

Danish Egyptian Dialogue Institute

Strategy 2014 - 16

Engaging to understand shared challenges

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1. Introduction

Danish Egyptian Dialogue Institute (DEDI) is an intergovernmental body with a strong dialogue mandate under the Danish Arab Partnership Programme (DAPP). Established in 2004, DEDI's core mandate as a centre of excellence is to promote political and cultural understanding between Denmark and Egypt and Europe and the Arab World. Dialogue expertise cuts across all activities, detailed in the Agreement establishing DEDI as conferences, seminars, publications, projects and programmes.

DEDI's dialogue expertise is nurtured through network activities with similar dialogue institutes and captured in publications on lessons learned in dialogue practice and methodologies. In systematizing lessons learnt, developing methodologies and disseminating insights on how to work with dialogue, DEDI draws not only on its own experiences but also on those of other partners, notably the wide range of Arab and Danish partners working with dialogue under DAPP.

DEDI has an important role to play as a platform within the strategic framework for DAPP (2013-16). DEDI's comparative advantages in dialogue competence and its unique intergovernmental status allow for a broad scope of governmental and civil society partnerships to be brought together. DEDI has particular comparative advantages due to its location in Cairo to nurture networks and long-term partnerships on a daily basis.

Responding to demands for input and facilitation as well as contacts from both Egyptians and Danes, DEDI acts as a bridge builder for Egyptian and Danish partners cooperation, including DAPP. DEDI builds long-lasting networks and co-operation between Egyptian and Danish partners with mutual interests and shared challenges. DEDI has an important task of facilitating and extending these long-term partnerships by providing insight on the Egyptian and Danish scenes. DEDI continuously expands its scope by reaching out to new partners aiming at involving broad segments of both societies.

2. National contexts

Egypt has key importance in the Arab world and socio-political change in Egypt has multiplier effects across the region. Egypt remains in transition after the fall of president Mubarak in 2011. The democratization process has opened up for political participation at new levels.

A major challenge for Egypt is an economy in need of substantial reform in order for sustained growth to materialize. There is a strongly felt need for reform in many sections of the population and political groups.

The January 2011 revolution opened new possibilities for DEDI. Its mandate was expanded beyond dialogue activities to include a range of activities in support of democratization. These activities included democracy training, opinion surveys, capacity building, and support to investigative journalism, civil society and local councils.

DEDI has learned important lessons from its wide range of support to the democratization. At the same time, there is also widespread Danish and other donor support to democratization, governance, media and gender in Egypt for DEDI to link up with.

Being a small country **Denmark** is heavily dependent on international laws and regulations. Denmark has a long history of democracy. As a member of the European Union, Denmark is part of Europe's legal and governance systems. Like Egypt, Denmark is a signatory to global conventions and well integrated in the global economy. Denmark is facing economic challenges and reforms are necessary to sustain a responsible social model. Globalization and population flows are changing Denmark's social fabric into an increasingly diverse and multicultural reality.

DEDI has an important function in maintaining an understanding of the socio-political contexts in Denmark and Egypt in order to contribute to a better understanding of the diversity of change in Egypt in an increasingly diverse Danish context - and vice versa.

This combined Egyptian-Danish context defines DEDI's role of facilitating dialogue between Denmark and Egypt with the objective of representing social, economical and political realities through the voices of civil servants, organisations and individuals from both countries in those priority areas where shared challenges are perceived and where dialogue about transition and reform process is deemed relevant.

DEDI is therefore in a position to proactively focus on its comparative advantage as an intergovernmental platform and concentrate its activity portfolio in line with its core mandate.

3. Objectives

The agreement establishing DEDI identifies its mandate as 'dialogue on all issues of mutual concern within the cultural and political sphere'. The following objectives are derived from this mandate:

3.1 Overall objective

DEDI promotes mutual understanding between Denmark and Egypt with a view to contributing to open, democratic and inclusive political and cultural development in Denmark and Egypt.

Indicator of success at this overall objective level includes frequent, positive and substantive references to DEDI's role in Denmark and Egypt.

3.2 Immediate objectives

- I. *Platforms for DEDI-initiated dialogue established in Denmark and Egypt, contributing to open, democratic and inclusive developments relating to thematic priorities of politics, culture and media*
- II. *Joint dialogue initiatives with a broad range of Danish and Egyptian partners involved in thematic priorities in politics, culture and media facilitated*
- III. *Expertise in dialogue processes as a mechanism for enhanced learning and mutual understanding related to democratization disseminated to key stakeholders in relation to thematic priorities of politics, culture and media*

Indicators of success at the immediate objectives level include documentable dialogue outcomes from DEDI projects and partnerships and a high degree of interest from partners in working with DEDI as well as media representation of results of DEDI's work.

4. Strategic priorities

DEDI's comparative advantage is dialogue between governmental and nongovernmental groups and organisations in Egypt and Denmark. During the strategy period DEDI strives to become a centre of excellence for intercultural dialogue in particular in areas of relevance to the transition process in Egypt. DEDI is a dialogue platform developing and facilitating long-term partnerships between Egyptian and Danish government representatives and civil society organisations and groups.

DEDI's dialogue function and activities will be within three priority areas of mutual interest to Danes and Egyptians and of particular relevance to the current transition process in Egypt:

- Politics and democratization
- Culture as a means of participation
- Media in an open society

Each priority area includes ample opportunities for dialogue facilitation: i) between groups and organizations already engaged in Egyptian-Danish collaboration (e.g. DAPP partners engaged in the three priority areas); and ii) in support of new project based dialogue activities to be identified by DEDI according to the 'Principles of engagement' in section 5 below.

On-going dialogue facilitation as well as project based dialogue activities within the priority areas will continue to enhance DEDI's learning and comparative advantage.

A three to four day signature annual event will be organised for each of the three priority areas. Two of the three events are organised in Egypt under DEDI's auspices and one event is organised under the auspices of a Danish partner. Themes rotate in such a manner that the annual event in Denmark covers a new priority every year. The objective of the events is to reach out to existing as well as new target groups applying a variety of dialogue and communication methods. The annual events also enhance stakeholder support and public attention to DEDI's role and function. Themes will be identified according to context and opportunities with some ideas being indicated below for illustration.

4.1 Politics and democratization

The Egyptian national context is one of relative political freedom although the process of democratisation is turbulent and characterised by increasing political polarization. The fundamental role of political institutions constitutes a challenge. There is some potential to address the challenges related to Egypt's current reform process relating to freedom, social justice and human dignity through dialogue with and learning from Danish partners experienced in social and political dialogue, including relevant aspects of the Nordic Model. In turn, such dialogue would have dividends for Danish partners and a wider Danish audience in terms of learning about the complex political and social changes in Egypt and discussing challenges of political participation.

DEDI will continue some of its on-going activities under this priority area including development of citizenship through "Democracy Schools" involving Egyptian NGO's and the Danish Institute for Parties and Democracy and exchanges on political campaigning through an Egyptian network involving Youth Wings of political parties, the Danish Youth Council and the Danish Institute for Parties and Democracy. New activities will be identified according to the Principles of engagement in section 5 below and the changing political context in Egypt as outlined above in section 2.

Building on lessons learned from ongoing dialogue activities, a three to four day thematic event will be held once every year rotating between Denmark and Egypt. By way of example, themes may include

‘Youth in politics’, ‘Women in politics’ and ‘Democracy and social inclusion’. Partners may include the Danish Institute for Parties and Democracy and The Danish Youth Council with whom DEDI already has a proven track record of cooperation.

4.2 Culture as a means of participation

Egypt’s new political context has produced a vivid cultural field of identity and expression. There is a relative freedom of cultural expression. The revolution has initiated street art as an open space for expression that rapidly has gained popularity as a tool of expressions on social and political change.

These developments in Egypt are followed with considerable interest in Denmark, including by artists involved in art in the public space in a Danish context and more broadly by members of the public. ‘Culture as a means of participation’ is thus a strategic area with great potential for dialogue between Egyptian and Danish partners, particularly when including art forms with a broad audience and participatory dimension. As a case in point, this was demonstrated by DEDI’s project ‘Arts & Culture in public space: Copenhagen workshop’ where Egyptian and Danish street artists and urban planners worked together in 2013. Similarly, DEDI’s ‘Athar-lina project’ reclaims monuments of Islamic Cairo through participation of its residents and cultural heritage stakeholders in a series of workshops and debates.

DEDI will continue some of its ongoing activities under this priority area, including ‘Art & Culture in Public Spaces’ organised jointly with the Danish Agency for Culture, and the Danish Centre for Culture and Development (DCCD). New activities will be identified according to the ‘Principles of engagement’ in section 5 below. Building on lessons learned, a three to four day thematic event will be held once during the three-year strategy period. As an example, an event on ‘Women artists in contemporary culture’ would render close collaboration relevant with CKU as well as KVINFO.

4.3 Media in an open society

The dynamics of the democratization process invites for numerous dialogue activities in relation to Egyptian media. It therefore provides DEDI with the opportunity to facilitate dialogue between members of the press on important topics. DEDI’s media activities have been important for Egypt’s public in relation to the transition. They have been carried out in cooperation with partners such as IMS, Danicom and Update (part of the Danish School of Journalism). Examples include a project on ‘Video Journalism’ involving Danish and Egyptian partners and DEDI Media Club engaged in media dialogue in Egypt.

DEDI will continue some of its ongoing activities under this priority area including press trips to Egypt and Denmark as well as content exchanges with cutting edge content producers. New activities are identified according to the principles of engagement outlined in section 5 below. Building on lessons learned, a three to four day thematic event will be held once during the three-year strategy period in collaboration with DAPP media partners IMS, Danicom and Update. ‘Documentary filmmaking’ and ‘Investigative journalism’ may be considered as themes for an annual event.

5. Criteria for engagement

DEDI is guided by the following criteria for engagement taking their point of departure from DEDI’s overall mandate and objectives when identifying new dialogue activities:

- A. Match DEDI’s comparative advantage emanating from its mandated competencies (i.e. ability as an intergovernmental body to work with a variety of governmental and nongovernmental partners, established network in Egypt and Denmark, presence in Cairo, assess partners and

scope for application of DEDI's dialogue approach, facilitate dialogue, establish platforms and disseminate lessons learned on dialogue methods)

- B. Involve Egyptian-Danish partnerships and cooperation types in at least one of the three strategy areas of politics, culture and media
- C. Involve strong dialogue elements as outlined in the strategy's immediate objectives (platform establishment, joint partner activities and dissemination of dialogue expertise)
- D. Engage partners with relevant expertise and compliance with dialogue requirements for mutual respect, equality and balance in distribution of roles and responsibilities
- E. Include outreach elements to reach broad and diverse sections of Egyptian and Danish society
- F. Integrate external communication in all activities, including considerations on community links and use of social media

Each new proposed intervention is assessed according to the above principles. A two-page assessment summary is submitted to the Board when asking for approval to start the activity as per the format in Attachments 3 of this document.

The above principles also apply for DEDI's engagement as a dialogue facilitator for partners and activities under DAPP.

6. Organisation

DEDI's status as an intergovernmental institute is reflected in its governance structure comprised of an Executive Board with six members, three representing Egypt and three representing Denmark.

6.1 Board

The six members of the Board are appointed by their respective Ministers for Foreign Affairs from amongst public figures with reputable backgrounds, intellectual standing and with known interests in promoting relations and dialogue between Denmark and Egypt.

Chairmanship of the Board rotates between Egypt and Denmark every two years.

The Board meets 2-3 times a year and adopts the strategy and overall guidelines for DEDI's activities, including annual work plans and budgets. Progress reports update the Board on implementation of work plans and activities in preparation of the Board meetings, in turn allowing the Board to focus its meetings on future activities and strategic priorities.

The Board appoints a Director of the Institute in charge of management of activities and human resources of the institute and reporting on delivery of results against set outcomes and outputs in annual work plans.

6.2 Institute

DEDI has its permanent location in Cairo and offers an open platform for Danish and Egyptian partners in the priority areas of dialogue on politics, culture and media. Comparative advantages emanating from this location include opportunities to offer guest use of the office premises, advice on dialogue methodologies and provision of contacts to Egyptian and Danish stakeholders.

Staffing of the Institute is tailored to serve DEDI's mandate. It reflects dialogue expertise and relevant communication competencies as well as the three priority areas identified in the strategy of the institute. Furthermore, staffing reflects the ambition to promote Danish-Egyptian dialogue activities flowing from that strategy as well as administrative and dialogue-specific support to facilitate joint activities with DAPP partners benefitting from DEDI's location in Cairo.

Strategy implications for the organisational set-up of DEDI is reflected below:

- Director
- Finance and Administration
- Programme Units
 - *Politics and Democratization*
 - *Culture as a means of Participation*
 - *Media in an Open Society*
- Communication Unit

7. Planning, monitoring and evaluation

DEDI submits annual work plans and presentation of new activities to the Board for approval using tailor-made formats (Attachments 1 and 3 of this document).

Progress of activities will be tracked by DEDI's monitoring system. Monitoring indicators for each activity will be developed to match the three priority areas of politics, culture and media. Indicators include inter alia measurable details such as number and types of participants in events, coverage of interventions in media reaching priority target groups and number of users of website dialogue events and dialogue coverage.

Based on progress monitoring results, DEDI submits progress reports to the Board using a tailor-made DEDI format designed to facilitate easy overview of progress on outputs and outcomes and issues requiring discussion by members of the Board (Attachment 2).

Synthesising the progress reports, an Annual Progress Report is produced for the Board.

The Annual Progress Report forms the basis of a shorter Annual Report for the general public focusing on a new topic every year. By way of example, the annual report for the general public could feature progress on gender equality activities of DEDI in the given year.

A mid-term review of the present DEDI strategy will be undertaken during the second half of 2015, separate from DANIDA's regular review. The review will include feedback from partners, assess outputs at project and programme level as well as the overall indicators of success mentioned above under section 3 on Overall and Immediate Objectives and present the results of DEDI's work in a conference.

Attachment 1: DEDI Annual Work Plan

The work plan has a section for each of the three priority areas and one for DEDI's communication and dialogue excellence activities respectively, in total five sections, each following the format below.

Summary narrative (max 300 words): activity portfolio of priority area, compliance with overall DEDI strategy and objectives, synergy of DEDI and DAPP activities.

Name of activity	
Activity description	<i>Narrative (max. 50 words)</i>
Partners	<i>Two or more partners</i>
Budget	<i>EGP/DKK</i>
Duration	<i>Year and month of start and end</i>
Strategy compliance	<i>Narrative (max 30 words)</i>
Progress indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Output indicators (max 3)</i> ▪ <i>Outcome indicators (max 2)</i>
Outputs end of year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Output 1 (narrative max 20 words)</i> ▪ <i>Output 2</i> ▪ <i>Output 3</i>
Outcomes end of activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Outcome 1 (narrative max 30-50 words)</i> ▪ <i>Outcome 2</i>
Implementation milestones	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Progress milestones presented in a spread sheet including timing and duration of inputs and outputs (e.g. seminar held) deliverables (e.g. seminar report, consultancy report)</i>
Human resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Lead staff</i> ▪ <i>Other staff</i> ▪ <i>Short term consultants</i>
Comments	<i>Any additional information required to put progress into perspective</i>

Attachment 2: DEDI - format for reporting to Board

Following up on the discussions at the Board Meeting of DEDI on 31st January 2013 below is a proposed format for reporting to the Board.

The purpose of the format is to facilitate an easy overview of completed as well as ongoing activities. The format also enables clear indications to Board Members on the type of feedback desired (approval, ideas for concept development, update on progress or status of a decision taken at a previous meeting).

	Information for the Board
1. Title and description	<i>Title of activity and brief narrative (max 30 words)</i>
2. Partners	<i>Names of Danish and Egyptian partners</i>
3. Budget	<i>Total amount and expenditure to date in DKK/EGP</i>
4. Duration	<i>Year and month of start and end</i>
5. Strategy compliance	<i>Priority area of DEDI strategy</i>
6. Board decision	<i>Date of Board meetings and comments (if any)</i>
7. Objectives	<i>Immediate objective of DEDI Strategy</i>
8. Output	<i>Output indicators of activity</i>
9. Outcome	<i>Outcome indicator of activity</i>
10. Comments	<i>Desired feedback from Board (for information, for approval, for comments and discussion and input of ideas)</i>

Attachment 3: DEDI – format for Board presentation of new activities

Each new proposed activity is documented in a two-page assessment summary (max 1000 words). The assessment will be based on the principles of engagement in Section 5 ‘Principles of engagement’ above. The two-page assessment summary will be submitted to the Board for approval.

Name of activity	
Introduction (100 words)	<i>Brief narrative presenting the activity</i>
Budget	<i>EGP/DKK</i>
Duration	<i>Year and month of start and end</i>
Background (150)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Brief history and context</i> ▪ <i>How this activity was identified</i>
Rationale (200)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Overall strategy compliance</i> ▪ <i>Synergy with existing activities</i> ▪ <i>How the activity matches DEDI’s comparative advantage</i>
Assessment of partners (200 words)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Overall justification for choice of partners</i> ▪ <i>Expertise and capacity of partners</i> ▪ <i>Compliance with dialogue requirements</i>
Partnership arrangement (100 words)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Description of the Danish-Egyptian governance and partnership arrangement</i>
Outcomes (100 words)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>1-2 outcomes</i> ▪ <i>Outcome indicators</i>
Implementation (150 words or chart)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Implementation plan with outputs and milestones</i>