



PROJECT FACTSHEET

January 2016

BLUE GOLD FOR ALL IN ASWAN



Girls at a secondary school in Aswan drink water from taps installed in the schoolyard. © FDFA

Country / Region

Egypt / Aswan

Thematic focus

Water

Duration

December 2012 – October 2016

Budget

CHF 5'000'000

Egypt has undertaken a major effort to modernise its water and sanitation sector. However, many obstacles remain before all Egyptians, without distinction, will be able to enjoy access to drinking water through an equitable and reliable service. In support of this progress, the SDC has developed an ambitious project in a disadvantaged neighbourhood of the city of Aswan.

Water is a fragile resource in Egypt. Rainfall in the country is scarce, with an annual average of only 51 millimetres; the corresponding figure for Switzerland is 1,537 millimetres. The Nile is the country's only year-round river and carries 55.5 billion cubic metres of water annually. While this figure remains constant, the population of Egypt continues to grow at a rate of a million people per year. This fact, together with a trend towards urbanisation, puts an added strain on this resource.

Inequality driven by poverty

The Egyptian government has made water management a national priority, but Egyptians are not all equal when it comes to water access. For example, in Aswan, one of the country's poorest governorates, the water supply network serving disadvantaged neighbourhoods does not have the needed capacity and requires repairs owing to a lack of upkeep and investment. This has led to pollution and public health problems.

This SDC responded to this situation in 2012 with a project called 'Aswan Water Programme: improving the drinking water supply and water management efficiency'. The project aims to help 100,000 residents of Al Nasseriya, an informal neighbourhood located one kilometre from the centre of the city of Aswan. The water supply network in this neighbourhood was built over 20 years ago as part of a government plan. It was designed for a population of 50,000 people. In the summer of 2011, with water levels running low, the residents of Al Nasseriya demonstrated in front of the Aswan Governorate building. The national water supply management company, together with local partner authorities, therefore proposed that the SDC focus its efforts on this neighbourhood.

Renovation, training and awareness-raising

Different measures are being implemented in Al Nasseriya. A number of worksites are one indication of this: a new reservoir with a capacity of 2,000 cubic metres has been completed, and work on a new pumping station and on water pipes is under way and expected to be finished in summer 2016. In addition, technical assistance is being provided to the Water and Sanitation Company and the technical teams in charge of the water supply system. A new computerised maintenance programme and the related workflows have also been set up at the Water and Sanitation Company.

Awareness-raising efforts are taking place at the same time. Environmental clubs have been set up in six schools, where students are taught how to use water sparingly through fun activities. They then pass along what they learn to their friends and family. Women play a key role in the SDC's project as well. Groups of women meet for regular discussions, including on the topic of water. These discussions have already had an impact on how community members go about their daily activities, such as washing dishes without letting the water run. Finally, street plays are used as an entertaining way of spreading the message about water.

Numerous partnerships

The SDC has partnered with several government entities, including the Aswan Water and Sanitation Company, institutional actors in the region, etc. The project in Al Nasseriya is expected to be completed at the end of 2016.



A group of employees from the Aswan Water and Sanitation Company learns how to read maps, a skill that will help them maintain the water supply network more effectively. © FDFA

Imprint

Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation SDC
Middle East and North Africa Division
Sägestrasse 77, CH - 3003 Bern/Köniz
www.sdc.admin.ch
This publication is also available in German and French