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**The American University in Cairo**  
**School of Global Affairs and Public Policy**

**AN APPLICATION OF ASSET BASED COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
APPROACH: A CASE STUDY FROM RURAL COMMUNITY IN EGYPT**

**A Thesis submitted to the**

**Public Policy and Administration Department**  
**in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of**  
**Master of Public Administration**

**By**

**Alyaa Farouk Ahmed Hessin**

**2014**

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*Alyaa Farouk Ahmed Hessin*

The American University in Cairo  
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AN APPLICATION OF ASSET BASED COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
APPROACH: A CASE STUDY FROM RURAL COMMUNITY IN EGYPT

Alyaa Farouk Ahmed Hessin

Supervised by Professor Hamid Ali

ABSTRACT

Many communities in Egypt, specifically the rural areas, are unquestionably distressed places as a result of the major economic and political shifts that have occurred over the past few years. Strategies of community development are currently viewed as the radical remedy for poverty related problems. In Egypt, community development strategies are usually driven from traditional approaches including charity, needs and rights based approaches which focus on basic needs like shelters and food. These approaches have proved a deficiency as they ignore the structural causes of poverty and address symptoms only. In response to these shortages came an alternative capacity focused practice called Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) approach. The case in this research is that ABCD could offer a coherent strategy of sustainable development in poor communities in Egypt. Based on that, the main objectives of the research is to study the application of ABCD approach in rural areas, and in turn present a customized ABCD approach derived from the international guidelines and the Egyptian experience. In order to fulfill these objectives, case studies from the rural communities in Egypt that adopts ABCD approach were extensively studied mostly through qualitative research methods. The analysis and the findings of the current research are most relevant to developing countries and to those emerging from state capitalism and centralization. The results of the research give substantial contribution in understanding and identifying the ABCD approach. Thus, a possible way is paved to generalize this bottom up development strategy over poor communities.

**Key words**

Asset based, community development, rural communities, developing countries, Egypt

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## Chapter One: Introduction

“As well as having needs and problems, our most marginalized communities also have social, cultural and material assets. Identifying and mobilizing these can help them overcome the challenges they face” (Foot and Hopkins, 2010).

This statement provides a sense of security to the poor and marginalized communities in Egypt. According to the Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS)<sup>1</sup>, Egypt’s poverty rate has increased, reaching 26.3% for the year 2013 compared with 25.2% in 2011. Many communities in Egypt, specifically the rural areas, are unquestionably distressed and poor places as a result of the major economic and political shifts that have occurred over the past few years. However, a lot of other inveterate factors can contribute enormously to this statement including isolation, unemployment, lack of education and deteriorated health services. Strategies of community development are currently viewed as the radical and proper remedy for poverty and poverty related problems. Therefore, community development strategies became crucial to people’s well-being, and affect everyone in the community (Assaad and Rouchdy, 1999).

### 1.1. Community development

Community development started a social movement and has been a fast increasing industry since the mid-twentieth century (Vidal, 1997). Biddle and Biddle (1965) examine the early phases of the community development field. At the time, the field was inexactly characterized and not assessed by a reasonable set of models. The creation of a new profession called community developer was not acceptable. In addition, the significance of community

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<sup>1</sup> CAPMAS is the official statistical agency of Egypt that collects, processes, analyzes, and disseminates all statistical data and the Census.

development was not clear on the grounds that the field was relatively new. However, citizen oriented strategies was the focus of the most powerful entities on the field at that time.

Definitions of community development vary between sources; however, all of them share the common elements of a process of bringing people together to achieve a common goal, make a positive change, and usually related to changing the quality of life and the well-being of the community (Woodside, 2008). A few definitions include the methodology of building connections and enhancing the capabilities of citizens and associations. Hustedde and Ganowicz (2002) recognize three basic attributes to community development practice: structure, power, and shared meaning. Structure incorporates the community's social practices and associations; power alludes to the community's relations with the individuals who have noteworthy access and control of assets; and shared meaning includes the social importance the community applies to physical space, physical things, activities, and behaviours (Hustedde and Ganowicz, 2002). While a general definition is hard to deliver, Chris Maser's meaning of community development may be the most fitting in this setting. In Maser's definition community development endeavors construct "the capacity of people to work collectively in addressing their common interests" (Maser, 1997).

The strategies used to tackle poverty, and develop communities into more humanized and livable places, are mostly needs focused. They are usually driven from traditional development approaches to development such as charity, needs based and rights based approaches (Nagi, 2001). These strategies mainly focus on basic needs and rights such as shelters, primary health care, water supply, and humanitarian food aid. They often start with a needs assessment and an external driven motive. Traditional approaches to developing communities, which ignores the structural causes of poverty and address symptoms only, have had a deficiency orientation.

These strategies, intended to fix community problems, were hence determined by the needs of the community (Beaulieu, 2002). The process and outcome of these traditional approaches concentrate on community shortcomings and failures, leaving pictures of various deficiencies that can be debilitating to community individuals. Further results of such evaluation incorporate communities' endeavors to look for outside aid to address their recognized needs instead of looking to aptitudes and tools for change inside their communities (Goldman and Schmalz, 2005). While there are circumstances where some outside assets may be demanded, the way to sustainable resolutions originates from inside the community (Rans and Green, 2005). In response to these excessively shortage based methodologies came an alternative capacity focused practice called asset based community development approach.

## **1.2. Overview to asset based community development**

Asset-Based Community Development approach (ABCD) has attracted the attention of community development academics and practitioners as an alternative strategy for development in urban and rural communities. It is a set of approaches for sustainable development of communities (McKnight and Kretzmann, 1997). They are based on the concept of building on what communities have, focusing on the positives and strengths, and regardless of the extent of poverty of these communities have (Mathie and Cunningham, 2003). As an innovative approach, the appeal of ABCD lies in its premise that communities can drive the development process themselves by uncovering, identifying and mobilizing existing assets, and empowering people through participation. Hence, it provides a radical remedy for poverty. In particular, ABCD gives attention to human, natural, physical, financial and social assets, and thereby creating sustainable economic opportunity (Boyd et al, 2008).

The ABCD methodology was created by John McKnight and Jody Kretzmann at the Institute for Policy Research at Northwestern University. In 1993, they outlined an alternative approach to the externally-focused approaches used by governments and international organizations to develop poor communities (Mathie and Cunningham, 2003). ABCD is a bottom-up development strategy that conveys a set of approaches for sustainable development of communities. Asset based approaches recognize and build on a combination of the human, social and physical capital that exists within local communities. They offer a set of concepts for identifying and enhancing the protective factors which help individuals and communities maintain and enhance their public value even when faced with adverse life circumstances. Asset based approaches can complement public services and traditional methods for improving and creating public value (McKnight and Kretzmann, 1993).

### **1.3. Research objectives**

Asset-Based Community Development embraces several ideas and practices that have potentially flourished during the current period of flux, and bear a promising future for community development at the international and local level. Therefore, the case in this research is that ABCD could offer a coherent strategy of innovative and sustainable development practice in local and poor communities in Egypt. Based on that, the main objectives of the research is to comprehensively study the application of ABCD approach in rural areas, and in turn determine whether it is possible to replicate the approach in similar communities or not. Moreover, the research aims to present a customized ABCD approach to Egypt derived from the international guidelines of ABCD and the Egyptian ABCD experience. Thus, a possible way is paved to generalize this bottom up development strategy all over distressed communities in Egypt.

Another purpose for this research is to fill in the gap that was found in the literature about studying and documentation of community development approaches in Egypt and about the scarcity of English language research. Filling in these gaps will prevent the recurrent incidence of previous mistakes, highlight the learned lesson of the preceding trials, form data base for community development work, and will give a chance for future community developers to build upon former experiences. In order to fulfill all these objectives, case studies from the rural communities in Egypt that adopts ABCD approach to development were extensively studied mostly through qualitative research methods. This involved exploring the assets that have been used, the processes and steps that have been tackled, the outcomes that have been generated, the challenges that have been faced, the pros and cons of ABCD approach and the future recommendations.

#### **1.4. Research questions**

Based on the aforementioned objectives, the research questions which are proposed in this study could be formulated as follows:

- To what extent is the ABCD approach adopted in rural communities of Egypt?

This question involves examining the processes, methods and tools that are used to achieve development in rural communities of Egypt. Then compare them with the standard process of McKnight and Kretzmann to determine the extent of adoption.

- Would the ABCD approach be replicated in similar Egyptian communities?

This question involves addressing the outcomes of adopting ABCD approach and determination of its impacts on the community; in addition to, examining the proposed challenges and the suitable methods to overcome them.

The answers to these questions give substantial contribution in understanding and identifying the ABCD approach in Egyptian communities. They disclose different ways of exploring and mobilizing community assets, and serve to develop a directory for further implementation of sustainable ABCD approach in Egypt. The analysis and the findings of the current research are most relevant to developing countries and to those emerging from capitalism, political instability and centralization such as Egypt.

## **1.5. Research outline**

The present research is divided into five chapters. The first chapter contains the introduction which gives a glance about community development and poverty in Egypt, and historical overview for ABCD approach. This followed by the research approach, which indicates the significance and objectives of the current research, and the research questions. Chapter two is the literature review which tackles the relation between poverty and community development, and gives a focus on poverty of rural areas in Egypt. In addition, it presents the different types of approaches to community development, their pros and cons, their extent of success to reduce poverty and achieve development, and their implementations at the international and Egyptian context. The final part of the literature review delivers in details the ABCD approach to development in terms of its theoretical background, processes, and its implementation in other developing countries. The methodology, different research methods of

the current research and overview of the case studies are clearly discussed in the third chapter. Chapter four gives an analysis to the findings and discussion of the research. Eventually, chapter five provides a succinct conclusion of the study.

## Chapter Two: Literature Review

### 2.1. Poverty and community development

When the word poverty is heard the first thing that comes to one's mind is lack of income, and most probably the homeless are the people who seem to be suffering from poverty (Saget, 2001). The definition and measurement of poverty have evolved and changed over time. Rowntree (1901) was maybe the first to endeavor to characterize in terms of the level of inadequacy of nutrition and fundamental physical needs. The poverty headcount ratio<sup>2</sup> was presented by Abel-Smith and Townsend (1966) who developed the meaning of poverty to incorporate the inaccessibility to jobs and resources. The multidimensionality of non-income related poverty qualities, including diet, lodging, cloth, education, wellbeing and the procurement of merchandises were presented by Clark et al (1981).

Havard in 1995 defines poverty as a condition characterized by severe deprivation of basic human needs, including food, drinking water, health, shelter, education and information. It depends not only on income but also on access to social services. While Gordon in 2005, said that poverty is the inability of getting choices and opportunities; it means insecurity and not having enough to feed and clothe a family. According to Chambers (2007), poverty is bad conditions and experiences of life in which material and other deprivations and disadvantages interact and reinforce each other as they do in the nets and webs. Moreover, the World Development Report in 2001 stated that poverty is multiple deprivations; besides low income or consumption, include lack of education, health, food, shelter, fear, and voicelessness. Much has been written about the concepts and different attributes of poverty. Hence, it could be safely stated that poverty is not just lack of income, many aspects exist beyond income, and in some

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<sup>2</sup> Head count ratio is the proportion of a population that lives below the poverty line



cases income is not the problem at all. It could be concluded that poverty is a multidimensional concept which include but not limited to lack of basic needs and assets, sense of powerlessness, lack of education and skills, isolation and discrimination and lack of security.

All the aforementioned concepts are accepted worldwide; however, when it comes to the Egyptian context some changes may apply. A report published by the World Food Program (WFP)<sup>3</sup> and CAPMAS (2013), indicates that in 2011, 48.9% of Egyptians were below the upper poverty line. At the same year, the 25th of January revolution, the mass emerged with united slogan all over Egypt “bread, freedom, social justice”. Bread, which symbolizes the physiological needs, was stated the first in order to highlight its necessity over other needs. Although poverty is multidimensional, poverty issues in Egypt is mainly restricted into hunger and shelter. In addition, many politicians claimed that needs including gender discrimination, esteem, love and belonging are seemed to be luxury at this stage, and if these dimensions would be taken into consideration then the majority of Egyptians will be categorized under poor (Nagi, 2001).

Poverty is continuously increasing, particularly in rural areas of Upper Egypt. Although poverty exists in all governorates, the incidence of poverty in urban governorates, such as Cairo, Giza and Alexandria, is minimal when compared to the rural ones. Poverty rates in rural areas constitute 42% of the total Egyptian population in comparison to 7% in urban cities (El-Tawila et al, 2013). One of the main differences between rural and urban Egypt is access to public infrastructure. Inhabitants of rural areas, unlike their urban peers, rarely have access to electricity, water or sewage system (Nagi, 2001). Even within rural areas, poverty rate differ from one governorate to another; rural areas of Upper Egypt are much more impoverished than

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<sup>3</sup> WFP is the food assistance branch of the United Nations and the world's largest humanitarian organization addressing hunger and promoting food security.

in Lower Egypt. For instance, three governorates in Upper Egypt - Assiut, Al-Minya and Suhaj - have 794 villages where impoverished people constitute 82% of the total number of poor people in the countryside (CAPMAS, 2012).

Many solutions have been proposed to eradicate poverty according to different causes and consequences of poverty. Adams and Page (2003) stated that solving societal problems especially those pertained to education and medical care could mitigate poverty related problems. While Olivares and Santos (2009) argued that launching small enterprises, and supplying the poor with loans and planned frameworks could serve as a feasible solution for poverty. Some countries provide monthly allowance to fresh graduates and unemployed citizens as an attempt to protect them from poverty. And others suggested that poverty could be diminished through decreasing the wages gap, providing food security and eradicating illiteracy (Fahmy, 2004). Nevertheless, most of the solutions embrace one or more concepts of traditional community development approaches.

## **2.2. Different approaches to community development**

The community development field emerged with the goal of addressing and alleviating poverty in low-income and minority communities around the world. This goal was set up upon the realization of the strong relation between poverty and underdevelopment (Vidal, 1997). Community development involves several processes where community members come together and take collaborative actions to achieve economic, social, environmental and cultural wellbeing of the community (Buckley, 1999). Consequently, these collective actions exert positive feedback on poverty reduction (Ndirangu et al, 2007). Since spending on the poor is not only equity enhancing but promotes development and economic growth as well, various approaches of community development have been emerged and are continuously changing to palliate

poverty related problems (fig.1). Eradication of poverty and community development became more interdependent goals after they were highlighted by United Nations (UN, 2000) as goals number one and eight respectively in the millennium development goals (MDGs)<sup>4</sup> (Khadka, 2012). As a result, the concept of community development in accordance with the concept of poverty became intertwined and passed through various stages of remodeling.

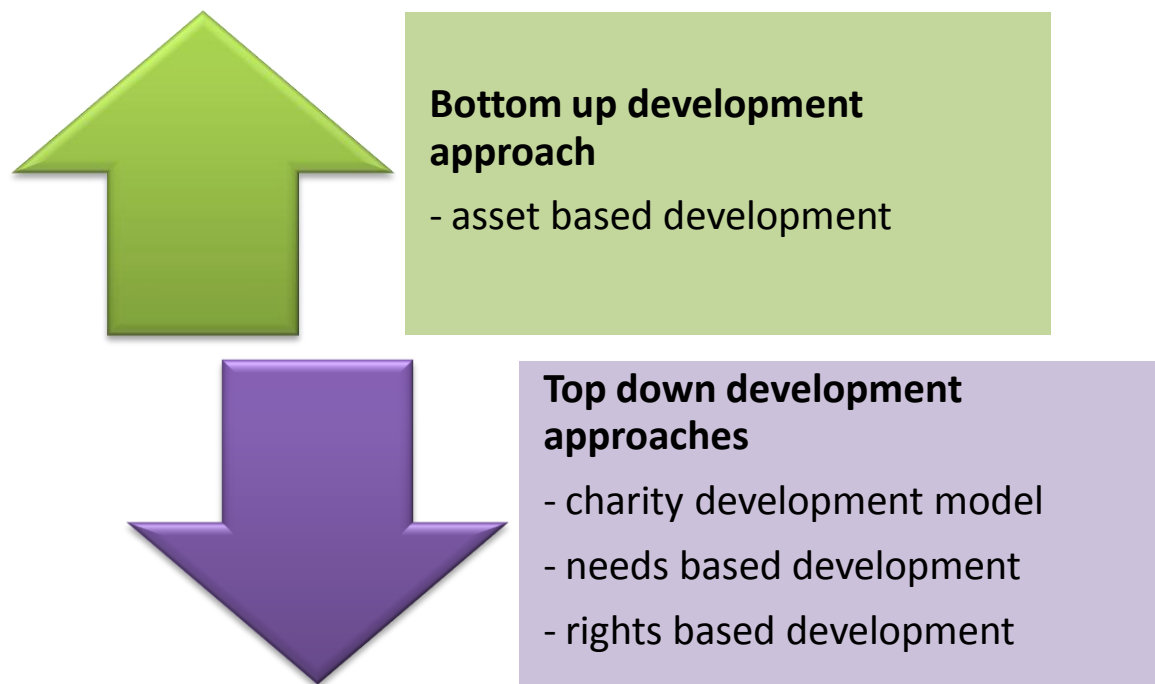


Figure 1: Different approaches of community development

Charity model, which also called the generosity model, is the most ancient and direct approach to community development. It simply conveys that the rich people donate to the needy ones, and assumes that the donors know the needs of the poor and are capable of satisfying those needs through donations (Hossain, 1999). The operationalization strategy of the charity approach is based upon tapping on the donors emotions and gaining their sympathy through impressive ads

<sup>4</sup> The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are eight international development goals that were established following the Millennium Summit of the United Nations in 2000, and aim to eradicate poverty, combat diseases, and achieve education and gender equality.

and stories about distressed communities (Hunter, 2012). The charity model typically involves donation of the philanthropic with money, food, clothing, shelter and medical care to the poor to mitigate their immediate suffering. For thousands of years, this was the prevailing model for dealing with the community problems through grass root organizations in local areas (McEwan and Butler, 2007).

In Egypt, charity model is a predominant approach to poverty alleviation in development and nonprofit organizations. The majority of these organizations such as Resala charity organization<sup>5</sup>, Orman charity organization and Ansar El-Sunna El-Muhammadiyah association has religious background and adopts the charity model in performing most of its activities. Typically, the activities are based upon collection of donations and alms from the rich, and then give it to the poor in the form of food, clothes, medications, and health and social services. This often results in transient pacification of the sufferance but the causes of the problem remains unresolved. Recent reports by WFP and CAPMAS had proven this perspective as they pointed to further increase in poverty in 2014 despite the exerted efforts in the last three years (CAPMAS, 2014).

The charity approach turns people to become helpless because after their immediate needs were relieved, the poor and needy continued to be poor and needy. In addition, more needs are engendered, and the people became increasingly dependent on donations. This strategy results in an adverse understanding of the way the individuals see their circumstances (Hunter, 2012). In many cases, because the poor did not participate in identifying their real needs, they were not fully committed to changing their lives in the way that the donors expected or

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<sup>5</sup> Resala charity organization is a non-profit organization that provides 31 activities including caring for orphans, helping the blind, the deaf, and children with special needs, blood donation, poverty alleviation, and literacy training. Website: <http://www.resala.org/pages/about>

demanded (Yeo and Moore, 2003). Besides that, the strategy of the charity approach does not even satisfy the donors' needs as each time they donate, they find the problem still big as it is and nothing improved. Consequently, the charity model does little or nothing to make systemic changes to the causes of poverty problem (McEwan and Butler, 2007).

Based on the aforementioned shortages of charity approach, the community development sector started to shift into a new remedy for poverty reduction which is, the Needs-Based Approach. A need is defined as a gap or difference between a current situation and the ideal or desired situation (Wilke, 2006). This approach came with a very important change as it base interventions on the needs as expressed by the poor themselves. The donors did not arbitrarily decide what the poor need. Instead, various needs assessments tools are practiced with the community members to identify what are the needs within the community. Then outsiders start to evaluate and prioritize those gaps, make decisions about how to address these problems through a particular intervention (Khadka, 2012).

Needs-based approach, also known as a traditional approach, depends on the expertise and fund of the outsiders. Despite this, it is considered to be a huge progress over the charity model because it generates an active interaction between the donors and the beneficiaries (Roehlkepartain, 2005). In Egypt, the needs-based approach to development has been tackled mostly by non-governmental organizations including Sawiras and Misr El-Kheir foundations. It involves forming teams composed of delegates from the community members and the patronized organization who then identifies the needs of the addressed community. Upon the identified needs, the organizations pick the most significant needs and start to take actions like building hospitals, schools and shelters, or providing job opportunities.

Nevertheless, needs based approach to development is incapable of addressing policies and regulations that could make radical change (Uvin, 2007). It defines the community by its problems that generally require outside expertise, resources and funding to be solved (Roehlkepartain, 2005). This could generate negative effects even when a positive change is intended, because community leaders are forced to highlight their communities' worst side in order to attract resources. Moreover needs based strategy discourages people from participating in higher community development level, and turns them to be passive consumers with no motive to be producers (Boyd et al, 2008).

Another approach for community development, which appeared right after needs based approach and gained prominence among the international development organizations, is the rights-based approach (Kindornay et al, 2012). It elicited as a response to the united nations 41/128 declaration on the right to development which stipulates in article 1 that: “The right to development is an inalienable human right by virtue of which every human person and all peoples are entitled to participate in, contribute to, and enjoy economic, social, cultural and political development, in which all human rights and fundamental freedoms can be fully realised.” This declaration gave a strong boost to the rights based approach and marked a new era in community development.

A rights-based approach to development puts the protection and realization of human rights at the centre. It uses established and accepted human rights standards as a common framework for assessing and guiding community development initiatives. From this perspective, the ultimate goal of development is to guarantee human rights to everyone (Cornwall and Nyamu-Musembi, 2004). In Egypt, international organizations such as United Nation Development Group (UNDP), World Bank and Care International are the main hosts of this

approach. The approach operates upon recommendation of international reports; for instance, the World Development Report 2013 focused on jobs availability as a promising trend to get rid of poverty (Mundial, 2013). Subsequently, most of the international organizations began to adjust its development programs and activities in the direction of providing job opportunities to the poor.

The rights based approach value community development more and classified it as an essential human right. Yet, it faces many critiques on how applicable it is to the real life development problems. Chong (2011) argued that implementing the rights-based approach leads to politicization of the non-governmental organizations. In turn, this results in hostility between these organizations and the government. Furthermore, the initiative of development is still externally driven without active participation from community members. It completely depends on the perspective and expertise of outsiders. The most obvious of all criticisms is that human rights are not universal and the rights provided by the rights based approach are primarily, if not completely, of western construction (Hunter, 2012). This could make the rights based approach impracticable in non-western and developing countries.

### **2.3. Theoretical background of asset based community development approach**

Most of the traditional approaches to development are externally-focused mechanisms that have been adopted extensively to eradicate poverty and accomplish the MDGs. The implications of such approaches cannot be discounted; nevertheless, it is associated with some limitations which hinder its ability to address policies and regulations that could make radical change (Uvin, 2007). Long term problems like poverty cannot be solved by such approaches alone, and can often be exacerbated by the influx of external resources. The strategy of

traditional approaches views the community as a set of needs and problems. This forces the community leaders to distort the shape of their communities, highlight problems and deficiencies, and hide capacities and strengths. Leaders are acknowledged on how many resources are attracted to the community, not on how self-reliant the community has become (Marglin, 2008). This strategy denies the basic community wisdom, discourages people from participating in higher community development level, and community members start to feel powerless, and see themselves as people with special needs that can only met by outsiders. In other words, they convert to be clients rather than citizen (Keeble and Meisel, 2006). Furthermore, focusing on resources based on needs or rights directs the benefits to suppliers rather than the needy community members (McKnight and Kretzmann, 1997).

Traditional approaches generally require outside expertise, funding and resources which ensure the local perception that only outside experts can provide real help and are capable of solving their problems. They also create a wall between lower income communities and the rest of society; make local groups deal more with external parties than with individuals in their own communities, and eventually weaken the social bond within communities (Roehlkepartain, 2005). Reliance upon needs identification as the solely way to determine the deserved community could be destructive to community well-being; it ensures endless cycle of dependence as problems must be worse than the previous year for the fund to be renewed. Further, the way of determination of the deserved community is questionable. It is corrupted with subjectivity because outsiders are responsible to judge the importance of certain community needs which they are not fully aware of them (Keeble, 2006). Traditional strategy can guarantee only survival, but can never lead to serious change or community development as it keeps the



image of the philanthropic and the needy, and the needs of the poor are only met when resources are available (Boyd et al, 2008).

Community developers start to feel the necessity of existence of a sustainable capacity driven approach to development. Accordingly, the united nation assembly is preparing to issue the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)<sup>6</sup>, which will build upon the MDGs to help in driving the implementation of sustainable development. The proposal covers a broad range of sustainable development issues including ending poverty and hunger, improving health and education and making cities more sustainable (Ferreira, 2012). As MDGs delivered needs and rights approaches to development, it is expected that SDGs should embrace strategies concentrate on identifying and mobilizing individual and community's positive aspects rather than assessing needs and fixing deficits. Asset based community development is one strategy emerged over the last two decades which embraces and utilizes this concept. It is an internally focused methodology, and aims to reduce poverty through sustainable development and participation and citizen empowerment (Fisher et al, 2009). Poverty reduction could be better achieved by community initiatives that build from human energy and existing resources within the current cultural and government structures (Rodrik, 2008).

## **2.4. Implementation of asset based community development approach**

Taking into account the experiences recorded by Mcknight and Kretzmann in 1993, and on different endeavors that utilize a comparable methodology, ABCD could be seen as an approach to development, as a set of methods for community mobilization, and as a strategy for sustainable community development. As an approach to development, it depends on the principle

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<sup>6</sup> One of the main outcomes of the Rio+20 Conference was the agreement by United Nations to launch a process to develop a set of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). <http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/?menu=1300>

that the recognition of qualities, natural resources, gifts and assets of members and communities is more accepted to motivate constructive activity for change than a single concentration on needs, deficiencies and problems. Seeing the glass half-full and half empty is not to deny the real deficits that a community confronts, than to stimulate a positive charge on how every single part has a value, and can contribute in significant approaches to community development (Mathie and Cunningham, 2003).

Following this approach is a set of methods, called ABCD process, that have been used as a platform to compile beginners communities around common framework, and to facilitate communication within as well as sorting some ideas on mapping the capabilities of the community (Boyd et al, 2008). McKnight and Kretzmann (1993) proposed thorough guidelines to facilitate the ABCD process. These guidelines are equally important and it could be formulated stepwise as follows (fig.2):

#### Step 1: Collecting Stories

Conducting casual dialogs and informal meetings allow community members to express their encounters from past initiatives. This dialog makes a dual benefit; it helps in disclosing undiscovered assets, as well as constructing self confidence in community members' capacities. This certainty will elicit the motivation to share in the sustainable community development (ABCD) process

#### Step 2: Organizing a Core Group

As the step of gathering stories proceeds with, specific members will be recognizable from the rest as community leaders. These promising people may have appeared previous

leadership competency, or they might presently be in a ruling position. Sorting out the pioneers of the crowd and convincing them to further investigate the benefits of the group is a critical step. These pioneers will communicate and form social networks with other community members. Thus, they will be the main catalyst in building trust between outsiders and insiders.

### Step 3: Mapping Completely the Capacities and Assets of Individuals, Associations, and Local Institutions

Mapping is a comprehensive methodology operated mostly by the residents of the targeted community. The mapping procedures assist participants to know more about the abilities of their peers and other community members. Correspondingly, this will shape relationships between diverse assets and resources. Mapping is quite more sophisticated than gathering data; the crucial part of the mapping methodology is in creating new connections among community members. During the mapping processes, community developers should have an outline to ensure the following aspects:

- Identifying associations: These associations are the base of community activities and are crucial as assets and resources. They could be sorted by discipline and those destined to cooperate for a typical objective should be recognized.
- Recognizing human resources, skills and capabilities. Community members should feel that their talents are recognized and of great value to the community. The capacities of each participant could be classified in classes; for instance, technical talents and communication talents, or they could be categorized according to skills of the heart, head, and hand.

- Identifying institutions within the community. Assets of local institutions and grass root organizations could be found in the services and products they offer, the tools and facilities they have, or the social networks they may give.
- Recognizing physical resources and natural assets: Natural assets like land, water, or other assets ought to be distinguished as either privately managed or community managed
- Mapping the economy of the community- How does the local economy function? What assets can be identified to achieve maximum benefit to the community? Could externally purchased products be locally produced in the community?

#### Step 4: Convening a Broad Representative Group to Build a Community Vision and Plan

This step involves forming a representative team to the community and setting a unified vision and plan. The central organized theme should be matched with the identified assets, and the decisions should be made by those recognized as community leaders in the earlier steps.

#### Step 5: Mobilizing Assets for Community Development

The actual processes of mobilizing the identified community assets are initiated in this step. More assemblies are encouraged to be involved with those who have similar interests. In this step, establishing a common ground amongst participants and encouraging further participation are of great importance.

#### Step 6: Leveraging from External Communities

This step involves looking for the activities, experiences, investments and resources from outside the community to optimally operationalize and support asset based approach to development.



Figure 2: Conceptual framework of the steps of ABCD process as defined by McKnight and Kretzmann

The ABCD process could be conceptualized as a strategy for sustainable community driven development. Beyond the identification and mobilization of particular community assets, ABCD approach is mattered of linking micro community assets, either physical or human resources, to the macro external environment. In other words, a great amount of effort is done to destruct the non tangible insulator wall around local communities. And more attention is paid towards the community position in relation to local institutions and the external economic environment (Pan et al, 2005).

Unlike traditional approaches, asset based approach to development recognize and build on a combination of human, social and physical capitals that exist within local communities. It offers a set of concepts for identifying and enhancing the protective factors which help individuals and communities maintain and enhance their public value even when faced with adverse life circumstances. ABCD approach complements public services and traditional methods for reducing poverty and creating public value.

Asset based community development approach is quite known among developmental organizations in Egypt; nevertheless, it is not incorporated in their development activities. Several international and national development organizations such as COSPE Egypt<sup>7</sup> and CDS<sup>8</sup> employ ABCD term and its equivalent concepts of sustainability, empowerment and participation on their websites. Despite this, their development programs utilize the traditional approaches to development and very few organizations adopt ABCD approach. Historically, the Egyptian culture favors ABCD approach. Anas ibn Malik<sup>9</sup> narrated that a poor man came to Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) ask him for money, the Prophet asked him: What do you have at your home? The poor man said: some cloths and cups. The prophet took part of the man belongings, sold them, gave him the money, asked him to buy food to his family and a poleaxe to work with, and to come back after 15 days. After 15 days, the man came back wearing new cloth and having some money that he earned; Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said to him that is better than asking people for money (Albānī, 1998). It could be

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<sup>7</sup> COSPE Egypt is part of COSPE, an international non-profit organization founded in Italy in 1983 operating in the field of international cooperation development and human rights. <http://www.cospe-egypt.org/about-cospe-egypt>

<sup>8</sup> The Center for Development Services (CDS) is an employee-owned development entrepreneurial venture that uses innovative approaches to mobilize technical and financial support for development endeavors in Egypt and the Middle East. <http://www.cds-mena.org/site/index.php>

<sup>9</sup> Anas Ibn Malik is a well-known and the last companion of the Prophet Muhammad. Retrieved on 11/09/2014 from <http://library.islamweb.net/newlibrary/showalam.php?ids=9>

concluded that, mobilizing one's natural, physical or human resources and assets is more fruitful and more sustainable than asking for external help.

Although Egyptians favor the concept of ABCD, the approach is not quite known among communities and has not been extensively translated into the implementation stage. One of the common mistakes that most of developing countries fall in is copying the approaches created by developed countries blindly without customization of the approaches to fit their culture and without looking for their peers experiences in adopting these approaches. As the founders of ABCD approach, John McKnight and Jody Kretzmann, are western in origin, and most of the literature is written from the perspective of western researchers, non-western applications of ABCD approach should not be overlooked. Examining the community development experiences of different countries that have the same political and economic conditions like Egypt is an influential step. It enables predicting the future, anticipating the problems, and knowing prompt solutions. Moreover, exploring other experience allows dealing positively with failure and success, saving time, money and effort, and achieving more outcomes and impact.

## **2.5. Nepal trials towards asset based community development approach**

Nepal is considered to be a good example in recurrent community development trials. It is a South Asian country that shares many economic and political similarities with Egypt and in turn, other developing countries. Nepal, as well as Egypt, is a centralized developing country suffers from political unrest, social violence, fragile economy and ineffective implementation of internal and external policy. All of these factors, in addition to isolation from international affairs, made the idea of community development appears as an alien concept to the Nepali

people until 1950. Nepali planners started to introduce community development approaches in era between 1950s and 1960s under the pressure of modernization theory<sup>10</sup> (Bhattachan, 1997).

Various community development concepts and approaches have been tried in the country with a unified goal of poverty alleviation. Community development approaches were first introduced in 1953 in the form of providing physical infrastructure through international aid from western countries. This trial was greatly criticized as it failed to enhance the economic and social well being in rural areas, and the country elites were the only beneficiaries (Bernstein, 1971). Another attempt was made bearing the concept of basic needs approach and aimed at tackling rural poverty. Basic needs approach based upon supplying people with their daily necessities such as food, water, shelter, health and education for humanitarian lifestyle (Korten, 1980). As the approach lack sustainability and empowerment factors, it only provided transient and short term satisfaction to the needs of impoverished and unsecured citizens. Moreover, the approach failed to accomplish its short term goals due to lack of accountability, evaluation and monitoring system and inaccessibility of the service to the deserved people (Acharya, 2008).

In 2000, community developers in Nepal set out a plan with main objectives of poverty reduction, human development, security and empowerment to marginalized groups and citizens living in rural areas. The state and NGOs were the two pillars used to implement community development projects. They played a significant role and followed needs based and rights based approaches while conducting all the initiatives (Dhakal, 2006). However, the outcomes of development were blamed for their failure to eradicate poverty and achieve social equality. Bhattachan (2003) mentioned that community based development strategies that have been

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<sup>10</sup> Modernization theory is a theory used to explain the process of progressive transition from a "pre-modern" or "traditional" to a "modern" society. It attempts to identify the social variables that contribute to social progress and development of societies, and seeks to explain the process of social evolution.



adopted in Nepal since the fifties were pseudo community based development strategies. They failed to yield any positive results; instead, they turned out to be anti-developmental and exerted negative impacts on social wellbeing. Based on that, community developers agreed upon the necessity of incorporation of ABCD approach into the Nepali community. As change is always hard specifically in centralized countries like Nepal, ABCD principles were introduced to the government and NGOs as a complementary approach and a more feasible way to effectively operate needs based and rights based approaches to development (Khadka, 2012). ABCD approach is currently used as an advanced model to operationalize needs and rights based approaches in Nepal as it is difficult to induce a radical change in centralized countries.

Development in Nepali and Egypt has many similarities and contrasts that could give useful insights. Lack of development awareness contributes to the early disappointment of advancement technique and methodology that were perceived in Nepal, and the same could be said of other underdeveloped nations including Egypt. Failure of traditional community development approaches were often due to developing of policies from exogenous people and top leaders, neglecting of community members participation, magnifying negative picture of the community and envisioning the community members as passive beneficiaries with some needs. Further, developing countries suffers from chronic problems which greatly contribute to this failure such as corruption, lack of accountability, lack of consistent evaluation and monitoring and failure to reach target group (Bhattachan, 1997). The state role in Nepal to achieve development is prominent. Unlike Egypt, NGOs in Nepal are not the only responsible for development, but the Nepali government shares greatly in this responsibility; it tends to foster NGOs work by embracing ABCD, and overcoming the aforementioned chronic problems. Such

cooperation between the public and non-profit sector would be the optimum way to achieve development and eradicate poverty in Egypt.

Of course nothing is idealistic; some authors have mentioned a few constraints that might hinder ABCD approach. Randal (2000) stated a single limitation in ABCD approach; the proposed claim is that certain environments may not be conducive to the ABCD method. The method may be difficult to enact in hostile environments or places where social hierarchies marginalize certain people. Mathie and Cunningham (2003) stated that the ABCD approach does not sufficiently address the part of outside agencies and organizations in the community development process, nor how the community can evade its reliance on external parties. Kretzmann and McKnight (1993) briefly discuss the role of outside institutions, but the topic requires more elaboration and thought. Additionally, it was also pointed out that the ABCD does not manage unequal force issues that minorities and women face, which can avoid them from the development process. Mathie and Cunningham (2003) also brought up that the ABCD approach does not deliver how to cultivate community leadership in diversified settings or how to approach a circumstance in which there is an absence of a positive environment to establish the ABCD methodologies.

## Chapter Three: Research Methodology

### 3.1. Design

For better understanding of ABCD strategy in the Egyptian context, the research was designed to explore the processes, outcomes, and faced challenges of asset based development approach in the rural communities. Hence, a new era could be established to sustainable development. The Egyptian Society for Endogenous Development (ESED)<sup>11</sup> is a non-governmental organization that adopts ABCD approach in community development projects. Few organizations in Egypt utilizes the term ABCD approach in their websites; however, their programs adopt a hybrid of asset based and traditional approaches. ESED embrace the asset based approach in all of its activities; it was founded in 2003 and concentrates its activities in rural communities of Upper Egypt. Moreover, a strong contact was already established with one of the community developer working at this organization, and in turn collecting data was expected to be easier and more comprehensive than other organizations. Therefore, this organization and its programs were chosen to help in answering the research questions and achieving the research objectives.

### 3.2. Methods

The qualitative method aims to gather in-depth understanding of social behavior and the reasons that govern such behavior (King et al, 1994). As ABCD approach is considered to be a collective social behavior, data gathering depended mainly on qualitative research methods. The methods used typically focused on meanings, views, and perceptions, where participants' description of their situation is highly valued. Multiple methods of qualitative research including

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<sup>11</sup> The Egyptian Society for Endogenous Development website: <http://www.egy-com.org/>

in-depth interviews, focus group discussions and case studies were conducted. Some data was obtained from secondary resources including previous literature and Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS).

### **3.3. Sampling**

Purposive sampling strategy was pursued in choosing the participants; preliminary criteria relevant to the research objectives were predetermined to guide the selection process. The selection criteria enclosed: all participants should have at least three years experience and should be currently working in community development field, the ratio between pioneers and novices should be 1:1, and diversity in educational background, social level, and affiliated sector should be taken into consideration as much as possible. The participants' number was not fixed prior to data collection, and the number of interviews was determined during the collection process on the basis of theoretical saturation. Interviews were stopped when new data no longer bring additional insights to the research questions.

### **3.4. Interviews**

Interviews and focus group discussion (FGD) are effectual qualitative methods for getting participants to discuss their personal encounters, opinions, and experiences (Mack et al, 2005). In turn, nine in-depth interviews were conducted with both community developers and beneficiaries of development programs. Community developers working in private, governmental and NGOs sectors were interviewed. Moreover, the interviewed participants were of different demographics and diverse backgrounds; some live in rural areas while other live in urban regions. Half of interviewees aged from 25 to 35, and the other half aged from 45 to 60. Part of the participants has engineering background, others with medical, administrative or

vocational backgrounds (table 1). Moreover, a focus group discussion was conducted with the community developers of The ESED. This variation is valuable as it allows triangulation and ensures validity and reliability of data. Interviews questions were designed to elicit a vivid picture of the participant's perspective on the ABCD approach and the current status of community development in Egypt. The questions were prospectively semi structured to let interviewees talk freely, and probing questions were asked if the discussion skewed to unneeded direction.

Two interviews were conducted with technical manager and the site manager of Al-Kayat project of the ESED. They joined the organization since 2008 and 2010 respectively; and both of them are engineers. The discussions in these interviews were more about the detailed process that they adopt for community development, and the day to day activities of the project (Annexes 1&2). Another one was held with the administrative manager of the ESED. He has a managerial background and was engaged in the field since 2006. Questions were about the successful methods of management of development projects (Annex 3). In addition to a focus group discussion that was done with the three of them and two of the community developers who work within the ESED (Annex 4).

Two interviews were done with community developers working at different grass root organizations at Al-Kayat village, and both of them are concurrently participants in Al-Kayat project of the ESED (they considered as beneficiaries and community development). Questions about the status of current project and other developmental projects were asked (Annex 5&6). In addition to a questionnaire that measures the reach, participation, and the impact of the project on the villagers (Annex 7). Two more interviews were conducted with the beneficiaries of the

project. The same questionnaire was asked in addition to some questions about the outcomes of the project and the challenges they faced (Annex 8&9).

Additional interview was held with a community developer working at CDS organization. Questions about the approaches they tackled in their projects, challenges they face and the future of community development in Egypt were asked (Annex 10). The last interview was conducted with the director of the innovation unit at the Egyptian ministry for local development. The questions in this interview focused on the role of the government in community development, the current developmental programs of the ministry and the approaches they are tackling (Annex 11).

### **3.5. Ethical considerations**

All interviews and the focus group discussion were held in the period between November and December 2014, after the IRB<sup>12</sup> approval (Annex 12), and were based at the location of the interviewees either in Cairo or in Al-Minya. The interviews were communicated in Arabic, then translated and transcribed in English by myself. Before conducting the interviews, all participants were informed about the nature, purpose and possible outcomes of the research through the informed consent (Annex 13); and permission was obtained on recording, if it was needed. All interviews recording and handouts were kept confidential, and the data was analyzed and interpreted by myself.

### **3.6. Case studies**

Additionally, a case study approach guided the documentation of the research objectives. As Yin (2008) explains, case studies are the preferred strategy when the researcher has little

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<sup>12</sup> An institutional review board (IRB), is a committee that has been formally designated to approve, monitor, and review biomedical and behavioral research involving humans.

control over events, and when the focus is on a contemporary and real life phenomenon. It is also essential to explain the study of human activity through practical and context dependent knowledge which could be gained from reporting of a case study (Flyvbjerg, 2001). Case studies from different communities in Egypt were comprehensively studied. This involved exploring the tools that have been used, the processes that have been tackled, the assets that have been mobilized, the challenges that were overcome, and the outcomes that have been generated from the development approach.

Al-Kayat, Shammas and Kafr Al-Arab villages were selected as optimum cases to be studied; they share common features of extreme poverty, social conflict and marginalization. ABCD approach is claimed to be operated in the three of them; however, it has been succeeded at Kafr Al-Arab, failed in Shammas, and still ongoing at Al-Kayat. This gave information about the process, outcomes, challenges and reasons for success. Moreover, Al-Kayat is located at Upper Egypt, Shammas at the west and Kafr Al-Arab is located in Lower Egypt; this also gave insights about application of ABCD approach in different cultures and contexts. This variation was intended to extrapolate the finding to a lot of number of communities as much as possible; however, more research is essential for generalization of the data.

### **3.6.1. Overview to Al-Kayat community**

Al-Kayat village is a rural area located in Al-Minya governorate in Upper Egypt. It is the poorest village in Al-Minya governorate. The village is marginalized and isolated from the government services including education, healthcare, infrastructure and urbanization. This greatly minimizes job vacancies, and in turn, aggravates unemployment. Moreover, Al-Kayat suffers from political conflict and intermittent religious conflict. In terms of assets, Al-Kayat village has natural assets summarized in the land and palms, and human assets summarized in the

large number of the village population and basic farming skills. The village economy is based on date trade. Although the palms are the major asset for the village, it represents a problem. The palm fronds (the hard leaves of the palm) are aggregated in piles everywhere in the village; it blocks the way, causes fires and sometimes hurts the children. From this problem, the idea emerged; converting the palm fronds to wood. The project of converting fronds to wood started in 2010. It is still operating and up till now the results are promising. From the fronds, two products were produced; parquet wood which used for the floor of fancy houses and hotels; and MDF wood which used for building homes for villagers and furniture. Moreover, from the fronds residues a poultry feed was produced which increases the productivity 25% more than the regular feed. In addition, the project provides a lot of job opportunities and adds skills to the villagers. The products of the projects are being sold in many exhibitions, and the revenue is used to cover the expenses of the project and providing other services for the village.

### **3.6.2. Overview to Shamma community**

Shamma is a rural area located in Marsa Matrouh governorate towards the western desert. It has the same conditions of poverty, isolation from public services, unemployment and weak economy like Al-Kayat. Moreover, the tribal structure of the community often leads to social conflict. Fig farming and agriculture skills are the main assets of the village. They have two types of fig; edible and non edible. They sell the edible fig and burn the non edible one. The idea of the project is transforming the non edible fig to jam. The project succeeded; the produced jam was complied with the international standards and was exported locally to many governorates in Egypt. Despite of the great success, community leaders decide to terminate the project after couple of years due to the conflict between them.



### 3.6.3. Overview to Kafr Al-Arab community

Kafr Al-Arab village is a rural community in Damietta governorate; it is located in the northeastern part of Egypt. Likewise, Kafr Al-Arab has the same features of poverty, lack of education, marginalization and unemployment. Cattle are the only asset of the village and in turn, breeding animals is the main skill of the community members. However, the community was facing a threat of extinction of these cattle due to the unaffordable price of animal feeds. From here, the idea of the project emerged. Community developer transformed the agricultural residues that grown naturally in Kafr Al-Arab land to animal feed that is capable of increasing the productive and reproductive capacity of the cattle. The project exerted and still exerting enormous results to the Kafr Al-Arab and surrounding villages.

**Table 1: Data about the participants to the interviews and the focus group discussion**

Code	Status (community developer/ beneficiary)	Demography	Years of experience	Pioneer / novice	Educational background	Working sector
IDI01	Community developer	Urban	6	P	Engineering	NGO
IDI02	Community developer	Urban	4	N	Engineering	NGO
IDI03	Community developer	Urban	8	P	Business	NGO
	Community developer	Urban	3	N	Vocational	NGO

FGD4	Community developer	Rural	7	P	Engineering	NGO
	Community developer	Rural	6	P	Business	NGO
	Community developer	Urban	3	N	Business	NGO
	Community developer	Urban	4	N	Business	NGO
IDI5	Beneficiary & community developer	Rural	15	P	Islamic studies	Private
IDI6	Beneficiary & community developer	Rural	5	N	Islamic studies	Public
IDI8	Beneficiary	Rural	4	N	Vocational	NGO
IDI9	Beneficiary	Rural	6	P	Vocational	NGO
IDI10	Community developer	Urban	4	N	Pharmacy	Private
IDI11	Community developer	Urban	10	P	Engineering	Public

## **Chapter Four: Findings and Discussion**

The research was intended to explore the possibility of applying asset based development approach in rural communities of Egypt. This involved reporting the activities, successes and failures of case studies from the Egyptian Society for Endogenous Development (ESED) that utilizes asset based approach to development. In doing along these lines, the research held two principle purposes. First, to define the conducted process of the community driven development approach, compare it with the standard process of McKnight and Kretzmann. Second, to examine the outcomes and challenges, and to customize practical prerequisites for successful replication in impoverished communities of Egypt.

### **4.1. The extent of adoption of ABCD approach in rural communities of Egypt**

The first research question was designed to generally identify the adopted development approach of the ESED in rural communities, and determine whether it could be classified as ABCD approach or not. This involved, going into the detailed steps of the conducted process mainly through the in depth interviews and the focus group discussion with the community developers of ESED. The guidelines and steps provided by McKnight and Kretzmann (1993) were used as a standard to measure the extent of ABCD adoption.

#### **4.1.1. The development process in Egyptian communities**

Although the process of ESED composed of well defined steps, it changes slightly from one project to another according to the circumstances of the community (fig.3).



Figure 3: Conceptual framework to the steps of the Egyptian approach to development in rural communities of Egypt

#### Step 1: Determination of the location

“Sometimes, we chose the village by ourselves and in other cases external entities offer a village for us, but in both cases we have certain inclusion criteria that should be fulfilled in the village”

Determination of the location differs from one project to another. For instance, Shammas village was selected because it was categorized among one of the poorest 1500 village in the United Nations report of 2003. However, selection of Al-Kayat village was done through field study by ESED with the help of Resala charity organization. The ESED prepared a questionnaire as a guide to compare between 11 villages in Al-Minya. It included questions about numbers of

palms, unemployment rates, rental rates, daily wages, local industries, and local NGOs and their activities. Then 22 volunteers from Resala took over the field study. They divided into 11 teams; each composed of two volunteers, and started to collect the data from villagers, grass root organizations and local directorates.

Upon the results of the field study and the report of the World Bank and the Egyptian center for economic studies about the 1000 poorest village in Egypt, Al-Kayat village was selected. Nevertheless, selection of Kafr Al-Arab village was completely different. It was recommended by Dana Gas company<sup>13</sup>. The company was searching for oil in these regions; and through its social corporate responsibility, development projects were greatly fostered. Correspondingly, Dana Gas chose ESED to create sustainable development projects at these villages. Despite that ESED does not execute the selection process in sometimes; each village should possess certain criteria to be accepted.

“No specific system for selection but common attributes should be inscribed in our selected villages; number one is extreme poverty, then assets availability then accessibility”

Three conditions should be existed in each village to be selected; the village should be poor, contains assets, and accessible. Poverty and assets availability are two consistent factors that cannot be separated. If the village is poor and has no assets, the project will have nothing to build upon and cannot be operated. Vice versa, if the village is not poor and has assets then the core value for the development and poverty eradication is lost and no need for the project.

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<sup>13</sup> Dana Gas is the Middle East's leading private sector natural gas company producing some 65,000 barrels of oil equivalent per day of oil, gas and natural gas liquids from its operations in Egypt and the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. Website: <http://www.danagas.com/en>

Additionally, reports from international organizations like United Nations and World Bank about development in Egypt always act as a solid guide in the selection process.

## Step 2: Exploring community assets

“The step is pretty compounded, it includes sub activities. It usually starts with selection of team number one, who will be responsible for initiating the communication between the ESED and the village”

Discovering community assets could be subdivided into two successive stages. Stage one encompasses selection of the team members (team no.1). Certain features should be present in the members of team no.1, in turn; a lot of time is allocated to select them. The members should be from diverse backgrounds and professions. Social, administrative, technical and psychological skills should be represented within the team. Furthermore, they should be reputable, trusted and have valuable position in the society. The team members are often life mavens and have former experience in community development projects. Spending enough time in this stage is permitted, as team no.1 will be responsible for building mutual trust between ESED and the community. All team members settle in the community for months (determined according to the nature and complexity of the project but usually not less than three months); as they try to join the villagers in their daily activities. Creating a robust relation between the team and the villagers will transfer the process organically to stage two.

“Then this team will start doing a comprehensive study that enables us to know everything about the village such as natural and human resources and also allows us to get closer to the lifestyle of the villagers. It occurs through informal interviews”

Stage two involves conducting a comprehensive field study by team no.1. The principal objective of this study is to identify all the natural, physical and social assets that could be mobilized; in line with, understanding the power relations and gender sensitive issues, and realizing norms, culture and key personnel within the community. Usually, the team begins with formal visits to the community leaders to introduce the project then continued with storytelling tool to elicit the needed information from community members. After that, a preliminary feasibility study of the project could be done to give a general idea about the benefit risk ratio of the project. The elongation of this step differs according to the social acceptability of the community and the size of the project. For instance, this step took longer time in Al-Kayat project rather than Shamas and Kafr Al-Arab projects.

Identification of the community assets depends greatly on the results of the comprehensive field study and to a lesser extent on the official data that obtained from CAPMAS, local directorates or other NGOs. This step yielded the identification of palm fronds as a precious source of wood in Al-Kayat village, and exploration of neglected assets in Shamas and Kafr Al-Arab including non edible fig and agricultural residues respectively.

### Step 3: Preparation for mobilization of assets

This step is a transition state between the idea of the project and its actual implementation. It involves numerous tasks that build upon step 2; as all the data used to execute these tasks are derived from the comprehensive field study that is done by team no.1 in the previous step.

“The preparation phase is the most important step; it includes a lot of activities, which after that determine the success of the project. We can say that this step is

the manual for the project; it basically consists of conducting scientific research and long term plans for the project”

The preparation step includes three phases that could be done in different order according to the requirements of the project. It usually starts with conducting scientific research; in which community developers integrate their technical and scientific backgrounds to turn the neglected community assets into profitable resource. For example, in Kafr Al-Arab project, scientific research was carried out to formulate a proper animal feed that increase the animal productivity and could be affordable for the villagers. Likewise, in Al-Kayat project, researchers conduct various experiments on converting the palm frond into wood.

After reaching a satisfactory point in the scientific research phase, the planning phase starts. The planning phase embraces doing a detailed feasibility study and a generic project plan, which identify the time plan, financial plan, resource plan and the benefit risk ratio of the project. A communication plan, that determines various entities and institutions that would help in the execution of the project, usually follows the project plan.

“Choosing the team no.2 members should be done carefully; they will monitor the activities throughout the project and build friendship with the villagers. The team of Al-Kayat project is carrying out the project activities during the day and is doing social visits (such as attending weddings, condolences and frolics) during the evening. Choosing of facilitation committee members should also be done carefully; these members are appeared to be powerful, trusted and have enthusiasm towards the project, and the information about them are obtained from the comprehensive field study of the previous step”



The final phase in step 3 involves formation of team no.2 and steering committee of the project. Members of team no.2 are community developers selected from the ESED; they are usually youth of diverse backgrounds, and have strong passion for community development. Their role is to ensure the implementation of the project and the compliance to the plan. They are not only responsible for facilitating day to day activities and overcoming problems, but also building trust and social relations with the community members.

Team no.2 continues till the end of the project as it represents the connector between ESED and the community. The number of the team members and number of days they are going to stay are set according to the complexity of the project. In Kafr Al-Arab project, only one representative was responsible for doing the aforementioned duties while in Al-Kayat project two members are responsible for them and they spend three day every week at the village. Selection of the steering committee members is also done in this phase. It is composed of individuals from the community, which were previously recognized by ESED members as natural leaders. They are individuals who have strong passion about the cause, appreciated status among villagers and have good reputation. They are insiders; therefore, they are able to successfully lead and open the way for team no.2 throughout the project.

#### Step 4: Implementation of assets mobilization

“Operationalization of the project should flow smoothly if the previous three steps were perfectly done. Thus, this step is easy compared to the previous ones”

Mobilization of community assets composed of several activities. First of all, the technology that was done in the labs is transferred to the community. However, it is not blindly transferred without modifications; instead, it is customized to suit the village circumstances and

the villagers' skills. This involves replacement of sophisticated devices with simple instrument that community members can readily operate, and taking into consideration the environmental conditions of the village (fig.4). A pilot experiment is then done, and the final product is subjected to certain tests to ensure compliance with the quality standards and its validation.

After meeting the requirements, a training program is given to the villagers to familiarize them with the process, instructions and the instruments. Ultimately, the project progresses to large scale production. In certain projects, female villagers played a successful role in actuating the project and controlling the turnover problem. In Shammas project, females were preparing the Jam at their homes, and it is expected that females will also play a major role in Al-Kayat project either.



Figure 4: Examples to the simplified devices that are used at Al-Kayat village

## Step 5: Empowering the community

“No specific action is taken in this stage; we do the action that the community members prefer. Sometimes, it is a company while in other cases it is a charity organization; it is all about their preference”

This step involves finding an entity to take over the project. The objective of this step is to ensure the sustainability of the project through proper management of community members. It begins when ESED members observe that their domination over the project become unnecessary for its existence. The interpretation of the observation differs from one project to another according to the surrounding circumstances of the community. In certain cases, a grass root organization, which is already exist, manage the project and exploit it revenues in performing its charity activities. On the contrary, at Kafr Al-Arab an association was established to administer the project which composed of community leaders, members of the steering committee and interested community members, while at Shammas the project was ruled over by the mayor of the village. Members of the association are usually predetermined in step 4 upon the recommendations of team no.2.

## Step 6: Independence of the project

Certain proceedings are performed to prepare for leaving the community. In previous projects including Kafr-Al-Arab and Shammas, the role of ESED is finished after optimizing all the operations within the project, ensuring its success and perpetuation, and no further interference is done. However, at Al-Kayat village, additional action is proposed to be done; an agreement that shapes the future communications between the community and ESED would be settled. This conveys that part of the project revenues will be used by ESED for further

development projects, and a representative of ESED will be a member in the project association that will be established at the end of the project.

#### **4.1.2. Similarities and differences between the Egyptian and Standard ABCD approaches**

The process that was outlined by Kretzmann and McKnight (1993) for implementation of ABCD approach was taken as a standard model to verify whether the development process, which was used by ESED to mobilize the assets of rural communities, adopts the ABCD approach or not. Step one of ESED process does not exist in Kretzmann and McKnight process. Methods of this step change from one community to another, and accordingly it will vary greatly from one country to another. It depends upon poverty rate, assets, political and economic conditions, and demography of each community. It goes without saying that determination of the location should be the first step; however, ABCD approach should have explicitly mentioned it and give some guidelines for criteria of selection.

Step two of ESED development approach looks at the glass as half full. Regardless of the deficiencies and needs, it builds an inventory of all the strengths and qualities within the community. Beaulieu (2002) proposes that the most ideal way to address the difficulties of any group is to precisely evaluate their accessible assets, and suggests disclosing the learning and abilities existing inside the community. Similarly, step one and two of ABCD approach aims to discover community assets, create a relationship with community members and identify the community leaders; besides, they highlighted the importance of building community members self esteem. Rubin's (2000) examination of community based development organizations discovered their primary objective was the identification of physical and social assets of the communities due to their empowering effects. ESED development process has the same objective; however, it gives more insights about the characteristics of the team members

concerned with this step, and the effective tools to be used while carrying out the comprehensive field study.

In the preparation step (step three) of ESED development approach, team #2 continues to identify community assets along with tuning and monitoring the mobilization process. On parallel, mapping the community -step three of ABCD process- continues with identifying the community assets in addition to finding possible ways of mobilization through interaction with community members. Kong (2008) supports this idea finding significant value in the casual conversations among community members, which can evolve practical applications to the identified assets. However, team no.2 focuses more on creating a robust social relationship with the community members as a way for optimum mobilization. When connections are made in this way, community members are enthusiastic to cooperate on how to overcome possible challenges and develop mutually beneficial relationships (Beaulieu, 2002).

Beyond relationships, and identification and mobilization of assets, step three of ESED development process expands; and aims to develop an equal identity and shared vision for the project through forming the steering committee. Kretzmann and McKnight (1993) mentioned the same in step 4; they ensured that a representative group for the community is crucial to solve the community problems. Tamarack (2003) supports multisectorial collaboration through ensuring that community members ought to join as equivalent partners to engender positive impacts for their communities. Although ABCD approach stipulates that development must originate from inside communities, external entities can always help (Aigner, 2002). Step three of ESED development process organizes and frames external help through the communication plan. It determines all possible individuals and entities that can support the project financially and non-

financially. Correspondingly, step six of ABCD approach indicates using community-driven initiatives and expanding them with the support of external activities, investments and resources.

Step four of ESED development process incorporates the actual processes to mobilize community assets. In line with this, step five of ABCD approach states the same; it identifies that establishing a common ground amongst participants and encouraging further participation are of great importance. However ESED development process focuses on practical phases for mobilization starting from small scale implementation then customization, and ends with large scale implementation. Lack of capacity to support continuous participation, can encounter a barrier to community mobilization (Foster-Fishman, 2006). Consequently, the tasks of team no.2 continue till the end of the project.

Step five and six of ESED development process describes the post mobilization stage which is not mentioned in ABCD process. Different course of actions are taken in these steps according to the conditions of the community; however, they all aim to ensure success, sustainability and perpetuation of the development project. Step six of ABCD approach contains optimizations activities similar to the activities of step six in the Egyptian approach.

Each step in both processes was carefully scrutinized for its activities and objectives. Although little differences exist in the terminology and the order of the steps, numerous similarities have been realized in the contents of each step and the undertaken activities. As Kretzmann and McKnight process is global, it concentrates more on the conceptual frame work upon which ABCD approach is operated, and less on the practical steps that should be implemented. The research uncovered no evidence that the involved community developers have learned about ABCD approach; nevertheless, ESED development process addresses the two

aspects carefully. It highlights the conceptual framework of ABCD approach and the functional steps efficiently. Moreover, it gives additional insights for location determination and the post mobilization stage. Therefore, the aforementioned discussion reveals that ABCD approach to development is conducted in rural communities of Egypt.

## **4.2. Examining the possibility of ABCD approach replication**

The second research question was designed to address the possibility of replication of ABCD approach in distressed communities in Egypt that have the same features of marginalization, impoverishment, centralization, fragile economy, and political instability. This requires examining the implications of ABCD approach in rural communities, and provides a suitable template for further replications. The answers to these inquiries obtained mainly from the beneficiaries of ABCD adopted projects and to a lesser extent from the community developers.

### **4.2.1. ABCD outcomes in rural communities of Egypt**

#### **Local economy**

Implementation of the ABCD approach leads to mobilizing natural and physical assets. This affects positively the economy of the community, and the wellbeing of its members. ABCD approach does not seek external help; it depends on utilizing the resources and positive aspects within the community to achieve sustainable economic development (Pinkett, 2000). The concept of development of the local economy is extensively utilized in the studied rural communities of Egypt. Al-Kayat village has 25,000 palms which naturally produce dates and palm fronds. Palm fronds were not only a neglected asset, but also they represented a major harm to the village due to risk of fires. Through embracing ABCD approach, neglected palm fronds

were converted to valuable raw material, wood. Likewise, in Shamma village, utilizing ABCD approach changed the non edible fig to delicious jam that was locally exported. The products of the projects are sold, and the revenues are used to improve community services including infrastructure, education, healthcare or any needs. This simple process activates economic self-reliance of community members, and creates sustainable local economy for the marginalized communities. ABCD, as a strategy for sustainable economic development, makes communities less dependent on the state economy and the government services.

### **Job opportunities**

Another outcome that was realized from adopting ABCD approach is generating numerous job opportunities. According to world development report (2013), development happens through jobs.

“Before this project we know nothing except farming which is not guaranteed. A farmer can work for only five days in a month and each day he earns 30 pounds (\$4) and of course 150 pounds (\$21)<sup>14</sup> per month cannot cover his family expenses. Previous projects that were done in the village provided us with jobs but just like farming they were not guaranteed. In this project I can feel some kind of stability; at least I can draw prospective plans based on my salary”

Creating job opportunities is capable of decreasing the unemployment rate which in turn, increases the productivity and fortifies the local economy of the community. Job vacancies decreases crime rate, immigration rate and psychological disturbances associated with unemployment. Other development approaches can also create job opportunities; however, the

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<sup>14</sup> Currency exchange rate: 1.00 USD, = 7.15011 EGP



opportunities created through adopting ABCD approach is sustainable ones. The natural assets of the community are sustainable; therefore, jobs created through them are stable. Stabilized jobs provide regular income that can enhance living standards the workers and give better access to education and healthcare services. Beyond earnings, jobs provide sense of security and share in the capacity building of community members. Generally, the well being of community members is improved through implementing ABCD approach to development.

### **Social cohesion**

The importance of social cohesion in any community development work cannot be overstated; it can inevitably lead to success or failure of the project (Perkins et al, 2004).

“Social conflict is a major problem that we used to face in the beginning of each project, but upon implementing the project, the conflict turned to be harmony”

“We were eating each other like fish at the beginning of the project but now we get to know each other better and have desire to do something to our village”

Due to its tribal structure, rural communities in Egypt suffer from social conflict and in some cases religious conflict. Moreover, political conflict has been arisen due to the current political instability. All these types of conflicts are aggravated upon adopting charity, needs or rights development approaches as community members start to fight over the benefits they can gain from externals. Contrarily, ABCD approach depends on the assets of community members so they feel that externals have nothing to give them; instead, they only help them to exploit their assets. Adopting ABCD approach connects the interests of community members; it enables them to have a common background and unifies them around a shared vision. Moreover, it leads to

establish new networks of relationships between conflicted parties. For instance, the steering committee of Al-Kayat project contains members from disputed families, yet they agree on supporting the project and find a way to communicate with each other successfully. Gilchrist (2009) stated that, networks that connect individuals and various sections of the local community are an invaluable resource, operating as communication systems and organizations mechanisms. Hence, ABCD approach is able to strengthen and extend networks of relationships, and in turn, foster social cohesion in rural communities of Egypt.

### **Empowerment**

A central theme of ABCD approach is the relocation of power to communities (Mathie and Cunningham, 2003), this was obviously recognized in the studied rural communities of Egypt. Empowerment of community members was not only realized from their speeches, but also appeared through their body language and facial expressions.

“We used to see external people who come and take the fronds for free, but we never know what they are going to do with it. Now no one can deceive us, we became aware of what we have”

“We have treasures more than urban areas and our products can compete the products of the biggest companies in Egypt”

“A lot of people from different cities in Egypt come to see our project; they cannot imagine what we have done, and many times television interviews were made with us about the project”

ABCD approach achieves empowerment through awareness, participation and capacity building of community members. Informing community members about their assets puts aside the idea of 'philanthropic and needy' that is associated with other development approaches. Community members have a feeling of richness and enhanced self esteem. Awareness also decreases the reliance on external agencies and eliminates the concept of 'only outsiders can help'. Moreover, the active participation of community members in all the steps of ABCD process, increase the self confidence and resident involvement. Capacity building -that has been implemented through ABCD approach- also shares in achieving empowerment. Community members have multiple skills, thus they are feeling productive and can perform various tasks. Empowerment of community members through ABCD approach turns them from clients to citizens.

Based on the aforementioned outcomes, ABCD approach could be safely replicated in similar communities in Egypt. However, further analysis to the challenges and reasons for success of ABCD approach is essential for successful replication.

#### **4.2.2. Challenges of ABCD in rural communities of Egypt**

Asset based approach holds a great promise to achieve development in distressed communities of Egypt. However, its actual implementation encompasses numerous challenges that would need further research as ABCD initiatives are done in the future. Surprisingly, the challenges appeared at Al-Kayat, Kafr Al-Arab and Shamma villages were interrelated. Therefore, this gives useful insights about the common challenges that could face ABCD approach in rural communities of Egypt.

## **Lack of trust**

Lack of trust is one of the major challenges that encounter ABCD approach in rural communities. This returns to the fact that members of these communities have been deceived several times by externals, who tend to use the human and natural resources for their own interests, and never consider community interests.

“In the beginning, the villagers were always afraid of us. They refuse to take with us, and every time we enter a public place, they tend to leave it. Even when they start to communicate, after a while, they were very cautious not to release any information”

“When I first met them and heard about the project, I was nodding my head to pretend I am convinced but deeply inside I am not. I only got convinced when I found them living with us”

Exploring of community assets is done through casual discussions between community members and community developers. Lack of trust hinders the occurrence of this effective communication, and could eventually lead to termination of the project if not overcome. The criteria of team #1 members and the tools they use to conduct the field study are the key to gain community members trust. The members of team #1 are usually males, elderly, have good reputation, and have -from the villagers’ perspective- influential professions in the society like journalist, engineer and physician. These characteristics are greatly appreciated in rural communities of Egypt. Moreover, the team lives in the community for a long time with the same lifestyle of the community members. During this time, day to day communications and friendly

discussions are always take place. Finally, team #1 does not leave the community until mutual trust has been achieved.

## **Cultural difference**

Culture difference is another challenge that faces ABCD approach in rural communities of Egypt. Culture refers to a set of behaviors, habits, roles, traditions and norms that apply to a particular community. Each village in Egypt has its unique culture that could be completely different from the neighboring village. The success of a development project in a certain community does not refer to its spontaneous success in different communities.

“The attitude of villagers varies greatly from one village to another within the same district. In some villages you cannot talk to female villagers while in other villages you can talk but without making eye contact”

“From my point of view, Shammas project was failed due to cultural difference; we were not able to engage within the community culture and understand their customs and traditions”

Understanding the culture of the community before implementing ABCD approach to development is crucial to achieve development. Moreover, inefficient interpretation to the culture within the community inevitably leads to failure of the project. That is what happened in Shammas village; community developers were not able to relate to the norms and behaviors of the community members. Consequently, they did not recognize that community members prefer to gain their leaders satisfaction rather than gaining self benefits, and the project was terminated. Understanding the culture is an ongoing process that starts with step one and continues

throughout the ABCD process. In some communities, the steering committee act as a cultural meeting point between community developers and community members. However, team no.2 often takes over the responsibility of understanding the community culture and in turn adapting the steps of ABCD process to perfectly fit in the culture.

### **Social conflict**

Most of rural communities in Egypt suffer from social conflict. Reasons for social conflict differ from one area to another. For instance, rural communities in Upper Egypt contain religious conflict while rural communities in Lower Egypt experience political conflict. In addition, the tribal structure of rural communities in the West is the reason behind the social conflict. Regardless of the reason, ABCD approach cannot function in social conflict. Conflict is associated with disruption of power, and ABCD approach need the collective power of all community members to achieve development.

“We exert a lot of effort and spend a lot of time to reach an agreement from all stakeholders of the village, but this is necessary for proper implementation of the project”

Resolving the original cause of the social conflict is impossible. Instead, creating a common objective upon which community members agree is the path to unify the warring parties. The steering committee, which incorporates leaders of different interests, enforces them to find a way for productive communication. Moreover, the association that formed in step five of ABCD approach ensures the sustainability of this effective communication.

## **The development concept**

The idea of endogenous development is an alien concept to the members of rural communities. Community members act as passive consumers in development projects based on charity, need or rights approaches. Therefore, they view themselves as vulnerable group of people with a lot of needs and problems. Development concept for them is all about gaining some services from the outsiders without minimal participation. Active interaction of community members and self reliance are of the cardinal principles in ABCD approach. Here is the challenge; community developers should modulate the concept of development from passive clients to active citizens. Moreover, the involvement of the community developers should be thoughtful to avoid induction of dependency.

### **4.2.3. Reasons for success**

While studying the implementation of ABCD approach in rural communities of Egypt, certain factors have been realized for its great contribution in the success of the approach.

Utilization of storytelling tool could be considered a factor for success of ABCD approach in rural communities of Egypt. Storytelling is one of the tools that are used for needs assessment in needs based approach. It is based on concluding the community needs from the stories narrated by community members. In ABCD approach, storytelling tool is conducted to know about the physical, natural and human assets of the community. In addition, it creates a friendly environment between community developers and community members, and facilitates the social acceptability of the project.

The characteristics of community developers who employ ABCD approach in rural communities of Egypt are a major factor for success. All of them have a passion to implement

concrete achievements and a great sense of responsibility towards distressed communities in Egypt. They work in a horizontal hierarchy with team spirit, and conduct weekly meetings to discuss the status of the projects. Moreover, they never share their personal, religious or political views among the community members. Community developers try to be objective as much as possible and always envision endogenous development as their ultimate goal.

Certain considerations should be kept in mind to achieve in the success of ABCD approach in rural communities of Egypt. First, community developers are very careful about power relations; they always start to conduct meetings with community leader before members. In addition, they are fully oriented with gender sensitive issues among different communities. Second, community developers incorporate the key personnel of the community in the steering committee to ensure their loyalty throughout the project; and in turn, the success of the project. Community developers never initiate a project until previous projects and peers experiences have been carefully examined.



## Chapter Five: Conclusions and Recommendations

### 5.1. Conclusions

By outlining ABCD process and unpacking its steps and outcomes, the research has served to position ABCD approach as a promising strategy to achieve development and eradicate poverty in rural communities of Egypt.

In accordance with that, the research highlighted few limitations to ABCD approach that should be considered when applying in similar settings. The asset based approach to development builds upon strengths and resources that already exist within a community. Therefore, an extremely poor community with no assets cannot embrace ABCD approach. Moreover, creating a strong relationship between community developers and community members is one of the main pillars upon which ABCD process is employed. This could lead to personalization of projects in some cases; and community members refuse to facilitate the process except in the presence of certain community developers whom they trust. Despite the fact that ABCD approach aims to reduce the level of external dependency that is associated with other approaches, it still depends on outsiders help to undertake the development initiative. Overdone involvement of outsiders could lead to external reliance in some cases. In addition, sustainable development -which is the ultimate goal of ABCD approach- needs external fund to be initiated and long period of time to be maintained.

Despite its limitations, the ABCD approach was proved to be capable of bringing development and alleviate poverty in rural communities of Egypt. It views community as a source of positive energy and of self-sufficiency that can ensure social justice and inclusiveness, and is able to manage changes. However, the efficacy of the ABCD does not only depend on the

approach itself, but also on how the organizations, individuals and practitioners incorporate it in communities. Besides, establishing and maintaining social cohesion among community members is fundamental to achieve sustainable development in Egyptian communities. ABCD is not a “copy and paste” process for community development; it needs customization and could not be imitated blindly from western theories. Therefore, the application of the ABCD approach discussed in this paper will require modification according to the time and context, more research for generalization of the data as well as borrowing ideas from different disciplines to enrich the gaps of the process.

## **5.2. Recommendations**

The research revealed that the implemented ABCD process has certain weaknesses; and improvement of these deficits would contribute positively to the outcomes of the process. The ABCD process would benefit from a proper monitoring and evaluation system. First, it is important to indicate that monitoring and evaluation is an ongoing process that starts in the early stages and continues even after the last step. Some of the key steps in the process of monitoring and evaluation are: setting objectives and frames, identifying parameters and standards of success, developing methods for data collection, analyzing data, documenting and reporting, improving current processes and methods, and evolving action plans. Evaluation system measures the effectiveness and ability of the community to accomplish the goals it has set. Moreover, it ensures sustainability of the project as emerged problems are instantly solved, and it also resolves problem associated with accountability.

Second, it should be stressed that community developers who are involved in the asset based development approach have no theoretical background about different approaches to development and even about ABCD approach itself. This was very clear in their terminology and

their definition to the steps. Some effort should be directed to enhance the theoretical background of the community developers. This will allow them to perform the proper course of action in any problem, deliver the development message to community members in a clearer way, and will expose them to different international experiences. Integration of theory with the practical experience that community developers already have will inevitably make a breakthrough in implementing ABCD approach and achieving sustainable development.

Another area needs extensive improvement is the relation between the government and NGOs. Unfortunately, it was realized in the interviews that the government support is diminished and ineffective. Cooperation is crucial for successful generalization of ABCD over rural communities in Egypt. The government should exert a vital role in aspects like monetary aids, technical and marketing support, and eliminating bureaucracy as much as possible

Eventually, the research was able to develop a directory for further implementation of sustainable development in Egypt; which generally conveys that development initiatives should build on the strength and assets of the community, marginalized and poor communities must be the primary focus of the development process.

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## **Annexes**

### **Interviews Questionnaires**

#### **Annex 1 (Archival # IDI 01)**

Site: Faculty of Engineering Ain Shams University

Interviewer: Alyaa Hessin

Translator: Alyaa Hessin

Interviewee: Engineer and community developer at the Egyptian Society for Endogenous Development (act as a technical manager) and assistant lecturer at Faculty of Engineering Ain Shams University

#### Questions:

What is the relation between your work as an engineer and the ABCD approach?

How you incorporate your technical background in ABCD implementation?

How you deal with villagers?

What are the challenges you face in each project?

And how you solve these challenges?

What are the tools you use to explore the community assets?

How you gain the trust of the villagers and how long it takes?

How you keep touch with the communities after terminating the activities?

## **Annex 2 (Archival # IDI 02)**

Site: The Egyptian Society for Endogenous Development

Interviewer: Alyaa Hessin

Translator: Alyaa Hessin

Interviewee: Engineer, community developer at the Egyptian Society for Endogenous Development (act as a site manager) and assistant lecturer at Faculty of Engineering Ain Shams University

### Questions:

Do you consent freely to participate in this tape-recorded interview?

What is your work?

What makes you join the Egyptian society for endogenous development?

How you know about development? How you enhanced your knowledge about development?

Did you participate in other projects? What was your role?

What are the organized steps you took to launch a project? Did you examine reasons for failure carefully before starting?

What is your role in Al-Kayat project?

How did you move in to Al-Minya? What are the difficulties you face with yourself? How did you deal with people? How did you gain their trust?

What were the challenges? How did you overcome? What are the current challenges? What you were not able to overcome?

What are the limitations and negative aspects of ABCD approach?

Do you think the project is successful? Why? What are the measures of success?

What are the prerequisites for successful replication?

### **Annex 3 (Archival # IDI 03)**

Site: Egyptian Society for Endogenous Development

Interviewer: Alyaa Hessin

Translator: Alyaa Hessin

Interviewee: A community developer at the Egyptian Society for Endogenous Development (act as an administrative manager and one of the main pillars of Al-Kayat project)

#### Questions:

Do you consent freely to participate in this tape-recorded interview?

What are the nature and the detailed process of your work?

How you select your team members?

How you select the location targeted for development?

What are the sources of funding?

How you market your idea and your products?

How you manage deficits? (Cultural difference- political conflict- rapid turnover- trust- female employment)

How you solve personalization of projects?

How you measure the success of your project?

What was the role of other NGOs and government in your project from 2011 up till now?



#### **Annex 4 (Archival # FGD 04)**

Site: The Egyptian Society for Endogenous Development

Modulator: Alyaa Hessin

Translator: Alyaa Hessin

Participants: five community developers from the Egyptian Society for Endogenous Development

#### Questions:

Do you consent freely to participate in this tape-recorded discussion?

What inspires you with the ABCD idea?

The idea of development is an alien concept to Egyptians? To what extent do you agree or disagree?

How you implement your local development dreams?

Who helped you throughout this process?

What were the challenges you faced?

How can you see the future of local development and ABCD in Egypt?

What are the current challenges?

What is your future plan to proceed in this field?

## **Annex 5 (Archival # IDI 05)**

Site: Al-Kayat village, Al-Minya governorate

Interviewer: Alyaa Hessin

Translator: Alyaa Hessin

Interviewee: Community developer at a charity organization in Al-Kayat village and community developer at the Egyptian Society for Endogenous Development

### Questions:

Could you possibly describe the project briefly?

Who are the proposed beneficiaries of the project?

What are the possible benefits and harms that you are expecting from the project?

What are the challenges you faced? and how you overcome them?

Do you consider the project has been succeeded? Why?

What are the other developmental projects that were held in the village?

Why you trusted the Egyptian society for endogenous development?

If we are going to replicate this project in another village, how could we reform it in a better way?

**Annex 6 (Archival # IDI 06)**

Site: Al-Kayat village, Al-Minya governorate

Interviewer: Alyaa Hessin

Translator: Alyaa Hessin

Interviewee: Community developer at a nonprofit development organization in Al-Kayat village and community developer at the Egyptian Society for Endogenous Development

Questions:

Could you possibly describe the project briefly?

Who are the proposed beneficiaries of the project?

What are the possible benefits and harms that you are expecting from the project?

What are the challenges you faced? and how you overcome them?

Do you consider the project has been succeeded? Why?

What are the other developmental projects that were held in the village?

Why you trusted the Egyptian society for endogenous development?

If we are going to replicate this project in another village, how could we reform it in a better way?

**Annex 7 (Archival # IDI 07)**

Site: Al-Kayat village, Al-Minya governorate

Interviewer: Alyaa Hessin

Translator: Alyaa Hessin

*On a scale from 1 to 10, 1 is the worst and 10 is the best, could you possibly rate the following questions:*

To what extent you are satisfied with the project?

To what extent the project was able to reach each home in the village?

To what extent equity was achieved in distributing opportunities and benefits among the villagers?

To what extent the project increase self esteem and enhance the perception of the villagers?

To what extent was the degree of participation of the villagers?

To what extent the project was able to elevate the living standard of the villagers?

To what extent the project was able to disclose the villagers' capabilities and skills?

To what extent the project was able to strengthen the social cohesion among the villagers?

## **Annex 8 (Archival # IDI 08)**

Site: Al-Kayat village, Al-Minya governorate

Interviewer: Alyaa Hessin

Translator: Alyaa Hessin

Interviewee: one of the beneficiaries, currently working as trainer in the project of the Egyptian society of endogenous development

### Questions:

What is your original work? What is your current work?

How did you know about this project?

What are the benefits you gained from the project?

What else you would like to add to the project

What are the challenges you faced in this project? How you overcome it?

Did you participate in other projects? Could you please describe them briefly?

What make this project unique?

Why you trust the Egyptian society for endogenous development?

How could we replicate the project in a better way?

## **Annex 9 (Archival # IDI 09)**

Site: Al-Kayat village, Al-Minya governorate

Interviewer: Alyaa Hessin

Translator: Alyaa Hessin

Interviewee: one of the beneficiaries, currently working as foreman in the project of the Egyptian society of endogenous development

### Questions:

What is your original work? What is your current work?

How did you know about this project?

What are the benefits you gained from the project?

What else you would like to add to the project

What are the challenges you faced in this project? How you overcome it?

Did you participate in other projects? Could you please describe them briefly?

What make this project unique?

Why you trust the Egyptian society for endogenous development?

How could we replicate the project in a better way?

**Annex 10 (Archival # IDI 10)**

Site: The American University in Cairo

Interviewer: Alyaa Hessin

Translator: Alyaa Hessin

Interviewee: pharmacist and work currently as a community developer at center for development services organization

Questions:

What is your original work? What is your current work?

What inspires you to shift your career to development?

What are the current programs you are working in?

What are the tackled development approaches?

What is the role of other NGOs in your projects?

What is the role of the government in your projects?

How can you see the future of local development and ABCD in Egypt?

## **Annex 11 (Archival # IDI 11)**

Site: The American University in Cairo

Interviewer: Alyaa Hessin

Translator: Alyaa Hessin

Interviewee: Professor of engineering and director of the innovation unit at the Egyptian ministry for local development

### Questions:

What is the difference between ministry of local development, ministry of planning, monitoring and administrative reform, and ministry of slums and urban upgrading? Which one is concerned with local development in Egypt?

Is there is a kind of cooperation between the ministry and the development organizations?

What is the role of the government in assisting development projects of developmental organizations?

What are the current development projects of the government?

What are the approaches tackled in these projects?

Is there is any future plan to prepare a well educated staff of community developers?

What are the challenges that hinder the ministry from performing more active role towards local development?



## Annex 12 (The IRB Approval)

CASE #2014-2015-21

 THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY IN CAIRO  
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

To: Alyaa Farouk Ahmed Hessin  
Cc: Mariez Wasfi  
From: Atta Gebril, Chair of the IRB  
Date: Nov 9 , 2014  
Re: Approval of study

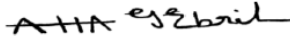
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This is to inform you that I reviewed your revised research proposal entitled "An application of asset based community development approach: a case study from rural community in Egypt," and determined that it required consultation with the IRB under the "expedited" heading. As you are aware, the members of the IRB suggested certain revisions to the original proposal, but your new version addresses these concerns successfully. The revised proposal used appropriate procedures to minimize risks to human subjects and that adequate provision was made for confidentiality and data anonymity of participants in any published record. I believe you will also make adequate provision for obtaining informed consent of the participants.

Please note that IRB approval does not automatically ensure approval by CAPMAS, an Egyptian government agency responsible for approving some types of off-campus research. CAPMAS issues are handled at AUC by the office of the University Counsellor, Dr. Amr Salama. The IRB is not in a position to offer any opinion on CAPMAS issues, and takes no responsibility for obtaining CAPMAS approval.

This approval is valid for only one year. In case you have not finished data collection within a year, you need to apply for an extension.

Thank you and good luck.



Dr. Atta Gebril  
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## Annex 13 (Informed Consent Form)



### Documentation of Informed Consent for Participation in Research Study

**Project Title:** *An application of asset based community development approach: a case study from rural community in Egypt*

**Principal Investigator:** *Alyaa Farouk Ahmed Hessin, 01001347903, [alyaafh@aucegypt.edu](mailto:alyaafh@aucegypt.edu)*

\*You are being asked to participate in a research study. The purpose of the research is to extensively study the asset based community development approach approach in the Egyptian context. Thus, a possible way could be paved to generalize this bottom up development strategy all over distressed communities in Egypt, and the findings may be published, presented, or both. The expected duration of your participation is three days.

The procedures of the research will be as follows Asset based community development is a set of approaches for sustainable development of communities. They are based on the concept of building on what communities have, focusing on the positives and strengths, and regardless of the extent of poverty of these communities have. This statement provides a sense of security to the poor and marginalized communities in Egypt.

Based on that, the ABCD approach needs to be extensively studied in the Egyptian context. Thus, a possible way could be paved to generalize this bottom up development strategy all over distressed communities in Egypt. The current research aims to: deeply understand the implementation of ABCD approach in the Egyptian environment; address the suitable ABCD

tools for the Egyptian culture that used to identify and mobilize community assets; analyze all negative and positive aspects and challenges of ABCD methodology; and to develop a practical guide for future applications of ABCD approach in Egypt.

This research will help a lot in understanding and identifying the ABCD approach in Egyptian communities. It will disclose different ways of exploring and mobilizing community assets, and will serve to develop a directory for further implementation of sustainable community development approach ABCD approach in Egypt.

\*There will not be certain risks or discomforts associated with this research.

\*There will be benefits to you from this research. Potential benefits to participants could be summarized in the possibility of replicating their experience in other communities, documenting their trials, and exposure to international experiences.

\*The information you provide for purposes of this research is confidential. All interviews recording and handouts will be kept confidential, and the data will be analyzed and interpreted by myself in a way that informants will not be identified.

\* Questions about the research, my rights, or research-related issues should be directed to (Alyaa Farouk Ahmed Hessin) at (01001347903).

\*Participation in this study is voluntary. Refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You may discontinue participation at any time without penalty or the loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

Printed Name

Signature

Date