

# Erasmus+ Programme

Capacity-Building projects in the field of Higher Education (CBHE)

# **Steering Migration through Sustainable Development: Euro-Egyptian Program for Agriculture and Rural Development (DeVilag)**

- Migration is the movement of people, either within a country or across international borders.
- In 2015, there were 244 million international migrants, representing an increase of 40% since 2000.
- About one-third of all international migrants are aged 15–34. Women account for almost half of all international migrants. A large share of migrants originate from rural areas (FAO, 2016).
- In Egypt, it is very common that rural households report having at least one internal or international migrant.

This proposal focuses on steering the Egyptian migrants from rural areas who target either big cities (Cairo, Alexandria, Port-Said etc.) or other countries (e.g. Italy) as irregular migrants.

there were 30,816 new permits holders for all of Europe and 21,532 for Italy.

As of October 2016, 12,766 migrants had disembarked in Italy from Egypt during 2016. This represents an increase of + 17,5 % over the same period of 2015 (10,856).

A major incident took place in Egyptian waters on the coast of Rasheed on 21 September, with a death toll of at least 178 migrants (Françoise De Bel-Air, 2016).

Egyptian emigrants are most often young men belonging to rural rather than urban areas.

## Specific needs and problems

This proposal aims to tackle needs and problems related to Egyptian villages and challenges facing smallholder farmers.

Lack of technical support: among all the global and local changes in Egypt, smallholder farmers still use old techniques and methods for the agriculture processes. Results of modern research such as new crop varieties that tolerate drought and produce more do not reach farmers.

Rural poverty and food insecurity: **agriculture is becoming an infeasible business** for smallholder family farmers due to high prices of agriculture inputs (fertilizers, labors, services, technologies, and energy) and also because of low productivity and market prices.

Lack of employment and income generating opportunities: Most available jobs in agriculture are associated with low and unstable incomes, poor safety and health conditions, gender inequality in pay and opportunities, and limited social protection.

Climate change and water scarcity: Smallholder family farmers and small-scale fishers are hardest hit by weather related disasters, which are increasing in frequency and intensity. In addition, the water challenges facing the farmers are enormous in terms of quantity and quality.

Integrated *rural development* is in the core of the **Egyptian Vision 2030 for Sustainable Development**. The Egyptian Sustainable Agriculture Development Strategy (SADS 2030) aims at both **‘vertical’ and ‘horizontal’ agricultural development** by increasing productivity in the ‘old lands’ of the Nile Valley and Delta and through improvements in water management systems and irrigation networks (FAO 2017).

The **EU will support the Egyptian government's efforts** to strengthen its migration governance framework. This will go hand in hand with cooperation in addressing **root causes of irregular migration**, in particular underdevelopment, poverty and unemployment (Association EU and Egypt, 2017).

## Aims and objectives

this project views a lever of social and economic development for rural areas and, consequently, a means of reducing the number of people seeking to leave the countryside or their countries due to the lack of attractive prospects.

Therefore, the main aim of this project is to support the Egyptian rural-community with the necessary qualified graduates and university expertise to improve agricultural productivity, enable more sustainable food production, develop the poor villages, enhance farmers' income and their living conditions to prevent migration to cities or beyond.

## Aims and objectives

The developed capacity building program is to achieve this aim taking into consideration the good natural resource management, adaptation to climate change, food and nutritional security for the people, and promoting the resilience of agricultural and fishing communities to crises (whether related to the market, prices or health or due to natural disasters, conflicts, etc.). In this regard, in Egypt, agriculture and rural regions clearly remain a source of resilience for many families in the face of economic shocks.



## Specific objectives

1. To identify the push factors for migration from rural communities, needed skills in the Egyptian organisations, and market to contribute directly or indirectly to rural-development especially in the agriculture and food production sectors.
2. Modification and reorientation of the existing post- and undergraduate curricula to supply the market with graduates who contribute to the implementation of the country's sustainable development vision and ensure the sustainable rural development. This will include introducing new concepts such as triple-performing agriculture – at the economic, environmental and social levels.
3. Establishing four DeVilage Service Offices at the four Egyptian universities to provide technical support for the farmers and public and private sectors. These offices will provide info sessions and support needed for stakeholders dealing with agriculture in old and new lands in Egypt.

## Specific objectives

4. To develop a capacity building programme to train and equip the professors in the Egyptian universities with the knowledge and tools to address the different dimensions of sustainable agriculture and rural development in the modified curricula.

5. To develop Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) as Open Education Resources (OER) for spreading the knowledge and raising the awareness of different stakeholders (students, politicians, academicians and wider society). The MOOCs will be high quality materials that are copyright free and publically available.

These five objectives will ensure graduating new generation of professionals who are aware of the root causes of migration, sustainable agriculture and rural development. Joining public and private sector, these graduates can change the face of the poor villages, enhance the living standard of farmers and steer migration. In addition, the capacity building program and DeVilag Offices will provide an enormous support to all the stakeholders dealing with agriculture in the country to achieve these objectives.