

Partnerships and connections between activities in Denmark and in Egypt

1. Background

In recent years CISU has had an increasing focus on the importance of communication as an integral part of North-South partnerships and projects. In a recent CISU position paper a central argument is that interventions in "the North" may be at least as important in fighting poverty globally as interventions in "the South". These interventions can take different forms, where communication in Denmark is a central activity that many organisations are undertaking already.

CISU wants to continue exploring opportunities to discuss and support members in further qualifying their communication work and other interventions in Denmark based on their partnerships and projects.

In the position paper CISU raises the argument, that meaningful interventions in Denmark – enriched by experiences from a partnership with southern based organisations - can take many forms. On this trip our aim has been to explore this statement further – through visits and interviews with as well Egyptian and Danish partners about possible synergies in their work.

2. Objective

The purpose of the visit has been to explore the partnerships and connections between activities in Denmark and in Egypt. A main focus has been be on communication but other forms of connections has been explored as well.

3. Observations on thematic issues

Synergi between activities in Denmark and Egypt

In Egypt we met with 5 different organizations with 5 different Danish partners. The organizations differed a lot in as well scope and strategy as well as in the kind of relationship, they had with their Danish partner.

Revolution Records – Rapolitics

Revolution Records is a record label (as well as a band) in Alexandria. They have a studio where bands from all over Alexandria can rehearse and record music. Furthermore they do different kinds of workshops – both in relation to the technical aspects of playing an instrument as well as workshops focusing on how to express yourself through rap and hip-hop lyrics.

Rapolitics is an organization who works with youth empowerment through rap (raptivism), dialogue & democratic awareness-raising. They work to equip youth with skills to express themselves artistically and act on the challenges they face in their lives. Through exchange visits, common activities, music and graffiti, they make youth from different countries inspire each other on how to address social challenges through arts and in this way take social responsibility.



To Revolution Records the partnership is very inspiring and has helped them a lot in order to establish the studio, learn how to do workshops and develop their ability to engage young people in expressing themselves through rap.

To Revolution Records it is crucial that Rapolitics is doing similar activities in Denmark. Rapolitics share experiences from their own work in Denmark, and this is what helps Revolution Records to move forward. Despite very different contexts, the partners have a shared agenda and strategy (empowering youth through hip hop). They have visited each other several times and have performed and held workshops in each others' countries. Revolution Records have told Danish youth about conditions in Egypt, and Rapolitics have engaged with Egyptian youths. The visits and exchanges have been very rewarding in several ways, raising questions (why are they supporting us at all), inspiring (to make workshops for other youth) as well as encouraging for both organizations in relation to the work that they do.

It is Rapolitics' own work in Denmark, which has inspired Revolution Records to do much more with their music than before, to include social activities and engagement of others in their outreach instead of "only" performing political statements with their band. Revolution Records on the other hand has inspired Danish youth (went on a tour on 4 different folk high schools) to see, that even in a setting with strict political limitations and many social challenges, young people can make a difference and fight for changing the state of things. Revolution Records have undergone a change in mindset, as they have realized that the 'revolution' is not only about changing the power at the top. A social change and a change of mentality also has to take place. This change cannot be solely linked to the exchange but the exchange is certainly a contributing factor in the general change of mentality.

Tadwein – Womans Council (Kvinderådet)

Tadwein is a small and newly established NGO working with data and statistics to support the case of fighting gender based violence. The founder has a long experience within the UN system and was co-founder of another initiative called "Harrassmap", which documented assaults on women during the Egyptian revolution. Tadwein want to make campaigns and evidence based advocacy as well as being a resource organization to other NGOs working with the same issues providing them with understandable graphics and statistics on the subject. In addition to fighting physical gender based violence in domestic and public spheres they have gathered information and started a campaign about online-behavior .

Women's Council in Denmark is a platform for organizations working with women's issues and gender equality – in Denmark as well as abroad. They do mainly political work and advocacy as well as being a resource base for organizations working with gender issues.

The partnership between Tadwein and Womans Council is less than a year old, so it is still young, and most communication has been about administrative issues so far. However Women's Council is quite inspired by Tadweins work with an upcoming database of violence related projects in Egypt as they have provided feedback on methods and surveys in relation to the work with the database. At the same time Tadwein describes how the partnership so far has been an eye opener in order to realize that Danish women face some of the same challenges as Egyptian women – although on a much lesser scale. Fx. allegations on rape being their own fault, when reported to the police.

CEWLA – Danner stiftelsen

CEWLA is a 20 year old organization with approximately 20 employees working with women's rights and legal issues. They specifically work with issues of violence against women, women's legal rights and documents, Sexual and reproductive health issues and political participation. They work actively to include as well government officials, religious



leaders, media, social workers and lawyers in their work. They also have a counselling

unit. Their current partnership with Danner stiftelsen centers around awareness raising on domestic violence and to facilitate exchange of experiences on how to involve religious leaders in the effort to combat domestic violence.

Danner stiftelsen is a Danish organisation working with issues of violence against women for more than 35 years. Danner has 38 employees and 200 volunteers. They run a shelter for women affected by domestic violence, and work with documentation and advocacy concerning domestic violence.

The partnership between CEWLA and Danner is less than a year old as well. Still CEWLA expressed great content with the exchange of experiences in the partnership. Danner sends them videos and updates on what they are doing. Recently Danner and CEWLA arranged a conference with participants from Denmark, Egypt, South Africa and Lebanon. At the conference Danner told about their history and many activities in Denmark. Both partners learned a lot from the participation of a Danish-Pakistani Imam who told about how to combat violence using text from the Koran. In this way CEWLA has been inspired by Danner's way of working with religious leaders debating issues of religion and how you can use specific religious texts to argue against violence instead of only focussing on specific, individual cases of violence.

For Egyptian organizations like CEWLA the international cooperation also has an importance in local advocacy. They can use international pressure nationally. Especially the term 'international shaming' came up.

Danner on the other hand is learning about Islam and religion from CEWLA as well as being inspired by the way CEWLA works with advocacy on an international level and look forward to share more experiences on this.

Plan Denmark/Plan Egypt – CDA El Nour and CDA Kamal Ramzy

Plan International has been present in Egypt for 35 years through Plan Egypt. Plan Egypt has around 200 employees and works – among many other things – with youth and empowerment. Plan Egypt is currently implementing several CISU projects with Plan Denmark – all of them focusing on enhancing the democratic space and recognition for young people in slum areas of Cairo and Alexandria.

The projects are specifically focusing on local CDA's (=CBO's) and how to include youth in the management and decision making structures here. A part of this is exchange visits, where youth living in poor neighborhoods in Egypt, Denmark and Kenya (where Plan DK works as well) meet and exchange experiences. An exchange visit from Egypt to Denmark and from Egypt to Kenya has already taken place. Return visits are to take place soon.

Plan Denmark has as its specific focus to work for more child- and youth friendly cities through means of youth empowerment, governance and democratic space. Besides activities in Kenya, Bangladesh and Egypt, Plan Denmark has recently agreed with Plan International, that they can start implementing activities in Denmark as well. They are already including marginalized Danish youth in exchange visits with Kenya and Egypt, and have been doing development education activities in schools, but the possibilities of interventions in Denmark will be further explored in the near future. Plan Denmark sees these interventions as important due to the fact, that it gives them more legitimacy as an organisation that they also address issues of youth in slum areas in Denmark. Projects so far have focused on helping youth organize themselves in order to fundraise and implement projects in their neighborhood.

However, Plan Denmark also stresses, that their overall legitimacy as an organisation is based on other things as well, among these their professional capabilities within areas of urban governance as well as Plan Internationals over 1 mio. people membership base. We met with youth groups in two CDA's. Both of them very enthusiastic about the possibility to be trained and do activities for their communities as well as having their own (physical) space to use. One of the groups had been to Kenya. They told us how, on one hand, how inspiring it was to see, what the Kenyans could do with much less resources than Egyptian youth, and on the other hand how the political space in Kenya was much wider!

CEOSS - Danmission

CEOSS is a 65 year old coptic evangelical organization with 750 employees. It is clearly divided in two parts: A church and a development department, the development department having a broad target group (meaning not only Christians). CEOSS covers a range of community development programmes as well as a Forum for Interreligious Dialogue (FiD).

The FiD facilitates different dialogues between target groups such as Christians and Muslims, Egyptians and Danes and Arabs and Europeans. We met with participants who had participated in different forums. All of them - Christians as well as Muslims, women as well as men - were very enthusiastic about the dialogue forums and the value of them. Both in relation to prevention of interreligious violence in Egypt, but also in relation to cases and crisis' such as the Mohammed cartoons as well as overall interreligious understanding (where some of the forums, revealed as much diversity among the European and Arabic participants themselves as between the European and Arabic groups). We met a wide range of staff at CEOSS and it seemed that there was an interest and knowledge of the situation in Denmark. An example of this came when we asked how CEOSS can contribute in Denmark. General director Dr Andrea Zaki Stephanous demonstrated a knowledge of Danish problems of inclusion - The fact that he used the term 'inclusion' instead of the in Denmark widely used term 'integration' goes to show that there is learning to be done from Denmark. (Perhaps we need to think more in the form of inclusion and not integration).

Danmission is a 150 year old Christian organisation encompassing both missionary work and development of churches, as well as poverty reduction, dialogue and conflict mediation - in Denmark as well as abroad.

Danmission has been partner with CEOSS for almost 25 years and support them in both dialogue forums as well as community development programmes. In Denmark Danmission works with dialogue between Christians and Muslims, they have a meeting place for refugees and immigrants and they do a lot of information work and fundraising through concepts such as "Global storytellers", "Konfirmand Aktion", as well as speeches and fundraising events in different settings. Danish Christians and Muslims are involved directly in some of the international dialogue activities such as the Leaders for Interreligious Understanding (LIU - Egypt, Lebanon, Syria and Denmark). However it does not seem that the purely Danish dialogue activities are linked to the international experiences internally in Danmission.

Observations regarding synergy between activities in Denmark and Egypt

From terms:

- How can activities in general (including communication) in Egypt benefit activities in Denmark?
- How can activities in general (including communication) in Denmark benefit activities in Egypt?

Direct Egypt-Danish synergies

For Rapolitics and Revolutions Records the visits from the Egyptian rappers to Danish folk high schools have played a very important part in learning Danish youth about the transforming potentials of expressing yourself through arts, in this case rap lyrics. The inspiration from youth - not that different from themselves but living in a very different social and political context - was a very inspiring and motivating factor for Danish youth to look at their own situation with different eyes. On the other hand Rapolitics being rappers themselves working with youth in Denmark, has had a huge impact on Revolution Records, learning them how to workshops, as well as inspiring them to take their rap beyond the artistic expression to also include activities, that are actively addressing social issues and solidarity.

For Womens Council and Tadwein as well as Danner stiftelsen and CEWLA it is clear that these organisations working with similar issues of gender based violence in Egypt as well as in Denmark give the partnerships a very strong relevance which allows for professional discussions and inputs on an equal level. Even though the situation in the two countries is different, it seemed that the partners have been surprised about how many experiences *are* actually useful and relevant for both countries, fx. womens experience with reporting violence, constructive ways of working with religious leaders - as well as a potential need for Egyptian inputs on how to work with sensitisation in relation to gender equality with Arabic men in Denmark due to the many new refugees coming in.

International synergies - including Egypt and Denmark

For Plan Denmark, Plan International and Plan Egypt, what springs to mind is the strong enthusiasm and outcome of the youth exchange visits as well as Plan Denmark's over all experience with youth participation and empowerment processes. The power of connecting youth - and experiences - from different countries appear very strongly and currently PLAN Denmark is trying to reinforce this through an upcoming virtual platform, so the connections and exchange of experience also can happen online. However to the egyptian partners - Plan Egypt as well as the local CBO's - it was not evident that the presence of exactly *Danish* youth made a big difference. The importance here seemed to be the concept of exchanging experiences with other countries - either directly through the youth themselves or indirectly through employees of Plan Denmark and Plan Egypt accordingly.

Overall it seems that Egyptian youth have gained experience and reflections from the exchanges on the importance and potentials of as well physical as political space. Perhaps it could be further explored how Danish youth could handle the situation of actually having space but not (being capable of?) using it. How can Danish youths become a more important part of decision-making? Can exchange of ideas and inspiration from Egypt be used?

The partnership between Danmission and CEOSS entails similar considerations. CEOSS employees and FiD participants were very enthusiastic about exchange of experiences and dialogue on an international level, but whether this was markedly improved be



specifically Danish attendance was not that clear. However for Danmission (as well as PLAN Denmark) it makes of course a lot of sense to include religious leaders and youth from Denmark, addressing the same issues.

Observations regarding communication.

From terms:

- How can the Egyptian partners contribute to the communication in Denmark – in a way that is meaningful to the Egyptian partners as well?
- How are the Egyptian partners and stake-holders represented in the communication and story-telling?

The different organizations have highly differing external communication – not least due to the fact, that their motives for communicating differ. It is, however, also evident that the organizations to some degree all share a wish to do 'oplysning' a Danish term that can be translated to 'educative communication'.

In educative communication the personal relation is paramount and this is where a strong partnership can be of great value. Some of the Egyptian partners have taken part in communication in Denmark – most apparent through specific projects or campaigns. There seems to be little in the way of sharing day-to-day. This also stems from a communication paradox: The best story-telling is usually based on stories with something surprising – and how do you set up an automatic system of surprises?

Also, stories with strong identification are stories with value based messages. They are difficult to 'harvest' in a system.

That being said, we can see stories being shared and while Rapolitics seem to have a functioning non-forced system of story-telling others have worked out systems of automatic sharing. It is also worth noting PLAN's explorations into using social media and story-sharing. Both as a tool for local advocacy and for sharing stories globally.

When it comes to ordinary external communication it is worth noting that the Egyptian organizations are highly skilled and have an almost intuitive touch – especially when it comes to engaging with the local public. Without dealing with advanced communication plans they seem to find a fitting response to communicative needs.

Conclusions and future perspectives and potentials

It is indeed very rewarding to link experiences from different countries. All partners visited confirmed that. However it was also clear that networks and exchange visits between partners outside of Denmark has great value in itself without necessarily including a Danish perspective or Danish participants. Still, we will claim, that working with similar issues in Denmark as in the partner countries allows for a more equal and legitimate partnerships with relevant inputs from both partners re-enforcing each others' work.

There is a chance that this will become even more relevant as the process of implementing the new Global Goals will unfold focusing on issues in as well Denmark (and the rest of the western/more wealthy world) as in poorer countries. Under this framework, Danish development organisations in general (and not the ones discussed in this report specifically) might be encouraged to question their current scope of work and whether they can adjust activities - abroad and/or in Denmark - so they contribute as much as possible to the fulfillment of the Goals.

In relation to communication, it seems there is potential in developing methods of sharing stories and voices – whether as narratives or facts to be used in a Danish context



– as well as more actively sharing Danish stories and perspectives with Egyptian partners. CISU will look into this potential and implement the findings of this trip in courses and material in upcoming trainings and workshops.

One way of developing more stories could be working with value based story-telling. CISU will continue the work on a story activation tool that has been released on the CISU webpage recently. Another could be using the multimedia tools PLAN are working on.

One recurrent thing, we have been witnessing as successes is, that dialogue is needed (from stories gathered by Danmission to Revolution Records' tour of Denmark or exchanges between youths and women's rights associations). Because of this, dialogue will be an important part of future communication tools and courses.

The findings of this thematic learning visit will also be used in the process of formulating an application for a current EU call on Development Education and Awareness Raising.

Dissemination

This report will be shared internally in CISU and a meeting has already taking place presenting insights from the trip with CISU colleagues. The report will also be shared externally with members through the CISU newsletter and homepage, as well as providing inputs for future trainings and workshops with members.

Annex 1 - Itinerary

Date	Activity
06.01	Travel Aarhus - Cairo
07.01	Morning: Travel to Alexandria Afternoon: Meeting Revolution Records
08.01	Meeting Revolution Records and other musicians
09.01	Travel Alexandria - Cairo
10.01	DAY OFF
11.01	Meeting Tadwein
12.01	Meeting PLAN Egypt, visiting CDA EL Nour, CDA Kamal Ramzy
13.01	Morning: Meeting CEWLA Afternoon: Meeting Danish- Egyptian Dialogue Institute
14.01	Meeting CEOSS, Visiting the technical housing organization in Shoubra
15.01	Travel Cairo-Aarhus

Annex 2 - People met

Rapolitics	
Revolution Records	Rapper Ahmed Rock Rapper Khalid Khalifa Rapper and sound engineer Rooney Rapper and sound engineer TemRaz
Womens Council	Project Manager Signe Greve Jørgensen
Tadwein	Director Amel Fahmy Communications Officer Jalna Mackintosh
Danner Stiftelsen	Project Manager Katja Gregers Brock
Cewla	Fatma Emam and Nora Mohammad
Plan Denmark	Head of Programs Helle Schierbeck Program Officer Morten Lynge Madsen Program Officer Rasmus Bering Communications Officer Signe Holme
Plan Egypt	Program Area Manager Mohamed Kamal Program Quality and Delivery Manager Ivan Tanku Project Coordinator Ahmed Mahmoud Mohamed Donor Compliance Coordinator - Radwa Tarek Youth and CDA members El Nour Youth and CDA members Kamal Ramzy
Danmission	Manager of Programs Thomas Skielboe Teamleader for fundraising Christina Kofoed-Nielsen
CEOSS	General Director Rev. Andrea Zaki Stephanous Senior Director for Development Ibrahim Makram Vice General Director Momtaz Beshay Director for Dialogue Samira Luka Deputy Manager for Forum Programs Rev. Ramy Nair Director for Development Margrite Saroufim Plus Development Department Team Board members, children and women from Shoubra

Annex 3 – Terms of Reference

Partnerships and connections between activities in Denmark and in Egypt

**Kim Jensen and Maria Molde
06.01-15.01 2016**

1. Background

In recent years CISU has had an ever increasing focus on the importance of communication as an integral part of North-South partnerships and projects. In a recent CISU position paper a central argument is that interventions in “the North” may be at least as important in fighting poverty globally as interventions in “the South”. These interventions can take different forms, where communication in Denmark is a central activity, that many organisations are undertaking already.

CISU wants to continue exploring opportunities to discuss and support members in further qualifying their communication work and other interventions in Denmark based on their partnerships and projects.

In the position paper CISU raises the argument, that communication in Denmark - based on experiences from a partnership with southern based organisations - can take many forms, including:

- Awareness raising in Denmark (and Europe) on living conditions in other countries, global interconnectedness and structural causes of poverty
- Advocacy that links interventions in the North and in the South
- Participation in public debates and other public for a, offering global perspectives on conditions in Denmark, thus enriching debates and civil society generally in the country.

However, these interventions can have many different nuances and other interventions are indeed possible as well. We want to explore these opportunities further by visiting different partners in Egypt as well as discussing possible synergies with both Egyptian and Danish partners.

2. Objective

The purpose of the visit is to explore the partnerships and connections between activities in Denmark and in Egypt. A main focus will be on communication but other forms of connections will be explored as well.

3. Outputs

The thematic visit will lead to the following outputs:

- A report compiling findings and recommendations



4. Thematic issues for the visit

Interventions in Denmark based on partnerships often take the form of communication about the project and partner country. That raises some questions for both parties:

- How can the Egyptian partners contribute to the communication in Denmark – in a way that is meaningful to the Egyptian partners as well?
- How are the Egyptian partners and stake-holders represented in the communication and story-telling?

Furthermore, we want to broaden the scope to include - as well as go beyond - communication and explore:

- How can activities in general (including communication) in Egypt benefit activities in Denmark?
- How can activities in general (including communication) in Denmark benefit activities in Egypt?

5. Stakeholders to be involved in the visit

The journey will include contact and dialogue with the following main stakeholders:

Plan Egypt, El Tadamoun, CDA, Kamal Ramzy, CDA, – *Partners to Plan Denmark*

Revolution Records – *Partner to Rapolitics*

Center for Womens Legal Advice – *Partner to Danner Stiftelsen*

Tadwein – *Partner to Womens Council*

Coptic Evangelical Organization for Social Services – *Partner to Danmission*

6. Plan of work

Before departure, skype or physical meetings will be held with the Danish organisations.

During the visit we will have individual meetings with the above mentioned Egyptian organisations and where relevant meet with target groups and other stakeholders.