

THE ROAD TO CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION IN EGYPT

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List of Abbreviations

CIHRS	Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies
CE	Citizenship Education
CSO	Civil Society Organization
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoY	Ministry of Youth
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
DEDI	Danish Egyptian Dialogue Institute
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organization
MOSS	Ministry of Social Solidarity
NCY	National Council of Youth
SCAF	Supreme Council of Armed Forces
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nations Children Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
ToT	Train of Trainer

1. Executive Summary

This study offers an overview of the status of Citizenship Education in Egypt; it is a qualitative study that tried to focus more on the efforts that are done within the non-formal sector.

The study also provides an overview on the development of civic education within the formal sector and the main factors that influenced its structure and development. It also sheds light on the efforts done within the Civic Education Unit in the Ministry of Youth.

There seems to be confusion when it comes to terminology, as civic education and citizenship education are used interchangeably in the literature. When examined deeply, both terminologies share many common factors based on the definitions that are commonly used. The main factors that are included in the definitions are mainly loyalty, belonging and nationalism human rights, duties, citizenship and tolerance values.

There are several insights that can be drawn from this study. First, most of the young participants in this research admitted that what is unique about Citizenship Education (CE) experiences is the interactive and inquiry-based methodology that helps them build knowledge and learn how to get it. Second, the projects that were created to address different aspects of CE varied in nature but most of these projects work mainly with youth and adolescents, some focus more on women, some focus more on remote geographic locations. Third, the challenges by Civil Society Organizations is centered around law restrictions, unstable funding channels and the lack of clarity of the role of these organizations to the public which result in considering their work unworthy. In addition, some challenges are specific to the CE field such as: it is a relatively new field in Egypt so it lacks enough trained calibers, weak content development, absence of documentation efforts and lack of understanding of the necessity of impact assessment and evaluation efforts.

Eventually, the study confirms there is still a need to do a quantitative and qualitative mapping of all the projects addressing Citizenship Education in Egypt to help identify further opportunities for improvement and to create more synergies among the organizations working on the ground.

2. Introduction

This study provides an overview of the current status of citizenship education in Egypt and the main elements that it includes. It focuses more on the efforts that are being done within the non-formal sector. The aim of the study is to shed more light on the different efforts and projects that are being implemented and to examine the trends and challenges in the Citizenship Education field and draw lessons learned.

In many countries, civic education on the local level is considered as an essential topic that must be discussed on the political national agenda. It aims to describe the social, economic and political form of the society and to define clearly the goals of the country and the minimum qualifications of “a good and active” citizen, emphasizing loyalty and national identity.

The Main Objectives of the Study are:

- 1-Identify a common understanding of citizenship education (CE) in the Egyptian context.
- 2-Examine the different forms of “non-formal” citizenship education in Egypt.
- 3-Identify some of the current themes of the “non-formal” citizenship education initiatives and programs and the various stakeholders working in this area.
- 4-Shed light on good practices and lessons learned in the field of citizenship education.

To that end, semi-structured interviews and focus groups were conducted to get insights from the different stakeholders¹. This study offers insights to all organizations working within civil society, specifically in the field of CE; to all policy makers who would like to take into consideration the non-formal efforts that are done; and to donor agencies that are looking into updating their strategies within CE field.

The study will start with an overview on Citizenship Education in Egypt then a brief explanation of the research methodology. The findings of the field work will be presented in four chapters:

- 1- Perceptions of citizenship education in Egypt.
- 2- Documenting some of the efforts of CE in Egypt.
- 3- Key challenges related to implementing CE projects.
- 4- Success stories within and recommendations for CE in Egypt.

1- The researchers interviewed members in NGOs, donor agencies, government officials, experts and academic professors, and youth who participated in CE projects as participants or trainers.

3. Overview of Citizenship Education in Egypt

This section will provide an overview on the historical background of CE field in Egypt in both the formal and non-formal sectors. It will also provide an overview of the definitions used in the literature in regards to CE, and will address the issue of terminology.

In Egypt, there are two ministries that are mainly concerned with citizenship education, the Ministry of Education (MoE) which provides formal education curricula and the Ministry of Youth (MoY) which organizes activities and camps for youth as extra-curricular activities. For the purpose of this study, the efforts done within the framework of the MoE will be considered formal while the efforts listed under the “Non-formal” sector will include activities conducted by MoY, activities of non-governmental organization (NGOs) registered with the Ministry of Social Solidarity (MoSS), community initiatives or social enterprises.

3.1 Background Information: Brief History of Citizenship Education

Formal Sector:

Civic education² can be traced back to 1922 after Egypt’s independence from the British occupation. This period witnessed the beginning of Egypt’s transformation into a nation state; curricula of civic education were developed with the purpose to promote Egyptian nationalism, highlighting that Egypt remained an independent entity, despite its colonial history (El-Nagar & Krugly-Smolka, 2009).

Following 1952’s revolution³, the priority was to increase educational institutions’ capacities to accommodate more students, this came at the expense of improving curricula and led to “an environment that discouraged students’ participation, questioning and independent thought” (Baraka, 2008, pp. 6-7). Civic Education was diffused within the curricula of social studies, Arabic language and religion, mainly as a hidden element (Baraka, 2008). Furthermore, the history textbooks at that time focused on Arab nationality and students studied the history of all Arab nations (El-Nagar & Krugly-Smolka, 2009). After the war in 1973, the values of peace and dialogue were enforced, highlighting the role that dialogue played in accomplishing Camp David Peace Agreement (Baraka, 2008).

2 Civic Education is the term used by MoE for the official curricula taught at schools. This term is used interchangeably with Citizenship education by MoY. However, all NGOs use the term Citizenship education.

3 Where Egypt became totally independent and declared as a Republic

During Mubarak's era (from 1981 to 2011), history and geography were renamed to social studies and included more information on Civic Education including human rights and the meaning of democracy (Baraka, 2008). With the new millennium, more attention was directed at Civic Education to be utilized to confront growing threats of extremism and globalization (Baraka, 2008). Another supporting factor to Civic Education growing prominence was pressure from international donor agencies on Egypt that required "quality learning that included interactive and democratic teaching styles" (Baraka, 2008, p. 6).

After the January 25th revolution in 2011, Egypt underwent several political changes, every year thereafter a different political power was ruling the country. This led to three different curriculums from 2011 to 2014; one was issued for the academic year 2011/2012 under the ruling of the Supreme Council of the Army Forces (SCAF), the second was issued for academic year 2012/2013 under the ruling of former president Mohammad Morsi, a member of the banned Muslim Brotherhood Group and the first elected president after the January 25th revolution, the third was issued for academic year 2013/2014 under the ruling of interim president Adly Mansour, who came into power for a transitional period after the revolution of June 30th, 2013 (Ali, 2014).

Research shows that these new curricula had more information on citizenship, human rights and political participation; which were missing from the previous curricula. An in-depth content analysis of the new curricula shows significant progress in content development, Ali stated in her study "it is very obvious that the MOE, guided by a political will, is giving more attention to the content of citizenship education. It is the first time – for this current academic year 2013/14 – that the ministry issued three textbooks for the secondary stage, grades 10, 11 and 12" (Ali, 2014, p.162).

Non-formal Sector:

As indicated the efforts of MoY that target youth mainly are described as non-formal activities. In this regard, it is worth mentioning that the definition of the age group of youth is not clear in Egypt. In the 2005 youth policy this age group was defined as falling between 18-35 years old (Abdelhay, 2005), but in the absence of a current national youth policy this issue remains unclear.

In 2005 a unit for Civic Education was established within the MoY in partnership with UNICEF, which focuses mainly on Civic Education projects targeting youth (more details on MoY programs will be shared in section III-2-a). Since then, this Civic Education unit has developed several partnerships with other International agencies to implement different programs in different parts of the country.

Under the “Non-Formal” education, there are the efforts of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and specifically Non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The later existed in Egypt since 1821 and the documentation of their role and activities started in the late 1950s (Khallaf, 2010). “Despite the long history of civil society in Egypt, a surge in its activities started to take shape in the late 1980s and has continued to take center stage as the third pillar in the country’s development over the past 20 years” (Khallaf, 2010, p. 3).

Between 1922 and 1952, a new constitution was in place and the civil society focused on “transparency and accountability of government, free elections, and rights for working class unions” (Hassan, 2011). From 1952 to 1970, during Nasser era, “the Nasserist State constrained the organizations of civil society by developing a corporatist populist regime” (Hassan, 2011); associations were closed or reduced and new laws were set to constraint the work of CSOs. From 1974 to 2011, the state continued to constrain the CSOs work, however in a mild way compared to Nasser era and the CSOs’ scope became wider (Hassan, 2011).

In 2011, the CSO sustainability index indicated that, “there are over 45,000 registered CSOs with approximately 30,000 civic associations; 13,000 agricultural, housing, and water cooperatives; 5,400 youth and sports centers; 115 trade and industry chambers; 24 professional syndicates; and 22 unions” (USAID, 2011, p. 9). As per Khallaf, the CSOs had several types: Service Delivery & Welfare Organizations, Women’s Associations, Human Rights Groups, Environmental CSOs, Consumer Protection CSOs, Business Groups, Philanthropic Foundations, Professional Syndicates, Trade Unions, Youth Centers & Associations, and Religious Groups (Khallaf, 2010). Even though the numbers of registered NGOs are growing, however many are no longer operating and exist only on paper. Many NGOs exist in the main three governorates in Egypt: Cairo, Giza and Alexandria (USAID, 2011).

In the past 15 years, NGOs have operated carefully within the field of CE, especially during Mubarak’s era, where organizations working on issues related to human rights and citizenship were not supported (Youniss & Barber et al., 2013). It should be noted that since the economic decline in Egypt in 1990, many NGOs focused on economic and social services, with special attention directed towards marginalized areas and underprivileged populations (Hassan, 2011). It is interesting that Hassan mentions in his article that the main items on the agenda of NGOs in Egypt in the past two decades have been:

- 1- Anti-corruption.
- 2- The issue of reform.
- 3- The value of citizenship “emerged as an input to promote a culture of tolerance and rejection of intolerance through the activities of civil society” (Hassan, 2011).

After the 25th of January revolution in 2011, Egypt witnessed an increase in CE programs and initiatives, some of these programs were being implemented by organizations that existed before the revolution (Waddell, 2013). Leaders within CSOs identified citizenship values and principles as essential for youth to learn at this period and programs varied in scope and direction (Corbel & Pollock, 2012; Waddell, 2013).

3.2 Definition of Citizenship Education

Prior to introducing the various definitions that exist within the literature, it is worth mentioning that there is confusion when it comes to the terminology of Citizenship education. The term Civics Education is used in the literature about Egypt interchangeably with the term Citizenship Education. This is due mainly to two reasons: First, the definitions are nearly the same: citizenship education is defined based on the notion of preparing a good citizen which includes knowing their rights and responsibilities, gaining a set of values and even learning critical thinking skills (Waddell, 2013). Civic Education is defined as “a process that imparts a “set of values, principles, and trends that influence a student’s personality in a way to encourage him/her [in] reacting positively, understanding his/her rights, [and] obligations toward his/her society. And that builds his/her capacity in thinking appropriately in different situations. (Baraka, 2008, p. 4). In both definitions there are common elements; such as learning the values, rights and responsibilities, and thinking skills; all needed to become a well-functioning citizen.

Second, in some academic papers, the two terms were used interchangeably in the same paper. For example, the paper entitled “Citizenship Education in Egyptian Public Schools: What values to teach and in which Administrative and Political Contexts?” (Baraka, 2008), in this paper within the literature review the definition section is entitled “Defining Civic Education” and the paper goes on to use the terms civic education and citizenship education interchangeably. It is clear from this paper that civic education is referred more to the school curricula in Egypt, while citizenship programs is mentioned more related to anything outside of school activities even if organized by the state. There is also the distinction between civic values and principles that form the foundation of citizenship, and that citizenship includes also actions based on responsibilities and rights, and includes loyalty to the country or to the civic values (Baraka, 2008; Waddell, 2013; Corbel & Pollock, 2012). For the sake of this study, the terms will be used interchangeably as well; mostly civic education is used for formal-sector projects. In the coming lines, more light will be shed on the definitions that each sector (formal and non-formal) uses for citizenship or civic education.

Formal Sector:

According to a publication issued by the MoE in 2003⁴, CE is based on eight core principles:

- 1- Civic education (duties and rights);
- 2- Life skills (negotiation, cooperation, tolerance, and managing diversity);
- 3- Government system (democracy, constitution, People's Council, elections, citizens' role in elections);
- 4- Preserving heritage (Arab and Egyptian heritage, Islamic and Coptic heritage, Arab and Egyptian values and traditions);
- 5- Egypt's relations with other countries (on the Arab, Islamic, African and global levels);
- 6- Non-governmental organizations (conditions to establish NGOs, the role of NGOs);
- 7- Arab organizations and institutions and 8) International organizations and institutions (Baraka, 2008).

In a research that was conducted to examine to which extent the aforementioned principles were achieved within the school curriculums and environments. Textbook analysis of Civic Education and history curricula in the Mubarak era shows over emphasis on authority, nationalism, tourism importance, cultural diversity and role of government in service provision; it also shows less emphasis on citizenship and human rights; and minimum emphasis on rule of law, social justice and political participation (Baraka, 2008).

Non-formal Sector:

In regards to MoY, there is no mention of Civic Education and its definition in their official documents, however there is mention of several dimensions of CE. There seems to be more focus placed on participation in elections, especially parliamentary elections, and the focus on the values of belonging and loyalty to the country. When it comes to inclusion, there seems to be a focus on most of the governorates.

Due to the diverse nature of the civil society organizations, CE has different and interrelated definitions. Some CSOs in Egypt work now within the framework of developing: "well rounded, responsible citizens who know their legal rights and duties, and apply this knowledge to evaluate government policies and practices. Moreover, nurturing students to become citizens who work for the common good has a positive impact on their communities and societies" (Faour & Muasher, 2011, p. 12). Many CSOs in Egypt have developed and customized their programs to satisfy and address the specific needs and target audience, with

4 Mubarak and education (in Arabic). (2003). Cairo: Egypt. The Ministry of Education. Department of textbooks.

a greater focus “on citizenship, democracy, human rights, tolerance, and political participation. Many of these programs began in the years leading up to the January 25 Revolution, and thus program leaders were prepared to adapt and expand their work during the post-revolution period” (Corbel & Pollock, 2012, p. 13). In 2004, the UN issued a definition that was described as the most comprehensive of CE, the definition described CE as “educating youth on four components:

- 1- Human rights, which include empowering citizens to be able to engage in social development;
- 2- law, social justice and democracy, meaning political and civic participation;
- 3- development meaning human development as the basis of human rights;
- 4- peace, meaning peaceful resolution of conflict through negotiation and dialogue” (Baraka, 2008, p. 3).

3.3 The Ecosystem of Non-Formal Citizenship Education

According to the “Citizens in the Making” report conducted by Gerhart Center in 2012, only 14% of the civic education programs carried out by the NGOs do not target youth, while the rest focuses on youth solely. This focus can be explained by the focus of MoY on Civic Education for youth as well as the rising wave of youth activism from 2011.

Most programs carried out by the CSOs are centralized in the capital and big cities; Cairo, Alexandria and Menya, the other governorates remain neglected especially in Upper Egypt, Sinai and the Red Sea provinces (Corbel & Pollock, 2012). The organizations working in the field of Citizenship Education and civic engagement include International Donors and Agencies, Research Centers, Social Enterprises and registered and non-registered Youth Organizations and Student Activities.

Along with the public sector and the civil society organizations, there are other important and contributing stakeholders for the spread of civic education values and content; such as the media, political parties, private sector, and religious institutions. Media is considered “powerful” because it is widely accessible to all irrespective of their level of education and sophistication” (El-Mikawy, 2013, p. 33).

3.3.1 Legal Environment

According to Article 19 of the Egyptian Constitution 2014, “*Every citizen has the right to education. The goals of education are to build the Egyptian character, preserve the*

national identity ... and found the concepts of citizenship, tolerance and non-discrimination. The State shall observe the goals of education in the educational curricula and methods, and provide education in accordance with international quality standards."⁵ This article mentions clearly that citizenship education is a primary concern for educational institutions in Egypt. There is one governing law for education in Egypt, law no 139 issued in 1981, which clearly states in the 2nd article that the Minister of Education has all the rights to issue the necessary decrees related to the education system, educational plans, the curricula, and the testing systems, after the approval of the higher council of education. Accordingly, any changes in curricula or the guidelines for it come from the Minister of Education. A most recent example is the decree no 467 for the year 2015, to create a committee for developing the Egyptian curricula; this committee includes: ministers of education, of Higher education, of culture, of scientific research, of vocational training and education, of endowments (Awkaf), the Mufti, Head of Al-Azhar institutions, and a representative from the Church. This is a clear attempt to unify the directions and guidelines for all educational curricula in Egypt.

The main law governing NGOs is Law no 84/2002, which defines the funding channels and processes, as well as operational issues related to activities and scope. The law has posed several restrictions on the funding of NGOs especially the lengthy and complicated process for the approval of projects from the MoSS.

3.3.2 Challenges

In the below section, data was collected from the literature that covered challenges that face both the formal and non-formal sectors in implementing CE related projects or activities. In later sections of the study, more challenges will be presented which was mainly raised during the field work.

Formal Sector:

The challenges within the formal sector are related to the political environment, the school and university environment, the curriculum, and the teaching methods and teacher preparation. The political environment might be seen as a challenge to CE, because of the daily encountered situations that could create frustrations (Waddel, 2013). The top down approach in the Egyptian education system that rests on principles such as discipline, obedience, oppression, and commitment makes CE difficult (El-Nagar & Krugly-Smolka, 2009). Civic Education curriculum is more based on information rather than skills, doesn't include any real life situations or participation from students (El-Nagar & Smolska, 2009, p.47).

5 Constitution of the Arab Republic of Egypt 2014, Unofficial Translation available on <http://www.sis.gov.eg/Newvr/Dustor-en001.pdf>

With regards to the teaching methods and teachers' preparation there is still a lot of effort needed in introducing new teaching techniques that are of participatory and creative nature, highlighting "the role of the teacher in a democratic classroom" (El-Nagar & Krugly-Smolka, 2009).

Non-formal Sector:

The institutions working with CE in the non-formal sector are facing several challenges; some of these challenges are related to the organization and structure; others related to the difficulties of implementing CE programs. All CSOs in Egypt face issues related to sustainability, financial constraints and outreach. In Egypt, small and medium sized CSOs do not have the capacity nor the resources to manage media campaigns or any other advocacy campaigns, while the big local CSOs have been able to sustain a rather good image of CSOs in Egypt. With regards to the outreach, there is huge pressure on CSOs, especially that the country is rather wide geographically and condensed demographically. There are huge differences between the urban and rural settings in Egypt in terms of culture and also interests. In addition, most CSOs receive funding from INGOs, international agencies, local and international corporations and community members; the funds are inconsistent and short-term which leads to many challenges and obstacles. Over and above, there are limitations from the MoSS and a very lengthy process to get the funds approved.

CSOs working in the CE field are challenged by potential of implementation, achieving impact, curriculum development, and availability of qualified trainers. There is a need for further emphasis on civic skills such as advocacy, organizing, and persuasive argument. Another challenge to implementation is finding trained and qualified trainers who can deliver the programs in quality, given the limited resources available to this sector. Another challenge is measuring the impact of their programs requested by donors, which is not easy to measure given the nature of the subject matter.

4. The Methodology of this Study

4.1 Statement of Problem

Egypt is facing several challenges on social, political and economic levels. It is becoming clear that the only way is to engage youth in societal dialogue about the future of Egypt and how each Egyptian can participate to create that future. This is where citizenship education becomes an essential component that can drive these efforts. Education has a pivotal role in social transformation, and can equip the Egyptian youth with the information and skills

needed to become active citizens. At the same time, civil society has always played a major role in Egypt and can offer an opportunity for youth to engage in real issues within their communities. This study aims at mapping the citizenship education initiatives within the non-formal sector in Egypt. This mapping is an attempt to identify all the efforts exerted in this field and the perceptions of the different stakeholders regarding these efforts. Based on this, this research hopes to provide best practices within this field and recommendations to the policy makers and involved stakeholders.

4.2 Research Questions

There are several questions that this study aims to answer through the desk review and the field work, this includes:

- 1- How is citizenship education perceived in Egyptian context?
 - a. What is the impact of these perceptions on one's attitude towards the "other"?
 - b. Based on these perceptions, how does that impact the concept of inclusion and exclusion?
- 2- How are these perceptions translated into action on the ground?
 - a. Who are the main stakeholders?
 - b. What are the initiatives or projects on the ground?
 - c. What are the success stories within the non-formal sector in relation to citizenship education?
- 3- What are the key challenges facing the CSOs and related government entities in implementing citizenship education projects?
 - a. What are the challenges related to legal environment?
 - b. What are the challenges related to inclusion/exclusion of certain groups or geographic locations or age group?
 - c. What are the challenges related to sustainability?
- 4- What are the aspirations of the involved stakeholders regarding citizenship education in Egypt?
- 5- What are the best practices within CE field so far?

4.3 Research Design

Case Selection:

This research involved a selected sample that includes a representative from the following stakeholders who are active players in the CE field in both the formal and non-formal sectors:

- Non-governmental Organizations and civil society initiatives that have implemented citizenship education projects.
- Donor agencies that are interested in citizenship education projects.
- Youth who are involved in citizenship education projects, either as participants or as trainers or organizers of workshops or events.
- Government officials who are involved in citizenship education projects.
- Experts and academic professors who have been involved as consultants in citizenship education projects.

The definition of youth in this study follows the Egyptian MoY age definition, from 18 to 35 years old (Abdelhay, 2005). The research team reached out to the youth who have been exposed to CE projects in different parts of Egypt to examine their perceptions and recommendations. The scope of this study does not include impact assessment or any evaluation of the programs implemented. However, one of the key aims of this study is to explore the representation of youth in the planning and design of the citizenship education projects, therefore the reach out within the civil society and government was directed to key players and decision makers.

It is worth mentioning that a major research limitation was that researchers could only secure interviews with donor agencies, professionals in the field, and only one government official from the Ministry of Youth (MOY). This posed several challenges to the research team during the field work especially in verifying the inputs from the field work.

Data Collection:

For this study, data was collected in the forms of semi-structured interviews, review of documents and focus groups.

Semi-structured Interviews:

Eight Interviews were carried out, four of them with donor agencies funding major CE projects in Egypt, one with a government official in the MoY, one with a researcher and consultant in the area of CE, and two with large Egyptian NGOs working in the area of CE. Each interview lasted from 45 to 60 minutes and was conducted in the language of the interviewee's pref-

erence. All interviews were audio-recorded, except when we were requested not to record which happened once in the field work. Also, during the interview, the researcher took field notes. Three protocols were developed for the interviews. The first is the version for the government officials and experts (Annex II), the second for the managers within donor agencies (Annex III) and the third for the CSOs working in CE field (Annex IV). Regarding the terms (civic & citizenship education), the term that was used most in English was citizenship education, and the one used in Arabic was civics education.

Documents:

The documents gathered for this study included the following:

- Reports that included documenting CE projects that the research team could find.
- Official strategy documents of the ministries of Youth, of Education and of Higher Education.
- Government documents that mention citizenship education that the research team could access.
- Donor agencies' reports related to citizenship education in Egypt.
- Any other reports related to citizenship education in Egypt.
- Scholarly papers discussing the status of citizenship education in Egypt.

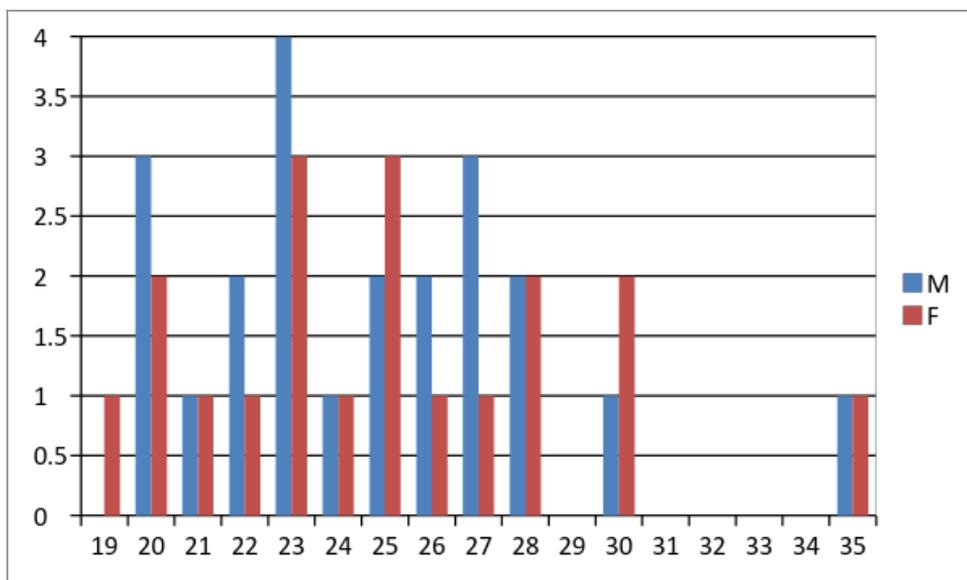
Focus Groups:

Four focus groups were conducted in total; three focus groups with youth groups involved in citizenship education projects, either as participants or trainers; one focus group with representatives of the CSOs involved in CE projects. The purpose of the focus groups is to understand the perspectives of the youth and CSOs' representatives, the challenges they face within this field and the recommendations they have to further develop the efforts done.

The demographics of participants in focus groups were as follows:

- The total number of participants in the study is 42: with 18 females, and 24 males.
- The age range of participants is from 19 to 35 with 1 male participant aged 46.

The below graph shows the distribution of participants among the age range:



Two protocols are developed for the focus groups. The first is the version for the CSOs (Annex IV) and the second for the youth who participated in CE projects (Annex V). Regarding the terms (civic & citizenship education), the term that was used most in English was citizenship education, and the one used in Arabic was civic education.

5. Perceptions of Citizenship Education in Egypt

All participants in the study were asked to explain what CE means to them and to identify the key components that constitute CE to them based on their experiences and the programs they offer or they participated in. Within this theme, some sub-themes emerged:

- 1- What is Citizenship education?
- 2- How is a citizens defined in Egypt?

5.1 What is Citizenship Education?

The definition of Citizenship education varied according to the backgrounds of participants; whether youth who facilitated or participated in CE programs, to executives who worked in donor agencies or CSOs, to government officials. Almost all definitions

included knowledge and skills needed to prepare youth to become more active citizens. The differences came from the focus of the knowledge, whether on rights and responsibilities, or on patriotism and national identity, or on human rights. Others saw CE as something that fills out the gap within formal schooling and thus they mainly focused on the method with which content was delivered and that all activities were engaging and fun. Others saw that the most important benefit from CE is the skills they gain, to have practical tools to become engaged in society.

Some participants in the field work especially from donor agencies and CSOs, found it hard to define CE and responded that it differed according to who is framing the definition and for which audience. Some explained that CE was about the knowledge, skills and attitudes that are needed for adolescents and youth to become active participants in the society. This included awareness of civil rights and responsibilities, building on the notion of nation and patriotism that is stressed upon within formal education, cultivating a culture of responsibility. One of the participants says: “In my view, Civic Education⁶ – and here I speak in terms of output- is a learning process that introduces an individual who is transferred from a normal to an active individual who has impact on the people around him”. The government official from MoY had a similar perception; she added that CE included adjusting the attitude of individuals towards more responsibility and proactivity.

One participant added the human rights’ perspective where all citizens are equal “regardless of their conviction, religions or geographical locations”.

Some participants explained that the main function of CE is to fill in a gap that exists in society that is not fulfilled in formal education settings: “Our main vision for Civic Education is that extracurricular activities fill the gaps in the Formal conventional or Governmental education in Egypt through NGOs or stakeholders who are interested in providing content or tools for education”. Many participants clarified that CE is an extra-curricular activity that happens outside of formal settings, schools or universities, and thus is “not defined by studying or curriculums, one must read and search to reach to a certain scientific level and to have some ambition”. In this concern, many participants shared that what made CE different was using interactive and joyful methods that engaged participants.

The method of inquiry and research is also important as one participant said: “.... we don’t provide the participant with all the information there are certain matters that we give him the space to reflect upon and ask and search about it”. There are some projects that even worked with teachers in formal settings to teach them the non-formal methods needed to

6 This is literal translation from transcription, where participant is using the term civics education in Arabic.

ensure CE is more engaging to students. One participant added; “I think that what we have in our school is Civic Education; having all the options available to everyone to choose from within without guidance or memorizing certain information to be examined in. I guess this is the spirit of Civic Education”.

For the youth who participated in CE programs, they mainly thought that CE is a continuous learning process, that it is more related to the non-formal education rather than formal education whether in schools or universities, and that it is more related to CSOs; as one participant puts it:

“The Civic Education concept is a form of non-formal education executed by a number of civil or non-governmental organizations because the governmental one does not much believe in such an idea such as the MoE and the MoY, but the NGOs do it in a much better way. It is not information-based learning, but more skills oriented such as the skills of problem solving, or carrying out community initiatives”.

Many young participants stressed on the fact that CE develops some skills that young people need to become active within the community; it also helps them build hands-on experiences:

“I have received many workshops on how to conduct community initiatives and managed along with a few people in executing one of those initiatives in the real world. And we believe that this better than just acquiring knowledge and contacts, we were able to convert this knowledge to a real thing in practice to solve his problems and help the state, and the community solve their problems”.

These experiences according to some participants build their confidence in themselves and even help them in bridging the gap between formal education and employment needs.

It is important to highlight that in the context of this study to identify some projects that were implemented by NGOs and associated themselves with the terminology or the field. There were two unique projects among that considered themselves within CE, one included job-related skills where they focused on women in Upper Egypt and helped them gain the skills that could benefit them in the job market and also educated them on some aspects of citizenship. Another project was focused more on developing dialogue skills among participants so they can use it in their life & work. They saw the importance of creating a space for

diverse people within the community to meet and explore their values so they can spread the awareness of the importance of diversity and how to live together.

The two experts who were interviewed, explained that it is very difficult to define citizenship education. One of them who was more focused on CE in the non-formal sector and is a practitioner in the field, clarified that “there are some core tensions in the understanding of civic education based on who is conducting it. In Egypt, it is stressed because it is a country that has different social tensions right now and political tensions”. She further explained that there is a difference between citizenship and civic education for example national history is a component of civic education but not necessarily of citizenship education. She added that the idea of citizen is still being formed in Egypt and each group has their own ideas and definitions of it, which makes citizenship education very difficult to implement. However, she sees that there is hope as she says: “it’s possible to create a set of agreed upon across the board citizen’s skills and values and knowledge that would look beyond political, religious, social disparities and differences”.

It is clear from the above that the main components of the definition mentioned in the MoE and MoY documents is in line with the definitions that some CSOs mentioned, where the end goal of CE is to develop an active citizen who is aware of the rights and responsibilities and acts accordingly. The main difference can be in the participation factor, where it is clear that CSOs target political and social participation while the formal sector is more focused on political participation. It is also clear that the definition of the UN that was mentioned before is the most comprehensive definition as it includes dimensions of human development and dialogue as part of conflict resolution, and these two dimensions appear in the projects that were included in this study. It is also of crucial importance to address the issue of finding a common definition of citizenship among the different groups within Egypt, to be able to advance the content of CE and reach a common terminology and definition.

5.2 How is a Citizen defined in Egypt?

Some participants explained that one main aspect of the Egyptian citizen is to be active and even proactive, not being passive towards his/her issues but knows how to voice and express him/herself; as one participant puts it: “The image of the citizen is one who does more than he talks, who does a lot of effort and build and try to understand notion of responsibility”. Some participants added a historical or an evolutionary perspective where the Egyptian citizen used to be a participant then became a doer, now he/she needs to become influential. Another perspective was based on geographical location, one participant voiced

her concern of the marginalization of geographically remote citizens, “They don’t have any rights, I want an association that fosters the youth, and gives them the opportunity to express and be empowered so that they could reach what they want”. Another angle of defining a citizen focused on the minimum official document needed by an individual to become a citizen, for example to hold a national ID which enables the individual to access basic rights such as education, voting, access to loans, marriage documents, etc.

Some participants clarified that there is no clear definition, and that it is variable from one person to another, and that no one can be a perfect citizen. Some participants expressed their concerns about exclusion from society based on these perceptions or definitions, as one participant puts it:

“I will not use the term citizen, because that will mean excluding a lot of people, today I am the citizen tomorrow I am not. I don’t associate the notion of citizen with loyalty or belonging or nation”.

Another participant added that the state and the culture were the main factors in defining a citizen, and this affected how citizens view each other and the rights each group of citizens can exercise.

In one of the focus groups, there was a discussion related to whether rights and responsibilities were of equal importance or not, specifically in the context of citizenship and defining who is a citizen. There was no conclusion to the discussion, however many participants saw that rights came first in this discussion, one of the arguments was:

“I think that pursuing the rights precedes the responsibilities and that the state is the one responsible to provide those rights to its citizens therefore we cannot ask them to fulfill their duties without securing fulfilling their rights. You cannot waive citizenship of anyone even the imprisoned loses some of his rights in jail but he is still a citizen!”

Other participants explained that duties or responsibilities were more important because they reflect the citizen’s commitment and loyalty to his/her country.

These perceptions say a lot about the impact of the narrative on the way a citizen is defined. Taking into consideration the focus of the formal curricula on nationalism and loyalty to the country, it is only natural that the citizen’s main characteristics are being proactive, patriotic, responsible and willing to participate in the community in all ways. The narrative doesn’t take into account the various challenges a citizen faces to exercise his/her participation,

it considers that it is the duty of the citizen to remove all obstacles and remain participating and engaged. On the other hand, the impact of the CE programs on some of the responses is clear where the importance of rights is highlighted and where it is stated that citizens who are deprived of their basic citizenship rights such as documentation and holding an Egyptian ID will not necessarily fit into this picture. This is a huge change to the narrative. On the other hand, it is still very clear that citizens who live in remote geographic areas or outside of the capital showed a sense of marginalization and distance from their civic rights. All of this put together, tells us that there is still a gap in the understanding of citizenship and reaching a common ground in terms of the definition, however there is a development in the concepts which shows that the transition towards democracy is happening slowly. On the other hand, there are indicators from what is shared by participants that show that there is still a gap between concepts and practice, which is a huge challenge and needs to be taken into consideration when designing CE projects.

6. Documenting the efforts of CE in Egypt

In order to identify the different efforts in the CE field in Egypt, it was important to create a map of the five principal elements; using the methodology of Dwight Laswell, the functionalist paradigm of the five W's. This cartography is focusing just on the stakeholders, without testing the impact on the different target groups. The "W's" used in this section of the study are:

- 1- **"Who"** are working on this topic as the main actors;
- 2- **"What"** they are doing exactly in the field of our study;
- 3- **"Why"** they are focusing on citizenship education;
- 4- **"How"** they are operating, **"where"** and **"to whom"**.

The study tried to create the cartography for some efforts implemented on the ground and did not focus on certain programs; it mainly depended on the data that was shared by participants in the focus groups and interviews who shared details about the programs they were part of. The data that was shared about the programs was analyzed based on three levels:

- First was the planning phase, which means how the stakeholders started to plan for the projects, think about their goals, determine their vision and mission, and choose their audiences before starting their work.

- Second, the implementation phase, which means the work itself and the process of the projects, including content development, trainers and so on.

- Finally, the assessment phase, including the monitoring and evaluation phase, that each actor on the ground will conduct differently and based on their objectives and goals. Some themes evolved from the data as it was analyzed and so they are added to the below themes.

6.1 The Civic Education Unit in MoY

In the beginning, the researchers started with the Civic Education Unit in the MoY which is the only program that was highlighted in several focus groups and we interviewed a government official from the MoY who spoke mainly about this program and an executive from UNICEF who also spoke only of this program.

The Civic Education unit was established in the Ministry of Youth in cooperation with the UNICEF in 2006, which started the first Train of Trainer (TOT) program which was composed of 15 females and males and then the program was launched by the end of 2006, 23rd of November 2006. At the beginning, it was named the Youth Leaders Unit and later was named after the program; Civic Education Unit. The main program focused on training with five main components: citizenship, participation, rights and responsibilities, youth and state, and youth and development. It was not a familiar concept for the people working in the MoY then, as the head of the unit explains in her interview: “In the beginning of 2006, when we were told that we are establishing a program named Civic Education, we didn’t know what this is? It was the first time for us to encounter such a concept. We didn’t fathom the idea that we will train youth to be trainers to train others on civic education...”. The program was designed by experts in the field who were jointly selected by UNICEF and MoY, they created a guidebook that include all the concepts and activities and is given was the trainers during the Train of Trainer (ToT).

All activities in the program were interactive and based on the feedback and engagement of participants. All trainers in the program were young (under the age of 30), and this was seen as one of the key factors for the success of the program (Wahba, 2014). The Roles & responsibilities section in the guidebook included: “the concept of rights, what are the rights and what are the responsibilities associated with these rights ... realizing that I have a right so I have a responsibility”. The Participation section included: “concept of participation, fields of participation, levels of participation. How to participate? Which level? Is it to create a political party? What are the challenges to participation? ... they don’t necessarily need to join a political party; they can join a CSO”. The guidebook is being revised and new activities will be added according to the changes that are happening in the country.

The MoY has two methods for evaluating their program. First, there is a form that is distributed among participants before and after the training implementation, and based on the feedback some adjustments are introduced. This form measures the level of information and willingness to participate. Second, there is a form for providing feedback on the trainers, in the end of the year the ToT is repeated, and some trainers get excluded from the program based on the feedback. Trainers are not hired in the MoY; they are contracted consultants.

From the documents and from the data collected during the field work there is a clear indication that the program is performing well in terms of reaching youth all over Egypt and in terms of content as well. The MoY government official said in the interview that the MOY is looking into updating the content to match the political changes that occurred. Apparently, that the evaluation system for this program is functioning. In terms of youth involvement, the whole program is run by youth, with the exception of the leadership from both MoY and UNICEF, which is considered an achievement.

6.2 Overview of the Projects in Non-formal Sector

The focus on the citizenship education as one of the tools that can build any society, did not get the attention of the Egyptian civil society's active actors before 2000 (Waddell, 2013). With the beginning of the millennium, the mapping of the CE actors in Egypt reflect that different foreign donors started to work in Egypt with pre-determined developmental plans and agendas either with the Egyptian government, or with the CSOs (Wahba, 2014).

Based on the field work done within this study, the projects focusing on CE in Egypt that we looked at can be divided into four main areas:

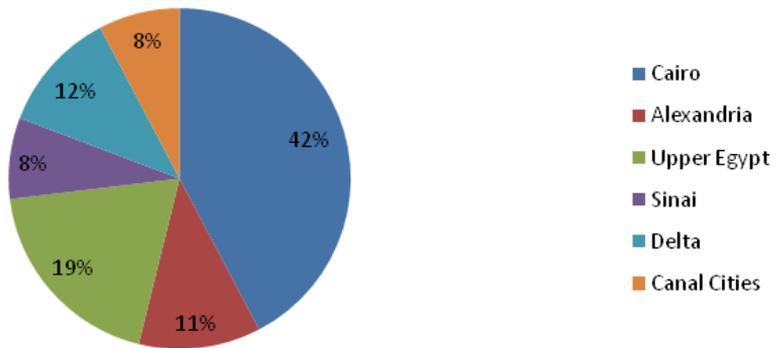
Organizations and projects working through trainings and workshops focusing on CE values and skills that are the foundation of an active citizen (British Council: Active Citizen Program, The Danish Egyptian Dialogue Institute & El Sadat Association for Social Development & Welfare: Democracy Schools);

- Projects working on building skills related to co-existence and dealing with diversity such as dialogue (DUF: Ambassadors for Dialogue).
- Projects focusing on advocacy based on human-rights approach like advocating rights of minorities (women, disabilities, etc.).
- Projects focusing on employability skills (Egyptian Association for Educational Resources).

However, there are many initiatives and startups, which are tackling the CE field differently with new innovative ideas (such as Ana Masry project, incubated by Nahdet el Mahrousa Foundation). Annex I shows the main actors within the field in the non-formal sector.

Participants in this study were equally split between Cairo and other governorates, which made it possible to get an overall picture of the CE field across Egypt in the non-formal sector. Through the data shared by participants and the desk research, it seems that the geographic distribution of the CE projects is as follows:

Distribution of CSOs focused on CE across Egypt



As indicated above, programs differ in their scope and focus, one of the interesting projects that we found during data collection was called “Transparent Budgets change the lives of people” and it is a project where people understand the budgets allocated to the services in their district, as an empowering tool for citizens to negotiate and pressure the government to get their rights & needs. “And people have witnessed the difference and recognized it, when they speak from a powerful stand and that they have information and knowledge, in terms of their rights”.

Another program that has gained quite a reputation in the field is Namaa Summer school, which is an incubated program under Nahdet el Mahrousa and they started in 2005. Namaa is working towards creating a generation of entrepreneurs in all fields whether social or economic or other. And so their learning experience is an intense one and it includes an element where people are encouraged and get support to implement their ideas and take initiative in the community, as the participant explained:

“The school basically targets people who have on ground ideas that they want to execute, so its role is helping those people in the application of the solutions and the ideas in their mind so that they would know that they can change and be a bit empowered and therefore participating in the community”.

Another similar program is The Lazord Civic Leadership Academy, which is a partnership between Lazord Foundation and the American University in Cairo (AUC). It is a fellowship program that offers select AUC and other young leaders an opportunity “to expand their skills in ethical leadership, civic engagement and strategic philanthropy” (The Lazord Civic Leadership Academy, 2015). This program offers young leaders to intern for 9 months in a CSO where they gain practical experience and also add value in their host organizations. The first fellowship started in 2009/2010 as the participant explains:

“If you count the ground work, it started in 2009, but the very first fellowship was 2009/2010, I believe, but the name came in 2011, before it was called LEAD-on. It started initially with LEAD students, graduates of the fellowships of the American University and then we opened up to applicants from Public Universities, which I think is one of the best moves we have done”.

Another interesting project was the Tahrir Lounge in the Nile Delta that is operated by El Sadat Association for Social Development and Welfare and started in 2011. The Tahrir Lounge is a “civic, social, and cultural institution that is dedicated to civil society activities and civic participation. Through these activities, it seeks to increase and enhance political and civic awareness of rural Egyptians, particularly youth, and to develop an active citizenry of residents who are empowered to build better communities, participate in civil society, and act as leaders within their communities” (The Tahrir Lounge - Nile Delta, 2015). One of the challenges this project faces is, according to the participant, “that youth who have any kind of civic education in delta, how would they then go and apply it? Like for example on the main focuses of Tahrir Lounge programming has been local councils, and educating youth and the local community about what the local council does”.

6.3 Main Components in CE

As mentioned in the definition section, the main feature of CE for many participants was being a complementary program that fills the gap in formal education. Accordingly, it had a more interactive and fun approach that was different from the formal education system.

Another participant added that the main difference is that they are not required to think in a certain way, and they are not obliged to build their programs with the same methodology. That was explained more in the description of one of the organizations that participated in the study which aims to “provide the students with different skills, different ideologies, respecting the importance of giving the students the space to think and analyze in whichever way they wish to follow”, and the participant clarifies this point more by saying that “Respecting diversity, by having a diverse and different audience, and by understanding how to work their way within this diversity among each other, is the only aspiration”.

Another component of CE is that it involves addressing the knowledge and skills of participants so that they can participate actively in society on both community and political levels. The knowledge part includes raising awareness on civil rights and responsibilities, human rights, and getting exposed to the notion of nationalism and belonging. The participants shared that there was an evolution in the programs through adding more components to cover different topics or to work with different target groups. As a result, the components can include some important soft skill and tools that aim to help the trainees to think in different ways and without guidance. Those skills include stressing on the importance of tolerance and being able to deal with diverse backgrounds and opinions to be able to become an active citizen.

6.4 Evaluation Process of the Programs

Most of the programs that were studied in this mapping research didn't have a clear system of evaluation and monitoring for the process of their program. However, reviewing the yearly agenda, the success stories and lessons learned can be an indicator for the evolution of each program, which cannot be done without some kind of assessment or evaluation process. The evaluation process for the majority of the programs should be an empiric work, with numbers and statistics. What was discovered in analyzing the data, is that the evaluation is usually done on the micro level, when the program seeks some information for a donor report or an official entity. Most of CE organizations are using now external evaluation consultants and researchers to assess and evaluate their work from an independent perspective, as was explained by many interviewees.

6.5 The Target Groups

Based on the field work, the beneficiaries (target groups) are chosen based on the age, gender, major of study or even the field of work and specialization. It seems that to define the target group by age for any program, was not a simple decision, as mentioned in two of

the conducted interviews. One of the participants said that there are two definitions for adolescent and youth; the first was decided by the UN and the second by the MoY, and it is not stable, which means that the ministry can change it from time to another, based on unclear references. In order to simplify this issue, the actors in this field always clarify the targeted group age in their written protocols with any governmental entity.

Moreover, there are other targeted groups; for example, one of the summer schools prepares an annual course for students in universities and technical institutes, between 16 and 17 years old. However, another organization is targeting the older age group mainly through workshops and training sessions depending on their field of work; journalism, young political activists in the parties, and so on. After the 25th of January revolution, a participant informed the researcher that several trainings on local councils –Mahaliat- were conducted in different governorates.

6.6 Youth Involvement in Planning Projects

This theme evolved from the data as many participants saw that youth involvement was important in planning and executing CE projects. Youth involvement in any project can take different forms, but the most important one, which can reflect the role of youth in the program, is their participation in the planning phase. This step as mentioned in one of the interviews is not just to empower youth, but it is a practice for what their role should be in their society, and then how to be active and effective citizens. A clear example was the summer school of Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies (CIHRS), where the youth participation was clear due to their involvement in different phases, for example the facilitators are involved in the whole process of the summer school. Moreover, the facilitators are responsible for choosing the activities; they design it along with choosing the film screenings. But they have to be chosen from the alumni of the summer school. Also, the Alumni Club of CIHRS has many initiatives; as publishing booklets that were fully executed by the Schools' graduates and sometimes they organized a limited door-to door campaign to raise the awareness of the importance of participation in the elections or the constitution.

6.7 Impact of 25th of January Revolution

Participants in the field work were asked if the 25th of January has an impact on the concepts of citizenship and civic values that they were exploring, and whether it had any impact on the execution of the programs they planned. There was a serious debate concerning the impact of the 25th of January revolution on CE field, the feedback from the participants reflect this point. One of the interviewees when asked about the difference before and after

January 2011 said “of course there is a difference” versus another interviewee who said: “I don’t think there are much changes before or after. They are the same employees in the government, same experience and exposure, same slow pace”, and the third one said: “...there was this big honey moon phase, about let’s push the civic education part more into supporting activists, that aspect of civic education...”. It explains that the bureaucratic system did not change, so donors or NGOs did not feel any change towards it. However, the need and quality of participation along with the feeling of ownership have increased.

“Before the revolution, the youth refused any participation in elections or the community, we really worked at the harder times when youth felt alienated from the society, ineffective and really was not participating in any activities. But now after the revolution the situation has completely changed and we are developing and upgrading the program according to these changes, we started to include issues like tolerance, accepting the other, we are shifting according to new challenges now than before when it was more of emphasizing the need to participate and that they have a role, their rights, their responsibilities, the need to participate, increasing your ownership and belonging.”

The main components of CE, that were mentioned above, started to be developed since 2011, thus the active actors in CE field saw the importance of including the topics that might lead to increasing the loyalty and the sense of ownership in the society. What was really surprising and uncomprehensive in this phase of the study, was the gap between the role of public schools and non-formal programs as it was mentioned during the interviews and focus groups. A responsible citizen, based on the international standards, is the one who knows his rights and responsibilities; so on the long term, a participant explains that the civic education can be used as a platform for community learning and community development, to give them back the sense of purpose within society without being violent, the importance of loyalty and the sense of tolerance, that’s also how one of the founders of a civic engagement program in Egypt declared;

“...there is a lot to do before getting to political parties and so I think that nowadays I don’t know if it is linked to the uprising or not, there is an opportunity to keep pushing for Civic Education in the sense of a responsible individual in the society and I think that the government will be the first one to be happy about it,”

During the last five years, certain terms started to be used more in the Egyptian society due to the 2011's events; i.e. (democracy, human rights, equality, and liberty). However, based on an opinion from one of the founders of a CE organization, the use of those terms in the public sphere has demonstrated that there is a serious need in the Egyptian society to explore, explain and develop the history of those terminologies. She added during the interview, that this is the role of the State, as it must be the first (or maybe the only) actor who can reach everyone in the society, and who can provide all the citizens by a minimum level of understanding using different tools; and civil society can help the state who is the most powerful and influencing actor; to try to build together a strong active citizen. However, she continues that this was not the case in Egypt; the State in the last two years had other priorities; the economic enhancement and focusing on the geographic political and security issues; which means that civil society had a huge role to play in the CE field, working only with two or three ministries and under a very tough environment.

7. Key Challenges Related to Implementing Citizenship Education Projects

All participants were asked about the challenges they face or they think CE field faces during the current stage that Egypt is going through and to make sure that it achieves the goal of supporting a smooth transition towards democracy. Many challenges were mentioned, and they were categorized into challenges related to:

- 1- Legal environment,
- 2- Sustainability,
- 3- Participation in programs,
- 4- Inclusion and exclusion.

7.1 Challenges Related to the Legal Environment

Some participants shared that there were some challenges related to security issues in the country, so some organizations had to change their plans of executing CE programs in certain parts of Egypt several times to accommodate these issues. Some participants shared that they find difficulty in getting approvals for the projects and programs they wish to implement, which leaves them in a state of continuous uncertainty. One participant shared the concern of being an initiative that is operating through an existing NGO, so their challenges are more related to the risks facing that NGO, she also shared the concern of the complexity related to legalizing their initiative, as she puts it:

“establishing an organization is not an easy road! We need a location; we need funding we need to have 100 of thousands of approvals. The legal environment is not at its best to include people who have ideas and want to apply it especially from the age of 18 to 35 years old”.

Another participant voiced a concern related to the change in the law that requires all organizations working within the field of development and social rights to be registered with the MoSS. This law affected his organization as he explains: “We were registered as a civil company that is affiliated to the Lawyers’ Syndicate but now the state does not allow anyone to work in the development field unless affiliated to the ministry of solidarity...” Over and above he mentions that during the registration process, the MoSS did not approve their name because it included social rights in it. One of the participants was working in a student activity that organizes events and workshops for Al-Azhar students, his main concern was getting permissions and approvals especially with the suspension of student activities in Al-Azhar University that has lasted for 2 years now.

Some participants from the interviews explained that the issue was not necessarily related to the legal environment, because the law doesn’t pose so many restrictions; the main issue is more related to the culture; the Egyptian people do not trust civil society and ask constantly about funding and foreign agendas, and this culture is what provides the space for the law enforcers to push further in their investigations and any practices that are not entirely their right.

As for international organizations and donors, in many cases, they prefer having local NGOs as partners even out of the capital because they understand the environment, they know how to work in the area, they know how to contact and network, they would know the needs. The approvals to work with the local entities was not simple as described by a participant, it can take from three to six months, and they can get rejected and start all over again and for the mini grant. When the funded organization has objectives to meet in one year so if it takes nine months to take the approval then there is only three months to finish the work which cannot happen.

There seems to be several issues related to the legal environment, some might be related more to processes and bureaucracy rather than the restriction of the law, which doesn’t help much in the overall picture. Unfortunately, we were not able to meet with anyone from the Ministry of Social Solidarity (MoSS) to get their input a point of view on these issues.

7.2 Challenges Related to Sustainability and Strategic Planning

Many participants indicated that the lack of funding was a major issue because it affects the resources the CSOs have and thus their reach out capacity; as one participant puts it: “this is affecting the diversity and offering the opportunity to everyone to participate especially for people who can’t afford it. And we also cannot sustain having a full time employer and this affects sustainability”. Some participants saw that a key challenge was working with the people in the field, on the streets and in their local communities, because youth face diverse issues, one participant gave an example: “I remember once we were doing awareness on the Blinds rights and we stayed in the street wearing the International Logo for Blinds which is a hand of 5 fingers and we had many troubles with the people”. Some saw that media campaigns against civil society are a huge challenge as they contribute to the culture of mistrust mentioned above, another argument was that the real challenge is that CSOs have completely acknowledged the stories in the media and are now either denying or defending themselves against funding, foreign funding, political awareness, etc. The participant saw that this attitude is not helping CSOs build the trust back with the community. One of the managers in a donor agency mentioned the issue of low organizational capacity among CSOs in Egypt. Another issue that was brought up by a donor agency employee was the lack of coordination among CSOs working on the ground, she suggested that the MoY can play a role in bringing the CSOs together and help build a network. These are all challenges related to the civil society in general.

As for challenges related to CE specifically, they mainly were related to curricula, trainers, assessment and documentation. Many participants shared that the curriculums need update and that there is a need to generate new activities to avoid repetition. In addition, there is no available content in Arabic, most of the content was English then was translated, and was not contextualized to Egyptian culture and reality, so this leads to many issues in the content. Some Arab countries started Arabizing the content to match their context, but no efforts are done yet in Egypt. This issue is directly related to lack of enough qualified experts and trainers who can continuously develop the programs and curricula, and who can also train new trainers.

As for the documentation of the activities, there are not enough efforts within the CE field according to participants. There are no manuals or guides that are shared so people can learn from each other and build on each other’s experiences. On top, there are no available tools to evaluate the impact of programs and thus the planning of new programs is not successful.

This is all linked to the lack of a clear vision for CE, a vision that is based on conducting a market study to understand what people really need, so updating the curriculum can be done upon a base.

As for young people who join CE programs, there is a challenge in the attitude of some of them who come to add this on their CV or get some money. Some participants in the data collection shared that there is a general sense of losing faith in change and dominating feelings of depression among youth, especially after the 25th of January revolution, and this affected negatively both the facilitators and the participants in CE programs.

7.3 Challenges Related to Participation in Programs

Bringing people to attend trainings in something that they don't believe in how it can affect their daily life is always hard based on the conducted interviews, so there are different tools used by some organizations to motivate people to come and attend the trainings related to the citizenship education; for example, one of the organizations that was interviewed during the field research, offer the participants a meal to attend the workshops. However, when it comes to the soft skills and sort of trainings that might empower youth and help them to find jobs, the situation is different, because normally youth thought that it is a new door for better opportunities for them, by providing them an attendance certificate with the logo of one of the ministries; or of an international donor agency which is practiced by different organizations. It was interesting during the field work, to notice that the Human Rights trainings and workshops did not have the same situation, which means that they attract more the audience.

7.4 Challenges Related to Inclusion/Exclusion

Many participants, within the different stakeholders' groups, highlighted that challenges in reaching out to people in different parts in Egypt especially in rural areas, as one participant puts it: *“To reach the audience who don't participate or even the marginalized categories in different urban slots is not always an easy task for the entities who work in this field”*. One participant who was from North Sinai saw that the State was excluding her city based on ignorance and stereotypes of this area, they are either categorized as a primitive and tribal area, or as an area that hosts terrorists, which in her opinion is not true at all. She also thinks that the media plays a key role in the stereotyping of her city.

Some participants explained that the exclusion may happen at organization level, where some organizations that have a political orientation but offer the same content or trainings

are not accepted by the State. Some saw the exclusion may happen on people's level where people do not come to certain trainings because they do not agree with this organization's orientation. Another form of exclusion is putting political awareness activities under the microscope for example, especially within universities; this by design creates tensions and fear among the youth groups. Another challenge is dealing with the mentalities of the students, as one participant puts it: **“they are mainly extremists on the two ends of the scale so it is quite hard to find some point in the middle where we can talk or understand what we say and convince them with it to create a common ground for dialogue”**.

In conclusion, it is clear from the above that the CE field is facing the same challenges that appear in the literature related to non-formal sector in general; such as lack of resources, funding issues, bureaucracy, access, and other. However, there are some challenges specific to CE field, considering that it is a relatively new field in the development sector. These challenges include lack of proper documentation of the efforts that are being done and the curricula, shortage of proper calibers who have enough experience and knowledge in the field to develop it further and lack of coordination among the stakeholders in CE field in Egypt. These challenges hold the key to the future of this field in Egypt and pave the way for the following section.

8. Success Stories within and Recommendations for Citizenship Education in Egypt

This section introduces success stories that were shared by participants, either stories that they witnessed within their programs or occurred because of their programs or in collaboration with theirs. The field researchers asked all participants to share their views and recommendations and categorized them according to the themes that emerged.

8.1 Success Stories within CE Field

As participants were asked to share their success stories, it was clear that each participant defined success from a different angle and shared stories based on this definition. The researchers categorized those definitions and the examples that were shared based on them.

Some participants indicated that success is related to the sustainability of the program, re-applying it and continuing it through turbulent times, whether political or on an organizational level. So for an employee in a donor agency, having a continuous and strong partnership with the MoY through its many changes from National Council of Youth (NCY) into a Ministry into NCY is a success story. One participant explained that success is in re-applying the

same model of work they do in their CSO in different parts of Egypt, especially Canal cities and Sinai where both have a specific environment of work. Another participant revealed that success can be measured through spread of the work and its impact to several governorates, and target groups as well; he explained that his organization started working only with school students, now they work with Alumni, single mothers, women and conduct trainings for governmental employees.

Some participants added that success are related to impact the on participants, as one participant put it simply: “Success for me is when people use the tools”. One participant shared that their volunteers have become very active and they have a very good reputation in their community which could qualify then to run in the municipality’s elections and succeed. One participant shared his success stories as follows: “A success story for me is when I see small changes in the participants who attend the workshops, when they start developing a skill they did not have before such as listening or engaging in meaningful conversations”. For the MoY civic education unit, the success is that the trainers who work in the program are contracted to do trainings for many other programs inside the ministry implementing the participatory active learning methods within the ministry’s activities and trainings.

Starting new initiatives or projects started as a result of the program was considered a success. Many examples were given, especially in governorates other than Cairo. A participant shared some accomplishments in Upper Egypt where they were able to establish the first syndicate for female service workers which is considered highly functional syndicate as they are achieving their goals gradually.

Another participant, who was part of the project that focused on dialogue as a means to advance social dialogue, explained that success means being able to apply tolerance concepts as there were many differences in opinions and political orientations within the team of the project. And this for her is practicing “tolerance” within the team before even preaching it to young people.

Another criterion for success can be the change in perception for example one of the managers of an NGO said that the success story for her, can be when people understand and believe in the role of civil society organizations in general;

“..that everyone has a bias against civil society but when you actually talk to them on a personal level and you get them for a training and you see how their perspective has shifted over the course of the training, they see

that civil society can be a partner for them not something that is all bad and they have an actual understanding of what it is and they've interacted with an actual civil society organization, I think that was a success story in the change of perspective in some of the employees and them wanting to be proactive about it, I think recently the ministry of social solidarity put out a call for NGOs to implement a series of trainings across a bunch of different governorates to educate people about civil society."

One participant was not able to provide a success story because she did not have a tool to measure the success, as it requires a lot of work and technology.

8.2 Recommendations for Effective CE in Egypt

Participants shared their recommendations for effective CE based on their experiences and exposure. The researchers have categorized them into two sections: one discusses the recommendation and dreams of the CSOs and young facilitators of CE projects. The other discusses the aspirations and recommendations of executives and managers in donor and international agencies.

One of the key issues that were mentioned several times was the lack of coordination and cooperation among CSOs working within the CE field. Thus two recommendations were mentioned based on that: the first is related to coordination and having a professional guideline or framework that governs all business relations in the field, as one participant explained: "I wish there would be a gentleman's agreement that creates a framework for CE in Egypt, so there wouldn't be hidden conflicts between the organizations, and it would mention things related to principles and professionalism, so how we as facilitators interact with the process, there would be consistency between what we say and what we do".

The second is related to collaboration, where there is a need to create a platform for all CSOs in the field to meet and exchange experiences, ideas, and knowledge. As one participant puts it: "I wish we have a yearly conference that gathers all the organizations, because our problem is we are disbursed, there are for example 50 projects working on dialogue, so if they all become one project it would be much better, then we start looking at the missing projects and start covering new ideas". Such gatherings will lead to further collaboration on the planning level and on the execution level as well. There was a recommendation for CSOs to re-structure themselves so that each group focuses on a certain aspect of CE. This can only be achieved after enforcing the above-mentioned platform and regular gatherings.

Another recommendation focused on the relationship of CSOs working in the field of CE with the state, the society, and with the research and academic community; all relations were described as weak; accordingly affecting the sustainability, growth and development of CE field in Egypt. So recommendations addressed several angles of this issue, to begin with there is a need to raise awareness of the role of CE field among the different stakeholders as explained: “I wish there would be more awareness among people and within the State, and this societal awareness needs to happen through civil society, and I wish there would be cooperation between the media and CE, so that they communicate the idea of CE”. Based on this level of awareness, a recommendation for further cooperation among the civil society and the State was mentioned, based on the fact that the State realizes that CSOs are actually filling a gap that they cannot fulfill, and that they need the development projects that are being done. Another recommendation was related to cooperation with the research and academic community, so there would be accumulation of knowledge and evaluation to decide which projects work and which don't.

The participants also indicated the challenge of linking the values introduced in the CE programs and the daily life of the attendees in these programs, as one participant put it:

“I think my ideals are to find ways that people can apply citizenship education, it can become relevant to their lives in whatever way, I just feel like that is so important, I don't want people to leave with the ideas that this is just talk, just stuff on paper, just ideas from outside, but for people to actually find the education relevant to their lives, you know it, whether it's a housewife who realizes... like there are things that are important to her like her children's education and her children's health, and she has the capacity to advocate for rights in these different fields, there's something that she can do, she can develop herself, she doesn't just have to sit with her friends or talk about it with her family and stuff like that but it's not these very vague ideas of what your rights are, it is very connected to your life and there is something you can do. That is the ideal.”

The recommendations of the donor's agencies complemented the above recommendations focusing on policy level. Some participants indicated that there is a need to reform the educational system based on the active citizenship tools and activities. While others recommended that a rights-based approach to be incorporated in the national curriculum. It's not necessarily a major reform, but a call to incorporate such methodologies, ideas and tools in the educational system:

“I wish that CE is incorporated into the educational system, I wish that schools can be more active on citizenship education, it has to be taught from a very young age not just at adolescence age, it has to start from kindergarten. I also dream that adolescents and youth find a supporting environment to participate and not to lose hope and continue to feel that they can make a difference.”

With regards to the idea of the necessary environment needed to foster citizenship and civic education, there were recommendations to foster trust and enthusiasm among youth in the culture of volunteerism and to advocate for adopting necessary policies to make the work of CSOs and specifically donor and international agencies easier. There was a recommendation to provide a legal umbrella and framework that can help donors and CSOs work without barriers. Another recommendation was to narrow down the Youth definition as it is very broad currently (from the age of 15 to the age of 35/40 and sometimes 55 according to the participant).

In conclusion, all recommendations address the key challenges that were raised in the literature and that were discussed in the field work of this study. Indeed, this study revealed some challenges that are specific to CE field and thus need to be addressed separately. The recommendations that were mentioned by the participants are extremely valuable and needs to be taken into consideration by the experts and practitioners within the CE field in hope to advance it further.

9. Conclusion

There are several insights that can be drawn from this study. First, most of the young participants in this research admitted that what is unique about CE experiences is the interactive and inquiry-based methodology that helps them build knowledge and learn to get it. They believe that the hands-on experience is extremely valuable as they are encouraged and supported to start their own initiatives within their communities to build a better future for themselves and the next generations.

Second, the projects that were created to address different aspects of CE varied in nature which reflects the diverse understandings and interests. Some projects focus on trainings and workshops, other focus on community organizing and helping people negotiate and advocate for their rights, while others advocate for a specific minority group's rights and some projects focus on employability skills besides citizenship concepts. All of these projects work mainly with youth and adolescents, however some give more focus on women, while others focus more on remote geographic locations. There is a general feedback of unequal distribution of CE services among the different regions in Egypt.

Third, the challenges related to CSOs are the same challenges that the literature discussed whether related to legal environment and law restrictions, weak funding channels or the popularity of the work of CSOs. However, some challenges are specific to CE field came out which mainly had to do with the fact that it's a relatively new field in Egypt which means the scarce of trained calibers, weak content development, absence of documentation and evaluation efforts. These are all serious challenges that have great impact on the quality of CE programs offer.

Despite the above mentioned challenges, there were many aspirations shared by the participants which are highly important to transform into policies and strategies as they are all very important to the continuation of CE in Egypt and its further development. The participants emphasized the importance of collaboration between CSOs working in the field to avoid work duplication in order to provide and deliver efficient and effective programs. Others emphasized the necessity of cooperation between the state and the CSOs in the field of CE.

Finally, this study offers an overview of the status of CE in Egypt; it is a qualitative study that tried to reach as many stakeholders within the field as possible. There is still a need to do a quantitative and qualitative mapping of all the projects addressing CE in Egypt, though this study tried to capture some of the main projects. As there was a lot of mentioning of the lack of impact assessment tools within the field, there is a need to look deeper into this issue through a case study research to provide more depth on the content and tools used within certain CE programs. There is definitely a need to continue further research within this area as recommended by many participants in the field work.

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Annex I

Main Civil Society Organizations Working within Citizenship Education Field

Type of Organization	Name	Head Office
International Organization	British Council in Egypt	Cairo and Alexandria
International Organization	Goethe Institute	Cairo
International NGOs	Plan International	Cairo
International Organization	Swedish Institute	Alexandria
Inter-governmental Organization	The Danish Egyptian Dialog Institute	Cairo
International NGOs	UNDP	Cairo
International NGOs	UNICEF Egypt	Cairo
International NGOs	GIZ	Cairo
National NGOs	Egyptian Association for Educational Resources (E-ERA)	Cairo
National NGOs	Cairo Center for Human Development (CCHD)	Cairo
National NGOs	El Sadat Association for Social Development and Welfare	Cairo
National NGOs	Egyptian Youth Federation	Cairo
National NGOs	Intercultural Youth Dialogue Association	Cairo

National NGOs	Maat For Peace, Development & Human Rights	Cairo
National NGOs	Mesaha Foundation	Cairo
National NGOs	Misr Baladna for Civil Society Development	Cairo
National NGOs	Nahdet ELMahrousa (NM)	Cairo
National NGOs	National Alliance of Civic Education for Youth	Cairo
National NGOs	New Horizon Association for Social Development	Cairo
National NGOs	The Association for the Development and Enhancement of Women (ADEW)	Cairo
National NGOs	Tanweer for Development	Menya
National NGOs	Youth Association for Population and Development	Offices All Over Egypt
National NGOs	Sting Consultancy	Cairo

Annex II

Interview Questions with Government Officials

a. Definition of CE:

1. Please introduce yourself, your education background and professional experiences.
2. What does CE mean to you? Did you personally study it in school or university?
3. MoY: Can you give me more background on the CE unit in your ministry?

MoE: Can you give me more background on the reasons behind the changes in CE curricula?

b. Ecosystem of CE:

4. What are the initiatives/programs that are addressing CE?
 5. Were there any changes that occurred after 25th of January revolution and June 30th events?
 6. How were these initiatives/programs developed?
Were youth involved in their development?
 7. What are the key elements of CE that you are focused on?
(information, skills, ...)
 8. MoY: Have you conducted any evaluation of your programs?
What are the out reach strategies you follow?
- MoE: Are there any extra-curricular activities addressing CE?
How are they designed and planned?

c. Best Practices:

9. Is there any cooperation between your ministry and the civil society?
10. Is there any cooperation between your ministry and other ministries?

d. Challenges:

11. What are the key challenges you are facing in implementing citizenship education projects?
12. What are your aspirations regarding citizenship education in Egypt?

Annex III

Interview Questions with Managers of Donor Agencies

a. Definition of CE:

1. Please introduce yourself, your education background, and professional experiences.
2. What are the CE projects that you are involved in/funding/monitoring?
3. How do you perceive citizenship education?
4. What are the key elements you focus on through your work?

b. Ecosystem of CE:

5. How did your vision for CE evolve across the years? What are the key mile stones for your work in Egypt? Especially after the 25th of January revolution?
6. What is your selection criteria for partner organizations in Egypt? Are there certain geographic areas that you target?
7. How do you evaluate your work and your partner organizations' work?

c. Best Practices:

8. What are the success stories you have witnessed?

d. Challenges:

9. What are the key challenges you are facing the CSOs while implementing CE projects?
10. What are your aspirations regarding CE in Egypt?

Annex IV

Focus Group Questions with CSOs

a. Definition of CE:

1. Please introduce yourself, your education background, and professional experiences.
2. Please introduce your project, and how it relates to CE?
3. How do you perceive CE?
4. Did this perception change after working in CE projects? Why?
5. Did this perception change after the 25th of January revolution? How?
6. From your perspective, how do you see “the other”? Who defines that? (based on culture, norms, constitution).
7. How did CE field change since 2003? Since 2011?

b. Ecosystem of CE:

8. How do you plan your projects? Who is involved?
9. What is your outreach plan? Are you planning to reach/target a younger audience? 12 - 15 years old?
10. How do you evaluate your projects?
11. Who are the main stakeholders in this field?
12. Is the media a key stakeholder for you? How do you handle them?

c. Best Practices:

13. What are the success stories with the community or youth you are working with?
14. Were you exposed to other CE projects in other places of the world? Especially democratic countries. Where?
15. Did you go through a different or unique experience through your CE program?

d. Challenges:

16. What are the key challenges you are facing as CSOs in implementing CE projects?
17. What are your aspirations regarding CE in Egypt?

Annex V

Focus Group Questions with Youth

a. Definition of CE:

1. Please introduce yourself, your education background, and professional experiences.
2. Please introduce which program you were part of.
3. How did you perceive CE growing up?
 1. Did this perception change after participating in CE program? Why and how?
 2. Did this perception change after the 25th of January revolution? How?
 3. From your perspective, how do you see “the other”? Who defines that? (based on culture, norms, constitution).
 4. Did you interact with “the other” as per your definition? Did your CE experience affect this interaction?

b. Ecosystem of CE:

5. How did you find out about the CE program you participated in?
6. Why did you decide to participate?
7. How did your contribution to the community change after your CE experience?
8. Do you feel a difference versus your peers who didn't attend any CE experience?

c. Best Practices:

9. How do you share your knowledge and experience with your peers?
10. Were you exposed to other CE projects in other places of the world? Where?
11. Did you go through a different or unique experience through your CE program?

d. Challenges:

12. In your perspective, what are the key challenges you think that CE is facing in Egypt?
13. What are your aspirations regarding CE in Egypt?