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Empowering Southern Mediterranean CSOs in IWRM

“Change is Yours”

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*Water Education and capacity building:
powerful policy tools in addressing the water agenda*



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(I) Who are WE?

Arab Office for Youth and Environment “AOYE” is an Egyptian NGO established 1978 with main believes including :

- **Young People have an important role in community**, especially in the age from 10 to 15 years where the child is forming and building his/her attitude and could be able to guide the surrounding community and influence it.
- **Behavior Change is essential**, to support and strengthen the role of the child to change bad manners in his community and disseminating of positive behaviors and new values for achieving **”Sustainable Development”**...

Here we talk about Natural Resources Preservation.

(II) What is the ISSUE?

“Insufficient knowledge of water ethics and responsible behavior, as well as the Rights and Duties in the Egyptian Society especially in Basic Education Schools”

- Egypt has almost ONE source of fresh water **“NILE”**
- Water Poverty Limit was exceeded since end of 90th **“Worries”**
- Several Political, Technical and Financial Challenges **“No Crucial Actions”**
- NGOs’ role was -and still- very essential **“Non-Formal Education”**
- AOYE “92” started Water Education Practices **“Satisfy your Conscience”**

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- A total 147 pilot projects were implemented in 3 governorates (Cairo-Suez-Ismailia) More than 70 schools and thousands of Children received educational programs with technical assistance to SAVE WATER
“Nominated to Kyoto Grand Water Prize – 4th WWF Mexico 2006”
- Nile Discourse Forum “NBD” to **Build Confidence** along the Nile Basin Countries since 2003 till now through Exchange Visits of Young People.
“One Nile One Family”
- Water Governance in Schools since 2009 which adopted water ethics tool “curriculum” targeting children 10-15 years. **“Change is YOURS”**

(III) Water Governance in Schools

“Change is YOURS”

- The project worked on the formation of student councils in schools. These councils consisted of students, and are for students, working similarly to a micro **“Ministry of Environment”** in each school.
- The student councils focused primarily on water related issues such as **“Nile in Our Eyes”** on how they could protect their LIFE Vessel from waste or/and pollution.
- The ongoing activities went through three phases with different approaches and supporters.
- A committee of representatives from civil society comprising of students, teachers, parents, neighborhood residents and NGOs.





(III) Water Governance in Schools

“Change is YOURS”

- Three Egyptian Governorates “Cities” participated in project **“Dakahlia – Beni Suef – Minia”** then **“Cairo”** came in latest phase.
- **The main activities conducted were:**
 - Non Formal Education in schools accompanied with Field Work.
 - Art and Cultural Competitions.
 - Training of Trainers ... NGOs, Educators and Parents.

(III) Water Governance in Schools

“Change is YOURS”

- Composition of school associations, to be known as “Nile Messengers”, who represent students in the school board which is leading the implementation of the activities and the management. **“Enforce the Sense of Ownership”**
- Conduct “Study Week” every month for promoting the protection of the environment and its resources inside and outside of the school; “Environmental Week”. **“Change is YOURS”**
- Students keep a record during this week detailing their efforts in fulfilling these roles in environmental protection and conservation as well as their influence on family/friends and the community. The most outstanding students are awarded the **“Nile Messenger Medal or Pin”**.

(III) Water Governance in Schools

“Change is YOURS”

- Establishment of a special place in each schools’ library which be supplied with relevant books and publications on water issues. **“Green Corner”**
- Radio announcements with general environmental information plus some with a particular focus on water resources and their conservation. **“Free Media Engagement”**
- A series of artistic competitions, where students have to draw posters or compose poetry and stories, reflective of their own personal experiences and their understanding of the importance of preserving the environment and its resources, especially water. **“Exploring Talents”**

(III) Water Governance in Schools

“Change is YOURS”

- Conducting practical training on the simple fixing up and maintenance. **“No Cost Low Cost Technologies”**
- Holding exchange visits between schools in the governorates, with the opportunity of an environmental competition. **“Let’s Share Ideas”**
- Organizing a study tour from Cairo to Aswan for 5 outstanding students from each school with an explanation of the story and history of the great river in addition to the current consequences from emerging pollution and how to protect the river.

“Pollution Reduction for better Future”



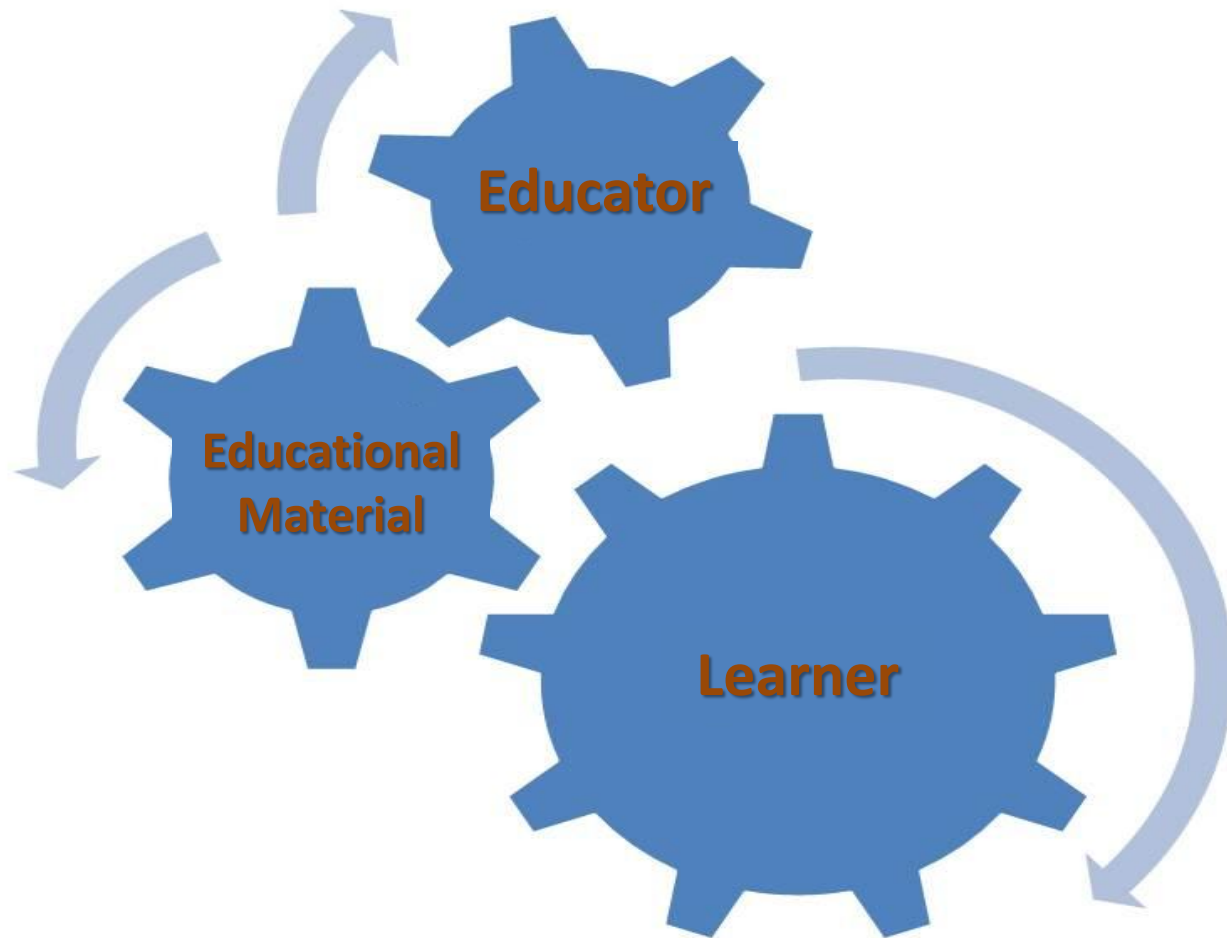






(IV) Water Education

- The priorities of the “Water Agenda” interacted with aspects of the capacity building through dealing with the educational system components in the project activities.







(V) Challenges

- **Community Neglecting** the role of the child for the NO TRUST in his/her ability to make change.
- **Convincing Educators to use new techniques** that would be out of ordinary methods and more appropriate and attractive to **Children**.
- **Building Confidence with Children** so that we can affect them.

(VI) Lessons Learnt

- ✓ **No progress in absence of the sense of responsibility and ownership.**
- ✓ **Children love the Non-Formal Education more than Formal Education.**
- ✓ **Rights and Duties Knowledge is essential for Change and Involvement especially the issue of water scarcity.**
- ✓ **Sustainability never be achieved without Stakeholders Dialogue and Engagement.**

