

Eg_Speech

Dear distinguished guests,
dear partners and participants
dear friends,
Dear ladies and gentlemen,
Good morning – *Sebah Alhir*

My name is Andreas Muckenfuß, I'm one of the founders and today's Executive Directors of CRISP a German NGO specialized in non-formal education techniques.

Together with CDS, our partners in 15 different governorates and together with our participants we were focusing on youth from different parts of Egypt and on their needs and challenges. We developed the project-series Simulating Egyptian Transition (SET), that aims to equip participants with those skills needed to take over more individual responsibilities and responsibilities for their communities.

And we offered them the chance to pro-actively work on those needs and challenges of youth that we had jointly identified. This year, to be more precise today, we are finishing the SET-Project-Series and present you what we have done and what we have achieved since 2012 when did our first project.

But don't get me wrong, today is a good day. We are finishing the SET-Project-Series because we've reached its end. We made it. At the end of SET we, or better said our participants, have created a new legal entity, the foundation *Nadi El Mohake*. You might have seen it already in today's agenda and for sure you will see it many times during the day, as we have pens, bags, mugs...Nadi El Mohake is everywhere today.

But more about Nadi El Mohake later on, as I am supposed to use these few minutes of my welcoming speech to talk to you about our history of SET. As you can see it is my great pleasure to share with you the journey of our project-series and why and how we created this new entity, the foundation Nadi El Mohake.

Anyhow, I feel the need to mention that the history I will present you in a nutshell in the next minutes, is the history from the project coordinator, it is the history of SET from my perspective. So it is just one version of the history among many many other histories that happened in the course of this Project-Series. And I very much hope that you will have the chance today to get to know many more stories by engaging with us throughout the day., in particular with our participants from 15 different governorates, who's stories are extremely exciting and moving.

So let me start by taking you back to the year 2012. This was the first time I came to Egypt. I met Kazem Hemeida, today's chairperson of Nadi El Mohake, and we had the idea of introducing the method of

simulation games, as an educational-tool to civil society actors here in Egypt. Briefly: in a simulation game, we create a safe space to better understand and to analyse social conflicts (challenges). In the center of every simulation game there's a given problem that shall be solved by the actors of the simulation game. When participating in a simulation game one has to step into the shoes of someone else. This way you gain new perspectives and thus new insights about the problem. During the simulation game participants try to find solutions for the problem and afterwards the ideas created and tested inside the simulation game are transferred to reality. So simulation games are like laboratories where you can experiment and test your ideas.

As a next step, we did an infotour and travelled to many places in different governorates, in order to present the method of simulation gaming to civil society organizations and together we discussed how the method could be used in their work.

In the spirit of 2012 we were sure that we want to work on the local level as much as possible. Therefore, we had to build a training-chain: training the trainers of the trainers of the trainers. The first cohort were English speaking participants, who then delivered further trainings to Arabic-speaking trainers from 10 different governorates. By the end of 2014 we had 20 English-speaking and 40 Arabic-speaking trainers.

But times had changed by the beginning of 2015 and we were unsure how to continue. The atmosphere was different these days. Our participants could feel it, we could feel it, even I could feel it by watching my friends starting to shave. During these days we transferred the issue of insecurity about future developments of the country into one of our project phases.

We agreed that what is urgently needed for civil society and for youth in general is a vision. Something in the future that we can relate to and something positive. So, during the project phase III in 2015, we started to develop A Vision for Egypt 2025. The vision was produced using the simulation game technique, as we developed a fictitious scenario that is mirroring the Egyptian society and ask the question: how to live together peacefully? This simulation game was implemented in 10 different governorates with around 300 participants. We merged the results of the simulation games and extracted its essence. The outcome was the vision that consists mainly of five values: humanity, honesty, equality, social justice and freedom. These five values are our guiding principles for all our activities until today.

Having the Vision for Egypt 2025 at hand was extremely useful, to first of all remind ourselves what we are aiming for and second to expand our network. This was very crucial for the course of our project-series, as the vision allowed us to easily approach stakeholders from other sectors, like business, media or local authorities. This cross-sectoral approach, pro-actively engaging with individuals and organizations from other parts of society that share the same values and getting out of the civil-society-bubble, helped us a lot to receive enough support to continue our work.

And how did we continue? After creating the vision there was a very high momentum among all of us to work on the realization of that vision. So we started to provide the space for participants to actually

transfer their ideas on how to contribute to realizing the vision, into concrete initiatives on the ground in their hometowns.

For months we were working on theories of change, project-management-cycles, accounting and teambuilding. The outcome of this process were several initiatives in 5 different governorates, designed, implemented and evaluated by our participants themselves. At this stage, the change we were talking so much about while we were developing the vision, was actually visible and tangible.

This was the end of phase four in the year 2017. There is one more phase, the one we did this year 2018. As the last phase was by far the biggest and most intense, we want to present you this phase more in detail. After the welcoming speeches, our participants will present you the work they have done this year and share with you the fruits of the many amazing moments that took place in the course of the project.

So to sum up what has happened over the last 6 years: this project-series had a very powerful engine that kept it running throughout the years. It was the powerful combination of

- tackling topics that are burning issues to youth in Egypt,
- setting free the creativity of youth via the simulation games,
- using their eagerness to take over responsibility, in order to lead them to develop their own local initiatives
- and trust among ourselves, believing that we are capable of taking care and supporting each other.

The combination of these elements was the engine of the project throughout the last six years and kept it going. As said in the beginning, the SET-Project-Series is finished by the end of today. But this engine we have developed together continues to run and today is the main driving-force of the newly established foundation Nadi El Mohake.

I'm very convinced that Nadi El Mohake will lead many other youth to reflect about themselves, to think about the Egypt they want to live in and to actively engage in bringing the change they want to see – inshallah.

I'm very happy and thankful, what we were able to achieve. This is the moment for me to say thank-you. Many thanks to CDS for the outstanding cooperation over last years. Especially in these times when it was unclear how to continue. Many thanks to the German Embassy who trusted us and our ideas and our participants. Many thanks to all those who were putting so much effort and heart and overhours into this project-series and made this event today possible. Many thanks to those who took the time today to come here and to get to know us.

But the last and by far biggest Thank You goes to all the participants, who had the courage and the dedication to take action and who in the very end are the project. *ISHTA ALIK, HABEIBIS*