union.

ILO in 2013 blacklisted Egypt, claiming that the government violates workers' freedoms standards, but the country was taken off the list in June 2014 following governmental promises that a new labour law would be adopted. This has not happened yet.

Freedom of assembly

Following the ousting of the previous administration on 3 July 2013, Morsi supporters organised mass demonstrations and sit-ins in Cairo. Egyptian authorities forcibly dispersed the sit-ins on 14 August. During the first two months after the ouster at least some 1,500 people were killed in this context, including security personnel. A crackdown on the MB and closest allies ensued, including the banning of the organisation, now declared a terrorist organisation, and the arrest of thousands of its members and supporters. Apart from this, more liberal/leftist groups have also come under pressure. In particular, the 6 April Youth Movement and other activists of the 25 January revolution have voiced concern on a context of political oppression and harassment in the form of continuing threats from the security apparatus linked to their protest and critical stance; accusations of espionage through media smear campaigns; travel bans; and verbal and physical threats from pro-government civilians. In December three prominent activists were sentenced to three years in prison for demonstrating without permission. A number of academics, journalists, and TV personalities critical towards the political situation have also been harassed, and some even indicted for espionage. The activities of the 6 April youth movement were banned by an injunction from the Cairo Court of Urgent Matters in May 2014.

In November 2013 a restrictive law regulating assembly was adopted under interim President Mansour. The law triggered heavy criticism by various rights groups and politicians for restricting freedom of assembly and not being in line with international standards or indeed the new constitution. The law includes a number of problematic provisions, especially broad grounds for suspension and dispersal of protests by the police, constraints on location of demonstrations, troubling discretion in the use of force by the authorities and heavy fines for violations. The law is being used widely against protesters critical of the authorities, leading to severe prison sentences given to a number of well-known activists. Those in pro-government demonstrations have rarely, if ever, been arrested.
It should be noted that the National Council of Human Rights has repeatedly spoken critically about the law, and submitted recommendations for its amendment.

**Participation in public life**

Opportunities for human rights/advocacy civil society to participate in public and open debates are very limited.

**Freedom of expression**

Although Egypt experienced an opening of the media in the aftermath of the January 2011 revolution, the regulatory framework remains unchanged and allows for government interference in media outlets. Over the past year, TV channels and news outlets deemed sympathetic to the MB and affiliated Islamists were closed down and many journalists harassed, including foreigners. Attempts to silence critical voices continued after the SCAF period. Smear campaigns in the media against dissenting voices affect public opinion, and cases of ordinary civilians taking legal action against critics occur regularly.

The recent political context has not favoured development of civil society and has given rise to the narrowing of public arena, thus restricting the role of civil society. A simplistic narrative built on albeit real security concerns, accompanied by increased State control, have led to deeper mistrust between CSOs and governmental institutions and have reinforced the former's isolation. Restrictions on fundamental rights, more specifically freedom of associations, freedom of assembly and freedom of expression may create major obstacles to the development of independent CSOs. This disabling environment is not conducive to CSOs' networking and access to information which are prerequisites to engage in policy dialogue.

**1.2 PARTICIPATION AND ROLES**

*The EU considers CSOs to include all non-State, not-for-profit structures, non-partisan and non-violent, through which people organise to pursue shared objectives and ideals, whether political, cultural, social or economic. Operating from the local to the national, regional and international levels, they comprise urban and rural, formal and informal organisations including non-governmental organisations, faith-based organisations, foundations, research institutions, trade unions and employers' organisations, cooperatives, professional and business associations, and the not-for-profit media.*

Despite the long history of citizens’ engagement in supporting development, particularly focusing on the “building of a national State” in the 19th century, CSOs were recognised as an important actor in Egypt development processes in the second half of last century and especially regarding the provision of services in remote or deprived areas.

Today, over 30,000 CSOs are estimated to be present in Egypt all over the territory, delivering services in fields such as education, employment, health and local development. Organisations range from traditional charities and “community development organisations” to human rights defence organisations, from environmental groups to women’s associations, from cultural groups to youth movements. These organisations operate under different legal/institutional status with different organisational set-up. The strong tendency of personalisation and identification of the organisation with the leader tends to disappear in new emerging organisations. A large number of
CSOs are active in Egypt as service deliverers and generally CSOs are seen mainly as service deliverers only. Not many CSOs appear capable of influencing policies, especially under current circumstances. An important challenge for civil society in Egypt is to have a vision of what their role could be.

**Fragmentation within civil society**

Relationships between CSOs are sometimes cooperative and sometimes competitive, if not outright hostile (see below). Often when there is cooperation, it is services/project oriented, although there have been instances of good concerted advocacy efforts on, for instance, constitutional human rights provisions or regarding VAW. Partnerships are often created for project implementation's purposes, with a clear differentiation between an organization assuming the role of “funding agency” and “agenda setter” and the other assuming the role of “implementing agency” (donors, European NGOs, local NGOs, Community Development Associations and informal groups). The verticality of the relations contributes to the fragmentation of civil society, although the above-mentioned constraints affecting civil society have not facilitated cooperation/coordination.

While some CSO networking shows promise, most existing networks are mainly donor driven, tending to gather public bodies and CSOs. These networks give a certain legitimacy and visibility to CSOs (particularly in front of external actors) and are a channel for accessing funds. Grassroots level organisations tend to be excluded and isolated from those processes.

The absence of general/thematic platforms/alliances representing CSOs and specific engagement illustrates the fragmentation of civil society organised only at project level through vertical partnerships. This makes the possibility of influencing policy very limited.

In addition to vertical relations based on sub-contracting activities, stereotyped representations of CSOs tend to reinforce the fragmentation, for instance between those working on human rights and sensitive issues and those working on “development”. It also hinders effective communication flows, knowledge transfer and capacity building.

**A renewed volunteerism**

Change dynamics/processes can be observed such as autonomisation from old leaderships, engagement in governance and an increased engagement of youth in organisations.

Young people tend to express a strong and renewed societal engagement, channelled through temporary movements, social enterprises and ad-hoc activities as well as within traditional civil society organisations.

"Movement based” organisations with a “civil approach” to religious faith (i.e. using religious faith as an original motivation, but not as a model for orienting politics and policies) are organisations where “volunteerism” develops. These organisations provide support to local community based organisations.

*Community Development Associations* tend also to enter in new dynamics with an increased involvement of young people. The dissolution of “elected” local councils and the current lack of capacities of public administration at local level create local vacuum where CDAs can engage.

The *emerging independent trade union organisations* are also grassroots/membership-based civil society organisations that can potentially offer renewed room for civic engagement fostering democratic methods and values.
Prevalent focus on service delivery

Except urban-based Human Rights' organisations, most CSOs engaged in “development” at local level are characterised by the tendency to substitute public administration in service delivery. Despite the fact that almost all NGOs and CDAs show “mission” and “vision” statements, they often have a limited capacity to distinguish between problems and causes and mainly focus on “mitigating poverty” rather than on producing changes on social structures and/or on the access to (economic/natural) resources. Their role in terms of policy influence is weak and unclear.

Limited relations between civil society and government

CSOs in general are not perceived by the government as being major actors for improving the relationship among public bodies and the society and for contributing to the elaboration of development policies, even though they are responsible for delivery of substantial public services. The culture of dialogue between authorities and civil society is not well established, neither at local nor national level. The centralised nature of Egypt’s public sector and the subsequent low level of empowerment of local entities give limited room for manoeuvre of local authorities to define policies and priorities at the local level in consultation with local civil society. Mistrust and misunderstanding of civil society's role has a direct negative impact on dialogue and cooperation. Authorities have reached out to CSOs in some instances for ad hoc policy consultations, especially on the draft NGO law. These consultations were however not structured or institutionalized, criteria for participating were not clear and CSOs' recommendations were rarely taken into consideration. The lengthy process of NGO-law revision, and the latest legislative provisions proposed by the Ministry of Social Solidarity provide confirmation of the existing gap between the Government and civil society.

A group of CSOs (particularly iNGOs present in the capital – limited number) is recognised by government as having key technical capacities/field knowledge (ex: Child and Mothers Protection) and thus, this group has access to governmental and para-governmental spheres playing an advisory role. The group of CSOs present at local level (particularly CDAs) is perceived as being implementing organisations, i.e. a “passive” vehicle of public policies/actions.

Nevertheless, the transitional period is conducive to the emergence of new synergies between local powers and CSOs mainly through CDAs and CBOs. Despite the lack of trust that often emerge at national level between civil society organisations and public organisations, often amplified by media, an increase of mutual trust and collaboration among CSOs and public authorities can be observed at local level. Mutual trust exists particularly in the development areas where the benefits from CSO actions are more visible: education, health, child-care and protection, equal opportunities and women’s rights, agriculture and the development of employment opportunities.

Relations between civil society and the private sector

Employers' organisations, cooperatives, and professional and business associations being considered part and partial of the CSO definition, private sector interests and concerns have the potential to be voiced through the civil society. In Egypt, there is a relatively well established layer of large, often geographically organised, professional and business associations which have sectoral committees to represent key economic sector interests. In particular in the major cities these associations are well resourced – both from financial as well as human resource point of view – and they have a good access government policy makers and established platforms for dialogue. Since the 2011 events, there has been an increase in the number of associations and
NGOs representing the private sector, giving voice also to young entrepreneurs, new market entrants and previously under-represented categories of enterprises. Egypt’s 7,000 cooperatives, which have a total membership of around 5 million, are mainly related to agricultural production and marketing, but these cooperative are heavily controlled by the government. Regular policy dialogue related to private sector development has been hampered by the political transition. SME representation is highly fragmented as there is no national association specifically representing the SMEs. Small and medium sized enterprises are members of the leading national business associations, a number of which have established SME committee(s), but their voice is largely diluted, while micro-enterprises, many of them operating informally and therefore excluded from public policy, are largely absent from public private consultations.

Egypt maintains a law that requires professional and business association to have a mandatory membership in a Federation (of Industries, of Chambers of Commerce etc.). These Federations are established under the public law and the Federations are called upon by the Government to participate in policy decision-making and policy consultations, since they are quasi government organizations, and as such do not enter conflict with government authorities. In this context the policy advocacy functions of professional and business associations tend to be somewhat restricted in their impartiality and independence.

Private sector voice in social and policy dialogue is also carried through some research institutions and think tanks with economic focus. In particular after the 2011 revolution these institutions and think tanks have built an advocacy agenda that calls for social inclusion and sustainable economic growth, while they continue to be governed and funded by well established businesses and business personalities.

1.3 CAPACITY

The capacity of civil society to engage in a policy dialogue with national authorities is rather limited, with the exception of a few large and well established Cairo-based organisations who have privileged and informal access to the government. The legal environment is not conducive to constituency strengthening and to setting up internal governance mechanisms. Neither is the socio-economic context with regard to being self-sustaining.

At the local level and, when substituting public authorities in local management of basic services, local CSOs can play an active role on governance issues. This increased capacity to advocate for services at local level exists but actions are limited locally due to the absence of strategy and also to communication/language constraints which prevent CSOs from being visible.

**Legitimacy, credibility and internal governance**

CSOs would need to enhance their efforts in building/strengthening their constituency and their internal governance in order to become a future legitimate and credible partner. In this transitional period and with a lack of legal enabling environment is unlikely to happen.

A survey conducted between December 2013 and January 2014 by the EU Neighbourhood Barometer (opinion polling and media monitoring) showed that in Egypt only 12% of the sample selected trusts CSOs to represent its interest. Over the past three years, and in particular in the last

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12 months, governmental campaigns relayed by the media against CSOs might have impacted on citizens' perception of civil society.

Strong stereotyped representations of civil society limits their legitimacy, their recognition and their possibilities of initiating dialogues among CSOs, between CSOs and government and between CSOs and citizens.

**Programme and project management**

Taking into account the different categories of CSOs, their effectiveness varies in areas such as fundraising, programme formulation, definition of results frameworks, financial management and evaluation.

The majority, and more specifically CBOs, are generally weak in institutional capacity, including strategic planning, financial management systems, fundraising, project management cycle, English, basic computer skills and equipment.

Reaching out to grassroots organization and developing a bottom-up approach is a major challenge for donors.

**Research and advocacy**

Some organisations and most likely CSOs involved in Human Rights produce studies and research but the capacity of disseminating the information is rather weak and limits the scope of possible debate. Few well established internationally oriented Cairo based rights organisations are very active in advocacy internationally but do not seem to resonate as effectively locally due to aforementioned constraints and limited influence on authorities.

**Organisation, coordination and collaboration**

The CSOs' fragmentation, isolation and lack of access to information and opportunities have a significant impact on their capacities to organise among themselves, to coordinate and collaborate. There is no functioning platform or coalition of CSOs promoting Civil Society participation in Egypt which hampers its development and its opportunities of influencing policies. The legal environment is a major constraint and CSOs' activities often run into security and regulatory obstacles.

Some sectoral networks are active and are mainly donors or government driven. On specific issues, where government is absent and/or lacks expertise, CSOs as implementing partners are invited to liaise with governmental administrations. Donors are also keen in building sectoral networks with a view to improving implementation of programmes.

However, these networks offer an access to authorities.

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2 A General Federation of NGO exists. However the fact that its president is elected by the Egyptian president compromises seriously its potential to play a role in organizing civil society and promoting development.
2 CURRENT EU ENGAGEMENT

2.1 STRUCTURED EU DIALOGUE WITH CIVIL SOCIETY

EU-Civil Society dialogue is structured around consultations that involve the EU Delegation, the EU MS and representatives of civil society. This dialogue focused on two components: political and operational.

The agenda and the regularity of the consultations within the premises of the EU Delegation are usually set by the EUD.

EU MS engage in regular but usually informal dialogue with CSOs with a view to sharing information on civil society environment and on programming cooperation.

So far, the EU has strived to maintain dialogue with as many different interlocutors as possible and accordingly adapted the list of CSO participants to the purpose of the consultation/thematic issue to be discussed. Most organisations that participate in the dialogue are Cairo-based. Given the limited representativeness of Cairo-based CSO platforms and the lack of well-functioning information sharing networks within Egyptian CS, it has not been possible to date to extend the dialogue to other regions, which limits the level of inclusiveness.

At the operational level, civil society is consulted (1) during the programming phase in order to get CSOs' feedback on the development of activities for each priority identified by the EU Delegation; (2) before launching calls for proposals in order to provide their input for the identification of priorities which will be indicated in the guidelines of Thematic programmes such as EIDHR and NSA-LA; (3) during ad-hoc and HQ missions; and (4) bilaterally with specific CSOs at regular meetings related to the monitoring of implementation of projects/programs.

At the political level, there are regular consultations of civil society at the following occasions:

1. The Human Rights Working Group: monthly meeting with Member States, chaired by the EU Delegation, where CSOs (primarily rights organisations) are invited on an ad-hoc basis to present their analysis on specific issues.
2. EU policy documents: Before/during the drafting of e.g. the annual ENP Progress Report, the Country Strategy on Human Rights, the local EU guidelines (Human rights defenders, violence against women), the Action Plan and other policy documents, civil society is consulted on the EU’s priorities.
3. High level visits/incoming missions: Meetings are organized to facilitate dialogue among CSOs and e.g. the HR/VP, EU Commissioners, EU Special Representatives etc.
4. Ad-hoc meetings: civil society is regularly consulted on a bilateral informal basis.

2.2 POLICY DIALOGUE FOR AN ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

In the aftermath of the 2011 Revolution, dialogue with civil society entered in a new and vibrant phase, which turned out to be very ephemeral.

Nature of current engagement

Promoting and enabling environment through political dialogue

The EU Delegation and MS have put great effort in engaging with authorities in the process of drafting new legislation on CSOs (NGO law) as has the EUSR on HR. Due to changing regimes
the process has been marred by many different drafts and changing governments. EU Delegation and MS have engaged with the authorities again lately related to the recently emerged document considered the latest 'draft law', which contains provisions of important concern, as well the announcement of a deadline for registration under the NGO law. It is likely that it will be left up to a new parliament expected to be in session within 2014 to adopt a final new NGO law. Messages on freedom of expression, association and assembly have been passed on several occasions on all levels.

In addition, on a regular basis the EU Delegation requests information to Ministry of Social Affairs on the status of EU funded projects awaiting approval.

Promoting an enabling environment supporting CSOs’ strengthening and promoting the right of initiative

The European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) and the Thematic programmes under the Development Cooperation Instrument (Non-State Actors and Local Authorities, Investing in People, Migration and Asylum, and the Environment and Natural Resources) are implemented largely through calls for proposals in which applicants, mainly CSOs, have a right of initiative.

In 2004, Egypt became eligible for EIDHR CBSS projects (European Instrument for democracy and human rights, Country based support scheme). This implied that projects could be funded through local calls for proposals, enhancing at the same time the dialogue between the EU and CSOs.

In 2007, the thematic programme “Non-State Actors and Local Authorities in Development” opened the eligibility to partner countries Non-State Actors, allowing a more direct access and support to local organisations. Local calls for proposals are organised on a yearly basis and several projects aiming at strengthening CSOs and their initiatives are funded.

Under 2007-2013 financial framework, 73 grants have been awarded to CSOs in Egypt for an EU contribution amounting at 23 Million EURO. Activities of around 200 Egyptian CSOs have been supported in the following main sectors: Women’s and Children Rights, Youth, Legal protection and Social Services to the most vulnerable.

Enhancing EU engagement with civil society

In reaction to the Arab Spring, the Neighbourhood Civil Society Facility was created in 2011 with the objective to strengthen civil society’s capacity to promote and monitor reform, to carry out advocacy work and to increase public accountability. This facility brings the flexibility necessary to support a more strategic approach of EU engagement with civil society.

Under bilateral cooperation implying government agreement, civil society has been more and more involved, mainly as implementing partners. However, the current transitional environment is not conducive to fostering in quantity and quality CSOs’ participation.

More specifically, EU SRING programme and EU support to the Social Development Fund contribute to a significant and inclusive involvement of CSOs, including Community Development Associations and Community Based Organisations. These actions aim at strengthening civil society participation in development processes and EU Civil Society partnership.
2.3 MAINSTREAMING CIVIL SOCIETY
Civil Society is a partner and not a sector of EU cooperation. Therefore, Civil Society is meant to be mainstreamed in all sectors of intervention and through all aid modalities, and not only in the traditional sectors like Human Rights. In order to effectively involve Civil Society in EU cooperation, a EUDEL internal Civil Society Task Force was created in the beginning of 2014.

In parallel and with a view to improving Civil Society mainstreaming, an external evaluation study on EU engagement with Civil Society in Egypt under bilateral cooperation and thematic programmes (2007-2013) was launched in February 2014.

2.4 COORDINATION
The EU Delegation coordinates regularly with the Development Counsellors of EU Member States on cooperation issues. In March 2014, EUDEL invite EU Member States to appoint Civil Society Focal Points. The initial purpose of this working group is to contribute to the design of the Roadmap process.

Most of the Member States present in Egypt are active in the field of civil society, be it for operational matter, when they have specific allocations for CSOs, or at the policy level when they do not financially support CSOs, but are active in strengthening dialogue with them.

The EU Delegation coordinates also regularly with other key donors under the Development Partners Group and sub-groups. There is no specific sub-group on civil society, being a partner in development and not a proper sector. The DPG thematic group on Democratic Governance focuses more on civil society issues. Key international donors participate such as United Nations agencies, EU Member States cooperation agencies (GIZ, Institut Français and AECID), USAID, The World Bank, the EBRD among others.

**Joint action**
EU Delegation and Member States through European development agencies (GIZ, AFD) carry out joint initiatives in the social sector through delegated cooperation schemes.
3 PRIORITIES

PRIORITY 1
Promotion of an enabling environment for civil society engagement in policy dialogue and governance

"Enabling environment": a functioning legal and judicial system that ensures the right to organise, the right to expression and information, and the right to participate in public affairs is an important part of an enabling environment. The rights of civil society organisations to operate and function freely can be defended on the basis of governments’ obligations to protect and promote the rights of expression, peaceful assembly and association, amongst others, as guaranteed under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and other multilateral and regional treaties.


The following expected achievements under this priority mainly focus on the dialogue between the EU and the Government:

- The communication on EU concept of civil society, on the role of civil society in development processes and the benefit of building dialogue and partnerships with civil society on matters of public interest and, on EU policy on civil society engagement (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of International Cooperation, Ministry of Social Solidarity, Ministry of Justice) is enhanced.

- The role of CSO active in Development is followed up at the political and policy dialogue level with the Government in the same manner as it is done by the EU for CSOs working on Human Rights issues.

- The EU political dialogue on the legal/judicial framework regulating civil society is strengthened.

- A technical dialogue with MoIC/MoSS on improving aid effectiveness is initiated (process of projects' approval, foreign funding, expertise sharing, access to information of the implementing rules etc.).

Indicators:

- Increased understanding of the government on the added value of involving civil society

- Improved aid effectiveness: administrative delays for projects' approval shortened, transparent information on procedures provided to CSOs

- Existence of mechanisms that facilitate transfer of (foreign) funding to CSOs

- EU has contributed to the process of adoption of a new legal and judicial framework regulating CSOs that ensures the right to organise, the right to expression and information and the right to participate in public affairs (to engage in policy and governance)

- Increased CSOs' legitimacy
PRIORITY 2
Structuring civil society participation in policy dialogue and governance

a- The following expected achievements under this priority mainly focus on the dialogue between civil society and the Government:

- Activities and initiatives aiming at creating interaction and at building trust between government and civil society are encouraged and supported

Indicators:

- Existence of transparent and visible consultation spaces and initiatives between government and CSOs at national and local level
- Increased number and diversity of CSOs consulted by the government
- Improved communication mechanisms between authorities and CSOs
- Increased mutual understanding and knowledge (government and civil society)

b- The following expected achievements under this priority mainly focus on the dialogue between civil society and the EU:

- Mutual knowledge on EU and on civil society in Egypt is improved
- A better structured and more effective partnership between EU and civil society is built
- EU-Civil Society consultations process is enhanced

Indicators:

- Increased understanding and knowledge by CSOs of EU policy-instruments and programmes
- Increased EU internal expertise on civil society in Egypt
- Existence of an inclusive and structured EU/CSOs consultation programme

PRIORITY 3
Development of civil society capacities in terms of networking, knowledge sharing, communication, evidence-based advocacy and monitoring

The expected achievements under this priority are the following:

- The emergence of new networks of CSOs (local and national) is supported
- The capacities to engaging in a more structured, visible and inclusive dialogue(s) are increased

Indicators:

- Increased number of functioning networking mechanisms
- Increased capacities of dialogue and lobbying of CSOs and networks
- Raised operational capacity of CSOs in advocacy and lobbying
- Number of events/debates on civil society raised
- Increased access to information
- Increase number of visible coalitions engaging with local or national authorities on development policies, service delivery, citizens' rights enforcement
- Increased number of CSOs' initiatives to improved media representations of civil society
- Improved civil society's public image and increased public knowledge of civil society
- Increased quality of information used for advocacy
4 ACTIONS

Action tables

**Priority 1**
**Promotion of an enabling environment for civil society engagement in policy dialogue and governance**

The following expected achievements under this priority mainly focus on the dialogue between the EU and the Government:

- The communication on EU concept of civil society, on the role of civil society in development processes and the benefit of building dialogue and partnerships with civil society on matters of public interest and, on EU policy on civil society engagement (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of International Cooperation, Ministry of Social Solidarity, Ministry of Justice) is enhanced.

- The role of CSO active in Development is followed up at the political and policy dialogue level with the Government in the same manner as it is done by the EU for CSOs working on Human Rights issues.

- The EU political dialogue on the legal/judicial framework regulating civil society is strengthened.

- A technical dialogue with MoIC/MoSS on improving aid effectiveness is initiated (process of projects' approval, foreign funding, expertise sharing, access to information of the implementing rules etc.).

**Indicators**

- Increased understanding of the government on the added value of involving civil society
- Improved aid effectiveness: administrative delays for projects' approval shortened, transparent information on procedures provided to CSOs
- Existence of mechanisms that facilitate transfer of (foreign) funding to CSOs
- EU has contributed to the process of adoption of a new legal and judicial framework regulating CSOs that ensures the right to organise, the right to expression and information and the right to participate in public affairs (to engage in policy and governance)
- Increased CSOs' legitimacy

**Actions:**

**A. Analysis: Studies, mappings and research**

- The EU (EUDEL +MS) will identify key entry points in the new administration at political and technical levels to convey messages.
B. Policy dialogue, consultation and facilitation

✔ The EU (EUDEL +MS) will assess in which ways and to what extent it can dialogue (political and policy) with the Government in order to promote the role of Civil Society in the development of Egypt.

✔ The EUDEL and the EUDEL with MS will propose actions tightening links and synergies between development/cooperation mechanisms and political dialogue.

✔ The EU (EUDEL +MS) will present to the authorities the findings of the evaluation study on EU engagement with Civil Society in Egypt under bilateral cooperation and thematic programmes (2007-2013).

C. Funding: Operational support including mainstreaming

✔ To increase EU support to strengthening CSOs and its initiatives through local call for proposalsAid modality: Grants

Call for proposal under EIDHR (6 MEUR for the period 2014-2017) and the new Thematic Programme supporting civil society and local authorities (6 MEUR for the period 2014-2017)

Priority 2
Structuring civil society participation in policy dialogue and governance

a - The following expected achievements under this priority mainly focus on the dialogue between civil society and the Government:

- Activities and initiatives aiming at creating interaction and at building trust between government and civil society are encouraged and supported

b - The following expected achievements under this priority mainly focus on the dialogue between civil society and the EU:

- Mutual knowledge on EU and on civil society in Egypt is improved

- A better structured and more effective partnership between EU and civil society is built

- EU-Civil Society consultations process is enhanced

Indicators

a

- Existence of transparent and visible consultation spaces and initiatives between government and CSOs at national and local level

- Increased number and diversity of CSOs consulted by the government

- Improved communication mechanisms between authorities and CSOs

- Increased mutual understanding and knowledge (government and civil society)
**b**

- Increased understanding and knowledge by CSOs of EU policy-instruments and programmes
- Increased EU internal expertise on civil society in Egypt
- Existence of an inclusive and structured EU/CSOs consultation programme

**Actions:**

**A. Analysis: Studies, mappings and research**

- A mapping identifying initiatives aiming at structuring civil society and at setting up the basis for building future dialogues will be conducted (EUDEL)

  *NB This mapping should be considered as a tool for knowing and a tool for pushing public debate on the role of civil society in Egypt*

**B. Policy dialogue, consultation and facilitation**

- The findings of the study on the evaluation of EU engagement with Civil Society in Egypt under bilateral cooperation and thematic programmes (2007-2013) will be presented to the CSOs consulted all over the country
- A booklet on EU engagement with civil society in Egypt will be produced and disseminated
- A programme of consultations (EUDEL, civil society) aiming at improving and diversifying EU consultation processes and mechanisms and enhancing transparency, predictability, inclusiveness, follow-up and coherence will be prepared and implemented
- MoIC/MoSS, other Ministries and public administrations will be offered EU support to build their capacities to engage dialogue and to create synergies with civil society

**C. Funding: Operational support including mainstreaming**

- Implementation of the SPRING programme component supporting civil society in socio-economic development at local level under bilateral cooperation (10 MEUR-2013/2018)

  **Specific objectives:**
  
i) To improve socio-economic conditions in targeted areas through the participation of civil society;
  
ii) To establish workable mechanisms needed for the effective participation of grassroots civil society in local development;
  
iii) To build on the ongoing efforts to increase mutual trust between civil society, government and the private sector.

Aid modality: Grants, Technical Assistance
### Priority 3

**Development of civil society capacities in terms of networking, knowledge sharing, communication, advocacy and monitoring**

**The expected achievements under this priority are the following:**
- The emergence of new networks of CSOs (local and national) is supported
- The capacities to engaging in a more structured, visible and inclusive dialogue(s) are increased

#### Indicators

- Increased number of functioning networking mechanisms
- Increased capacities of dialogue and lobbying of CSOs and networks
- Raised operational capacity of CSOs in advocacy and lobbying
- Number of events/debates on civil society raised
- Increased access to information
- Increase number of visible coalitions engaging with local or national authorities on development policies, service delivery, citizens’ rights enforcement
- Increased number of CSOs’ initiatives to improved media representations of civil society
- Improved civil society’s public image and increased public knowledge of civil society
- Increased quality of information used for advocacy

#### Actions:

**A. Analysis: Studies, mappings and research**

- Study on the EU engagement with Civil Society in Egypt under bilateral cooperation and thematic programmes (2007-2013) aiming at providing a better understanding of CSOs and their interactions with the Government of Egypt at national, regional and local level, with a view to improving their contribution to the development process, reinforcing their participation in policy dialogue and engaging them more strategically and effectively in future EU-Egypt cooperation.

*To be finalised by September 2014*

**B. Policy dialogue, consultation and facilitation**

- Structured and more inclusive consultations on the Civil Society Facility to be held

**C. Funding: Operational support including mainstreaming**

**Short Term**

- To strengthen the capacities of CSOs to build strategic approach(es) contributing to a more and better structured civil society, to elaborate communication strategy on civil society and its role with a view to enhancing dialogue(s) and to support the creation of areas of dialogue
Aid modality: Grants - Call for proposal under Civil Society Facility (2014 – 1.1 MEUR)

Mid Term Long Term
✓ To consolidate EU capacity building support to CSOs
✓ To progressively support more strategically CSOs' activities and participation

Aid Instrument: Civil Society Facility 2015-2017
## 5 DASHBOARD

### Country: EGYPT

#### Process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Achievement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Involvement of Member States in Roadmap elaboration</td>
<td>Member States present in the country are actively involved in the elaboration of the Roadmap</td>
<td>EU MS Focal persons appointed to contribute and follow-up to the Roadmap exercise.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultation with local civil society</td>
<td>The Roadmap has been prepared on the basis of consultations with a broad range of local CSOs respecting principles of access to information, sufficient advance notice, and clear provisions for feedback and follow-up.</td>
<td>2 consultations meetings held at EUDEL (CSOs, EU MS). Around 130 CSOs consulted in the framework of the evaluation study on EU engagement with civil society (workshops, seminar, bilateral meetings, and questionnaires).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joint actions</td>
<td>Member States present in the country are actively involved in the implementation of the Roadmap priorities.</td>
<td>EU (EUDEL and EU MS) should agree on roadmap follow-up and implementation (3d quarter 2014) with a view to continuing promoting consistency and synergy of EU support to civil society, improving coordination and information sharing mechanisms, and increasing the number of joint actions under the 3 priorities.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Outcome

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Achievement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Promotion of an enabling environment for civil society engagement in policy dialogue and governance</td>
<td>- Adoption of a new legal and judicial framework regulating civil society activities that ensures the right to organise, the right to expression and information and the right to participate in public affairs (to engage in policy and governance)</td>
<td>- The communication on EU concept of civil society, on the role of civil society in development processes and the benefit of building dialogue and partnerships with civil society on matters of public interest and, on EU policy on civil society engagement (Ministry of Foreign Affairs,</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
- Existence of mechanisms that facilitate transfer of (foreign) funding to CSOs
- Improved aid effectiveness: administrative delays for projects' approval shortened, transparent information on procedures provided to CSOs
- Increased understanding of the government on the added value of involving civil society
- CSOs' legitimacy increased

Ministry of International Cooperation, Ministry of Social Solidarity, Ministry of Justice) is enhanced.
- The role of CSO active in Development is followed up at the political and policy dialogue level with the Government in the same manner as it is done by the EU for CSOs working on Human Rights issues.
- The EU political dialogue on the legal/judicial framework regulating civil society is strengthened.
- A technical dialogue with MoIC/MoSS on improving aid effectiveness is initiated (process of projects' approval, foreign funding, expertise sharing, access to information of the implementing rules etc…)

| Structuring civil society participation in policy dialogue and governance | a - Existence of transparent and visible consultation spaces and initiatives between government and CSOs at national and local level
- Increased number and diversity of CSOs consulted by the government
- Improved communication mechanisms between authorities and CSOs
- Increased mutual understanding and knowledge (government and civil society)

b - Increased understanding and knowledge by CSOs of EU policy-instruments and programmes
- Increased EU internal expertise on civil society in Egypt
- Existence of an inclusive and structured EU/CSOs consultation programme | a - Activities and initiatives aiming at creating interaction and at building trust between government and civil society are encouraged and supported
b - Mutual knowledge on EU and on civil society in Egypt is improved
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| Development of civil society capacities in terms of networking, knowledge sharing, communication, advocacy and monitoring | - Increased number of functioning networking mechanisms  
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