

Mega Projects on Egypt's Horizon

By: Rania Al-Maghraby, PMP, OPM3

Project Management Consultant, OneWayForward Inc., Egypt

<http://www.OneWayForward.com>

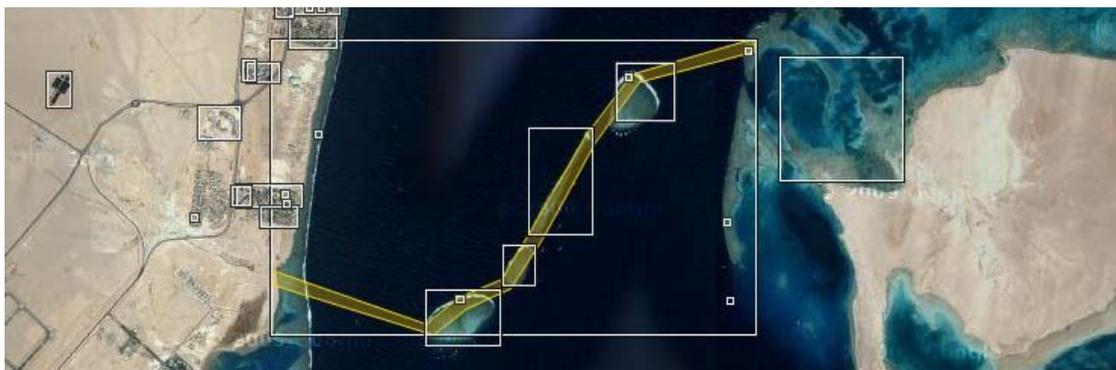
Since my young age, when I started to realize the surroundings and recognize the world around consciously, I have always been wondering how a country like Egypt can be poor or needy or underdeveloped?! A country possessing a rich and generous supply of all kinds of resources: human resources (with a population now around 90 million), natural resources (the Nile, moderate temperature all year long, soil, minerals, seas), historical reserve, strategic location, regional leadership, ... what else? The list goes long. Given that fact, the undeserved demoted situation in which Egypt exists is very questionable. The problem was definitely with the leadership and management system.

Leadership problems can derail any kind of organization, including a country large organization. When the leadership was lacking vision of the future, careless, showy, and selfish, that opened the doors for endless list of forms of corruption. The result is a stolen economy, lost and depressed people, and lack of control on the future.

Our new Egypt has on its agenda a number of brilliant projects that were dismissed deliberately during the "thieves' era". Such projects are promising to take the whole country to new levels, and they are actually receiving a fair deal of attention and dedication at the current time. The following is a short description of some of these mega projects.

1) Egypt - Saudi Arabia Bridge:

A project that was supposed to be inaugurated back in 2007, but was unexpectedly cancelled without explanation, despite the offered funds from the Saudi side. The bridge is planned to be the shortest land line link between Egypt and Saudi Arabia, crossing the narrowest point in the Red Sea in between of the two countries, supported by islands on the way.



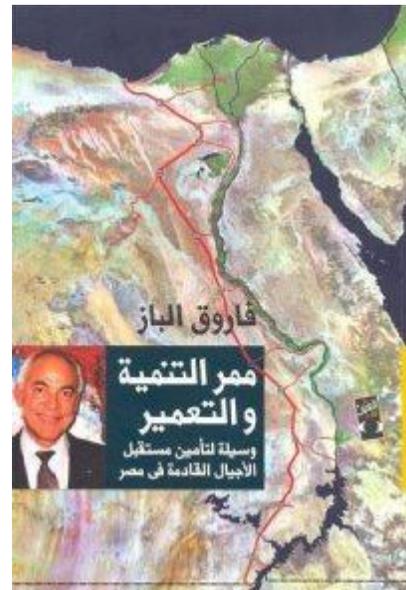
This is promising huge savings in transportation time and effort, both for passengers travelling between the two countries (with a very high volume and rate), and for trade transportation. This project is said to be delayed for many years, and really needlessly.

The economic returns from this project are putting it on top priorities, and it is surfacing back again on discussion tables to be taken ahead; what a much awaited step!

2) Western Desert New Axis Project:

The Egyptian geology scientist Dr. Farouk EL-BAZ, Research Professor and Director of the Center for Remote Sensing at Boston University, USA, has proposed a geography reformation project in order to help spreading the condense around the Nile valley. More than 90% of Egypt's population are living around the slim strip of the Nile valley and its delta, leaving the wide margin of the eastern and western deserts on both sides unutilized.

The idea of this project is to construct a new axis, extending from Nasser lake at south of Egypt, to the Mediterranean sea in the north, by building a high transportation way, railroad, electricity stations, multiple horizontal connections with the original valley, and water pipe transferring water from Nasser lake all along the axis.



This aims at utilizing the wide unused area of Egypt land, in order to help alleviate the pains of the condensed density of population, like competition for resources, lack of self sufficiency abilities with the limited use of land resources, crowding and transportation loads, and many other troubles coming from this concentration around a narrow strip.

Can you imagine Egypt's map after this project? A totally new one!

3) Nuclear Power Plants:

How many times did we hear about plans for establishing nuclear power generation plants in Egypt? There were actually humble trials to actuate such plans, but they never seriously showed tangible results. These plans are being revisited in our new era to be put into action so that the nuclear plants are actually operated. They are expected to be used in electricity generation to rectify the repetitive shortage and cuts, in addition to other manufacturing and development purposes.

4) Egypt Space Program:

Egypt had an ambitious program for space scientific activities. This was started 10's of years ago by establishing local space authorities to take care of managing the series of space projects to put Egypt on the space map. Some steps have been taken by launching local satellites, accompanied and followed by big training programs in which Egyptian engineers appointed for the space program were sent overseas in order to help Egyptian satellites to be manufactured locally as an early step in diving deeper in the space field.

Many of these activities have been stalled, partly due to funding issues, and partly due to careless and inattentive behavior of those supervising the program. No discussions have been raised recently about this program after the country's transformation, but it's expected to take its turn on the agenda after more stressing concerns are addressed.

5) A High Dam sibling?

Egypt's High Dam in the south at the beginning of the Nile path in the country is a very famous building. It's there to keep the Nile water behind in the Nasser artificial lake when the Nile level increases to prevent floods, and to use the lake's reserve in case of water shortages if the Nile's water level is low.

A great idea was lately proposed by Egyptian engineers to construct another dam behind the High Dam, amidst Nasser lake, to help in many aspects: connecting the eastern and western deserts at the two sides of the Nile. This could help inhabitation of the currently abandoned desert wide space, enabling agricultural projects in the south of Egypt, making easier trade and transportation with Sudan, generating more electricity, lowering water evaporation rates from Nasser lake, ... and many other benefits that engineers are expecting.

6) Sinai Development Projects:

A myriad of projects are on the table for Sinai. The main activities in Sinai are focusing on its touristic attraction; this has been in many cases at the expense of development of life style of the local citizens themselves. This outbalance is definitely causing a lot of depression and lack of satisfaction for the local Bedouin citizens. This is significantly changing now, and rectification projects for Sinai development, with many aspects of civil and services projects, are now on the plan.

These are just examples, and the list goes on. We are full of aspiration and optimism; we are keeping patience during the transformation stage, trying to do our part as individual gears running a bigger machine, so that we all reach the aspired destination. This is so that this country realizes its full potential and takes its deserved position.

About the Author



Rania Al-Maghraby

Author



Ms. Rania Al-Maghraby is an independent management consultant from Egypt. She is PMP[®] certified, ITIL[®] Foundation certified, MSc Computer Science, and a certified OPM3[®] Consultant and Assessor. Rania is the owner and general manager of the OneWayForward Inc. (www.OneWayForward.com), a sole proprietary consultation firm based in Egypt. She is a speaker at several professional events including PMI Global Congress and IPMA World Congress. She has published a number of papers and articles in wide spread international magazines, journals, conference proceedings, and authored books. Rania has contributed to professional development over years as a member in a number of committees and professional organizations. She has worked across local and international private sector companies, NPOs, and governmental organizations of various industries. Her interests include Project Management, Open Standards, Business Administration, and Academic Research. Personal Website: www.OneWayForward.info. She can be contacted at rania@onewayforward.info.