

Review Article

Activating the role of women in water projects

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Abstract

Water is one of our most precious natural resources. A growing human population, and the expansion of economic activities that comes with it, will intensify the pressure on water resources. Therefore, in Egypt water management become particularly important as it located in the Arid/Semi-Arid belt. Accordingly, water in Egypt is a limiting factor for – economic and social development activities and development plans. The integrated water resources management is the approach that strengthens and supports the sustainable management and development of water resources in addition to other resources in order to achieve the most appropriate economic and social benefits. Also to achieve social justice in distribution without any disturbance in the environment and allow the participation of interested in water in making process. From that way, a deep conviction about activating and vital economic and social role of women in facing the challenges of development at all levels. Therefore women should contribute to achieve a comprehensive reform for the communities in development areas as a partner of the inherent social and economic system and represents half of the manpower affecting its development, Therefore, the Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation has given considerable interest for women's affairs and included the importance of their role in water management principally in Ministry of Water Resources Recent Strategies.

This study aims at evaluating the economic and social roles of women in water resources development projects in Egypt. In addition, the study is extended to crises-cross the impact of women presence in water resources projects on the efficiency and effectiveness of one of these projects.

Thus, in the current study New Assiut Barrage Project has targeted the economic and social role of women in some villages of Assiut Governorate. A sample was selected to identify the obstacles faced women role in developing the economic and social effects of new Barrage and put down or propose same methodology to activate this role. On the other hand, investigating of the social role of women was concerned with the surveying of the most important facilities women have in the study area in addition to the potentials in the research sample that contributes to the establishment of women's roles in social education and awareness for water projects.

Finally, the study ended up that women have a significant role in raising the efficiency and effectiveness of New Assiut Barrage. The findings of the study can be summarized as the success of water projects is depending partially on the women role through

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changing the negative social traditions achieving effective participation of individuals, raising of women community self-confidence, improve women different roles, stimulating their spirit of competition, participation and volunteering.

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1. Introduction

Egypt has implemented many national projects to bring aspired hope to save any drop of water to ensure the expansion of development; there are several pilot projects along the Nile River, such as the establishment of many Barrages that guarantee delivery of water to the largest possible area of agricultural land in Egypt. The creation of the New Assiut Barrage project is one of the most important national projects to support the overall development in Egypt. The project's main objective is to create a New Assiut Barrage that replaces the current Barrage as shown in Fig. 1 which was constructed in 1902 on the River Nile at 544.75 km north of the Aswan High Dam to ensure the suitable water required to provide sufficient water levels to feed the Ibrahimiya canal, which has a length of 316 km and serves 1.64 million acres in Middle Egypt, as well as to improve the performance of river navigation in addition to generating electricity necessary for development projects, which also serve the environment at the same time “ECRI (2010)”.

This project is considered one of the hugest projects, which serve more than 18 million people at 5 governorates of Middle Egypt with area of 1.6 million acres to improve river navigation through the establishment of two first-class navigation locks, as well as the production of clean electrical energy by generating new hydroelectric station with energy of 32 MW and providing new corridor by establishment of a bridge that load 70 tons which locates over the new Barrage to connect the east and west of the Nile, in addition to providing control system on the latest global systems to control the discharges and levels, which leads to better improvement of water management in Upper Egypt, and contributes to economic return of agricultural products increment.

The role of women in economic and social activities associated with the field of water in Egypt is the lowest at the global level. This is associated with the lack of women awareness of the importance of water and its socio-economic effects on national income and livelihood of Egyptian.

2. Identifying of the problem

The effective contribution of women in society adds an important human resource to face the challenges of progress, development and growth. Water is considered as one of the determinants of development. Women roles activation is a

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