



## 13 Villages Community Development Project in Sharkeya

In 2004, Ibrahim Abouleish, SEKEM's founder had initiated a project to develop the villages surrounding SEKEM Farm. The project was in action for three years, during which the 13 villages received campaigns and actions for their development.

The project included gathering, separating and recycling waste, building sanitary rooms, raising awareness on health through medical convoys, trainings on Biodynamic agriculture and composting, restorations and maintenance of buildings, illiteracy classes, scholarships and employment for children with special needs, and supporting small projects.

Heliopolis University for Sustainable Development (HUSD) with SEKEM group of companies decided to reinstate the project in October 2019 with the students, teachers, professors and SEKEM staff, building on the first project's experience and knowledge of the area and inline with **SEKEM Vision 2057**, Egypt vision 2030 and SDGs 2015-2030 that covers the four dimensions of sustainable Development; ecology, economy, society and culture.

The project will cover an area 45,000 kilometers with around 30,000 residents in 13 villages: Abu Shair, Ali Kamel Metwally, Galfina 1, 2, 3, Nabih, Karama, Kamal Nakhla, Maher, Tahaweya, Dahar, Basateen Barakat and new Manshiyya.

Center of Education for Sustainable Development center (CESD) at HUSD is leading a new paradigm of education that could prepare HUSD alumni in order to face the sustainable development challenges focusing on the Community-Based Learning (CBL). CBL is an intended pedagogy that takes the learners out of classes to the community in order to link what they learn theoretically to real life experiences. It is a step further from academia to the field in order to achieve positive change and development to the community and to the students reciprocally.

CESD is the coordinator of this project with the 5 faculties (Pharmacy, Engineering, Business and Economics, Physical Therapy and Organic Agriculture), the Alumni Association, Research Department, SEKEM Schools and SEKEM Medical Center to achieve promising goal of the 13 villages community development project.

The project is an opportunity for the thirteen villages to improve their living conditions and to create job opportunities; but it is also a chance for the students to get involved in community work, to find ways through their fields of studies to serve people and their country.

### [Start of the project:](#)

A certain group was assigned to lead this project that constitutes of: two project managers, one representing HUSD from CESD and one representing SEKEM entities,



two representative professors from each faculty to coordinate between the students, the dean and their colleagues, the students who are studying subjects that are related to the curriculum in order to connect what they learn to real life applications

The project started by conducting a situational analysis study through many tools:

### **Questionnaires:**

1. A questionnaire was created by HUSD professors to find out the needs and the problems of the 13 villages' residents and questions was on the following fields: demographic information, living unity, the residence, Waste disposal methods, available electric machines, domestic drinking water and sanitation, expenditure items, information on agriculture land ownership and agriculture information, organic agriculture, agricultural irrigation and drainage, agriculture problems in the village, animal ownership, economic standard of the village.
2. 122 students from the 5 faculties joined one day training on how to conduct an interview with the 13 villages' residents, as well as being introduced to the culture and traditions of the people in that area to implement a successful questionnaire.
3. An average of 600 questionnaires were completed representing 30% of the households of the 13 villages (around 30,000 residents). As the questionnaire was targeting the households (those who have families) of the villages.

### **Focus Groups:**

1. 10 Focus groups were done in the 13 villages according to the demographic distribution.

### **Data Coding and data entering:**

1. HUSD staff will support in the analyze the qualitative answers of the questionnaires through making codes for the replies in order to turn it into quantitative data
2. The results of this data will figure the backbone of the action plan that we are going to collaborate with different stakeholders in order to achieve it on the ground.
3. In a way or another this will match with the SEKEM vision for 2027
4. The hereunder are the far-reaching goals in the 13 villages

### **- Cultural dimension**

- Unfolding the individual potentials of learners and educators in the 6 schools of the 13 villages
- Research in HU contributes to the social innovation and consciousness development of the 13 villages.



- Healing-Oriented medicine was successfully implemented in the 13 villages through the faculty of physical therapy and faculty of Pharmacy.
- Multicultural actions and free offering of different arts in the 13 villages
- **Ecological Dimension**
  - Organic agriculture to be completely implemented in the 13 villages farms and fields (قانون الزراعة العضوية) .
  - Renewable energy practices and projects to be conducted in the 13 villages on a large scale.
  - 100% sustainable water management system in the 13 villages in agriculture, household and industry.
  - Sustainable waste management practices in the 13 villages .
- **Ecological Dimension**
  - 100% circular economy in all economic activities in the 13 villages.
  - 100% Economy of Love Concept and Charta, including transparent communication, full cost accounting and fair pricing within the 13 villages.
  - 100% Ethical banking and money sources are the norm in the 13 villages projects and activities.
- **Social Dimension**
  - Ensuring social inclusion in the 13 villages
  - Empowering women in the 13 villages in order to be a major catalyst for the development in the villages
  - Facilitate the rural environment in the 13 villages with opportunities to live happily and with dignity in order to avoid their immigration to the urban areas
  - Establishing in the 13 villages models of sustainable community development, based on individual consciousness development.

The development activities that are foreseen to be implemented according to the capacities of the faculties and based on the primary data we got from the villages:

- 1. Education and cultural and sport activities by core program and SEKEM school staff and students:**
  - a. Capacity development for the teachers in the 13 villages (Education for Sustainable Development - ESD) to be done by the Center of Education for Sustainable Development (CESD)
  - b. Introduce musical events, plays with a message, storytelling, ....etc (Core Program at HU)
  - c. Literacy program (SEKEM School)
  - d. Assess the available kindergarten and fix any areas that need to be fixed, besides checking on their curriculum and train the teachers using SEKEM kindergarten curriculum (SEKEM School)



- e. implement sport activities in the 13 villages on a regular basis (support from HU & SEKEM School sport teachers)

## 2. Health and Medical Awareness by Pharmacy and Physical Therapy and with the SEKEM medical center:

- a. Provide a primary health care card (starting by schools' students)
- b. Raise awareness on chronic diseases and their dangers after making convoys where medical examinations on blood pressure, diabetes and obesity will be checked and follow up programs will be provided to needy people.
- c. Provide hands-on training on first aid and occupational safety and health and explain how to deal with injuries that result from accidents.
- d. Awareness sessions on: Genetic diseases and their causes, harmful drugs and diseases caused by burning waste
- e. Awareness sessions on: proper nutrition, exercising and keeping fit importance and training them on some exercises that could be done at home besides providing them with a suitable diet.
- f. Introduce a comprehensive concept of maternal care to women and improving access to care before and during pregnancy, delivery and after birth.
- g. Create tailored programs for: women and mothers, children and special needs, children with malnutrition problems and elderly people after completing an assessment on all residents.
- h. Awareness convoy on diseases and injuries that need to be intervened in physical therapy through the detection of any diseases related to the musculoskeletal or nervous system and transfer the cases that requires physiotherapy intervention either to SEKEM medical center or to the outpatient clinic at the Faculty of Physical Therapy at HU.

## 3. Ecological projects by Engineering and organic Agriculture staff and students:

- a. Organic agriculture sessions where farmers and agriculture guiders are going to be trained on organic agriculture through arranging an experimental farm to be organic cultivated. Introduce the formation of compost by using their green Waste. These sessions will be introduced after explaining the problem of global warming and climate change and our role as humans to solve this problem for the sake of future generations as well as its impact on health and economy. **(Organic agriculture faculty)**
- b. Analyze the sewage water and recommend sewage treatment units with different types of sewage technology. **(Engineering faculty)**



- c. Classification of water sources within the region and make analysis for different samples for each water source and comparing the output with international standards and Recommend the appropriate means for simple treatment methods in accordance with international standards (usage of chlorine, filters ...)(**Engineering faculty**)
  - d. Determine the average loads and monthly consumption per house and increase their about the reasons for the high electricity bills and guide them to the optimal methods in rationalizing energy consumption (**Engineering faculty**)
  - e. Detecting the available electricity sources and their efficiency and check the connectivity to the grid (**Engineering faculty**).
  - f. Introduce renewable energy sources as biogas and implement a pilot unit and solar water heaters(**Engineering faculty & VTC**)
  - g. "No plastic" campaign (**Engineering faculty & SEKEM School**)
4. **Projects that would increase their income by organic agriculture and business staff and students:**
- a. Empowering women by providing them training on small industries that would help in increase their income and their families by selling them in the weekly market such as: production of mushrooms, yogurt, tomato paste, jams and liquid soap (**Business School**)
  - b. Training women on how to market products and conduct a simple feasibility study for small projects and how to measure their profit and loss (**Business School & Entrepreneurship Center**)
  - c. Growing some simple crops on rooftops that might help some families to save their own requirements at a lower prices and the excess amount could be sold, moreover, they can create some small industries upon the planted crops on the rooftops (**Organic agriculture faculty**)