

Al-Makhzan Village Development Project in Qena Governorate. A Robust Example of Egyptian – Kuwaiti Collaborations in Action

Cairo, Thursday, November 13th, 2014

The EFG Hermes Foundation signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Kuwaiti Initiative Group for the Support of the Egyptian People today, as part of the continued joint efforts towards sustainable development. The memorandum endorses the strong ties between Egypt and Kuwait, and embodies an agreement to finance the integrated developmental project of the village of Al-Makhzan, located in Koos Center in the Governorate of Qena. This agreement exemplifies the resilient and continued social development role played by the private sector and its goal is to find solutions for challenges with infrastructures, poverty, education, food safety, and unemployment and sewage issues in the village.

The signing ceremony took place at the Four Seasons Nile Plaza Hotel and was attended by HE Dr. Ghada Wali, Minister of Social Solidarity. On behalf of the Egyptian government, Dr. Wali thanked the people and the government of Kuwait for their continued support of Egypt. She highlighted the importance of the project as a model case of cooperation between the two nations, and stressed on the fact that it is a prosperous developmental partnership between the private and public sectors that must be replicated. Dr. Ghali promised to provide all the support needed to allow similar Arab-driven social development projects in Egypt, which have proven their success over the past years within several collaborations with Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

Dr. Ghali emphasized the importance of this development project in Al-Makhzan Village in Qena Governorate and spoke of the success of previous developments, the likes of the project that was undertaken at Ezbet Al-Sheikh Yaaqoob in Bani Suwaif.

On her part, the Non-Executive Chairperson of EFG Hermes and Chairperson of the EFG Hermes Foundation; Mona Zulficar expressed the deep interest of the EFG Hermes to continue – through such exemplary development projects – to actualize and endorse the concept of sustainable development in Egypt along three dimensions; economic development, social advancement and the preservation of the environment. On the topic, Mrs. Zulficar said, “The Foundation, by carrying out field studies, seeks to identify the real needs to help develop the less privileged parts of Egypt. By fighting poverty and improving healthcare services, education, housing, and water and sewage systems, in addition to funding small enterprises that can create job opportunities for Egyptian youth.” Zulficar explains, “It is necessary to spread awareness about the necessity of adopting a new philosophy in development work in Egypt; one that merges between social and developmental perspectives. These projects face huge challenges that cannot be confronted by donations and grants alone, but through the implementation of carefully studied and laid out plans targeted towards sustainable development.”

On her part, Mrs. Adla Mussaed El-Sayer; Head of the Kuwaiti Initiative Group for the Support of the Egyptian People, affirmed, “The historic ties binding Egypt and Kuwait span political, social, economic and cultural arenas.” El-Sayer revealed that members of the Kuwaiti initiative have provided 276 thousand Kuwaiti Dinars (approximately 7 million Egyptian Pounds) in donations from the Kuwaiti people to cover the costs of the project,

which has been carefully planned by experts and consultants in accordance with specific scientific standards, including a study of the local community and the degree of basic needs within that group.

Hanaa Helmy, Chief Executive Officer of the EFG Hermes Foundation commented on the topic saying, “Since its initiation, this project has embodied transparency in all aspects, including the planning and future execution plans, with the simultaneous implementation of the principles of sustainable development taking place.” Mrs. Helmy further explains, “EFG Foundation and the members of the Kuwaiti Initiative for the Support of the Egyptian People have together presented a comprehensive field study for the Al-Makhzan Village in the small town of Koos in Qena Governorate. This nine month study was undertaken by consultants and technical experts who provided a detailed feasibility study in order to come to terms with the actual and basic needs of the residents and which has revealed that the number of those living under the line of poverty has reached 80% of the population of Koos.”

The detailed development project in Al-Makhzan in Koos Center in Qena Governorate shows how it eyes multiple dimensions, including housing, health, education and food supply. Accordingly, the project will undertake the construction and renovation of 362 houses, and a new school over an area of 400 square meters. The project also entails provisions to the existing school including furniture, scientific apparatuses and laboratory requirements, as well as maintenance work, renovations and the construction of a new bakery.

Al-Makhzan Village development project represents an extension of the vision of EFG Hermes Foundation for Social Development, which aims to combat poverty through sustained development in the villages and rural areas of Egypt. The vision is based on diversity and does not focus solely on one sector such as education or health. Rather, it aims to rehabilitate society as a whole, including infrastructures, human development and the entire economy. This vision has been exemplified in the reconstruction and development project held in Ezbet Yaaqoob in Bani Suwaif Governorate, where the Group supervised the reconstruction and improvement of 450 houses, the construction of a water treatment plant and the development of a service center that includes a clinic, a nursery, a bakery, a training facility and a dairy milk factory, all at the cost of 27 million Egyptian Pounds. This project was inaugurated in 2010.

In that respect, EFG Hermes donated 50 million Egyptian Pounds earlier in the year to the EFG Hermes Foundation to endorse its efforts to support the development of several villages in the more poverty-stricken areas of Upper Egypt. The funds are to be distributed starting 2015 in accordance with the laid out executive plan. The projects are expected to serve and benefit more than 30 thousand Egyptians.

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About EFG Hermes Foundation

As part of its social responsibility towards the communities in which it operates, EFG Hermes established the EFG Hermes Foundation in 2006. The EFG-Hermes Foundation is an independent, non-profit, non-governmental organization. Its mission is to assist people and institutions overcome the financial, educational and health-related challenges facing our society.

The Foundation aims to support innovative and sustainable programs that increase the opportunities for those most in need to make a positive change in our local communities.

The EFG Hermes Foundation's mainly focuses on healthcare and poverty alleviation in Egypt by helping combating widespread diseases and supporting development initiatives in the housing, water, sanitation, and income generation areas. Other program interests include issues related to education, the environment, gender equality, employment, children rights, youth development, and microfinance.

Since its launch, the Foundation has played a significant role in the development of the society by working with reputable institutions and NGOs on several projects including and not limited to: Unite for Children: Street Children Initiative; Youth Sustainability and Viability Fund; The Paper Recycling and Graphics Center; Nazlet Hussein Housing Project in Menya; Bani Khaled Water and Latrine Facilities in Menya; Hepatitis C Awareness and Combat; Hepatitis B Vaccination campaign for college students; Microfinance; Medical Convoys; School Feeding Program; Community Center for Art for Development; Poverty Alleviation of Ezbet Yacoub in Beni Sweif; Support Children with Cerebral Palsy and the Student in Free Enterprise (SIFE).

About EFG Hermes

Established in 1984, EFG Hermes, the leading investment bank in the Arab world, draws on 30 years of experience to serve as the preeminent investment bank in the region to provide a comprehensive spectrum of financial services including Investment Banking, Asset Management, Securities Brokerage, Research and Private Equity. Additionally, EFG Hermes owns a 63.7% majority stake in the Lebanese commercial bank Crédit Libanais.

Through its operations in Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the UAE, with more than 800 employees of 25 nationalities, EFG Hermes serves a considerable and diversified client base from the Middle East and North Africa to Europe, Africa and the United States. Our clients include governments, corporations, financial institutions, high net worth clients and individual customers.

The Kuwaiti Initiative to support the Egyptian people in collaboration with the Kuwaiti Red Crescent Society

The initiative to support the Egyptian people has been launched at the beginning of July 2013 at a time coinciding with the holy month of Ramadan and in cooperation with the Kuwaiti Red Crescent Society. It is the outcome of a popular civic movement spearheaded by Kuwaiti men and women who are eager to extend a helping hand to the Egyptian people in view of the critical times facing Egyptians.

The vision of the Kuwaiti initiative can be summed as an offer of financial support to vulnerable and abstinent Egyptian families, as well as individuals throughout Egypt.

For further information about EFG Hermes, please visit www.efghermes.com and stay connected with us

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Note on Forward-Looking Statements

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