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# Engaging the Egyptian diaspora for development: Egyptian government policy and knowledge transfer

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The American University in Cairo
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# Engaging the Egyptian Diaspora for Development: Egyptian Government Policy and Knowledge Transfer


A Thesis Submitted to
The Department of Political Science


In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
For the Degree of Master of Arts


By
## Iman Dawood


Under the Supervision of **Dr. Ibrahim El Nur**


**May/2012**

To the millions of Egyptians who may have left their home

but whose hearts are still there

and who continue to work and hope for a better Egypt…

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All praise be to God without whom this work would not have been possible and without whom nothing is possible.

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# ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

| | |
|---|---|
| **AEAS** | Association of Egypt-American Scholars |
| **ASRT** | Academy of Scientific Research and Technology |
| **CAPMAS** | Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics |
| **FOESA** | Friends of Egyptian Scholars Abroad |
| **ICT** | Information and Communication Technologies |
| **ILO** | International Labor Organization |
| **IMIS** | Integrated Migration Information System |
| **MME** | Ministry of Manpower and Emigration |
| **MOCIT** | Ministry of Communication and Information Technology |
| **MOD** | Ministry of Defense |
| **MOE** | Ministry of Education |
| **MOFA** | Ministry of Foreign Affairs |
| **MOHESR** | Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research |
| **MOIC** | Ministry of International Cooperation |
| **NDP** | National Democratic Party |
| **OECD** | Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development |
| **OPEC** | Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries |
| **STI** | Science, Technology, and Innovation |
| **TOKTEN** | Transfer of Knowledge through Expatriates Program |
| **UNDP** | United Nations Development Program |

# ABSTRACT

Viewed within the context of an increasingly transnational world, diasporas have become crucial development actors for their respective home countries contributing to the transfer of essential financial, social, and human capital. The level and impact of diasporic contributions to homeland development have been found to depend on multiple variables, of which perhaps most relevant to policy makers in developing countries, is government policy towards emigration in general and the diaspora in specific. Although Egypt has a sizable diaspora with a relatively high skill level, the potential of its diaspora seems unrealized especially in regards to the role it could play in transferring essential skills, knowledge, and expertise to Egypt.

Hence, this thesis has examined Egypt's emigration and diaspora policy in an effort to determine whether or not Egyptian government policies, in both formulation and implementation, are conducive towards diaspora engagement in general and knowledge transfer in specific. Using Alan Gamlen's concept of transnational governmentality and his impending policy typology, this thesis first examined Egypt's diaspora engagement policies and then examined Egypt's knowledge transfer programs. Egyptian policy documents were analyzed and interviews with Egyptian policymakers, former government officials, and experts were conducted.

This thesis found that Egyptian government policies towards the diaspora do not compose a well formulated and comprehensive policy framework. Policies and programs aimed at diaspora engagement and knowledge transfer are not implemented as they are formulated. Consequently, Egyptian government policy does not seem conducive towards any serious knowledge transfer

from the diaspora. Policy recommendations for more effective diaspora engagement and knowledge transfer policy are also shared.

**CHAPTER ONE**

**INTRODUCTION**

**1.1 Introduction**

The two-way relationship between international migration and development, also known as the migration development nexus, is far from a straightforward one. Attempts to analyze the link between the two have concentrated on a variety of facets such as the effect of migration on labor-receiving countries, the effect of labor-sending countries' development (or lack thereof) on migration flows, or the effect of emigration on the development of labor-sending countries. It is perhaps this last facet that is most relevant to labor-sending countries such as Egypt.

Over the past decade, a consensus seems to have emerged about the potentially positive effect emigration can have on the development of labor-sending countries. Emigration, and more specifically diasporas (defined here as ethnic minority groups of migrants and their descendants who are living in a host country but still maintain to some degree social or emotional ties with their homeland) are currently seen as having the potential to fuel the development of these countries[1]. This increasing optimism can be traced to the emergence of the field of transnationalism. Transnationalism is defined as the process "whereby transmigrants forge and sustain multi-stranded social relations that connect their societies of origin with the societies of settlement. Consequently, they build social fields that enable them to maintain multiple relationships – familial, economic, social, organizational, religious, and political – that span

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[1] Hein De Haas, "Migration and Development: A Theoretical Perspective," *The International Migration Review* 44(1) (2010): 227.

borders"[2].   Basically, globalization and accompanying technological changes are believed to have transformed migrants and their progeny into diasporas that are capable of continuing to positively take part in processes ongoing in their nation of origin. It is this underlying idea that forms the basis of this thesis' conceptual framework referred to as transnationalizing governmentality which will be later discussed in chapter 2.

Much attention has since been given to diasporas; they are becoming increasingly recognized for the vital financial, human, and social capital that they possess[3]. The existence of such rich resources within the diaspora and the diasporas' ability to transfer these resources, as a result of today's highly transnational world, has transformed diasporas into crucial development actors. Engaging these diasporas especially at the more profound level of facilitating knowledge transfer i.e. the transfer of information, skills, experience, and technology by the diaspora to bodies and institutions in the homeland, as opposed to just seeking their remittances and investments, has become the subject of much interest. Various efforts have therefore been spent on determining the different variables that determine the nature and level of diaspora engagement.

Although various determinants have been identified (see section 2.1.3), home government policy towards the diaspora has emerged as a decisive factor in determining the extent of diaspora engagement and the type of capital transfer that takes place. Apparent both in the literature and in the experiences of various countries, government policy is crucial to the realization of higher-

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[2] Charles Green, *Globalization and Survival in the Black Diaspora: The New Urban Challenge,* (Albany: State University of New York Press), 1997, 174.

[3] Dina Ionescu, *Engaging Diasporas as Development Partners for Home and Destination Countries: Challenges for Policymakers* (Geneva: The International Organization for Migration), 2006.

impact forms of diaspora contributions such as human capital contributions. Some policy makers have actually recognized the ability of their highly skilled diasporas (composed of a high percentage of migrants with at least a tertiary education) to contribute knowledge, skills, and expertise even without returning to home country development and have worked to make this a reality[4]. Several countries, most notably China and India, have pursued specific diaspora engagement policies that have enabled them to successfully mobilize their diasporas and benefit from their diasporas' rich human capital.

Even though Egypt is a major labor-sending country with a sizable diaspora (estimates of the Egyptian diaspora currently range between 3 and 8 million[5]), it does not seem to have benefited from its diaspora as have some other developing countries. The results of diaspora engagement have been mainly limited to financial capital transfers in the predominant form of remittances which were approximately $7.1 billion through formal channels in 2009[6] and an estimated $2-2.5 million through informal channels[7]. Remittances are the second source of foreign currency for Egypt exceeding the revenues of the Suez Canal for example. They have also composed 4 per cent of GDP in 2009 which points to how important remittances are for the Egyptian government.[8] There has also been some diaspora philanthropy such as the well-documented case

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[4] Martin Grossman, "Diaspora Knowledge Flows in the Global Economy," (paper presented in E-Leader Conference,) *Budapest*, 2010, 3.

[5] Omar Ashour, "ElBaradei and the Mobilization of the Egyptian Diaspora," last modified September 2010, *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace,* http://carnegieendowment.org/2010/09/29/elbaradei-and-mobilization-of-egyptian-diaspora/6bwg.

[6] The World Bank, *Migration and Remittances Factbook 2011* (Washington DC: The World Bank, 2011).

[7] Minessy, Mohamed. Interview by Iman Dawood. Cairo, Egypt. April 9, 2012.

[8] World Bank, "Migration."

of the Coptic Orphans[9] and a limited volume of investments by the Egyptian diaspora[10]. Higher-impact forms of diaspora contributions with potentially more impact on Egypt's development such as human capital transfers, though, seem to have been quite minimal[11]. This is not a result of the limited skills available in the Egyptian diaspora, as there is no doubt that the Egyptian diaspora is in fact burgeoning with many resources of which is a priceless pool of knowledge, skills, and expertise that has the potential to spur Egypt's transformation into a competitive country in today's knowledge economy.

Although the exact educational and skill attainment level of the Egyptian diaspora is difficult to calculate due to the lack of complete and up-to-date data about the subject; the overall educational and skill profile of Egyptian migrants points to a diaspora with a relatively high level—especially when compared to the profile of Egyptians in Egypt (see section 3.6). Studies conducted to gauge the extent of the Egyptian diaspora's human capital contributions also confirm the existence of much unrealized yet rich human capital in the Egyptian diaspora. A report conducted by the United Nations in Egypt in 2011 titled "ICT Policy Review" refers to this unfortunate state when it highlights the "untapped potential represented by Egyptian experts in the diaspora[12]". Likewise, Dina Mehrez and Hadia Hamdy in their study titled "Skilled

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[9] Jennifer M Brinkerhoff, "Diaspora Philanthropy in an At-Risk Society: The Case of Coptic Orphans in Egypt," *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly* 37, no. 3 (2008): 411-433.

[10] "Migration and Development in Egypt," The International Organization for Migration, http://www.egypt.iom.int/Doc/IOM Migration and Development in Egypt Facts and Figures (English).pdf (accessed April 25, 2012).

[11] Hadia Hamdy and Dina Mehrez, "Skilled Egyptian Contributions to Development," *Education, Business and Society: Contemporary Middle Eastern Issues* 3 no. 4 (2010): 250-261.

[12] United Nations, "ICT Policy Review," last modified October 25, 2011, UNCTAD, http://www.unctad.org/en/docs/dtlstict2011d6summary_en.pdf (accessed March 25, 2012).

Egyptian Diaspora Contributions to Egypt" emphasize that although the highly skilled Egyptian diaspora does make some contributions to Egypt's development, its potential is not "fully utilized"[13].

Such a state requires that attention be devoted to the topic of the highly skilled diaspora's engagement and particularly the transfer of the diaspora's human capital. Keeping in mind the demonstrated importance of government policy in bringing about higher impact forms of diaspora engagement, an examination of Egyptian government policy is essential. No studies to our knowledge, however, have been conducted towards this end. Hence, in order to better understand the situation at hand this thesis aims to examine Egyptian government policies towards the diaspora in order to ascertain whether or not they produce a comprehensive policy framework that enables the diaspora's engagement, results in higher-impact forms of human capital and knowledge transfers, and facilitates the positive role the diaspora could play in Egypt's development.

## 1.2 Research Questions

The thesis is therefore concerned with answering four main questions. The thesis's first question is what are the Egyptian government policies towards highly skilled emigration in general and more specifically towards the diaspora? And also do these policies compose a comprehensive policy framework? The next question asks whether the Egyptian government policies under question are actually implemented as formulated. The third question is then are these policies conducive to the highly skilled diaspora's engagement and to the transfer of its human capital for the purposes of Egypt's development? Finally, the last question is, based on the answers of the

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[13] Hadia Hamdy and Dina Mehrez, "Skilled Egyptian," 250.

first three research questions, what recommendations can be made for Egyptian policy makers in order to develop a more elaborate and comprehensive approach to Egyptian diaspora engagement and to maximize the Egyptian diaspora's potential contribution to development especially via knowledge transfer?

**1.3 Hypothesis**

The initial hypothesis of this research is that current Egyptian policy towards highly skilled emigration is one of nonchalance towards the loss of Egyptian brains stemming from the low demand for such highly-skilled labor in the Egyptian economy. Instead, Egyptian policy makers currently see highly skilled emigration as merely a means of reducing unemployment at home and see ensuing remittances as a crucial source of foreign exchange that exceeds other sources of foreign exchange such as the Suez Canal. Policies may aim at engaging the diaspora, however, the focus of these policies will primarily be financial in nature with the objective of facilitating remittance transfers and investment. If some formulated policies are aimed at benefiting from the diaspora's rich human capital, it is unlikely that they are actually being implemented as formulated due to negligence of the Egyptian government, inefficient bureaucracy, and the generally deficient nature of Egyptian institutions. It seems as though Egypt's policies in this aspect, although may exist, are incomplete and do not compose a comprehensive and effective policy framework.

The result of this is that Egyptian government policies are not conducive towards diaspora engagement in general but even less so towards knowledge transfer in specific. Consequently, the potential benefits that could be derived from the highly skilled diaspora are largely

unrealized. This obstructs the diaspora's involvement in Egypt's development even if the ability of and motivation from the Egyptian diaspora is present.

Therefore, Egypt's migration and diaspora engagement policies must be adjusted and implemented in a different manner to reflect their current shortcomings. A comprehensive policy framework should be formulated and implemented in an effective way. This no doubt requires greater communication and coordination between the different relevant policy making and implementing institutions. Specific policies aimed at engaging the diaspora and transferring its knowledge should be at the core of this policy framework in order for Egypt's diaspora to have a chance to propel Egypt forward in today's knowledge-based world.

## 1.4 Methodology

To answer the research questions above, this thesis utilized two main research methods: document analysis and interviews.

The first research method used was that of document analysis. Document analysis was employed to explore Egyptian government policy towards the diaspora and specifically the highly skilled diaspora. Various documents were collected and analyzed by the researcher. The documents analyzed were: laws, ministerial publications, ministerial websites, project documents, governmental news articles, conference agendas and proceedings, newsletters, and government presentations. These documents were mainly from three ministries relevant to diaspora engagement and knowledge transfer: the Ministry of Manpower and Emigration (MME), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), and the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific

Research (MOHESR). Documents form other government agencies were also at times consulted when necessary. Each document was examined as an independent document but also as a document within a larger pool of documents so as to be able to determine whether or not the different elements of Egypt's diaspora policy are aligned and coordinated or whether they are fragmented and ineffective.

The second research method employed was that of interviews. This research method allowed us to better explore Egyptian government policy towards the diaspora by filling in the gaps remaining following document analysis. Unstructured interviews were conducted with three groups of people. The first group of people consisted of senior officials of the Egyptian government currently employed in the MME, the MOFA, and the MOHESR. The second group of people interviewed consisted of former members of these ministries. Finally, the third group with which interviews were conducted consisted of experts on Egyptian migration and on knowledge transfer in Egypt. A total of ten interviews were conducted. These interviews were aimed at tying together the information obtained through document analysis, learning how the various policies and programs of the Egyptian government are actually implemented in reality, and finally benefiting from the experience of policy makers and experts who are able to offer constructive recommendations for improvements in Egyptian government policy.

**1.5 Thesis Structure**

This chapter mainly introduced the topic of this research and presented the need for further research into Egyptian government policies related to the diaspora's engagement and particularly

the diaspora's human capital transfers. The main research questions, hypothesis, and methodology were also noted.

In chapter 2, the literature relevant to the migration-development nexus and to diasporas as actors in a transnational world will be reviewed. The chapter will also review the literature published on different diaspora engagement impact levels and their determining factors. Finally the literature review will introduce successful country experiences of China and India as well as the specific policies of diaspora engagement that they followed. This chapter will then conclude by setting the conceptual framework for this thesis which is that of "transnational governmentality." The last section of the chapter will also review Alan Gamlen's policy typology that has been used to examine Egypt's policies towards the diaspora.

Chapter 3 is a historical chapter that will review Egyptian highly skilled migration patterns as well as Egyptian government policies towards emigration. It will review the five phases of Egyptian migration which are: the phase prior to 1974, the phase of expansion from 1974-1984, the phase of contraction from 1984-1988, the phase of deterioration from 1988-1992, and the current phase.

Chapter 4 will present and analyze the data collected for this research about the different capacity building and extending rights policies (see section 2.2.2 for definitions) of the Egyptian government particularly the MOFE, MME, and the MOHESR. The first part of the chapter will examine the different policies and programs of the Egyptian government that are meant to symbolically build a nation as well as the institutions that are meant to help govern the diaspora.

The second part of the chapter will then look at the policies and programs of the Egyptian government that are meant to extend political, social, and civil rights to the diaspora. The ability of the government to implement these policies as was originally formulated will also be noted.

Chapter 5 will then present and analyze the data collected for this research about the extracting obligations and investment policy type in general and the knowledge transfer policy type in specific (see section 2.2.2 for definitions of these terms). The beginning of the chapter will look at Egyptian government policy towards the highly skilled diaspora and its human capital. The rest of the chapter will then examine each of the knowledge transfer programs implemented by various bodies of the Egyptian government. Particular attention will be paid to whether these programs are in fact conducive towards knowledge transfer from the diaspora.

Finally, chapter 6 will then conclude by summarizing the findings of this thesis. It will then offer specific policy recommendations for a comprehensive diaspora engagement strategy that can amplify the role of the Egyptian highly skilled diaspora in Egypt's development particularly through knowledge transfer. Limitations of this thesis and ideas for further research will also be shared.

**1.6 Conclusion**

This chapter introduced the topic at hand pointing to the benefits that can be amassed from the engagement of a country's diaspora in today's transnational world. Because Egypt does not seem to be benefiting from its sizable and rich highly skilled diaspora, we expressed that it is necessary to examine the different factors that determine Egypt's level of diaspora engagement

of which is the understudied yet extremely crucial aspect of government policy towards highly skilled emigration and the diaspora. We stated the thesis's main research questions, its hypothesis, and its methodology. We also clarified that the main aim of this thesis is the examination of Egyptian government policy in order to determine whether or not it is conducive towards diaspora engagement in general and knowledge transfer in specific.

A note must be mentioned here about the limitations of this research. First off, the paucity of data on Egyptian migration and the Egyptian diaspora must be noted. Estimates of the size of the Egyptian diaspora vary by the millions. Even estimates offered by different official sources of the Egyptian government such as the MME and the Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS) vary greatly (see section 3.6 for more information). Likewise, information about the different phases of Egyptian emigration through the years is not extensive. This is also the case with Egyptian policy documents—the Egyptian government either does not make public or simply does not possess that many written documents. Hence, this thesis had to complement document analysis with interviews with public officials in various policy-making and implementing ministries to be able to gain an accurate understanding of the situation.

It is also important to note that this thesis is mainly focused on examining Egypt's formulated policies towards highly skilled emigration and the diaspora. It will also look at government initiatives that have resulted from these policies; however, it will not be able to fully judge the effectiveness of these initiatives. Such an appraisal is beyond the scope of this thesis; nevertheless, the thesis will allude to whether or not policies have been implemented as

formulated in order to see whether or not the Egyptian policies are conducive towards diaspora engagement and knowledge transfer.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

## 2.1 Literature Review

In order to better understand the role of diasporas especially in relation to the development of their home countries via the transfer of essential human capital, it is important to review the literature published about the migration development-nexus in general and diasporas in specific. It is also important to review authors' conceptions about the different levels of diaspora engagement as well as the factors that determine these different levels of diaspora engagement and their impact on home country development. This literature review will begin in this way and will end with perhaps what is the most crucial segment of the literature: the role of labor-sending countries' government policies towards the diaspora in successfully engaging diasporas and in achieving knowledge transfer. The last section of the literature review will then look more specifically at the diaspora engagement policies pursued by different governments (of China and India) towards this end.

### 2.1.1 Introduction: The Migration-Development Nexus

Much has been written throughout the past couple decades about the relationship between migration and development. This two-way relationship, usually referred to as the migration-development nexus, is composed of the effects of migration on the development of labor-sending/receiving countries and of the effects of imbalances in development on migration. Of particular relevance to this study is the literature written about the effect of emigration on the development of labor-sending countries. As with most complex relationships, assessments

regarding this two-way relationship have varied over time—often influenced by the current historical moment and circumstances[14]. For the purposes of clarifying some of the trends or phases that have developed through the years, it is possible and useful to divide literature about the migration-development nexus into three phases as Hein De Haas has done in his article "Migration and Development: A Theoretical Perspective".

During the first phase, which lasted until about 1973, the dominant views on the subject were based on the experiences of emigration from Europe to the US and from Eastern and Southern Europe to Western Europe (often through guest worker programs) during the post-World War II era and were consequently quite optimistic. Neoclassical theories at the time perceived migration positively advocating it as a tool for the optimal allocation of production factors to the benefit of both sending and receiving countries[15]. Rooted in the theoretical framework of modernization theory, migration was seen as being capable of helping developing countries in their development take-off. Kindleberger, for instance, wrote about the ability of financial remittances, return migration, and skills and knowledge transfers to contribute to the South's development. Kindleberger adamantly argued that "large-scale emigration can contribute to the best of both worlds: rapid growth in the country of immigration . . . and rapid growth in the country of origin"[16]. G. Beijer also shared Kindleberger's view arguing in his article

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[14] Ninna Nyberg-Sørensen, Nicholas Van Hear, and Poul Engberg-Pedersen, "The Migration – Development Nexus: Evidence and Policy Options" International Migration 40, no. 5 (2002): 7.

[15] Hein De Haas, "Migration and Development," 5.

[16] Charles P. Kindleberger, Europe's Postwar Growth: The Role of Labor Supply, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965) 253.

"International and National Migratory Movements" that migrants were "a hope for the industrial development of their native land"[17].

This phase of optimism, however, was replaced during the mid-1970s by more negative views on the migration development nexus. Influenced, at least in part, by neo-Marxist theories such as dependency theory and world system's theory prevalent at this time, migration was seen as undermining regional and national economies by depriving them of their valuable human and material capital resources which are exploited for the benefit of industrialized countries in need of cheap migrant labor[18]. Papademetriou, for example, argues that it could lead to "an uncontrolled depletion of their [labor-sending countries'] already meager supplies of skilled manpower - and the most healthy, dynamic, and productive members of their populations"[19]. It is also during this phase that literature about the brain drain became popular. The emigration of skilled sectors of the population of developing countries were seen as depriving poor countries of the already scarce skilled and professional labor resources in which developing countries had already invested many years of education[20]. Literature published about remittances was also quite negative during this time with studies pointing to the tendency of remittances to go towards consumption and rarely contributing to productive investment[21]. Migration was also seen as a contributor to inequality since remittances were accruing to those who were already better off[22].

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[17] G. Beijer, "International and National Migratory Movements," *International Migration* 8, no. 3 (1970): 102.

[18] Hein De Haas, "Migration and Development," 6-8.

[19] D. G. Papademetriou, "Illusions and Reality in International Migration: Migration and Development in Post-World War II Greece," *International Migration* 23, no.2 (1985): 111-112.

[20] George B. Baldwin, "Brain Drain or Overflow," *Foreign Affairs* 48, no. 2 (1970): 358-372.

[21] Oded Stark and David Levhari, "On Migration and Risk in LDCs," *Economic Development*

The third and current phase, referred to briefly in the introduction, is grounded in the theoretical framework of transnationalism and has corresponded with the paradigm shift towards more pluralistic approaches that take into account agency and structure[23]. Literature published in this phase views migration more positively; migration should fuel the development of labor-sending countries not only via financial remittances, but also via knowledge flows and positive social remittances[24]. Perhaps among the first to explore the applicability of a transnational framework to migration is Nina Schiller in "From Immigrant to Transmigrant: Theorizing Transnational Migration"[25]. Her idea is that globalization and accompanying technological changes allow migrants to continue to take part in processes ongoing in their nation of origin. This moves the analysis beyond issues such as "remittances" and "return migration." Migrants do not need to return to positively contribute to their countries[26]. Much literature has consequently been published about diasporas, instead of return migrants, because they are believed to be "at the core of the transnational global landscape" and possess a variety of links with their home countries that "engenders a web of transformations within countries' economies and societies"[27].

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*and Cultural Change* 31, no 1 (1982): 191-196.

[22] Michael Lipton, "Migration From the Rural Areas of Poor Countries: The Impact on Rural Productivity and Income Distribution," *World Development* 8, no.1 (1980): 1-24.

[23] Hein De Haas, "Migration and Development," 15.

[24] Samuel M. Maimbo and Dillip Ratha, *Remittances: Development Impact and Future Prospects*, (Washington D.C: World Bank, 2005).

[25] Nina G Schiller, "From Immigrant to Transmigrant: Theorizing Transnational Migration," *Anthropological Quarterly* 68, no. 1 (1995): 48.

[26] Christopher Mcdowell and Arjan De Haan, *Migration and Sustainable Livelihoods: A Critical Review of the Literature,* (Working Paper) Sussex: Institute of Development Studies, 1998.

[27] Manuel Orozco, "Diasporas, Development, and Transnational Integration: Ghanians in the US, UK, and Germany," (a report commissioned for Citizen International) The Dialogue, 2005, 4.

It is also interesting to note that during this phase, and specifically during the 1990s, a "brain gain" theory also emerged which suggested that the prospects of migration raise the expected return to education and consequently higher levels of education are sought in developing countries and brain gain results[28]. The soundness of this theory is contested however. Therefore, let us return to the transnational nature of today's world and the role of diasporas in it.

2.1.2 Diasporas as Development Actors in a Transnational World

Diasporas are being increasingly seen as important for the development of their home countries in the literature. Although there is no single accepted definition of the term diaspora, "new" definitions have recently evolved to reflect the transnational era. In the mid-eighties the term began to take on a new meaning where it refers to "ethnic minority groups of migrant origins residing and acting in host countries but maintaining strong sentimental and material links with their countries of origin—their homelands"[29]. Ionescu also defines the term in a similar manner explaining that the term "diasporas" conveys the idea of transnational populations, living in one place, while still maintaining relations with their homelands, being both "here" and "there"[30]. The term diaspora is preferred, in the literature and this thesis, to migrants because it applies to expatriate populations abroad and generations born abroad to foreign parents who are or may be

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[28] Donald Lien and Yan Wang, "Brain Drain or Brain Gain: A Revisit," *Journal of Population-Economics* 18, No. 1, (2005): 154.

[29] Gabriel Sheffer, *Modern Diasporas in International Politics*, (London: Croom Helm, 1986).

[30] Dina Ionescu, "Engaging Diasporas," 13.

citizens of their countries of residence but may nevertheless wish to continue to support their home country development[31].

The literature points to mainly three types of capital (financial, social, and human) that diasporas possess and that can be useful for home countries that desire to actively engage their diasporas. Financial capital transfers discussed in the literature have varied taking different forms such as that of foreign direct investments (FDI), trade, remittances, savings, start-up or business investments, purchase of real estate and humanitarian support. In more recent years some authors have also written about social capital transfers which refer to social remittances composed of ideas, practices, identities and social capital that flow from receiving to sending country communities. Social remittances can be transferred through the diaspora in different ways, be received by members of the home country, and affect social values and lifestyles in home countries[32]. Finally, scholars have also written about the diaspora's human capital which refers to the levels of education, training, skills and knowledge available in a diaspora that might be drawn on for home-country development initiatives[33]. This definition of human capital is the one we have adopted for the purposes of this thesis. Methods of transferring this human capital include brain circulation or circulation of skills, technology transfer, virtual participation, diaspora networks, temporary return, and skill-matching programs, banks or databases[34].

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[31] Ibid.

[32] Panitee Suksomboon, "Remittances and 'Social Remittances: Their Impact on Livelihoods of Thai Women in the Netherlands and Non-Migrants in Thailand," *Gender, Technology and Development* 12, no. 3 (2009): 461-82.

[33] Ibid.

[34] **Yohannes Woldentensae, "Optimizing the African Brain Drain: Strategies for Mobilizing the Intellectual Diaspora towards Brain-Gain," (paper presented to Association of African Universities at the Conference of Rectors, Vice Chancellors and Presidents of African Universities) Tripoli, October 21-25 2007.**

Since this thesis is mainly interested in the human capital transfers of the diaspora, it is important to mention the limitations of the use of this term. It is understood that this human capital, as explicated in human capital theory, allows people to be more productive and contributes significantly to the economic growth of a country. Thus, it is understood that if home countries engage their diasporas and facilitate the diasporas' human capital contributions this will aid in countries' economic development. It is important to keep in mind though that the theory of human capital is not uncontroversial and that some such as Mark Blaug, for example, have highlighted the limitations of this idea. Blaug contends that "it has to be said that the models so far examined in the growth accounting literature fail utterly to explain the mechanism by which this effect is produced.[35]" It is important to keep in mind that while economic growth emanates from education and knowledge, it does so from many other things. Nonetheless, it is hard to deny that knowledge, skills, and expertise are not essential to a country's development—especially in the case of Egypt where human capital is an oft-neglected aspect of government policy.

2.1.3 Diaspora Impact Levels & Determining Factors

As briefly mentioned above, there are different types of diasporic capital transfers which tend to have varying effects on home country development. It is hence useful to refer to literature published on diaspora impact levels so as to understand the impact these different transfers can have on home country development.

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[35] Mark Blaug, *The Economics of Education and the Education of an Economist*, (New York: New York University Press, 1987) 233.

Of the literature published on the different levels of diaspora impact, perhaps Yevgeny Kuznetsov most clearly identifies the different levels. In his paper, titled "Why is Diaspora Potential so Elusive?" he refers to five different levels of diaspora impact; they are remittances, donations, investments, knowledge, and institutional development and reform. Kuznetsov illustrates these different levels of diaspora impact in a hierarchical pyramid form starting with a subsistence agenda (remittances) at the bottom and ending with a self-actualization agenda (institutional development and reform) at the top—as can be seen in the figure below.[36] Of these levels, the first three clearly refer to financial capital transfers (remittances, donations, and investments). The higher levels of the pyramid and particularly the fourth level of the pyramid relates to maximizing the positive impact of the diaspora's human capital contributions and hence is the main focus of this study.

**Figure 2.1: Hierarchy of Diaspora Impact**

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[36]Yevgeny Kuznetsov, "Why is Diaspora Potential so Elusive? Towards a New Generation of Initiatives to Leverage Countries' Talent Abroad," (paper published by the World Bank Institute) New York, 2009, 5-6.
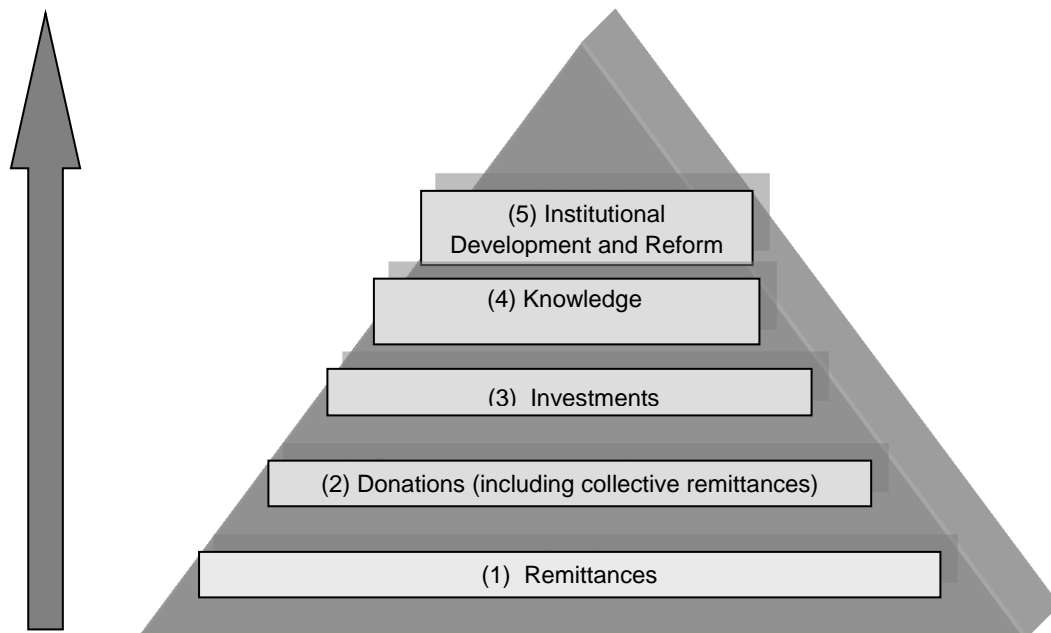
Source: Yevgeny Kuznetsov, "Why is Diaspora Potential so Elusive? Towards a New Generation of Initiatives to Leverage Countries' Talent Abroad," (paper published by the World Bank Institute) New York, 2009.

As apparent in Kuznetsov's pyramid above, different types of capital transfers can have widely different effects on home country development. Not surprisingly then, attention has been given in the literature to the different factors responsible for determining a country's engagement level with the diaspora and the resulting impact.

Perhaps of the first literature published on diaspora engagement levels and the determinants of these different levels is Milton Esman's work. In it Esman identifies three different factors he believes are responsible for shaping the level of impact of the diaspora's contribution to its homeland. These three factors are: the diaspora's ability to mobilize, the opportunity

structures/context, and finally their motivation to act[37]. The first factor refers to the need for a sense of solidarity and community identity amongst the diaspora in order for the diaspora to be able to contribute. King and Melvin have also written about the importance of this factor years later[38]. Esman's second factor refers to the opportunity structure or the context that shapes the diaspora's mobilization. Jennifer Brinkerhoff also later expanded on Esman's work by mentioning the availability of economic opportunities, access to necessary infrastructure (political, technical, informational/communication) and government support as important elements of this second factor.[39] Finally, the third factor according to Esman is "their [the diaspora's] inclination or motivation to maintain their solidarity and exert group influence."[40] Clearly, all these factors play an important role in shaping the nature of diaspora engagement.

Devish Kapur also outlines several factors that play a part in determining diaspora engagement levels in his article "Diasporas and Technology Transfer." Speaking specifically about how to achieve the level of technology transfer (level four in Kuznetsov's hierarchy) Kapur identifies factors he believes are "most important in affecting a diaspora's role."[41] He divides these factors into four main categories: a) factors that contribute to the potential importance of diaspora such as its size, education/skill, income, the activities in which it is engage, and b) factors that

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[37] Milton Esman, "Diasporas and International Relations." in *Modern Diasporas in International Politics*, edited by Gabriel Sheffer, (London: Croo Helm, 1986) 333-349.

[38] C. King and N.J. Melvin, "Diaspora Politics: Ethnic Linkages, Foreign Policy, and Security in Eurasia," *International Security* 24, no. 3 (1999):108-138.

[39] Jennifer Brinkerhoff, "Diasporas, Skills Transfer, and Remittances: Evolving Perceptions and Potential" in *Converting Migration Drains into Gains*, edited by C. Wescott and Jenniffer Brinkerhoff (Manila: Asian Development Bank, 2006) 13.

[40]  Milton Esman, "Diasporas and International Relations," 336.

[41] Devesh Kapur, "Diasporas and Technology Transfer," *Journal of Human Development* 2(2) (2010): 276.

contribute to the realized influence of the diaspora such as host country characteristics and home country characteristics such as policies c) the degree of formality of diaspora channels and finally d) the demand stemming from the source country i.e. their willingness and openness to benefit from the diaspora.[42]

Although Esman and Kapur's sets of factors are not identical, they do share many similarities. The first factor or set of factors in both Kapur and Esman's work refers to the potential ability of the diaspora to contribute to home country development i.e. skill level. Likewise, both Esman and Kapur refer, in their second set of factors, to the context or home country characteristics that influence the actual ability of diasporas to contribute. It is this factor and more specifically, government policies, that are the concern of this study and hence the following section of the literature review will be dedicated to the importance of this as a determinant of the level of diaspora contributions as evidenced by different country experiences.

2.1.4 The Importance of Government Policy: Evidence from India & China

The important role of home country governments in shaping their diasporas' engagement levels is clear in the above mentioned literature. It becomes even more so clear when we examine the experiences of countries deemed "successful" in mobilizing their diasporas for the purpose of development. Perhaps the two most notable countries that have managed to benefit from their diasporas are China and India. Because we are mainly concerned with human capital transfers, we will only review literature concerned with this.

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[42] Ibid.

Grossman, in trying to answer the question of why "some developing countries have successfully leveraged the diaspora option, while others have failed to do so" refers to the case of China[43]. He argues that China has effectively implemented strategies to deal with its brain drain problem. Tracing China's strategies beginning with the late 1970s (the opening up of China), Grossman stresses the importance of the "Chinese government's attitude towards overseas capital and knowledge[44]." Grossman argues that the Chinese government had recognized the relevance of technology transfer to the continuing growth of China and hence worked to placate overseas Chinese professionals. Although between 1978 and 1990 the Chinese government implemented more than fifty laws and regulations targeting overseas Chinese to return, Grossman demonstrates that the government soon after had a policy shift. While the Chinese government was still worried about brain drain, it began to view emigration as a way to store brain power overseas to be used in the future, as opposed to viewing it as a permanent loss. Grossman claims that "this mindset has facilitated knowledge flows back to China and has contributed to its economic development.[45]"

Xiang Biao, like Grossman, also explores the Chinese government's policies towards the diaspora. Biao stresses the shift of Chinese government policy (briefly mentioned above) as a shift towards a transnational diaspora perspective. Biao explains "the Chinese government's emphasis on temporary return and transnational networks is probably most clearly evidenced by the slogan, weiguo fuwu (serve the motherland), proposed in the late 1990s, as compared to the

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[43] Martin Grossman, "Diaspora Knowledge," 5.

[44] Martin Grossman, "Diaspora Knowledge," 6.

[45] Ibid.

earlier notion of huiguo fuwu (return and serve the motherland), which indicates that physical return is no longer regarded as a determinant."[46] This policy became known, by many such as Clay Wescott, as the "dumbbell model" depicted below.

**Figure 2.2: The China Dumbell Model**



Source: Hongxing Cai, "Chinese Knowledge Diaspora in the Development of Chinese Research Universities," (presentation presented at the International Conference on Diaspora for Development) Washington D.C., July 13-14, 2009.

Hongxing Cai confirms the success of this Chinese government policy. He states that over 30 million Chinese diaspora members have played a role in China's reform and opening up since 1978 and that the Chinese diaspora, particularly the knowledge diaspora, has been "actively and deeply involved" in China's development[47]. Cai also discusses the specific diaspora engagement policies pursued by the Chinese government, however, these will be reviewed in the next section of the literature review.

The Indian experience does in fact share some similarities with the Chinese experience as Benjamin Chemouni argues in "The Diaspora as Economic Asset: How China and India Use

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[46] Xiang Biao, "*Promoting Knowledge Exchange through Diaspora Networks," (*a report written for the Asian Development Bank) Oxford, 2005, 3.

[47] Ibid.

Their Diaspora to Support their Economic Development." Chemouni argues that the similarities

lie in the rationale behind the policies followed by India and China—explaining that both states

followed policies aimed at rendering their diaspora governable by producing a self-disciplined

diaspora that can act in accordance with the states' interests.[48]

Marie-Carine Lall traces the emergence of Indian government policy towards the diaspora. She

explains that, before applying certain reforms in 1991, India had never really sought to exploit

the potential of its relatively large diaspora. Instead, before 1991, Lall argues that the Nehruvian

autarkic model of development that was coupled with a focus on nation-building diverted serious

attention from the diaspora.[49] Nonetheless, gradually and especially after 1991, the Indian

government began to engage its diaspora for the purposes of supporting its development.

A case study published about the role of the Indian diaspora highlights the emergence of India's

diaspora policy and explains that "recognizing the importance of overseas Indians in the wake of

liberalization and globalization, the Indian government took new initiatives to engage the

Diaspora.[50]" Chemouni also explains how India created a new institutional and legal framework

through which it courted the diaspora. A more detailed description of the actual policies followed

by India will be addressed in upcoming sections. What is clear, though, is that the Indian

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[48] Benjamin Chemouni, "The Diaspora as an Economic Asset" The London School of Economics, (2009) 24.

[49] Marie-Carine Lall, *India's Missed Opportunity: India's relationship with the Non Resident Indians,* (Aldershot: Ashgate), 2001.

[50] K. Bhargava et al, "Building Bridges: A Case Study on the Role of the Indian Diaspora in Canada", *The Centre for the Study of Democracy* (2008) 24.

diaspora definitely assisted in the transformation of India into a knowledge-based economy and played an especially strong role in the emergence of the Indian IT industry.[51]

## 2.1.5 Diaspora Engagement Policies of China

Literature on the cases of India and China, reviewed above, points to the important role of government policy in benefiting from diasporas' human capital. It will prove useful for the purposes of this thesis to delve even deeper into the successful experiences of China and India and review the literature concerned with the specific diaspora engagement and knowledge transfer policies that they have implemented towards this end.

In the Case of China, the Chinese government's recognition of the importance of overseas Chinese talent and their general policy of "weiguo fuwu" (serve the motherland) has shaped the formation of more specific policies aimed at both engaging the Chinese diaspora and of transferring their knowledge, skills, and expertise. Biao has identified three different types of Chinese government initiatives that compose their policy framework. They are namely policies, concrete programs, and official websites[52].

In terms of policies, Biao collected and analyzed 180 government policies issued during the period from 1986 to 2003 relevant to the Chinese diaspora. The Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Personnel, and the Ministry of Personal Security were found to be the main formulators of these policies. Biao found that most of these policies were issued by the Ministry

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[51] Devesh Kapur, "Diasporas and Technology Transfer," 272.

[52] Xiang Biao, "Promoting Knowledge," 29.

of Personnel and were aimed at liberalizing existing regulations and making working and living environments friendlier to facilitate knowledge exchange. Biao also reviewed the policies issued by the Ministry of Education and found that they are aimed at offering more benefits to the diaspora. Biao observed that the remaining policies, formulated by the Ministry of Personal Security, were meant to regulate exit and entry matters and issued for example a "green card" which was meant to encourage and allow overseas Chinese professionals with foreign passports to enter China freely within a period of time.[53]

Although according to Biao policies from the central government are impressive, he also points to enthusiastic efforts of local governments particularly at the provincial and municipality levels.[54] Mu Xiaosen has spoken of the Liaoning province as an example of such local efforts; Mu Xiaosen explained that they have invested RMB 78.5 million for projects that provide overseas Chinese professionals with free offices and facilities, fund research, housing, and even allocate for them special personnel to assist them in applying for national research funds.[55] Biao explains that these types of incentives are not just restricted to rich provinces, he states that even poor provinces such as Shanxi, and cities such as Xi'an, also provide Chinese diaspora professionals with similar incentives.[56] This illustrates the importance of initiatives at both central and local government levels for a sound and effective policy framework. Universities have been also found to play a role; one extremely interesting development was that of a

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[53] Ibid.

[54] Ibid.

[55] Mu Xiaosen, Speech at Liaoning Technology Business Development Delegation – Chinese Scholars and Students Seminar, Japan, 9 August 2003.

[56] Xiang Biao, "Promoting Knowledge," 30.

university in Beijing that almost went as far as to guarantee spouses of diaspora professionals a job with high pay and status[57].

In an attempt to incorporate overseas Chinese professionals the Chinese government has also attempted to acknowledge and publicize the achievements of overseas Chinese professionals who have actually returned to China. They have recognized them through conferences that have taken place multiple times throughout the past two decades such as the ones held in 1991, 1997, and 2003[58]. These conferences have been hosted by a variety of different government entities in cooperation with one another. This no doubt points to the importance of coordination between various government entities for effective diaspora engagement. Of course, though, these policies of honoring returned Chinese professionals may be more symbolic than substantive in nature but still work to incorporate overseas and returned Chinese professionals[59].

In regards to concrete programs run by the Chinese government, Biao divides them into two types of programs: funds-based and activity-based[60]. Examples of funds-based programs given by Biao are programs meant to encourage short-term visits of overseas Chinese professionals, programs to support collaborative research projects between China-based scholars and overseas Chinese professionals, programs to support overseas Chinese professionals to start research projects in China, and programs aimed at recruiting outstanding professionals to work in strategic areas. A well-known program meant to encourage short-term visits of overseas Chinese

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[57] Ibid.

[58] Ibid.

[59] Xiang Biao, "Promoting Knowledge," 31

[60] Xiang Biao, "Promoting Knowledge," 32.

professionals, for example, is known as the Sunlight Plan. The Sunlight Plan is a fund that supports short-term visits for the purposes of academic exchange, training, participation in joint PhD programs, the transfer of technology to underdeveloped regions in China, and participation in research and development at state-owned large and medium enterprises[61]. The Sunlight Plan also facilitates the setting-up of larger collaborative activities between overseas Chinese professionals and China. Biao gives the example of when Chinese diaspora members based in France visited the Gansu province in northwest China in July and August of 1997. These diaspora members visited over seventy institutes and signed fifty-six proposals for joint projects. The diaspora members also submitted two suggestions for agricultural technology and local development[62]. No doubt such proposals and suggestions point to the links between the diaspora, knowledge transfer, and China's development. Another fund based program is the Distinguished Young Scholars Program which has been set up by the National Science Foundation which grants RMB 550,000–800,000 (US$ 66,000–96,000) to scientists below forty-five years of age for a four year period. It is important to note that although this program is open to diaspora members, returned diaspora members, and Chinese citizens who have never emigrated, 80 percent of grant recipients are either current diaspora members or returned diaspora members[63]. This suggests the importance of allocating a large budget to general nation-wide research activities.

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[61] Ibid.

[62] Xiang Biao, "Promoting Knowledge," 33.

[63] Xiang Biao, "Promoting Knowledge," 35.

Activity-based programs are various, but the most conventional activity of this type of program is the invitation of Chinese professionals to visit China for the purposes of knowledge exchange such as the "One Hundred PhD Holders Homeland Visit Delegations" event. Another activity described by Biao is that of information exchange between specific knowledge-user institutes in China and members of the Chinese diaspora such as the program run by the Ministry of Science and Technology where local institutes all over China publicize their technology problems through an e-newsletter titled "Snapshots of Science and Technology for Overseas Chinese" and seek help from the diaspora[64]. Another example of an activity-based program is the Guangzhou Overseas Students Fair which was started in 1998 and is held during the Christmas break to cater to diaspora members working in the West and aims to introduce overseas students to the Chinese market[65]. We found the timing of this fair to be particularly interesting because it points to the Chinese government's special attention to the characteristics and intricacies of its diaspora. Moreover, it is important to mention here again that this fair is mostly a local initiative one again pointing to the importance of local initiatives.

Finally, the last type of initiative aimed at engaging the diaspora and specifically benefiting from their human capital is that of "official websites". The Chinese government has set up websites specifically catered to the diaspora. Biao explains how almost all government departments related to the diaspora have set up either entire websites or sections of websites to target the diaspora[66]. Grossman also speaks of how social networking and Web 2.0 have been used by the

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[64] Xiang Biao, "Promoting Knowledge," 34.

[65] Xiang Biao, "Promoting Knowledge," 39.

[66] Xiang Biao, "Promoting Knowledge," 41.

Chinese government to connect to its diaspora[67]. No doubt these have played a large role in attracting highly skilled members of the diaspora and facilitating the transfer of their knowledge to China as a survey conducted reveals that websites are by far the most important means of information and communication for the Chinese diaspora.[68]

## 2.1.6 Diaspora Engagement Policies of India

India seems to have also recognized the value of its overseas' talent and has actively formulated and implemented policies to this end. Although India only really started actively engaging their diaspora in the 1990s (as argued by Lall above), Eric Leclerc and Jean-Baptiste Meyer argue that a few countries in Asia have attempted to mobilize their offshore human capital before anyone else had thought about it. They argue that "India, for instance, had exercised the option of occasionally calling on the non-resident Indian (NRI) experts to offset brain drain effects as early as the 1960s and 1970s, although her efforts were not entirely successful.[69]"

More serious and successful efforts, however, really started in the late 1990s as Lall argues and coincided with the liberalization of the Indian economy. According to Daniel Naujoks, "India once had a closed economy that did not encourage foreign contributions, businesses, or investment. When the government liberalized the economy in 1991, diasporic Indians became more useful as agents of trade, investment, and technology.[70]" Hence, the government began to

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[67] Martin Grossman, "Diaspora Knowledge," 4.

[68] Xiang Biao, "Promoting Knowledge," 42.

[69] Eric Leclerc and Jean-Baptiste Meyer, "Knowledge Diasporas for Development," *Journal of Asian Population Studies* 3, no. 2 (2007): 156.

[70]**Daniel Naujoks, "Emigration, Immigration, and Diaspora Relations in India," Migration Information Source, http://www.migrationinformation.org/feature/display.cfm?ID=745 (accessed March 25, 2012).**

show significant interest in the diaspora and established a number of diaspora policies towards this end. One of the first steps towards this was the initiation of the Persons of Indian Origin Card Scheme. In 1999 the Indian government began this scheme which granted former Indian citizens and their non-Indian-born descendants (up to four generations) near parity with actual Indian citizens but did not permit them to vote, stand for election, or be employed by the government. A similar sort of scheme, the Overseas Citizenship of India, was created six years later and was aimed at those whose parents or grandparents once had or were eligible for Indian citizenship on January 26, 1950[71]. Similar to China's policy of issuing a "green card" for Chinese professionals with foreign passports, these two schemes were aimed at fostering feelings of belonging to Indians abroad and at facilitating their entrance into India as well as quelling demands for dual citizenship[72].

Thomas Lacroix and Simona Vezzoli have explained how in 2004 a separate ministry was created for the diaspora. Named the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs, it had three different categorical missions: 1) dealing with departure flows, 2) providing services and protection to overseas Indians, and 3) enhancing the development impact of the Indian diaspora[73]. Although the Indian government had already set up an annual diaspora conference in 2003 (the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas) that was meant to operate as a platform for interaction between overseas Indians, the Indian government, and interested segments of the Indian society, such as

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[71] Ibid.

[72] Simona Vezzoli and Thomas Lacroix, "Building Bonds for Migration and Development" (discussion paper published by Migration and Development Sector Project) Eschborn, 2010, 19.

[73] Ibid.

businessmen and cultural and charity organizations, this ministry set up many more of such initiatives[74].

Although there were many implemented initiatives, the two that are of most relevance to the diaspora's human capital contributions are known as The Global Indian Network of Knowledge and The Prime Minister's Global Advisory Council. The first of these two is an electronic network meant to facilitate knowledge transfers from abroad without requiring overseas experts to relocate. The second was also created with the objective of benefiting from the diaspora's human capital and was basically created to serve as a high-level body to draw upon the talent of overseas Indians.[75]

Similar to China's diaspora policies, India's diaspora policies include policies aimed at giving rights to non-citizens, facilitating their entrance into India, and finally specifically benefiting from the diaspora's human capital through knowledge transfer programs, conferences, and think-tanks. While there is literature on other countries such as Taiwan, Ireland, Korea, the Philippines, and Israel who have also actively courted their diasporas and succeeded in engaging them and facilitating their knowledge transfers, the literature on China and India is evidence enough of the importance of government policies in bringing about a high level of diaspora contributions to homeland development.

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[74] Daniel Naujoks, "Emigration".

[75] Thomas Lacroix and Simona Vezzoli, "Building Bonds," 31.

**2.2 Conceptual Framework**

To conclude this chapter we will now refer to the conceptual framework employed by this thesis. This thesis uses Gramlen's concept of "transnational governmentality" and his ensuing policy typology to examine the Egyptian government's emigration and diaspora related policy and determine whether or not it is conducive towards diaspora engagement and specifically knowledge transfer.

2.2.1 Transnational Governmentality

Gamlen's concept of "transnational governmentality" is primarily based on Michael Foucault's notion of governmentality[76]. For Foucault this term refers to "the means by which a population is rendered governable, through the construction, machination, and normalization of a set of governmental apparatuses and knowledges.[77]" While Foucault's term was indeed developed over a period of years and is no doubt multi-faceted, it basically refers to the way in which a state exercises control or governs its population. Gamlen, though, builds on this idea. He argues that whereas a state is usually concerned with the governmentality of its domestic population, it is possible for states to be also interested in the governmentality of their transnational emigrants or their diasporas. By being interested in more than just the governmentality of its domestic populations, Gamlen believes the state is thus transnationalizing governmentality[78].

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[76] Alan Gamlen, "Diaspora Engagement Policies: What Are They, and What Kinds of States Use Them?" (working paper published by COMPAS) Oxford, 2005, 5.

[77] Michael Foucault, "Governmentality" in *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality* edited by G. Burchell et al, (Chicago: University of Chicago) 1978, 102-103.

[78] Alan Gamlen, "Diaspora Engagement" 5.

Gamlen's main focus is on diaspora engagement policies. He looks specifically at diaspora engagement policies and sees them as part of a state's process of transnationalization governmentality. Gamlen's understanding of diaspora engagement policies as part of a state's attempt to trasnationalize governmentality is actually quite similar to Peggy Levitt's ideas on diaspora engagement policies. Peggy Levitt also interprets states' diaspora engagement policies as an attempt by states to systematically redefine their boundaries to include members no longer officially in their residence[79]. This redefinition of boundaries is believed to allow states to reproduce what is known as citizen-sovereign relationships with members of their diasporas.

While citizen-sovereign relations usually refer to the exercise of power and authority over the subjects of a state, governmentality includes more than just the typical rationalities and institutions of sovereign power usually understood as belonging to citizen-sovereign relations. Instead, Mitchell Dean explains that governmentality also regards subjects, and the forces and capacities of living individuals, as members of a population that could be fostered, used, and optimized[80]. Hence, it is understood that as states redefine their borders, transnationalize governmentality, and reproduce citizen-sovereign relations with their diasporas they are actively seeking the benefits that could be drawn from their diasporas whether financial (such as remittances or investment) or nonfinancial (such as the transfer of human and social capital) in nature. Formulating and implementing these diaspora engagement policies, then, ensures the diaspora's continued involvement in its homeland and a state's benefit from this.

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[79] Peggy Levitt, "Transnational Migration: Taking Stock and Future Direction," *Global Networks* 1, no. 3 (2001): 202.

[80] Mitchell Dean, *Governmentality: Power and Rule in Modern Society,* (Great Britain: Sage Publications), 1999, 20.

2.2.2 Diaspora Engagement Policy Typology

Gramlen's framework of the transnationalization of governmentality also emerges as a result of his systematic comparison of all the different types of policies being followed by seventy different states. His work brings forth three different types of diaspora-engagement policies: a) capacity building policies, b) extending rights to the diaspora, and c) extracting obligations form the diaspora. Each of these three policies also has subtypes as can be seen in the figure below. We will now devote some time to exploring what Gamlen means by each of his diaspora engagement policy types.

**Figure 2.3: Diaspora Engagement Policy Typology**
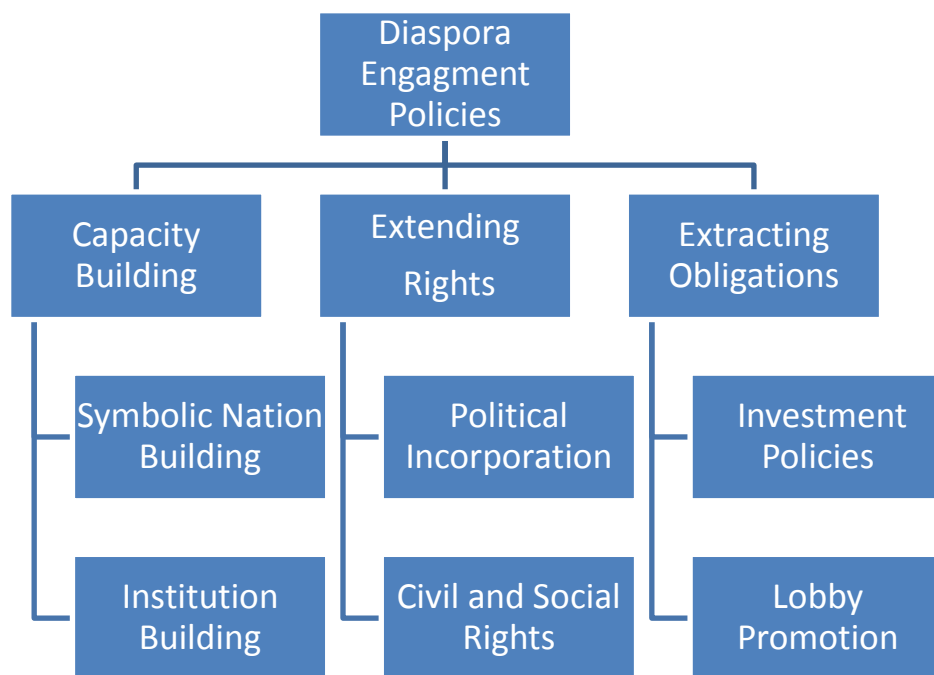


Source: Based on Alan Gamlen, "Diaspora Engagement Policies: What Are They, and What Kinds of States Use Them?" (working paper published by COMPAS) Oxford, 2005.

As mentioned earlier, diaspora engagement policies are understood to be part of a state's attempt to recreate citizen-sovereign relations with its diaspora members. In order for such relations to be produced, though, there must be a "cohesive, state-centric national society at the transnational

scale, with a corresponding set of institutions.[81]" The first of Gamlen's policy types—capacity building—includes two sub-policy types (symbolic nation building and institution building) and work to this end.

The first policy subtype of symbolic nation building is aimed at strengthening the symbolic bases of an imagined 'diaspora' community. State policies of this type attempt to produce a diaspora that is homogenous and that feels allegiance to its home state. According to Gamlen, policies of this type vary but seem to all be aimed at increasing emigrants' sense of belonging to a transnational community i.e. their nation's diaspora. For example, states would promote the culture of their state abroad amongst their diaspora members, would use inclusive symbols and rhetoric, would shape its media and public relations in a way that targets the diaspora, and would host conventions and conferences for the diaspora.

The second policy subtype of institution building aims to give the state systems and institutions to govern it diaspora. So, while symbolic nation building policies aim to make the diaspora governable, institution building policies aim to facilitate the governability of the diaspora by furnishing it with institutions for this end. Policies of this subtype would include things like monitoring (where institutions collect statistics about their emigrants for example), the creation of consultative diaspora bodies, and the creation of dedicated diaspora offices and bureaucracies.

The second policy type also relates to a state's objective of transnationalizing citizenship. Basing his conception of rights on Marshall's classic citizenship theory, Gamlen explains that states try and extend civil, political, and social rights to members of their diaspora through what he labels

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[81] Alan Gamlen, "Diaspora Engagement," 22.

as the extending rights policy type.[82] Under this larger policy of extending rights, Gamlen once again has two policy subtypes—political incorporation and civil and social rights.

The main goal behind a state's use of political incorporation policies is the creation of incentives for diaspora members to become involved in transnational activities that would benefit their home states. Gamlen asserts that "the rationale behind politically incorporating emigrants is that this upgraded membership status will flatter or appease expatriates, producing goodwill relationships that help to protect steady flows of remittances and investments.[83]" Policies that fall under this policy type vary but usually relate to issues of voting, nationality, or other special membership concessions.

The second sub-policy type of civil and social rights is also related to a state's attempt at the extension of rights to its citizens abroad. Since guaranteeing citizens' civil rights is an essential element of legitimacy for any state, a state who embarks on diaspora policies of this type aims to appear as its diaspora's legitimate transnational sovereign. Policies that fall under this category relate to a state's recruitment, deployment, and protection of its overseas workers[84]. Likewise, issues related to healthcare and welfare are also at times the subject of state's diaspora engagement policies.

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[82] Alan Gamlen, "Diaspora Engagement," 10.

[83] Ibid.

[84] Alan Gamlen, "Diaspora Engagement," 12.

In return for extending rights to their transnational citizens, states also attempt to extract obligations from their diasporas. Gamlen purports that "the strength of states' claims to legitimately extract benefits from 'their' diasporas arguably flows from their reciprocal provision of benefits.[85]" Of course it is important to note here that the use of the term obligations is not a literal one. Most often there is no actual (legal or other) obligation that can be derived from the diaspora by the state; it is not really an obligation. It is understood that diaspora members are not obliged to do anything but may simply feel obliged in return for the many rights extended to them for example. The obligations that states tend to extract from their diasporas relate to two types of benefits—economic and political. In Gamlen's typology, the policy subtype of investment policies relates to economic benefits. The second policy subtype then relates to the political benefits that can be amassed from its diaspora and is termed lobby promotion. Since this thesis is concerned with the role of the diaspora in transferring knowledge for the purposes of home country development we will only discuss Gamlen's first policy subtype of investment policies.

When speaking of investment policies, Gamlen is not only speaking of remittances, FDI transfers, and the creation of special economic zones to attract expatriate investments, he is also speaking of a wide variety of measures taken by the government to benefit from the diaspora in a way that could assist in the state's economic development. Of this wide variety of measures, we are mainly concerned with what Gamlen refers to as knowledge transfer programs. Gamlen explains that because new economic growth theory perceives knowledge as the engine of growth, knowledge transfer programs are often seen as crucial aspects of state's diaspora engagement policies. He argues

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[85] Alan Gamlen, "Diapsora Engagement," 13.

Countries with high emigration fear a 'brain drain' of the highly skilled, representing both a loss on these investments and forfeiture of future gains through knowledge production. The prospect of mobilizing highly skilled diasporas to increase knowledge production at home is attractive to many states, especially those fearing brain drain[86].

Gamlen then speaks of two types of knowledge transfer programs—the first one he explains is the United Nations' Transfer of Knowledge Through Expatriates program (TOKTEN) and the second is the virtual cluster approach[87]. UNDP's TOKTEN program is mainly concerned with facilitating temporary returns by researchers in diasporas for short-term consultancies or fellowships in their respective home countries. The virtual cluster approach instead relies on an infrastructure to facilitate communication and cooperation through the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs). This virtual cluster approach depends on brain circulation networks to develop viable ideas to benefit the home-country.[88]

Thus, Gamlen's framework suggests that for governments to successfully engage their diasporas and get to the level where they are able to benefit from their diasporas' human capital, they must at first attempt to build a transnational nation symbolically and build institutions to serve it, and then extend rights to their diasporas in order that they may finally extract obligations from their diasporas.

**Figure 2.4: Diaspora Engagement Policy Sequence**



Capacity Building → Extending Rights → Extracting Obligations

[86] Alan Gamlen, "Diaspora Engagement," 16.

[87] Ibid.

[88] Ibid.

This framework is applied to Egypt's emigration and diaspora related policies in order to see whether or not Egypt's policies can actually be considered diaspora engagement policies that are conducive to the Egyptian diaspora's engagement. The policies found are assessed by Gamlen's three-type policy breakdown trying to see whether or not Egypt formulates and implements such policies. It must be noted that although this paper is focused on the third policy type—that of extracting obligations via knowledge transfer programs, this research investigates whether or not and how Egypt is pursuing the first two policy types as well since as we have seen that the success of the final policy type is dependent on successfully carrying out the first two policy types. However, research on the third policy type is limited to investment policies and particularly knowledge transfer programs since that is the focus of this thesis. The other country experiences reviewed in the first part of this chapter as well as Gamlen's policy typology will be used as a ruler against which to measure the comprehensiveness and success of Egypt's policies.

## CHAPTER THREE

## HISTORICAL CHAPTER ON EGYPTIAN EMIGRATION:

## MIGRATION PATTERNS & POLICY THROUGH THE YEARS

### 3.1 Introduction

Currently Egypt is considered the largest labor-sending country in the region. Yet, this was not always the case. Egyptian migration patterns have vacillated over the decades and can be viewed as having undergone five distinct phases (as Ayman Zohry has identified): the phase prior to 1974, the phase of expansion from 1974-1984, the phase of contraction from 1984-1988, the phase of deterioration from 1988-1992, and the current phase.[89] It is important to trace the patterns of Egyptian migration through these different phases while concentrating specifically on Egyptian highly skilled emigration patterns in order to better understand how the Egyptian diaspora can relate to Egypt's development. This historical review will also focus on Egyptian government policy and how it developed throughout the years setting the stage for our analysis of current Egyptian government policy.

### 3.2 The Early Phase of Migration: Prior to 1974

As alluded to in this thesis's introduction Egypt currently has a large diaspora; however this was not always the case. Especially prior to the 1950s, emigration was not a central part of Egypt's history and very few Egyptians actually emigrated outside of Egypt[90]. Some Egyptian students

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[89] Ayman Zohry, "The Place of Egypt in the Regional Migration System as a Receiving Country," *Revue Europeenne des Migrations Internationales* 19, no. 3 (2003).

[90] Ibid.

did travel abroad during the nineteenth century and some Egyptians did emigrate temporarily for political reasons; however, such flows were very limited in nature. One of the most notable quotes from a population study published on Egypt in 1936 that demonstrates the difference between today's migration patterns and earlier ones is "Egyptians have the reputation of preferring their own soil. Few ever leave except to study or travel, and they always return…Egyptians do not emigrate."[91] Indeed, the only real systematic form of emigration that can be said to have taken place prior to the 1950s was that of Egyptian school teachers emigrating to Iraq during the 1930s in the context of a program where Egypt was providing teachers to other Middle Eastern countries[92]. It should be noted here that the first instance of systematic emigration was highly skilled in nature. Nonetheless, such highly skilled emigration was on a limited scale.

It was actually immigration, and not emigration, that was the overwhelming phenomenon during the first half of the twenty-first century with immigrants from the Eastern and the Northeastern Mediterranean countries coming into Egypt. The lack of substantial emigration flows and the heavy presence of immigrants in Egypt led Egyptian government policy at the time to be mainly concerned with immigration issues (such as the status of the non-Egyptian population) while barely paying attention to emigration[93]. The emigration policies that were in effect till the mid-1960s were largely composed of restrictions and limits on exists as well as difficult exit-visa requirements such as the specification of a number of professions and 'productive groups' which

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[91] Leila Talani, *From Egypt to Europe: Globalization and Migration Across the Mediterranean,* (London: I.B. Tauris), 2009, 64.

[92] Ayman Zohry, "The Place of Egypt".

[93] Ibid.

were barred from emigration[94].  Such preventive emigration policies were in tune with President Nasser's generally restrictive policies at the time. Generally speaking though, migration policy was not very developed at the time. Ali E. Hillal Dessouki states that before 1960, one would not even find mention of "migration" among government officials or in the mass media.[95]

The mid-1950s were characterized with the beginnings of political, economic, and demographic pressures such as the government's burden of providing jobs to all university graduates. Such pressures eventually culminated in the Egyptian government's active promotion of emigration in the 1960s. The first emigration promotion policy was only initiated in 1960s when the government began encouraging young Egyptians to pursue further education abroad[96]. The Egyptian government began to reconsider its former policy of restrictions and prohibitions due to the new political and economic circumstances Egypt was facing. The real policy shift took place, then, in 1967. On October of 1967, a ministerial committee for manpower issued a major policy statement emphasizing the importance of establishing a stable migration policy. It recommended the encouragement of work abroad, the collection of information about foreign labor markets, a survey of the manpower force in Egypt specifically the areas with a surplus and shortage of labor, the establishment of contacts with countries in need of agricultural laborers, the simplification of the bureaucracy related to emigration, and the preservation of contacts with emigrants that could encourage them to visit Egypt and remit parts of their savings.[97] Here it is extremely interesting to note that the latter part of these recommendations i.e. the

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[94] Ibid.

[95] Ali E. Hillal Dessouki, "The Shift in Egypt's Migration Policy: 1952-1978," *Middle Eastern Studies* 18, no. 1 (1982): 53-68.

[96] Ayman Zohry, "The Place of Egypt".
[97] Ali E. Hillal Dessouki, "The Shift," 55.

recommendation that Egypt maintain and preserve ties with its emigrants while encouraging them to return back and remit savings can be said to be the first time an Egyptian governmental body realized the value of its emigrants abroad and may compose the seeds of a diaspora engagement policy.

These beginnings of a pro-emigration policy were at least in part effective in promoting the emigration of young Egyptians as the total number of requests for emigration in 1969 totaled approximately 28,000 as opposed to 15,000 requests for all previous six years combined[98]. It should also be noted that of those that travelled, especially after 1967, many PhD students that had travelled abroad to study did not return to Egypt and settled down in their host countries. Nevertheless, the Egyptian government's promotion of emigration and work abroad was still combined with policies that restrained emigration. The Ministries of Health and Industry, for example, occasionally defended the necessity of imposing restrictions on the emigration of medical doctors and engineers. Likewise quotas were assigned in multiple fields such as medicine, dentistry, pharmacology, nursing, chiropractory, veterinary, engineering, architecture, statistics, and high school teachers of language, geography and history. The fields that were exempt from these constraints were interestingly agriculture, law, Islamic studies, fine and applied arts, economics and political science[99]. These sorts of quotas while meant to protect against the deterioration of Egypt's essential human capital, were not very clever as they failed to recognize the importance of specializations crucial to development such as agricultural experts and economists. Such constraints still did keep emigration in check during this phase—limiting

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[98] Leila Talani, "From Egypt," 64.
[99] Ali E. Hillal Dessouki, "The Shift," 57.

the number of highly skilled Egyptians that could have travelled abroad during this time; nevertheless they were not too prohibitive as not all quotas were actually filled.[100]

It was only with the advent of Sadat's rule that there was indeed a turning point in the Egyptian government's emigration policy. With Sadat's liberalization or *infitah* came a liberalization of emigration policy as well. Sadat's 1971 Constitution established emigration (permanent and temporary) as a right in Article 52. Various decrees and laws were issued since then to liberalize emigration policy. A decree issued in 1971 (No. 73), for example, gave Egyptian emigrants the right to be reinstated in their former governmental jobs within one year of their resignation in an attempt to encourage them to travel abroad and still be able to return to their jobs if their emigration was not smooth or successful[101]. An eighteen-point plan was also issued during the year 1971 that removed various bureaucratic and administrative restrictions on emigration such as those that dealt with issues of dual nationality, the lifting of exit visa requirements, the renewal of passports, and the reduction in the quantity of paper work needed for emigration. A year later, in 1972, the council of ministers further eased emigration procedures. Dessouki claims that at this time the deployment of Egypt's labor force became an "officially recognized policy objective."[102]

A note must be finally said about the nature of the policies of this phase. As he was speaking about the government policies of this phase, Dessouki argues that

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[100] Ibid.

[101] Ali E. Hillal Dessouki, "The Shift," 58.
[102] Ali E. Hillal Dessouki, "The Shift," 59.

In a manner truly reflective of Egypt's political system since 1952, migration policy has developed in a piecemeal, pragmatic and eclectic fashion. It evolved through practice guided by the ruling elite's cherished wisdom of 'trial and error'. It was molded in response to changing events and circumstances. Thus, one notices the lack of a coherent and concrete set of objectives based on an accurate estimate of manpower force and its development[103].

Clearly, emigration policies developed in this way could not have been very effective. Likewise, it must be noted that at this time there were countless committees, departments and organizations with conflicting jurisdictions and functions that also could not have been very effective in managing emigration or in maximizing the advantages that could have emerged as a result of this sort of emigration.

## 3.3. Egyptian Emigration during the Oil Boom: The Expansion Phase 1974-1984

The relaxation of emigration procedures at the dawn of Sadat's coming to power set the stage for a massive increase in the magnitude of emigration flows throughout the decade that followed. Directly after the 1973 war began the second phase of Egypt's emigration history. The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) oil embargo of 1973 and the decision to raise oil prices by 70 per cent led to a tremendous increase in oil revenues and allowed the oil-rich Arab states to embark on many ambitious development projects[104]. These development projects required much labor that was not available in the labor-poor Arab states. Hence, the demand for Egyptian manpower rose as a result of the 1973 oil boom. While the majority of emigration of this period consisted of low skilled labor migration, there were still highly skilled Egyptian migrants emigrating at this time. The increasing demand for teachers, for instance, spurred the emigration of skilled Egyptian teachers during this time. The Egyptian

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[103] Ali E. Hillal Dessouki, "The Shift," 55.
[104] Ayman Zohry, "The Place of Egypt".

government also supported the emigration of highly skilled members of the health sector such as doctors, veterinarians, pharmacists, and dentists who were also needed in the Gulf. The number of Egyptian emigrants in 1970 when compared with the number of emigrants in 1976 demonstrates the immense increase in Egyptian emigration during this phase. As estimated by CAPMAS, the number of emigrants in 1970 was about 70,000 as opposed to 1.4 million in 1976[105].

As a result of the increased number of Egyptian emigrants outside of Egypt, Presidential Decree No. 574 of 1981 was issued. This decree established the Ministry of State for Emigration Affairs. Leila Talani explains that "the role of this new ministry was to provide services to Egyptians willing to migrate abroad. The ministry was also in charge of drafting an Egyptian migration strategy aimed at favoring the economic development of Egypt[106]." Reflected in this new ministry's role was once again the Egyptian government's recognition of the potential usefulness of emigration for Egypt's development. However, as can be seen in Talani's description of the ministry's role, this recognition seems to have only been about the "economic" or financial advantages of emigration for Egypt.

Egypt's first comprehensive migration law, Law 111, appeared two years later and is actually still in effect today. It consists of five chapters and is titled "Emigration and Sponsoring Egyptians Abroad." The first chapter of this law establishes the right of Egyptians to emigrate, their right to remain Egyptian nationals (i.e. have dual nationality), and their right to enjoy

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[105] Ibid.

[106] Leila Talani, "From Egypt," 65.

constitutional and legal rights. The first chapter also states the Ministry of Emigration Affairs should do its best to strengthen emigrants' ties with Egypt. The first chapter of the law also established the Supreme Committee for Emigration which was to be headed by the Minister and included high-ranking officials from other ministries. Amongst the things the committee was responsible for was the setting up of training centers for potential emigrants and the provision of cultural, media, and national materials to Egyptians abroad that could help them maintain ties with their homeland. The second chapter of this law defines permanent migration, regulates it, and allows even permanent migrants to remain nationals of Egypt. The definition of permanent migrants (that is also adopted for this thesis) is: "the Egyptian who stays abroad permanently, by obtaining the nationality of a foreign country, or a permanent residence permit to stay in this country; or who stays abroad for at least ten years, or obtains an emigration permit from one of the countries of emigration specified by a resolution of the Minister concerned with Emigration Affairs." The third chapter then defines and regulates temporary migration. The definition for temporary migrant (also adopted in this thesis) is: "the Egyptian Citizen, who is not a student, or seconded employee, who settles and sets up his main activity abroad, and has a job to make his living, providing that he has stayed abroad for one year and has not taken the permanent emigration procedures." The fourth chapter details the numerous rights and advantages attributed to Egyptian emigrants by the Egyptian government such as being exempt from taxes and the right to return to your job in the public sector within two years of the date of emigration. Finally, chapter five consists of concluding and transitional provisions.


**3.4 Egyptian Emigration Following the Oil Bust: The Contraction Phase 1984-1988**

While Egyptian emigration rates were soaring during the expansion phase discussed above, they underwent a contraction during the mid-1980s. Oil prices had begun to decline in the early 1980s and the commencement of the Iran-Iraq war in 1983 brought along with it an even further decrease in oil prices as it aggravated tensions between members of OPEC[107]. Consequently, the demand for foreign labor in the Gulf seriously dwindled. This contributed to a major decrease in the demand for low skilled labor during this time—particularly for construction workers[108]. Likewise, it is important to note that at this time the demand for Asian workers began to grow vis-à-vis the demand for Arab workers; Asian workers were especially preferred for their political docility[109]. Furthermore, the Gulf States embarked during this phase on a policy aimed at replacing the foreign aspects of their labor force with nationals such as Saudi Arabia's policy of "Saudization"—still in effect today. It must be taken into consideration that accurate data about this phase of Egyptian emigration is quite limited and hence it may be difficult to completely deconstruct the dynamics of this phase. Nevertheless, estimates suggest that by 1985, the number of Egyptian emigrants had diminished to about 1.4 million from 2 million in 1980[110].

It is interesting to note, especially for our purposes, that although the demand for low skilled labor declined at this time and low skilled emigration to the Gulf decreased, this was not exactly the case with highly skilled Egyptian emigration. Zohry explains that highly skilled Egyptian emigrants gradually began to replace low skilled Egyptian emigrants. This is of particular interest to us as it points to the increasingly skilled nature of Egyptian emigration as well as the

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[107] Reuters "Iran-Iraq War Growing Factor in Oil Pricing" *The Toronto Star*, March 5, 1988, Business Today.

[108] Ayman Zohry, "The Place of Egypt".

[109] Ibid.

[110] Ibid.

upsurge of rich human capital in Egypt's diaspora[111]. Moreover, as Zahlan argues, it may make more sense to discuss "a redistribution of labor" at this time, as opposed to a simple reduction in the aggregate emigration rate[112]. Nonetheless a definite contraction of Egyptian emigration cannot be denied—especially when one examines the phase that followed a couple years later.

**3.5 The Deterioration Phase: Return Migration From 1988-1992**

The contraction phase discussed above was soon after followed by a deterioration phase that lasted from 1988-1992. This phase can be mainly defined by the phenomenon of return migration that characterized Egyptian migration flows of the time. Egypt witnessed a major flow of return migrants from the Gulf—of both highly skilled and low skilled migrants. It was the 1991 Gulf War that especially forced approximately 1 million Egyptian migrants (hosted by Kuwait and Iraq) to return to Egypt[113]. Besides the phenomenon of return migration, Egyptian migration flows at the time were also characterized by the decrease in the number of new contracts issued to Egyptians. Zohry demonstrates the extent of this decline when he says that

> Considering 1988 as a base year, the number of contracts halved in 1989. This big decline was due to the decrease in the number of contracts with Jordan, Iraq, Yemen, Saudi Arabia, and other Arab Gulf countries. In 1990, the number of contracts further decreased to 43 per cent (of the base year 1988). In 1990, however, contracts with Saudi Arabia and Libya increased.[114]

The effects of the Gulf War are definitely apparent in Zohry's statement. Similarly the International Labor Organization (ILO) explains that the number of Egyptians abroad declined

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[111] Ayman Zohry, "The Place of Egypt".

[112] A.B. Zahlan, "Labor Migration and Economic Integration in the Middle East," in M.C. Hudson (ed) *Middle East Dilemma*, (Tauris & Co: New York) 1999, 259-79.

[113] Ayman Zohry, "The Place of Egypt."

[114] Ibid.

from about 1.9 million in 1989 to about 1.5 million in 1991 which equates to approximately a 21.5 percent contraction[115].

## 3.6 The Current Phase: Increasing Permanent, Irregular, and Highly Skilled Emigration

Beginning in 1992 Egyptians began to emigrate frequently out of Egypt again and by the end of 1992 the number of Egyptians abroad consisted of about 2.2 million people[116]. This can be seen as the start of the current phase of Egyptian emigration. Perhaps the most distinctive feature of this phase is the increase in permanent Egyptian emigration. This permanent emigration took the form of permanent emigration to more developed countries—particularly to Europe. The table below contains data about both temporary and permanent emigration of Egyptians from the year 1982 to 1998. As can be seen, the number of permanent emigrants to developed countries grew by an average of 83 per cent from the year 1990 to 1998. The number of permanent emigrants to Europe specifically grew by 125 per cent. While temporary emigration also increased during this time, it was a much smaller increase of 68 per cent[117].

A note must be said here about the accuracy of this data and conflicts about it. As can be seen in the table below, the Egyptian MME estimated that the number of Egyptians abroad was almost 5 million in 1998. The accuracy of MME figures is contested though because the MME is not

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[115] Leila Talani, "From Egypt," 70.

[116] Ayman Zohry, "The Place of Egypt."

[117] Leila Talani, "From Egypt," 70.

aware of all those who emigrate—not all Egyptians who emigrate go through the MME. CAPMAS conversely reported the number of Egyptians abroad was only 2.7 million in the year 2000. CAPMAS estimates particularly rely on results of conducted censuses; however, this has repeatedly led to major underreporting as it appears that family members when asked about the number of family members living abroad tend to underreport (most likely in fear of taxes being levied on them or in fear of issues of military conscription)[118]. Hence, there are problems with both sources of data. However, it should be noted that both sources correspond regarding the proportion of temporary and permanent emigration (with two-thirds being temporary and one-third being permanent).

**Table 3.1: Total Temporary and Permanent Migration[119]**

|  | 1982 | 1983 | 1984 | 1990 | 1995 | 1998 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Temporary Migration** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Arab Countries** | 2,946,120 | 3,206,169 | 3,157,139 | 2,083,262 | 2,129,050 | 3,511,859 |
| **African Countries** | 600 | 2,411 | 75,358 | 952 | - | 2,545 |
| **Asian Countries** | - | 284 | 635 | 601 | - | 6,073 |
| **Total** | **2,946,720** | **3,208, 864** | **3,112,132** | **2,084,815** | **2,129,050** | **3,520,477** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Permanent Migration** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Australia** | 50,000 | 42,718 | 45,735 | 32,423 | 75,000 | 80,350 |
| **European Countries** | 155,775 | 100,998 | 155,503 | 225,521 | 400,068 | 506,028 |
| **American Countries** | 260,440 | 195,111 | 444,438 | 485,545 | 396,000 | 780,841 |
| **Total** | 466,215 | 338,827 | 645,676 | 743,219 | 871,068 | 1,367,219 |

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[118] Minessy, Mohamed. Interview by Iman Dawood. Cairo, Egypt. April 9, 2012.

[119] Ibid.

| Total Temporary and Permanent Migration | 3,412,935 | 3,547,691 | 3,878,808 | 2,828,034 | 3,000,118 | 4,887,696 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

Source: Egyptian Ministry of Manpower and Emigration, Emigration Sector, as reported by CARIM, 2008, updated 7 February 2005.

It should also be noted that another qualifying characteristic of this phase is the increase in irregular migration of Egyptians to Europe. It can be said that following the tightening of policies by the European Community and particularly after the Schengen agreement in 1990 and the Maastricht Treaty, Egypt faced an upsurge in the number of irregular emigrants.[120] It is important to keep in mind that although irregular migration is often associated with low skilled workers, in the case of Egypt these irregular migrants are not only poorly-educated unemployed youth but also in many situations fresh graduates[121]. An agreement signed between the Egyptian government and the Italian government in 2006 is one of the ways that the Egyptian government has tried to regulate migrant flows. Although the agreement has not been very successful due to the fact that finding potential migrants in Egypt with the skills required by Italy has been difficult, this agreement was still able to legalize the approximately 5000 irregular migrants in Italy[122]. This high number of irregular migrants and an agreement aimed at mitigating the problem definitely points to the magnitude of the phenomenon in recent decades.

This phase also witnessed a major increase in the amount of remittances received by Egypt—especially in this last decade. In the year 2000, for example, remittances totaled approximately

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[120] Ayman Zohry, "Egypt: A New Player a New Player in the Euro Mediterranean Migration System," (2006): 5.

[121] Ayman Zohry, "Egypt: A New Player," 6.

[122] Ahmed Ghoneim, "Evaluating the Institutional Framework Governing Migration in Egypt," Partners in Development, 2009, 9-10.

$2.85 million and continued to increase reaching $8.69 million in 2008[123]. As mentioned earlier in this thesis, remittances in the year 2009 were only $7.1 million. This decline can be attributed to the financial crisis that no doubt affected the amount of remittances remitted back to Egypt. It is important to mention this overall gradual increase in remittances over the span of this decade due to the importance of remittances for our topic of Egypt's development. Although it is generally agreed that the majority of remittances are spent on consumption, studies have shown that remittances have also played a role in the formation of human capital in Egypt. A study conducted by Asmaa Elbadawy and Rania Roushdy found that remittances have a mild positive effect on the schooling of boys aged 15-17 and a strong positive effect on the school of university-aged boys.[124] Furthermore, the same study found that remittances had a positive effect on the schooling of girls aged 6-11 but a mild effect on the schooling of university-level girls.[125] Remittances have been responsible for not only increasing the level or years of schooling for some children but have also been instrumental in putting or keeping girls in school. Because many families in Egypt are less likely to send girls to school if they have a limited income, remittances have played a part in increasing this limited income and allowing girls who would have never been able to attend or continue their education to do so. We mention this effect because it is no doubt relevant to human capital and Egypt's development.

Now that we have looked at some of the developments of this phase, it is interesting to examine characteristics of the current day diaspora. Currently, estimates of the number of Egyptians

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[123] The World Bank, *Migration and Remittances Factbook 2011* (Washington DC: The World Bank, 2011)

[124] Asmaa Elbadawy and Rania Roushdy, "Impact of International Migration and Remittances on Child Schooling and Child Work: The Case of Egypt," Working Papers 545, (Economic Research Forum, 2010), 16.

[125] Ibid.

abroad range from 3 and 8 million[126]. It seems as though the figure that the majority agrees on lies somewhere in between 6.5 and 7.5 million[127]. This is definitely a substantial number as it composes about ten percent of the Egyptian population. It is also interesting to note the distribution of emigrants amongst countries in both the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the Arab world. The two graphs below illustrate the geographical breakdown of Egyptians in OECD countries and in Arab countries according to the latest comprehensive data available at CAPMAS.

**Figure 3.2: Distribution of Egyptian Emigrants in Arab Countries by Country of Residence 2004**
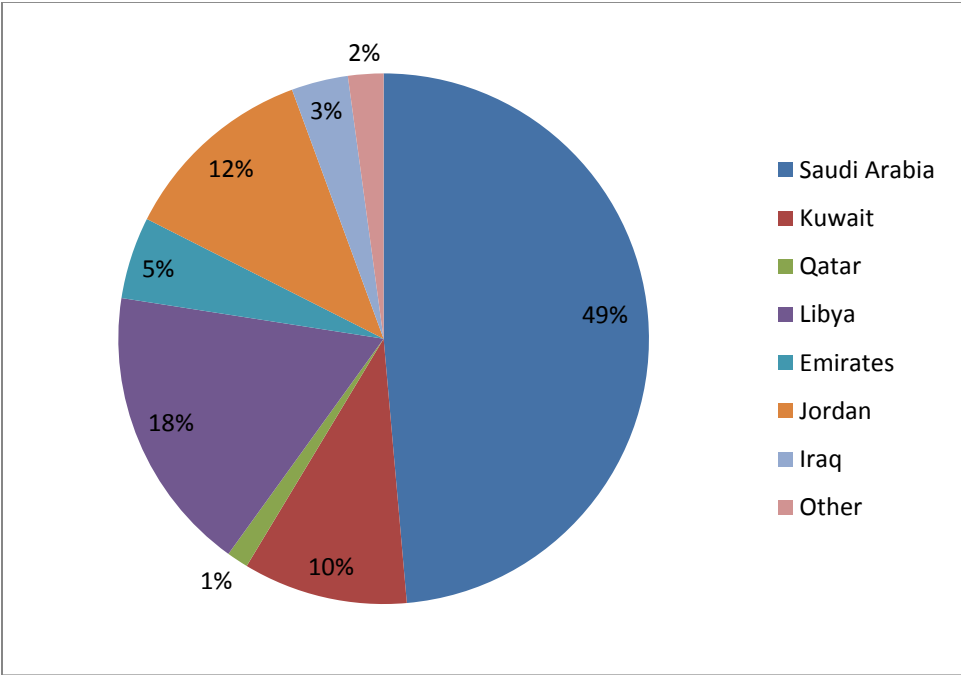


Source: Data Derived from CAPMAS 2004

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[126] Omar Ashour, "El Baradie".

[127] Minessy, Mohamed. Interview by Iman Dawood. Cairo, Egypt. April 9, 2012.

**Figure 3.3: Distribution of Egyptian Emigrants in OECD Countries by Country of Residence (2000)**
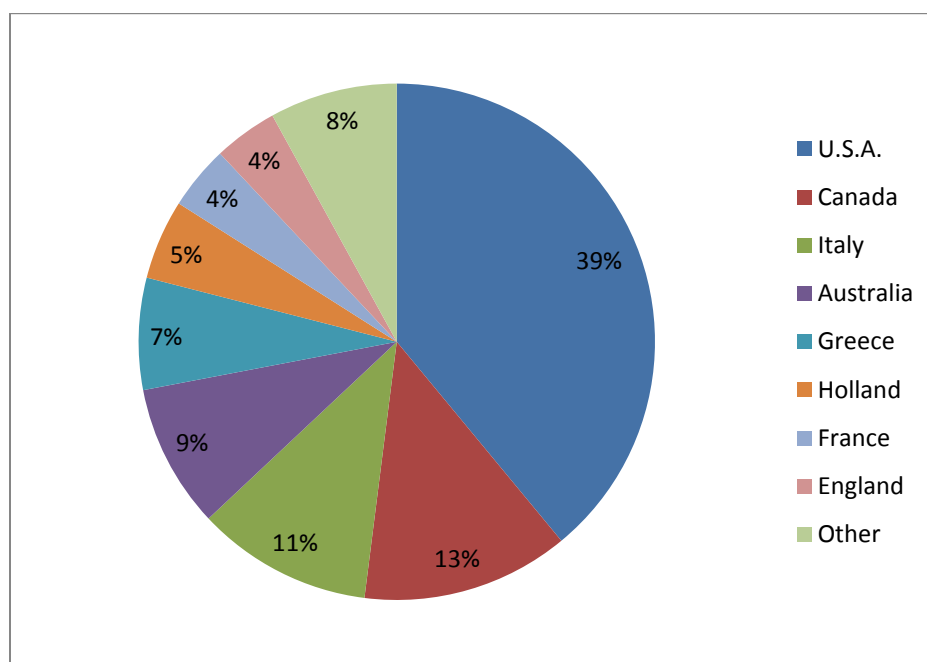


Source: Data Derived from CAPMAS 2000

While the distribution of Egyptian emigrants and the proportion of temporary to permanent migration may initially give the impression of a low skilled Egyptian diaspora, such an impression is misleading as in reality a large portion of the temporary emigrants housed in Arab countries are actually quite skilled. Saudi Arabia currently houses the largest portion of highly skilled Egyptians.[128] Unlike the 1970s where most emigrants in the Gulf were low skilled construction workers, there are currently many highly skilled emigrants (such as doctors, engineers, business school graduates, and school teachers) currently employed in the Gulf.[129] In 2002, for example, 43.4 per cent of Egyptians in Arab countries were scientists, managerial, and

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[128] *The Road Not Travelled: Education Reform in the Middle East and Africa*, (Washington DC: World Bank) 2008, 251.

[129] Minessy, Mohamed. Interview by Iman Dawood. Cairo, Egypt. April 9, 2012.

technicians[130]. More up to date figures are unavailable yet it is likely that such a percentage is even higher today as the share of low skilled workers in the Gulf is generally decreasing while the share of highly skilled workers is increasing. This development points to an increasing rate of Egyptian brain drain and points to the serious need for diaspora engagement policies that at least try to make up for this brain drain by transferring knowledge from the Egyptian diaspora.

In regards to Egyptians living in OECD countries, the OECD's online database does have data about the level of education of immigrants residing in the OECD. In this case, there is a wide variety with the lowest percentage of Egyptians possessing a tertiary education residing in Italy (21 per cent) and with the highest percentages in Canada and the United States (65 per cent-62 per cent respectively) in the year 2008. The table below details the educational attainment of Egyptians in the rest of the OECD countries. From this data, one can calculate that 47 per cent of Egyptian immigrants in OECD countries possess at least tertiary education which is approximately five times the level of Egyptians possessing tertiary education residing in Egypt— only 9.59 per cent of Egyptians possessed tertiary education in 2008.[131]

**Table 3.4: Percentage of Immigrants in OECD countries with Tertiary Education or Advanced Research Programs**

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[130] "The Road Not Traveled" 252.

[131] Ayman Zohry and Priyanka Debnath, "A Study on the Dynamics of the Egyptian Diaspora: Strengthening Development Linkages." IOM. 2010.

| Country of Residence | Percentage (%) |
|---|---|
| Australia | 31.3 |
| Austria | 30.6 |
| Belgium | 41.5 |
| Canada | 65.4 |
| Denmark | 33.3 |
| France | 43.5 |
| Greece | 26.0 |
| Ireland | 58.9 |
| Italy | 21.7 |
| Spain | 33.0 |
| Sweden | 47.2 |
| Switzerland | 51.2 |
| United Kingdom | 43.5 |
| United States of America | 62.7 |

Source:  The OECD Database in Ayman Zohry and Priyanka Debnath, "A Study on the Dynamics of the Egyptian Diaspora: Strengthening Development Linkages." last modified 2010. IOM. http://www.egypt.iom.int/Doc/A%20Study%20on%20the%20Dynamics%20of%20the%20Egyptian%20Diaspora%20%28English%29.pdf , 28.

Egyptians in the diaspora not only have a higher educational profile than Egyptians in Egypt, but they seem to have also gained many additional and useful skills upon travelling and working in their host countries that they would not have gained had they remained within Egypt.  Zohry and Debnath found in a study conducted on the Egyptian diaspora that 44.3 per cent of Egyptians living in Arab countries surveyed felt that their skill levels were enhanced as a result of staying and working abroad. The study also found that of those surveyed in OECD countries, 97.5 per cent of them felt that they had acquired new skills while working abroad.[132]  These findings suggest that the Egyptian diaspora, more so in OECD countries but also in Arab countries is in possession of many skills as a result of their emigration.

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[132] Ayman Zohry and Priyanka Debnath, "A Study," 45.

Egyptians abroad are not only on the whole more educated and in possession of skills as a result of studying or working abroad, but many of them are scientists, scholars and experts. Some estimates have claimed that the overall number of such highly skilled Egyptians in the diaspora is around one million. In an article titled "Egyptian Expatriates Help Egypt's Emerging Industries," Noha Hatata argues that "approximately a million Egyptians residing outside of Egypt are successful and accomplished scientists and experts in various fields[133]." The important idea here is not necessarily the exact number of Egyptians abroad who are highly skilled, but the popular perception that there are many Egyptians abroad that are successful and accomplished. Ibrahim Badran, who was at one point president of the Academy of Scientific Research and Technology (ASRT), explains that while on mission he had visited universities in seventeen states in the United States and claims that he always found exceptional Egyptians at each of these institutions. Galal Elgemeie, First Undersecretary of the State for Scientific Research at the MOHESR, confirms this perception arguing that Egyptians abroad are very talented. He explains that Egyptians in the diaspora are of "a very high caliber" and that they are able to succeed in environments such as advanced countries in the OECD where there is a high rate of knowledge creation and discovery. Egyptians are not only productive when in these environments but they are also very good at innovation[134].

Thus, it is extremely important to note that the above mentioned characteristics of Egyptians abroad relate to Egyptian migrants abroad specifically. They do not take into consideration the characteristics of the rest of the Egyptian diaspora such as the second-generation Egyptians born to Egyptian migrants for example. Although no data on the rest of the Egyptian diaspora is

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[133] Noha Hatata, "Egyptian Expatriates Help Egypt's Industries," in *Daring to Care* ed. Seheir Kansouh-Habib (Cairo: AFICS, 2011) 433.

[134] El-Gemeie, Galal. Interview by Iman Dawood. Cairo, Egypt. April 10, 2012.

available, we can definitely assume that the rest of the Egyptian diaspora is also quite skilled and possesses much essential human capital that can be useful for Egypt's development. No doubt any effective diaspora engagement strategy should also take into account the rich resources available in the entire diaspora and not just the migrants themselves. We will devote the next two chapters to examining this.

**3.7 Conclusion**

This chapter has reviewed Egyptian migration patterns beginning with the early phases of Egyptian migration and concluding with the state of Egyptian emigration today. We have traced Egyptian emigration patterns finding that they have been especially affected by oil and geopolitical circumstances in the region. We noted the expansion of Egyptian emigration during the oil boom, the contraction of Egyptian emigration after the oil bust, and the return of Egyptian emigrants to Egypt during the years of the Gulf War. We then examined the current gradual increase in Egyptian highly skilled emigration to the Gulf and the increase in permanent emigration—particularly to Europe. We also noted the existence of a highly skilled Egyptian diaspora—both in OECD and Arab countries.

It has been also interesting to observe the policies of the different Egyptian regimes throughout the different phases—starting with Nasser's especially restrictive emigration policies, followed by Sadat's liberalization of Egyptian emigration policies, and ending with the introduction of Egypt's most comprehensive emigration law at the beginning of Mubarak's rule (Law 111) in 1983 which continued with Sadat's unrestrictive policy nature. Perhaps it is important to mention here the absence of any real return migration policy. As we have seen, the Egyptian government

has been bent on encouraging emigration throughout the last couple of decades and has not attempted to bring about the return of any of its emigrants. It is now necessary to delve further into the current state of Egypt's policies to see whether or not the government has implemented policies that attempt to benefit from the diaspora without requiring its return. We will use Gamlen's policy typology, outlined in chapter 2, to examine Egyptian policies towards the diaspora in the next two chapters.

**CHAPTER FOUR**

**THE EGYPTIAN GOVERNMENT'S DIASPORA ENGAGEMENT POLICIES:**

**CAPACITY BUILDING AND EXTENDING RIGHTS**


**4.1 Introduction**

After reviewing in the last chapter Egyptian migration patterns and the Egyptian government's policy towards emigration (and specifically highly skilled emigration) through the years, this chapter explores the Egyptian government's policies towards the diaspora to see whether or not they can be considered diaspora engagement policies according to Gamlen's policy typology. Since no studies exist to our knowledge that contain a comprehensive review of Egypt's policies towards the diaspora, research had to be conducted towards this end. Egypt's diaspora policies are explored below through Gamlen's diaspora engagement policy typology. Gamlen's three-type policy breakdown is used to navigate the complex field of Egyptian government policy. This chapter deals with the first two policy types of Gamlen's typology—capacity building and extending rights policies. Although we are primarily interested in assessing whether Egypt's policies are conducive to knowledge transfer, we will still examine these policy types since Gamlen has identified that the success of a government's efforts at extracting such obligations from the diaspora is bent on its successful pursuit of the first two policy types. The next chapter will then be devoted to the main focus of this thesis which is the Egyptian government's attempts at extracting obligations, investment policies, and knowledge transfer programs.


**4.2 Capacity-Building Policies: Symbolic Nation-Building &Institution Building**

As explained in chapter 2, states pursue capacity building policies in order to be able to communicate with their diasporas and therefore be able to build a nation symbolically (by promoting their culture abroad for example) and build institutions (such as a specialized ministerial level agency) to serve the diaspora. In this section we will first examine Egyptian government initiatives that fall under the symbolic nation building policy type and then we will examine the initiatives that fall under the institution building policy type.

In Gamlen's policy typology, he refers to the use of inclusive rhetoric and symbols as a method of symbolic nation building.  He explains that home states, while attempting to engage with their diasporas, often make symbolic gestures to reinclude the diaspora within their national population. He states that "attempts at (re)inclusion are expressed in high-level rhetoric celebrating emigrants as national heroes, and bestowing them with prizes and accolades[135]." Our research revealed that it is in fact part of the Egyptian government's policy to symbolically reinclude the diaspora through this method. Although this specific intent was not documented in Law 111 or any legal document, the government does frequently use high-level rhetoric when targeting the diaspora. The government's frequent use of the term "Sons of Egypt" to describe Egyptians abroad no doubt is an example of this. Likewise, the government attempts to reinclude the diaspora through the activities of the MOFA, the MOHESR, and sometimes the MME. The MOFA's consulates in diaspora-hosting countries, for instance, claim to work to make Egyptians (both the migrants themselves and their families) feel included by celebrating and honoring them. An example of this is when the Egyptian consulate in Sydney honored in March 2012 distinguished Egyptian students who got grades exceeding 99 per cent in the General Secondary

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[135] Alan Gamlen, "Diaspora Engagement," 6.

School Certificate in Australia[136]. The Cultural Affairs and Missions Sector of the MOHESR, though, seems to play an even stronger role than does the MOFA in specifically honoring highly skilled Egyptians in the diaspora through the work of its cultural attachés abroad. Elgemeie, while speaking of his experience as a cultural attaché in Berlin during the years of 2006-2009, explained that he would commonly celebrate the achievements of Egyptian experts and scientists abroad. He gave the example of the time he honored Egyptian engineer Hany Azir who built the Berlin Hauptbahnhof in Germany[137]. The MME seems to also play a role in this through its recognition of notable figures in the Egyptian diaspora—however; it seems to play a smaller role than do the previously mentioned agencies.[138] Such recognitions and celebrations do in fact seem to be aimed at reincluding the diaspora in theory; however, in reality these activities no doubt only incorporate a small segment of Egyptian diaspora and probably are not enough for the building of a symbolic Egyptian transnational state. Hence, we will examine Egypt's other attempts at symbolic nation building below.

Other methods of symbolic nation building, as discussed by Gamlen, relate to the promotion of a state's culture and the induction of diaspora members into it. The Egyptian government has indeed formulated a policy to this end as can be seen in Article 2 of Law 111 which dictates that the ministry related to emigration is deemed responsible for

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[136] Egyptian Consulate in Sydney honors distinguished Egyptian students," last modified 21 March, 2012. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs,
http://www.mfa.gov.eg/English/Ministry/News/Pages/NewsDetails.aspx?Source=6781921f-3993-444a-859e-ee26ce851de8&newsID=1b8990e6-591d-4e2c-a11f-d6591d05652d.

[138] Alaa El Khaseery, "Aisha Abdel Hady Meets Scholars and Citizens of Egypt Abroad." Al Nahar. December 9, 2010, http://www.masress.com/alnahar/24534.

> Maintaining the Arab language and culture, the national heritage as well as the spiritual ties among migrants, and disseminating them among their new generations through the following:
> • Enabling migrants' children to pursue their education according to the Egyptian educational systems.
> • Establishing Arab cultural centers where migrant gatherings exist, and providing them with libraries.

It should be noted that there is a divergence, however, between the formulation and implementation of this policy. While in writing it seems as though the MME would be the main body responsible for the implementation of such a policy, in reality it is the MOFA's consulates abroad that seem to be mainly in charge. Mohamed Minessy, Secretary General of the Egyptians Abroad Welfare Fund, explained in an interview that the activities listed in Article 2 of Law 111 and noted above are the MOFA's "indirect" forms of sponsoring Egyptians abroad. Such activities are not new and have been going on for decades. Perhaps the most established of these formulated policies in reality is that of enabling migrants' children to pursue their education according to the Egyptian system abroad. Minessy spoke of the proven importance of this for Egyptians abroad. The policy of establishing Arab cultural centers and providing them with libraries, though, does not seem to be actually implemented. At most, Egyptian consulates play a role in the promotion of Egypt's culture abroad through some dispersed activities. A recent example of this was the celebration of the day of the Egyptian family which took part on March 3rd, 2012 at the Egyptian consulate in Jeddah. The MOFA claims that the main purpose behind it was for Egyptians living in Saudi Arabia to "recall the atmosphere of family warmth and harmony of Egypt"[139]. However, besides a couple of such activities that probably do not reach the majority of Egyptians abroad, the Egyptian government does not have the reputation of being

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[139] "Egyptian Consulate in Jeddah celebrates the Day of the Egyptian Family," last modified 3 March, 2012, Ministry of Foreign Affairs,
http://www.mfa.gov.eg/English/Ministry/News/Pages/NewsDetails.aspx?Source=6781921f-3993-444a-859e-ee26ce851de8&newsID=bf99d08e-462e-43b6-aa72-2df790aad949.

in very close contact with its citizens abroad. Badran expressed that Egypt needs to pay more attention to these activities; giving the example of the Philippines, he argued that the success of such activities is crucial to successful diaspora engagement.

Gamlen also specifically mentions that states often shape their media and public relations to target expatriates as a means of symbolically building a nation. While this is no doubt still relevant for states like Egypt, Gamlen's understanding of "media" seems a bit outdated. Gamlen only speaks of satellite television channels, newspapers, and websites with no mention of more recent but perhaps even more effective forms of social media such as Facebook and Twitter which have become essential components of any entity's PR strategy. In Egypt's case the focus on media can be seen in Egypt's policy documents. Also in Article 2 of Law 111, the Egyptian government claims that

> The state shall sponsor Egyptians abroad and do its best to strengthen their ties with Egypt. The Minister concerned with Emigration Affairs shall take all necessary measures, issues all resolutions necessary for achieving this purpose, and specifies the means of ensuring this sponsorship, such as… Providing the mass media suitable for addressing the issues of interest for Egyptians abroad, as well as providing them with reliable information about their homeland.

This has in fact been implemented in reality—although once again the MME does not seem to be the main agency responsible for taking "all necessary measures" to this end. Instead the Ministry of State for Communications and Information Technology has played a larger role especially in terms of traditional media sources.

Egypt was, for instance, the first Arab country to start satellite broadcasting when it launched the Egyptian Satellite Channel in 1990. Nile TV International was also established a couple years later in 1994 and is similar to the Egyptian Satellite Channel except that it broadcasts in English

and French also[140]. Egyptian governmental newspapers such as Al-Ahram and Al-Akhbar newspapers have also been printed in a way and continue to be printed in a way so as to reach the cities that host large portions of the Egyptian diaspora abroad[141]. It should be noted here, though, that there have been demands from the Egyptian diaspora for better targeted media. In 2007, for example, the Vice President of the Egyptian Association in the United Kingdom called for the establishment of a satellite channel specific to Egyptians abroad[142]. This signifies that perhaps the implementation of Egypt's formulated policy is not that effective and that currently established forms of media do not fulfill the specific needs of the Egyptian diaspora.

More recently, the Egyptian government has exceeded Gamlen's limited perception of media and has attempted to use other forms of media to reach the Egyptian diaspora. In the last decade Egyptian ministerial websites, particularly those of the MOFA (http://www.mfa.gov.eg) and the Emigration Sector of the MME (http://www.emigration.gov.eg/) have been set up to cater to Egyptian expatriates. Created with this audience in mind, the MOFA website not only provides Egyptians abroad with information about Egyptian missions abroad but also offers services to members of the Egyptian diaspora such as passport renewal. Likewise, the website of the Emigration Sector is also burgeoning with information specific to Egyptian emigrants and also offers certain online services. A website titled "The Sons of Egypt Abroad" hosted by the State Information Services (http://www.sis.gov.eg/_VR/son/html/meclinindex.htm) was also created

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[140] Noureddine Miladi, "Satellite TV News and the Arab Diaspora in Britain: Comparing Al-Jazeera, the BBC and CNN," *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 32, no. 6, (2006) 949.

[141] Minessy, Mohamed. Interview by Iman Dawood. Cairo, Egypt. April 9, 2012.

[142] Salah El Sharbany, "An Satellite Channel for Egyptians Abroad," *Al Ahram*, September 25, 2007, http://www.news-bank.net/cached-version.aspx?id=hrm-249662&highlight=%D9%84%D9%85%D8%A4%D8%AA%D9%85%D8%B1%20%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B9%D8%A7%D9%85%20%D9%84%D9%84%D9%85%D8%B5%D8%B1%D9%8A%D9%8A%D9%86%20%D8%A8%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AE%D8%A7%D8%B1%D8%AC.

and seems to act as a portal for Egyptians abroad. Lately the Egyptian government has also begun to infiltrate the ranks of social media. In an effort to keep abreast of the changing media landscape especially after the Egyptian Revolution demonstrated the importance of social media, the MOFA just launched an official webpage on Facebook and created an official account on Twitter during the first couple months of the year 2012. On March 2nd, 2012 the Ministry stated that "within the framework of Ministry's keenness on achieving direct and rapid communication with all Egyptian citizens - in Egypt and abroad - the Ministry created an account on Twitter." Minessy argues that these online forms of communication have revolutionized the way the ministry communicates with Egyptians abroad and vice versa. Although it is too early to judge, considering the creation of these accounts was just within the last month or two, it seems as though social media will be one of the more important forms of media targeted at the diaspora by the Egyptian government. Currently though, its effectiveness in absorbing the Egyptian diaspora into a symbolic nation-state is unclear.

Conferences and conventions hosted by states seem to also play a role in many diaspora engagement strategies. According to Gamlen,

> In many cases, home-states have held large conferences and conventions with a range of purposes in mind: to symbolize a willingness to listen inclusively to 'constituents'; to meet or appoint diaspora 'representatives' and establish patronage relationships with them; to air state concerns and solicit feedback and help; and to broadcast messages at a captive audience[143].

In the case of Egypt, hosting conferences for the diaspora is definitely a part of its formulated policy towards the diaspora as can be seen in the following excerpt of Law 111. The law states that the ministry concerned with emigration should be responsible for "encouraging the

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[143] Alan Gamlen, "Diaspora Engagement," 7.

conferences and seminars that address national issues [for the diaspora]." While the formulated policy is definitely not clear enough in regards to why and how these conferences and seminars are to be hosted, at least such intent is expressed in Law 111.

Moreover though, this policy does not seem to have been implemented as formulated. It seems as though only a couple of conferences have been held towards this end by the Egyptian government. There has been mainly one general conference for the diaspora that was originally hosted by the Ministry of State for Emigration and then more recently was hosted by the MME. The main stated aim of these general conferences for Egyptians abroad, according to the MME, was the strengthening of ties between Egyptians living abroad and Egypt. Although they were meant to take place on a regular basis, the conferences were first initiated in 1984 but were only held on a sporadic basis afterwards. The conferences were initiated again after Aisha Abdel Hady became minister in 2006. The latest of these conferences was hosted in July of 2009 under the title "Interaction, Welfare, Development." Although it was meant to discuss a wide variety of topics of relevance to the diaspora, it seems as though there was a major focus on facilitating the investments of the Egyptian diaspora. The first session of the three day conference, for example, was headed by the Minister of Investment Mahmoud Mohieldeen and targeted the development process in Egypt, investment environment and conditions, and the role of the ministry in encouraging and facilitating the procedures for investments[144]. Wael Farrag, a senior official working in the MME and a member of the Egyptian Society for Migration, explains that besides the fact that they have been hosted in a sporadic manner, one of the main reasons these conferences have not been effective in incorporating the diaspora is that they have been focused

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[144] "The Conference in Brief," Emigration Sector, http://www.emigration.gov.eg/conference/Files/Brief.pdf (accessed April 17, 2012).

on extracting investment from the diaspora. He says that Egyptians feel like the government is constantly trying to "suck them dry" and hence they cannot see these conferences as more than a plot for extracting more money from them. It is therefore difficult to consider these conferences as a successful attempt by the government to symbolically build a transnational nation.

There have been other such conferences that have been hosted in a similarly erratic manner aimed at engaging with the diaspora but they have also been often discontinued after only a couple meetings—if even. Most recently, for example, a conference titled "1st Conference of Young Egyptians Abroad" hosted by the MME in collaboration with the National Youth Council and the Ministries of Investment, Civil Aviation, Tourism, Defense, Culture, Information, Education, Higher Education and Housing was hosted in 2010. However, it seems as though the year 2010 was the first and last time such a conference was hosted. It is doubtful that a conference hosted only one time could be very effective in encompassing the Egyptian diaspora. Nevertheless, this particular conference is of interest because it encompasses more than just migrants themselves but also aims at including a greater portion of the Egyptian diaspora—its youth.

Apparently, although hosting conferences and conventions may be an element of the Egyptian government's formulated diaspora engagement polices it is not one that is implemented as formulated. Minessy confirms this saying that although there have been gatherings of this sort that they have been mostly unsuccessful[145]. Mohieldin Hamed Tantawy, Undersecretary of the Central Department of Foreign Relations at the MME also says such conferences have been

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[145] Minessy, Mohamed. Interview by Iman Dawood. Cairo, Egypt. April 9, 2012.

ineffective; saying that although there have been many, nothing substantial has come out of these conferences. It is important to note that other conferences for the diaspora have been hosted in Egypt; however, they have been actually initiated by associations of the Egyptian diaspora or other nongovernmental associations in Egypt with a focus on knowledge transfer and hence will be discussed later in chapter 5.

It is understood that as governments are symbolically creating a nation state that includes their diasporas, they are also building institutions that can cater to their diasporas and help govern them. Gamlen speaks of the formation of consultative bodies and transnational networks composed of diaspora members as examples of these institutions. He clarifies that these sorts of institutions are often created to help states include members of their diaspora by providing them with useful means for channeling diaspora voices. It seems as though such institutions are mostly absent in the case of Egypt. The only real body created for the diaspora is the General Union for Egyptians Abroad which was created in 1985. Its board of members is composed of fifteen people (three returned Egyptian emigrants and twelve Egyptians still in the diaspora).[146]. This union was created as a result of a recommendation originating from one of the general conferences hosted for the diaspora. It seems as though the government at the time happily created this union since this union was to be overseen by the Egyptian government—in contrast to the different diaspora associations that had emerged in various diaspora-hosting countries[147]. This union, however, has been far from efficient, suffers from problems within its board of trustees, and its members have often complained of much interference from the MME especially

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[146] "The General Union for Egyptians Abroad: Hopes and Ambitions," *Al Jalia Magazine*, June 30, 2011. http://www.aljaliah.net/articles-action-show-id-234.htm

[147] Dessouki, Ali E. Hillal. Interview by Iman Dawood. Cairo, Egypt. April 10, 2012.

since the union is funded by the MME[148]. Thus, it is unlikely that this union is able to properly serve its purpose of being a "consultative body."

Of the other more traditional types of institutions discussed by Gamlen such as ministerial level agencies and monitoring agencies, some do indeed exist in Egypt. As has been pointed out in the historical chapter of this thesis, a ministry was founded to deal specifically with the emigration of Egyptians. Due to the increased number of Egyptian emigrants outside of Egypt and specifically in the Gulf, a presidential decree established the Ministry of State for Emigration Affairs in 1981[149]. This ministry was later combined with the Ministry of Manpower and Training in 1996 leading to the creation of the current day MME[150]. The MME is in the theory the main body responsible for migration matters of which is dealing with the diaspora. Within the MME is the Emigration and Egyptians Abroad Sector which also handles diaspora-related matters.

Perhaps the objectives of the Emigration and Egyptians Abroad Sector are a good indication of the way in which the Egyptian government views the function of this institution. According to the website of the Emigration Sector, "The role of the Emigration Sector is to develop a comprehensive Egyptian Emigration Strategy, to provide the necessary care for Egyptians abroad

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[148] Farrag, Wael. Interview by Iman Dawood. Cairo, Egypt. April 15, 2012.

[149] Leila Talani, "From Egypt,"  65.

[150] "The Ministry's History," The Ministry of Manpower. http://www.manpower.gov.eg/%28S%28hv3wgy55c01za3ytlxdrzr55%29%29/MinisteryHistory.html (Accessed April 17, 2012)

and to benefit from their scientific potential in order to contribute to the process of development

in Egypt[151]." The following are the objectives also listed on their website:

> First: to develop executive plans and policies to encourage Egyptian emigration and provide the opportunities that ensure its success, on the basis of the assumption that migration is a natural and stable phenomenon.
> Second: to sponsor Egyptians abroad, encourage them to create Egyptian gatherings, unions and clubs and focus on the second and third generation of migrants by fostering their ties and allegiance to their homeland.
> Third: to achieve the maximum capitalization of Egyptian potential abroad, whether in relation to scientific and research knowledge transfer or to the contribution in savings to Egyptian development strategies; to support Egyptian capacities inside and outside Egypt.
> Fourth: to establish an integrated database on Egyptians abroad, emigration markets, and migration; to regulate legislations in the countries of destination.

A look at these objectives clarifies how the creation of the Egyptian Emigration Sector can be interpreted as being part of Egypt's diaspora engagement policies. It is objectives two and three of this government sector that particularly signify that the Egyptian government is aware of the importance of communicating and strengthening ties with its diaspora. Moreover, objective three specifically relates to the main focus of this thesis—the Egyptian diaspora's human capital contributions referred to here as "scientific and research knowledge[152]." Nonetheless, it is vital for us to keep in mind that just because an entity's objectives acknowledges the significance of these aspects does not mean that they are necessarily realized in practice. Therefore, chapter 5 will be devoted to exploring this in detail.

The other main institution that can be said to have been created for the purposes of diaspora-related matters is the Consulate Section of the MOFA. The Consular Affairs section of the MOFA is mainly responsible for providing services to Egyptians abroad. As of late, a specific

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[151] "Objectives," The Emigration Sector, http://www.emigration.gov.eg/AboutUs/Objectives.aspx (Accessed April 17, 2012).

[152] Ibid.

institution within the MOFA titled the "Egyptians Abroad Welfare Fund" was created in 2011 to provide better quality services and care for Egyptians abroad. In the project's document the importance of the diaspora is recognized; it states that Egypt's real wealth is not in its land, Nile, or cultural heritage, but in its expatriates who fill the world with their expertise and contributions in all the different fields of culture, knowledge, and life.  It is anticipated that this newly created body will help Egypt extend more rights and services to its diaspora. Besides the bodies in the MME and the MOFA, the Ministry of Interior (MOI) also has the Bureau of Travel, Immigration and Nationality, the Civil Services Sector, the Personal Affairs Sector, and the Labor Sector that all deal with migration and diaspora-related issues[153]. Of course this is not to say that other governmental bodies such as the Ministry of Education (MOE), the MOHESR, the Ministry of Defense (MOD), the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology (MOCIT) do not deal with the diaspora, but simply that the previously mentioned institutions are at the core of government-diaspora interactions.

It is important to consider though that the number of institutions that deal with the diaspora is not necessarily a point of strength. Tantawy explained in an interview that there needs to be greater coordination and unity in dealing with diaspora matters and that the proliferation of all these bodies does not signify the success of Egypt's diaspora engagement strategy. Mohamed Shawky, former legal consultant to the MME, attributed this messy situation to the fact that Egypt's Law 111 does not accurately specify the role of each of these institutions since at the time of the law's adoption all these bodies did not exist. The lack of coordination in diaspora engagement policy making can also be attributed to the often competitive nature of the two main ministries that deal

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[153] Ali Sawi, "Migration Related Institutions and Policies in Egypt," Analytic and Synthetic Notes, CARIM, 2005. http://www.carim.org/Publications/CARIM-AS05_08-Sawi.pdf

with the diaspora—the MOFA and the MME. Tension between these two institutions seems to exist and became apparent to us through interviews conducted with policymakers in both of these ministries. Apparently such tension is not rare as Gamlen claims that

> As institutions dedicated to expatriate affairs grow within the state system, a tension sometimes emerges between the powerful agency containing the immigration bureaucracy (often the labor or justice department) and the foreign service. The former tends to claim a traditional stake in anything related to migration policy, while the latter inevitably forms the front line of home-state contact with expatriates.

In the case of Egypt, when asked about the activities of the MOFA and if they encroach on the domain of the MME, a senior official in the MME expressed that they in fact do. He attributed this fact to the elevated status of the MOFA vis-à-vis other ministries. He argued that the MOFA is the ministry of the "pashas" while the MME is the "black duck" of ministries. He also complained of limited funding in comparison with the MOFA. Furthermore, he stressed the need for greater capacity building of the MME. When policymakers in the MOFA were asked about their encroachment on MME territory, they took on a defensive note arguing that there is plenty of work to be done and that they have no problems sharing this workload with the MME. This situation seems to be improving, however, as Minessy explained that following the revolution coordination between the two entities has become more fruitful.

It is also extremely important to note here the absence of a ministerial level agency specifically for emigration and the diaspora. As was noted in the literature review and conceptual framework, numerous countries interested in the governmentality of their diasporas have created ministerial level agencies for them. We have seen this, for example, in the case of India where the Ministry for Overseas Indians was created to manage emigration and interact with the diaspora. This, however, is not currently the case with Egypt with the Emigration Sector being only a body

within a larger ministry that deals with all issues of labor and manpower (the MME). Furthermore, the MME is currently suffering from a severe lack of capacity. Farrag argues that this is one of the greatest obstacles to successful diaspora engagement. He explains that he has campaigned for the creation of such a ministry many times by discussing the idea with various senior officials including most recently the former Prime Minister Essam Sharaf. Farrag explains, though, that although they were promised the creation of such a ministry, they are yet to see any progress in regards to its creation.

A remark can be also be made here in regards to the monitoring institutions that Gamlen refers to in his policy typology. For Gamlen, monitoring refers to the surveillance of the diaspora. Gamlen explains "This process is often not merely a way of collecting inert data, but a way of selecting actors whom it would be profitable to deal with and forming long-term relationships with these actors[154]." In the case of Egypt, Egypt's emigration law does in fact refer to a policy that works towards the preparation of "an overall routine survey of the numbers and categories of Egyptians abroad, in collaboration with other entities." In reality Egypt does have multiple institutions that collaborate to collect statistics about emigration and the diaspora in specific. The emigration sector, for instance, participates in this collection of data as evident in objective four where it aims "to establish an integrated database on Egyptians abroad." The MOFA also plays a part in this collection of statistics on diaspora members mostly through consulates abroad. It is quite interesting to find that the third ministry under study the MOHESR also participates in a similar way. A report published on Egyptian higher education policy explains that "Egyptians wishing to study abroad also have to obtain a permit from the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific

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[154] Alan Gamlen, "Diaspora Engagement," 8.

Research and to re-register on return. The Ministry holds and publishes data on such students[155]."

Of the other ministries briefly mentioned above the MOI also plays a role in the collection of statistics on the diaspora. The comprehensiveness of such monitoring, however, has proven itself quite subpar which is evidenced at the very least by the fact that estimates of Egypt's diaspora vary by the millions. Furthermore, the Egyptian government does not go beyond this mere collection of statistics i.e. it does not reach really out to actors and associations of the diaspora and establish long-term relationships. Farrag also confirmed that this policy of monitoring has not been implemented in the best way possible. Such a state is very unfortunate as having such information and monitoring the activities of the diaspora is no doubt vital for the success of any diaspora engagement strategy. We will now move on to the next diaspora engagement policy type to see if and how the Egyptian government extends rights to members of its diaspora.

**4.3 Extending Rights: Political Incorporation & Civil and Social Rights**

After discussing the basic symbolic nation building and institution building policies of the Egyptian government, we can now proceed to discuss the policies of the Egyptian government that seek to extend rights to the diaspora. As stated before, Gamlen divides policies related to extending rights into two subcategories—political incorporation and civil and social rights. We will first consider Egyptian government policies that relate to the political incorporation of the Egyptian diaspora.

Gamlen argues that states' rationale behind politically incorporating emigrants is that this upgraded membership status will flatter or appease expatriates and help produce goodwill

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[155] "Arab Republic of Egypt: Country Statistical Situation Report," last modified August 2009, European Union, http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/european_neighbourhood_policy/documents/CSSR_Egypt_-_EN_0509.pdf

relationships that protect states' steady flows of remittances and investments[156]. There are many

methods of political incorporation that can take place and vary from simply offering diaspora

members special membership concessions, allowing them to vote, and even offering them

parliamentary representation. In this sense, Egyptian government policies seem to be somewhat

concessional—but only following the Egyptian revolution. It is true that ever since the

Presidential Decree issued in 1971 Egyptians have had the right to dual nationality. Such a right

was also confirmed in Law 111; Egyptians are granted the right to dual nationality as can be seen

in article 1 of the law:

> Egyptians, whether individuals or groups, shall have the right to permanent or
> temporary migration, whether the purpose of migration necessitates permanent or
> temporary stay abroad, in accordance with the provisions of this law and other laws in
> force. Egyptians shall keep their Egyptian nationality according to the Egyptian
> nationality law. Their permanent or temporary migration shall not result in violating the
> constitutional or legal rights they enjoy in their capacity as Egyptian citizens, as long as
> they do continuously keep their Egyptian nationality.

The fact that Egypt has conferred dual nationality to its citizens is not something to be taken for

granted as not all states pursuing diaspora engagement policies grant their citizens this right.


Besides granting members of the diaspora the right to dual nationality though, Egypt did not do

much to politically incorporate its citizens until after the revolution in January 2011. Even

though technically Egyptians abroad had the same rights afforded to Egyptians in Egypt, such as

the right to vote, these rights were not realized in reality. Egyptian groups abroad had been quite

dissatisfied with the actualization of their rights and had been lobbying for years for more

political rights and specifically the ability to vote[157]. Their lobby process was not completely

ineffective as there was a response to their calls even before the Egyptian revolution. Around the

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[156] Alan Gamlen, "Diaspora Engagement," 10.
[157] Dessouki, Ali E Hillal. Interview by Iman Dawood. Cairo, Egypt. April 10, 2012.

year 2005, for example, there were attempts by members of the Egyptian government (within the MME) to amend Egyptian Emigration Law 111 to clarify the political rights granted to Egyptians in the diaspora and to specifically grant them the right to vote in reality. Nonetheless, as with many of such initiatives, Shawky explains that the process of amendment was stalled especially after the change of leadership and the appointment of Aisha Abdel Hady as the Minister of the MME in 2006[158].

Renewed calls for greater political rights during the events of January and February of 2011, however, were difficult for Egyptian officials to ignore. The interest of the Egyptian diaspora in Egypt's affairs was most definitely demonstrated during these events, and its close ties with Egypt were proven when members of the Egyptian diaspora abroad not only closely monitored the uprising but even staged their own protests worldwide. When former President Mubarak stepped down, Egyptians abroad held celebrations everywhere—from in front of the Egyptian Embassy in Bahrain to Trafalgar Square in London. It is not surprising then, that after such strong participation of the Egyptian diaspora in Egypt's revolution that steps would be taken to allow the diaspora to participate democratically in its country's affairs. Minessy admitted that the new revolutionary ideas of January 25 definitely paved the way for further involvement of Egyptians abroad by making it possible for them to vote using their national ID cards (Law 130—2011). He explained that they [the MOFA] "want Egyptians abroad to be part of Egypt[159]." Roshdi, a spokesman from the ministry, also asserted that recent changes such as allowing Egyptians abroad to authorize presidential candidates would "enable Egyptian expatriate to

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[158] Shawky, Mohamed. Interview by Iman Dawood. Cairo, Egypt. April 12, 2012.

[159] Minessy, Mohamed. Interview by Iman Dawood. Cairo, Egypt. April 9, 2012.

participate effectively in the political process in their motherland[160]." Minessy admitted that although Egyptians are able to vote using their national ID card, Egypt could still expand political rights to the diaspora further by allowing voting using the number on their birth certificates. This would allow those who do not have a national ID card to still be able to vote.

It was also interesting to hear Minessy speak of how the Egyptian government would like to eventually offer Egyptians abroad parliamentary representation—without even being directly asked about it. He explained that this representation does not have to be from the expats themselves but can even be elected officials residing in Egypt. Such thinking is no doubt in line with the greater political liberalization that is supposedly sweeping the policy scenes of Egypt following the revolution. Nonetheless, such a step does not seem to be on the recent horizon as Minessy only "hopes" that this will soon materialize and no concrete steps have been taken towards this end. Likewise, such a move seems unlikely due to the hesitant manner in which the Egyptian government has been extending political rights to the diaspora—even after the Egyptian revolution. In the eligibility requirements for the Egyptian president, defined in the Egyptian constitutional amendments that followed the revolution, Egyptians with dual nationality or Egyptians married to non-Egyptians were disqualified from running in presidential elections[161]. Such a decision was viewed as being hostile towards the Egyptian diaspora and especially towards certain renowned figures in the diaspora such as Ahmed Zewail. Such a move

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[160]"Foreign Ministry Affirms Invalidity of the Photocopied Presidential Authorizations," last modified 19 March, 2012, The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, http://www.mfa.gov.eg/English/Ministry/News/Pages/NewsDetails.aspx?Source=6781921f-3993-444a-859e-ee26ce851de8&newsID=bdbff057-8ce1-4ac3-a8bd-e859883d9091

[161] Nathan Brown and Michele Dunne, "Egypt's Draft Constitutional Amendments Answer Some Questions and Raise Others", *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace,* http://egyptelections.carnegieendowment.org/2011/03/03/egypt%E2%80%99s-draft-constitutional-amendments-answer-some-questions-and-raise-others (Accessed May 20, 2012).

conflicts with the recent move towards the facilitation of voting for Egyptians abroad and hints at the incomplete extension of rights to the diaspora. Nevertheless, the most recent step of allowing Egyptians abroad to vote seems to be a positive step forward in terms of achieving the political incorporation of the diaspora. Although it is still too early to accurately judge the effectiveness of such a policy, we imagine this to be a very important move in strengthening ties with the Egyptian diaspora which could work to improve Egypt's ability to extract obligations from the diaspora.

Besides extending some political rights to the diaspora, the Egyptian government does also try and extend civil and social rights. The importance of securing these rights for the diaspora are expressed in Article 1 of Law 111 where it is stated that "permanent or temporary migration shall not result in violating the constitutional or legal rights they [Egyptian migrants] enjoy in their capacity as Egyptian citizens, as long as they do continuously keep their Egyptian nationality." It should be noted though that this article suffers from lack of detail and hence even Egypt's formulated policy does not seem effective in extending the necessary rights to Egyptians abroad. In practice the Egyptian government does extend certain rights to the diaspora. For example, the Egyptian government at times negotiates on behalf of Egyptian migrants (as in the example where it attended a meeting of Fishermen in Greece[162]) and occasionally also checks on the welfare of Egyptians abroad (as in the example where the consular commission from the Embassy in Manama, Bahrain visited Egyptian expatriates imprisoned in the Manama prison to

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[162] "The Embassy of Egypt in Athens meets with Egyptian fishermen in Greece Extending rights," last updated 13 March, 2012, The Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
http://www.mfa.gov.eg/English/Ministry/News/Pages/NewsDetails.aspx?Source=6781921f-3993-444a-859e-ee26ce851de8&newsID=27cac127-7d8c-4a63-8fd3-853265413bff

check on their conditions)[163]. Egyptian consulates and embassies abroad also seek to help any Egyptians who have encountered legal problems in their host country[164]. These activities are of course quite typical of countries' diplomatic missions abroad but still are important for diaspora engagement. It should be noted that this type of extension of rights, however, in practice is rarely relevant to highly skilled members of the diaspora.

Also, as with the implementation of a lot of these policies—it is doubtful that such an extension of civil and social rights is very effective. Minessy expressed that the provision of these rights and services is a "huge load" for the MOFA giving the example that at the very minimum even if only 1% of the Egyptian diaspora was in need of legal help, for example, that would account to approximately 70,000 cases for consulates abroad to deal with[165]. It should be noted that few Egyptians abroad seem to have ever been satisfied with the services extended by consulates abroad. A study conducted on the Egyptian diaspora found that Egyptians abroad still feel that there is significant room for improvement in the services provided Egyptian embassies and consulates abroad. Of those Egyptians surveyed, most expected a certain level of ignorance and negligence on the part of the staff in these embassies even if they had not actually visited an Egyptian governmental agency abroad[166]. Farrag confirmed in an interview the findings of this study claiming that Egyptians abroad "would rather get imprisoned than have to deal with an Egyptian consulate or embassy abroad". Consequently, in reality very few members of the

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[163] "The Embassy of Egypt in Manama visits the Egyptian prisoners," last modified March 14, 2012, The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, http://www.mfa.gov.eg/English/Ministry/News/Pages/NewsDetails.aspx?Source=6781921f-3993-444a-859e-ee26ce851de8&newsID=88c1a57d-d646-4fb5-b7e6-92e74b84c9ef

[164] Minessy, Mohamed. Interview by Iman Dawood. Cairo, Egypt. April 9, 2012.

[165] Minessy, Mohamed. Interview by Iman Dawood. Cairo, Egypt. April 9, 2012.

[166] Ayman Zohry and Priyanka Debnath, "A Study," 8.

diaspora seem to benefit from this extension of rights; perhaps it is only low skilled workers who have no choice but to depend on the Egyptian government for protection of these rights when abroad. This no doubt signifies that the implementation of this specific diaspora engagement policy is likely to be highly ineffective in reaching out to the diaspora and extending to them the rights they need to acknowledge the Egyptian government as its legitimate sovereign while abroad.

**4.4 Conclusion**

As we have seen in this chapter, the Egyptian government has in fact formulated policies that target the Egyptian diaspora in order to engage it in a symbolic nation state. As can be seen in both Law 111 and documents of the relevant ministries, these formulated policies aim to reach out to diaspora members and include them by using inclusive rhetoric and symbols, shaping national media, spreading the nation's culture, and hosting conferences. Unfortunately though, we found that in practice these policies were not implemented as formulated. In particular we found that conferences have been hosted in a sporadic manner and have concentrated on the advertisement of investment opportunities to diaspora members as opposed to functioning as a positive arena for the strengthening of state-diaspora relations. It must also be noted that these policies have been mostly aimed at migrants themselves, with few policies actually encompassing other members of the diaspora.

We have also noted that multiple institutions have been built by the Egyptian government to aid it in the governmentality of its diaspora such as the emigration and consulate sections in the MME and MOFA respectively as well as many other bodies in different ministries. At the same

time though, we lamented the absence of a ministerial level agency specific to the diaspora. The redundancy of these bodies and their functions, tension between them, and concurrently the absence of a central diaspora body is clearly an obstacle to efficient diaspora engagement. Because Law 111 has not properly identified the institutions that should handle diaspora matters and has not specified the specialized functions of each, it seems as though a coordinated and comprehensive diaspora policy framework is impossible. We also found that although Egypt did form a consultative body from the diaspora (the General Union for Egyptians Abroad), this union suffers from many problems such as interference from the Egyptian government and is currently quite ineffective. Finally, we also spoke of the existence of monitoring institutions in Egypt but lamented their inability to provide us with any accurate or reliable data about the Egyptian diaspora—once again clearly hindering the formulation and implementation of a comprehensive and effect diaspora engagement strategy.

We have also reviewed Egypt's policies towards the political, social, and civil rights of Egyptian citizens abroad. We highlighted the recent shift following the Egyptian revolution when the government went to greater lengths to politically incorporate its diaspora through the establishment of absentee voting using national ID cards. Yet we pointed out further expansion of absentee voting to allow voting using ID numbers on birth certificates as an important move that should be considered by the Egyptian government for more effective diaspora engagement. Furthermore, we noted parliamentary representation for the diaspora to be a much needed initiative. We also found that while Egypt's extension of social and civil rights is briefly mentioned in Law 111, it is not clearly formulated. Likewise, we found that even if certain rights are provided to the Egyptian diaspora in reality, they are most often only relevant for low skilled emigrants. Egyptians abroad, especially those who can afford to, shy away from dealing with

Egyptian embassies and consulates abroad due to their perceived (and most likely actual inefficiency) making the implementation of the latter part of this policy highly ineffective.

Overall it seems as though the institutions Egypt has built for the diaspora have not been completely successful in symbolically building a nation state and in extending political, social, and civil rights to its diaspora. Although many of these policies have been included in Egypt's Law 111 and in various ministries' policy documents, they have not been clearly formulated as evidenced by the lack of details in these documents. No doubt the incoherent and incomprehensive nature of Egypt's formulated policies has consequently contributed to the its often unsuccessful attempts at diaspora engagement. This, coupled with weaknesses in implementation, has definitely negatively affected Egypt's ability to engage with its diaspora. This is not say that there are no strengths to Egypt's interactions with its diaspora, but that one would not expect Egypt to be able to easily extract obligations from its diaspora based on the state of its first two policy types of capacity building and extending rights. Nevertheless, we should still see whether or not Egypt does pursue extracting obligations policies and specifically knowledge transfer policies since it is still possible for states to pursue such policies without perfecting the implementation of the first two policy types.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE EGYPTIAN GOVERNMENT'S DIASPORA ENGAGEMENT POLICIES:

EXTRACTING OBLIGATIONS & KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER


## 5.1 Introduction

It is understood that the main rationale behind the formulation and implementation of the two previously discussed policy types for most states relates to their recognition of the many benefits that could be derived from their diasporas. The process of extracting these benefits is what Gamlen has termed the "extracting obligations" policy type. As explained in chapter 2, extracting obligations can take many forms of which are investment policies (that relate to FDI, remittances, and knowledge transfer) and lobby promotion (which relates to the use of diaspora members as political lobbyists in their countries of residence). Our interest in this thesis is not related to the way the diaspora can act to improve the political circumstances of Egypt on a global scale, but how the Egyptian diaspora can participate in the socio-economic development of Egypt. Therefore, this thesis will only review the investment policies type while concentrating on knowledge transfer policies and programs in order to be able to assess whether or not Egypt's policies are in fact conducive to knowledge transfer from the diaspora.


Our initial survey conducted on the Egyptian government's investment policies brought forth more information on both remittances and investment than it did on knowledge transfer. We found that Egyptian government policy since 1967 (see section 3.2) has recognized the importance of remittances and has pursued numerous policies that seek to encourage emigrants to remit—the earliest of which was for example aimed at allowing emigrants to open foreign

currency accounts in Egyptian banks and offering them high interest rates[167]. Moreover, this research found that the benefits that could be gained as a result of Egyptian diaspora members investing in Egypt seem to have also been recognized by the Egyptian government early on. This can be seen as early as 1977 when Law 32 allowed tax exemptions to Egyptians similar to the ones granted to foreigners in an attempt to encourage Egyptians abroad to invest in Egypt. More recently also in Article 3 of Law 111 the ministry concerned with emigration has been given the responsibility of "considering and suggesting the means that enable Egyptian migrants abroad to contribute with their savings in productive development projects in Egypt." How successful the government has been in implementing these policies, however, is contested and beyond the scope of this thesis.

## 5.2 Knowledge Transfer Policies

Information about the transfer of the diaspora's human capital for the purposes of home country development, however, is much sparser. The research conducted for this thesis was also only able to uncover limited information about knowledge transfer related policies—attesting to the lack of such policies and programs in reality.  The first recognition of the value of Egyptians' human capital can be seen in the Egyptian government's restrictive emigration policies which were in effect before the 1960s and mostly remained till Sadat's *infitah*. The Egyptian government at the time at least partially recognized the importance of the skills that Egyptians possessed for the development of Egypt and as previously mentioned had composed quotas for the emigration of Egyptians in the fields of medicine, dentistry, pharmacology, nursing, chiropractory, veterinary, engineering, architecture, statistics, and high school teachers of

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[167] Ali E. Hillal Dessouki, "A Shift," 63.

language, geography and history[168]. It cannot be said, though, that the government completely recognized the importance of Egyptian skills since certain fields that were indeed crucial to Egypt's development were not allocated quotas (see section 3.2). It seems as though even this incomplete understanding of the importance of Egyptian human capital disappeared when Sadat came to power. Following a major shift in emigration policy, it seems as though Egyptian human capital was no longer seen as being so indispensable—or at least that the benefits resulting from emigration (such as remittances) were seen as compensating for the loss of Egyptian brains.

Mubark's first years in power saw the adoption of Law 111 which, as previously mentioned, is still in effect. This law does seem to at least acknowledge that there is worth to "Egyptian expertise" abroad. Article 3 states that the Egyptian government and specifically the Egyptian ministry concerned with emigration shall partake in: "suggesting means of capitalizing on the expertise and know how of Egyptian scientists abroad in the development and production fields in their homeland." Nevertheless, this is the only mention of this throughout the entire law. Likewise, it is interesting to note here how the law defines useful expertise and know how. It offers quite a limited conceptualization of what exactly consists of useful human capital referring only to the "expertise and know how" of "Egyptian scientists." This focus on Egyptian scientists is in line with the previous Egyptian regimes' limited conceptualization of what constitutes as indispensable human capital. When asked about the superficial nature of this law, Shawky explained that at the time of the law's composition the government was unsure of how it was to exactly benefit from Egyptian brains abroad. Therefore, he explains, they just included a statement to allude to what they hoped to eventually accomplish. Shawky also explained that

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[168] Ali E. Hillal Dessouki, "A Shift," 57

since the adoption of this law, no other laws have been made to complement or supplement this law's statements about how to benefit from the highly skilled Egyptians in the diaspora. No doubt the absence of qualifying laws or decrees about this subject negatively impairs the government's ability to implement an elaborate and well-structured diaspora engagement policy.

The implementation of this section of Article 3, as was mentioned in the law itself, is the responsibility of the ministry concerned with emigration (which was the Ministry of State for Emigration and is currently the MME). It is useful to also look at the vision, mission, and objectives of the Emigration Sector to assess whether or not it really has been concerned with the implementation of a policy that capitalizes on the diaspora's human capital. We find that the Emigration Sector's "vision" only alludes to the potential "exchange of benefits between migrants and their homeland" without specifically referring to the possibility of knowledge transfer[169]. An excerpt from the Emigration Sector's mission statement also only alludes to the role the Egyptian diaspora could have in instigating Egypt's development process without specifically referring to its role in transferring their expertise. It states

> In view of the important role performed by Egyptian expatriates in fostering the Egyptian economy and prompting the process of economic, technological and industrial development, the Emigration Sector of the Ministry of Manpower and Emigration, in the framework of its mandate, is very keen on maintaining its ties with Egyptian migrants and providing them with the facilitations necessary to contribute to the comprehensive development strategy, in addition to supporting their potentials inside and outside Egypt.

As can be seen, the Emigration Sector's mission statement refers to migrants' contributions to Egypt's development but does not refer specifically to migrants' human capital contributions as would be expected from the main agency responsible for implementing such a policy.

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[169] "Vision," The Emigration Sector, http://www.emigration.gov.eg/AboutUs/Vision.aspx, (Accessed April 17, 2012).

We do find, though, mention of knowledge transfer in the Sector's objectives. Objective number 3 of the Emigration Sector is to: "achieve the maximum capitalization of Egyptian potential abroad, whether in relation to scientific and research knowledge transfer or to the contribution in savings to Egyptian development strategies; to support Egyptian capacities inside and outside Egypt[170]." This objective's conceptualization of Egyptian expertise is more encompassing than Law 111's conceptualization as it refers to both "scientific and research knowledge." The distinction between the two probably relates to the outdated nature of Law 111 vis-à-vis the more recent formulation of the sector's objectives. It is worth pointing out, though, that the capitalization of Egyptians abroad is equated to either knowledge transfer or remittances. The way in which the objective is worded seems to give the impression that knowledge transfer and remittances are equal in terms of importance. This is slightly disconcerting as many have now come to see the knowledge and skills of members of the diaspora as an asset that is potentially more significant to the economic development of a country than the mobilization of financial resources[171]. It is also disconcerting because of the two ways the government could capitalize on Egyptians abroad, in practice, it is much easier to benefit from the diaspora's financial capital (especially remittances) than it is to benefit from the diaspora's human capital—which our research seems to suggest may actually be the case.

Another way to assess whether or not the Egyptian government has formulated policies that recognize the importance of the knowledge, experience, and skills that the diaspora possesses is to examine the main ruling party's policies. For the majority of the "current phase" of Egyptian

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[170] "Objectives," The Emigration Sector, http://www.emigration.gov.eg/AboutUs/Objectives.aspx, (Accessed April 17, 2012).
[171] Brett Johnson and Santiago Sedaca, "Diasporas, Émigrés and Development," (a paper published for USAID). March 2004, 55.

emigration, the main ruling party was the National Democratic Party (NDP). Channeling the diaspora's human capital does not seem to have been a priority for the NDP, although mention of the topic was not completely absent. In the 9th NDP Conference that took place in 2007, for instance, one of the main topics discussed was the Egyptian diaspora[172]. One of the conference's final recommendations was that more attention be paid to solving the Egyptian diaspora's problems. Another recommendation was concerned with finding ways to make use of Egypt's scientists in the diaspora[173]. It is fascinating to find that twenty-four years after the emergence of Egypt's law that states that the Egyptian government must find ways to benefit from the diaspora's expertise, that the main ruling party was still issuing a recommendation to that same end. This no doubt points to the serious possibility that Law 111 could not have been implemented as was originally formulated. We will now examine how the government has actually been implementing this policy.

Instead of just focusing on the activities of the Emigration and Egyptians Abroad Sector of the MME we have instead decided to also examine the activities of the MOHESR and the MOFA since we have seen in our assessment of the previous two policy types that in practice the MME is not always the main implementing agency. This decision was also made after careful analysis of the experiences of other diaspora engaging countries whose experiences have brought to light the crucial role other such ministries (especially ones related to higher education and research) have played in facilitating the transfer of their diasporas' human capital. As an alternative to

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[172] Sahar Abd-El-Rahman, "The 9th Conference for the NDP Recommends Solving the Diaspora's Problems," Al Ahram, November, 7, 2007. http://www.news-bank.net/cached-version.aspx?id=hrm-144025&highlight=%D9%85%D8%A4%D8%AA%D9%85%D8%B1%20%D9%84%D9%85%D8%B5%D8%B1%D9%8A%D9%8A%D9%86%20%D8%A8%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AE%D8%A7%D8%B1%D8%AC%20%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B9%D9%84%D9%85%D8%A7%D8%A1

[173] Ibid.

examining the policy scene ministry by ministry, we have instead decided to adhere to Gamlen's policy typology and examine Egypt's knowledge transfer policies program by program. Gamlen divides knowledge transfer programs into two types: TOKTEN and the virtual cluster approach. We find this typology to be limiting, and instead we will simply review all initiatives and programs even if they do not fit exactly into Gamlen's typology. We have divided the initiatives into the following sections: the TOKTEN program, databases, conferences and workshops, cooperation and joint projects, and finally virtual participation.

### 5.3 TOKTEN Program

We will begin by examining the TOKTEN program which is the oldest and supposedly most established of Egypt's knowledge transfer programs. The TOKTEN program as briefly mentioned in section 2.2 is a United Nations' project aimed at transferring the knowledge and experience of expatriates in the diaspora to their home country. It was one of the first programs established worldwide with the goal of reversing brain drain in countries with high rates of emigration and specifically highly skilled emigration. Egypt seems to have been amongst the first countries to implement this program in 1980 through a partnership with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in Egypt. The ASRT housed in the MOHESR was and continues to be the implementing Egyptian governmental agency. Technical cooperation and cost sharing between the ASRT and the UNDP continued until 1994. Ever since 1994, however, the ASRT has been fully responsible for the project[174].

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[174] Academy of Scientific Research and Technology, "Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) System in Egypt" (Cairo:ASRT) 47. http://www.asrt.sci.eg/ar/pdf/ASRT-Booklet.pdf

According to the project's website, "there exists an important untapped potential source of knowledge represented in its [Egypt's] Expatriate Nationals. In order to transfer knowledge to Egypt, there should be a brain-drain reversal giving Egypt the opportunity to benefit from the knowledge[175]." To this end, the TOKTEN program obtains the services of specialists in the diaspora for short assignments in Egypt for a duration of two to four weeks. In an effort to make an effective contribution, the specialist's visit may be extended till six weeks and or may be repeated a second time in that same year. The TOKTEN program is responsible for funding the plane tickets for these consultants while the hosting institution is responsible for paying consultants' per diem[176]. The sectors in which specialists contribute are supposed to be key sectors of the Egyptian economy that correspond to the priorities of the National Development Plan. The website explains that the project is also meant to culminate in the creation of links between organizations in Egypt and organizations in diaspora-hosting countries. As a result of the creation of these, it is hoped that training opportunities would be created and instruments, equipment, and knowledge would be transferred to institutions in Egypt.

An ASRT publication states that the TOKTEN project has been able to bring in more than half of the experts who have been employed in scientific missions at the highest level of national bodies i.e. ministries, universities, research centers, associations, and companies during the duration of the project. Members of the Egyptian diaspora in the U.S. have composed by far the overwhelming majority of expatriates consulted through the TOKTEN program with over 350 Egyptians residing in the U.S. consulted since the beginning of the program. The next largest

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[175] "Background," TOKTEN, http://www.tokten.eg.net/background.html, (Accessed April 17, 2012).

[176] ASRT Official. Interviewed by Iman Dawood. Cairo, Egypt. April 15, 2012.

group of Egyptians consulted is from the Egyptian diaspora in Canada with over sixty experts consulted since the beginning of the project. Experts from other countries such as Germany, the UK, France, the Netherlands, Sweden, Australia, Brazil, Norway, Czech Republic, Switzerland, Spain, Hungary, and Belgium have also been consulted[177]. However, besides Germany and the UK, the experts consulted from these other countries have been quite limited with about ten or less experts consulted from each of these other countries. A senior official at the ASRT admitted that there is a need to expand geographically in order to cooperate with institutions that are outside of the U.S. and Canada.

Consultations throughout the duration of the project have varied widely. The highest number of consultations that have ever taken place was thirty-seven and occurred during the first year of the project. Since that year, the number of consultation has never exceeded thirty-seven and has only ever come close during the first six years of the project. It is interesting to note that a major decline in the number of consultations occurred during the years of 1988-1991 with an average of only about four consultations taking place each year[178]. When asked about this dip in activity, a senior official in the ASRT explained that it has nothing to do with the project itself and that the number of officials consulted was based on the needs of institutions in Egypt at that time. However, Badran explained in an interview that the pace of activity in the TOKTEN program highly depends on the president of the ASRT who is either able to increase the level of activity of the ASRT or totally depress it.  We can also predict that this depression had to do with the political situation and instability at that time-especially with the Gulf War going on during the

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[177] Academy of Science Research and Technology, "STI," 47.
[178] "Amplifying the Benefits from Egyptian Expatriates," (presentation for Science Day) Cairo, 2005.
www.scienceday.sci.eg/proceedings/7-%2520Fareaway%2520Scientists.ppt

latter part of this period. Following the year 1992 the number of consultations did increase again, nonetheless, it never really reached its original levels[179]. This does not seem to be related to issues of funding though as even when the project was co-funded with the UNDP till 1994, the number of consultations was still not very high. Likewise there was not a dip in the number of consultations following the withdrawal of UNDP funding. It is interesting to note that the pace of consultations decelerated again starting the year 1999 but started to accelerate again with an average number of seventeen consultations made during each year of the period of 2005-2009[180]. When asked whether the project was negatively affected by the recent Egyptian revolution, a senior official at the ASRT explained that at first some members of the Egyptian diaspora were afraid to visit Egypt but that this did not last long and consultations have resumed their normal course. Nevertheless, we were not able to verify this since no records were available for the last two years of the project at the ASRT.

In regards to the fields in which experts were consulted, they have been numerous and have included the following: space engineering, research & development, laser research, infrastructure, pharmacy, water sources, urban planning, communications, energy, medicine, industrial production, mining, nutrition, electronics, environment, bioengineering, and new materials[181]. The field that witnessed the highest number of experts of these was industrial production, closely followed by electronics, and then followed en suite by medicine.  Energy was also a field in which many experts were consulted. Originally, according to the objectives of the

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[179] Ibid.

[180] Ibid.

[181] Ibid.

project, these fields were meant to correlate to the priorities in Egypt's National Development Plan. It is interesting to note, however, that a field such as research and development only witnessed four consultations throughout the entire period of 1980-2005[182]. When asked on what basis these fields were chosen, a senior official at the ASRT explained that they were based on the needs of home institutions and that the ASRT did not filter them in any way. This definitely goes to show that the project was not implemented as was formulated; it is also a major weakness of the project.

Although the ASRT's publication claims that "Egypt has achieved great success in managing and implementing the idea of this global project and benefit from it,[183]" this does not seem to be the case. The project's implementation seems to have deteriorated with time as can be seen in the decreased number of consultations that followed the initial six years of the project. The project's website also simply does not seem to have been updated since 1998 when it was created. The data on the project that is uploaded on the website is incredibly outdated with information posted only until the year 1998. Likewise, the background information on the project that is posted on the website still claims that the project is co-funded with the UNDP although this is definitely no longer the case. Besides the outdated website, however, there are other signs that the project is not being implemented as one would hope. The attitude of the ASRT employee in charge of the TOKTEN program was surprising. When asked about the TOTKEN program and the data, he was not immediately willing to provide any information claiming that such data was confidential and that it should not be given out as it can be used for "incorrect purposes." Such an attitude in

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[182] Ibid.

[183] Academy of Scientific Research & Technology, "STI," 47.

regards to data about the project is highly disconcerting as this is not the spirit that should be associated with a project whose main goal is to share and transfer knowledge.

Amr Ezzat Salama, former minister of the MOHESR, also explained that the TOKTEN programs is not very effective due to the fact that in reality visiting scholars only spend about two weeks at the host Egyptian institution. Hence, he explained that  this brief visit does not allow for a very big impact on the host institution. Also, as briefly mentioned above, the number, origin, and fields of consultations that have taken place do not seem to have been highly effective especially following the first six years of the project. Likewise, one of the main aims of this project was that through the course of these consultations links between home and host country institutions would be established and that activities outside the scope of the TOKTEN program would be realized. A senior official in the ASRT admits, however, that to his knowledge no such links have been established. He also added that there needs to be greater links between home and host country institutions in order for the project's activities to increase. Increased funding would also benefit the program, he explained, as it would allow greater room for advertisement of the project and hopefully better results. The idea that this is the state of Egypt's most established knowledge transfer program is highly disconcerting; however, we will now look at the rest of related initiatives in order to get a better idea of the state of knowledge transfer programs in Egypt.

## 5.4 Databases of the Diaspora and of the Diaspora's Experts

Perhaps one of the most important activities that a government interested in engaging with its diaspora and more specifically interested in benefiting from its diaspora's human capital must undertake is the creation of a database. As is the case with any subject, the availability of reliable

information on the subject paves the way for effective policy making and implementation. This is no doubt the case with diaspora engagement; the creation of a reliable database has also been found to be especially essential for purposes of knowledge transfer. Yohannes Woldentensae, when speaking of the African Diaspora, argues that "the establishment of [a] database on the brain drain is crucial to promote networking and collaboration between African Diaspora and institutions in the country of origin[184]." Furthermore, Woldentensae explains that this database should be generated so as to provide information on both the size and composition of the diaspora with regards to the expertise available. Databases should contain detailed information about the occupational categories of highly skilled members of the diaspora. One would hope that Egypt, a major labor-sending country for numerous decades, would have established an extensive and reliable database of its Egyptians abroad by now. Our research uncovered that there have in fact been efforts to establish such a database. We will now review these efforts.

We will begin by examining the database created by the ASRT as this was part of the TOKTEN project that we have just discussed above. According to the ASRT's publication, through the TOKTEN project, an electronic database of the diaspora was created. One would assume that this would be one of the most established and comprehensive databases of Egypt as the project has been running for 32 years. We find, however, that the ASRT's database includes data on approximately 1500 Egyptian experts from 14 countries[185]. This database is not only limited in terms of the number of Egyptian experts it has classified, but is also limited in terms of the number of countries included. Moreover, a senior official at the ASRT admitted that

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[184] **Yohannes Woldentensae, "Optimizing," 6.**

[185] Academy of Scientific Research & Technology, "STI," 47.

"unfortunately, the database has not been updated recently." He attributed mistrust between Egyptians and the Egyptian government as the main reason for the diaspora's unwillingness to volunteer information about themselves to the ASRT. It is also important to note here that as can be expected from a database created by the ASRT it is only a database of scientists and hence leaves out a lot of other skilled professionals that could be of benefit to Egypt's development.

It was interesting to find that the ASRT similarly has a "library" of experts' files that is classified by fields of science and country of origin. This library of experts' files contains information on previous consultations, reports, and most significant achievements and publications[186]. While this sounds like a promising database, it was disappointing to find that this database only contains information about experts who have actually been consulted through the TOKTEN program who number no more than about 500 experts[187]. Such numbers are no doubt very small when compared to the number of Egyptian experts in the diaspora. This "library" of experts and the TOKTEN database of scientists cannot be very useful as they are only really used by the ASRT to assist in the search for appropriate consultants for the TOKTEN program. Access to the databases is closed off and hence the databases are not used by other bodies or agencies for other purposes.

A look at the objectives of the Emigration Sector listed earlier in section 4.2 proves that the creation of a database is in fact one of its main objectives. Objective number four of the Sector is to "establish an integrated database on Egyptians abroad, emigration markets, and migration; to

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[186] Ibid.

[187] Ibid.

regulate legislations in the countries of destination[188]." It would make sense then that such a comprehensive database would have been created by now.

It seems as though by the year 2001 such a database still had not been created. One of the goals of the Integrated Migration Information System (IMIS) project, which was first implemented in 2001, was to build the capacity of the Emigration sector in order for it to be able to better facilitate and manage Egyptian out-migration for the purposes of development[189]. Retraining and reorganizing staff members in the Emigration Sector was the one of IMIS project's main activities. It was believed that of those retrained there would be a distinct team in charge of compiling a database of Egyptians abroad[190]. Egyptian officials claimed, when speaking to the press, that the creation of such a database is important so that the Egyptian government could benefit from the experience of scientists in various fields of development. It was also seen as important because it could help the Egyptian government encourage diaspora members to remit and invest their savings in investment projects in Egypt[191]. It was said that the MME and the MOFA would cooperate together in this since the MOFA's diplomatic missions abroad were seen as being most suitable for the collection of information on members of the diaspora and their skills.

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[188] "Objectives," The Emigration Sector, http://www.emigration.gov.eg/AboutUs/Objectives.aspx (Accessed April 17, 2012).

[189] "About the IMIS Project," The Emigration Sector, http://www.emigration.gov.eg/AboutUs/AboutIMISProject.aspx (Accessed April 17, 2012).

[190] Christine Fandrich, "Facilitated Egyptian Labor Migration and Development," The Center for Migration and Refugee Studies. The American University in Cairo. 2009.

[191] Mahmoud El Nawbi, "They are 4 Million Emigrants: A New Policy for Egyptians Abroad," Al Ahram, June 18, 2012, http://www.news-bank.net/cached-version.aspx?id=hrm-24167&highlight=%D9%85%D8%A4%D8%AA%D9%85%D8%B1%20%D9%84%D9%84%D9%85%D8%B5%D8%B1%D9%8A%D9%8A%D9%86%20%D8%A8%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AE%D8%A7%D8%B1%D8%AC%20%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B9%D9%84%D9%85%D8%A7%D8%A1

The reality of the situation is, however, that over ten years later and multiple employees of the MME have expressed that such a comprehensive database still does not really exist. Farrag explained that there was the intention of composing a database and that specific forms were created by the MME to be filled out by diaspora members. When asked about the number of diaspora members included in the database so far he explained that no one actually has access to this database. Tantawy also confirmed this stating that a complete database still does not exist and that it is one of the biggest obstacles to effective diaspora engagement. It is hard to believe, then, that such an incomplete database that no one actually has access to could be very effective in identifying highly skilled Egyptians in the diaspora who could be engaged for the purposes of channeling their human capital. It also seems as though cooperation between the MOFA and MME in the creation of this database has not been very strong. Farrag argued that the ministry's actions in this sense are of a competitive nature instead of a complementary nature. This could definitely be the case since the MOFA seems to be working on a database itself. Minessy explained that the MOFA is currently working on the compilation of a database of Egyptians abroad. He explained that the MOFA has recently upgraded their strategy of data collection to include new forms of information technology mainly websites and social media platforms such as Twitter and Facebook. He added that these methods are actually proving to be effective in reaching Egyptians abroad. It would be interesting to see, in the future, how these efforts materialize.

Another initiative was later taken towards the establishment of a database of Egyptian scientists in the diaspora in the year 2010. A cooperation protocol was signed by CAPMAS and an Egyptian NGO named The Age of Science (headed by Essam Sharaf former minister of the

Ministry of Transportation and later prime minister). The two bodies were to cooperate in the establishment of a database that detailed the achievements of Egyptians abroad and how to best use them. Following the creation of this database, the Age of Science was to actively find ways for Egyptian experts abroad to assist in the development of Egypt[192]. It is interesting to note that although there is cooperation here with a governmental body, the main implementing agency is a nongovernmental organization. Such a development can be seen as an indication of the failure of the Egyptian government to create an accurate and comprehensive database. When asked about the project's implementation, Mohamed Abdu of the Age of Science explained that the database was indeed compiled. However, he explained that the database was of any Egyptian inside or outside Egypt who had obtained a PhD and not specifically of Egyptian scholars in the diaspora. Furthermore, he clarified that this database only contained information on Egyptians abroad who had obtained their PhD through an official governmental scholarship and therefore did not contain all Egyptians who had obtained their PhD abroad. The database, although complete, has yet to be publicized and is yet to be used for any purposes, Abdu clarified. Although it is too early to judge the success of this project, the database only includes Egyptians who had gone abroad through official governmental sponsorship and therefore fails to include a large majority of Egyptian scholars who are currently abroad. Likewise, the database still has not been publicized and hence no one has actually used it to call upon the skills and expertise of scholars abroad. It seems as though even this effort has not succeeded at truly establishing the type of database that is needed for true knowledge transfer from the diaspora.

## 5.5 Conferences and Workshops for the Highly Skilled Diaspora

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[192] "Egypt Begins a Survey of Egyptian Scholars Abroad in Order to Benefit from Their Achievements," *CNN*, October 14, 2010, http://arabic.cnn.com/2010/scitech/8/13/egypt.ol/index.html.

We have seen in the experiences of other countries that engage with their diasporas that often conferences and workshops are hosted to facilitate links, interaction, and knowledge transfer between highly skilled members in diasporas and home country professionals, academics, and institutions. In this section we will first review conferences and workshops that have been hosted by various agencies of the Egyptian government towards this end. Because there have been an extremely limited number of conferences completely hosted by the government towards this end, we will then also look at the conferences that have been hosted by nongovernmental organizations in cooperation with governmental agencies.

Previously in this chapter we had mentioned that an annual conference for the diaspora has been hosted by the Egyptian government but that in reality it was only actually hosted on occasion. Although none of these conferences were hosted for the specific purpose of transferring the diaspora's human capital, it is still important to reexamine these conferences under this section also as they have been one of the main forms of interaction with the highly skilled diaspora and most likely one of the ways in which the government has proceeded to try and extract obligations from the diaspora. It is important then to examine these conferences and assess whether or not the Egyptian government has recognized the diaspora's human capital and tried to benefit from it during these conferences.

We have previously mentioned that when Aisha Abdel Hady became minister of the MME in 2006 she soon after reinstated the idea of a general conference for Egyptians abroad. For instance, a conference was held on August 26th 2007 for Egyptians abroad and was hosted under the auspices of Egyptian Prime Minister Ahmed Nazif and was chaired by Aisha Abdel Hady.

This conference was also attended by various other ministers and government officials. Approximately 200 members of the Egyptian diaspora attended the conference—they seemed to be mostly from the United States and Canada with some others from Europe and the Arab countries. We were interested to find that the slogan for this conference was "new thoughts on prospects for development[193]." Under this heading, four main themes were addressed during the conference: prospects for investment in Egypt, investment in real estate and agriculture in Egypt, investment opportunities in North Sinai and Qena, and investment in education and tourism[194]. Basically the entire conference revolved around advertising to Egyptians abroad investment opportunities in Egypt. It seems as though the government believed that the best way to achieve the development of Egypt was only through the transfer of the diaspora's financial capital with no mention of the importance of the transfer of its human capital.

A quick look at the conference proceedings of the last annual diaspora conference hosted in 2009 also brings to light the government's complete negligence of the topic of highly skilled Egyptians abroad and knowledge transfer. Of the four sessions held, none of these sessions were planned to discuss the diaspora's human capital contributions; the focus was instead on the development of Egypt through the provision of investment opportunities to diaspora members, political rights of the diaspora (or why it was impractical to have absentee voting), and services available to the diaspora. [195]. This goes to show that the topics of concern for the Egyptian government were mostly related to on one hand quelling the calls of Egyptians abroad for better

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[193] Ashraf Mokhaymer "The Fourth Conference for Egyptians Abroad Searches for Investment Opportunities" Okaz Archive. http://www.okaz.com.sa/okaz/osf/20070818/Con20070818133168.htm (Accessed April 28, 2012).

[194] Ibid.

[195] "The Conference in Brief," The Emigration Sector, http://www.emigration.gov.eg/conference/Files/Brief.pdf, (Accessed April 17, 2012).

services and for greater political rights and on the other hand extracting obligations from them in the form of investments. In the conference's recommendations, however, two recommendations were made that relate to Egyptians abroad participating in home country development through knowledge transfer. This probably points to the fact that although the Egyptian government did not find this topic important enough to dedicate a session to it, the topic still emerged most likely as a result from suggestions from members in the diaspora. The two recommendations read as follows:

> 1) Professionals conferences to be held in different sectors, first to begin with is a conference for scientists, for scientific interaction to benefit the research and the researchers in their homeland
> 2) Allowing the Egyptians Abroad to share in the establishments of the educational buildings[196].

The first of these recommendations relates to the establishment of specific conferences in each field so as to facilitate the contributions of highly skilled diaspora members to the research ongoing in Egypt. The fact that this recommendation was made in the year 2009 indicates that no such conferences actually exist till this day with this purpose in mind. The second recommendation made relates to allowing the Egyptian diaspora the right to participate in the establishment of educational facilities in Egypt. From these recommendations it is apparent that until quite recently the Egyptian government had not done much towards this end.

In regards to the actualization of these recommendations, Shawky who was one of the conferences' attendees explains that although multiple good recommendations arose from this conference, nothing really materialized. Shawky attributed this failure to Egyptian bureaucracy arguing that it is the main detriment to the realization of these recommendations and to the

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[196] "Conference Recommendations," The Emigration Sector, http://www.emigration.gov.eg/conference/Files/RecommendationEN.pdf (Accessed April 17, 2012).

realization of many similar good ideas. The latter of these recommendations though, related to the role diaspora members could play in education in Egypt, seems to have been taken somewhat seriously as will be later discussed in section 5.6.

As can be seen, the latest conferences hosted by the Egyptian government have been mostly geared at attracting remittances and investors from the diaspora. None of the sessions of either conference were devoted to the topic of facilitating the human capital contributions of Egyptians in the diaspora. Minessy stated that there is currently another conference of this type being planned for this coming summer probably to take place in July 2012. Although no information has been made public about this conference yet, we will be curious to see whether or not there will be a positive shift in the direction these conferences take. It will be interesting to see if the spirit of revolution and reform has awakened interest in improving the state of scientific and research knowledge in Egypt with the assistance of qualified individuals in the Egyptian diaspora.

We will now refer to the second set of conferences that have been hosted in Egypt over the years for the diaspora. These conferences are interesting to us not only because they have been geared towards the diaspora but because they have been specifically geared towards highly skilled members of the diaspora. Although they are not really considered complete governmental initiatives, they have been hosted by an NGO named Friends of Egyptian Scholars Abroad (FOESA) with the cooperation of the Egyptian government (mainly the MME). The idea for these conferences originated from the FOESA which was founded in the early 1970s and aimed to contribute to the enrichment of thought and to participate in serious scientific efforts in order

to work towards the goals of economic development. Badran, former president of the FOESA, explains that FOESA was created in recognition of the role Egyptians abroad could play in helping Egypt with the problems it was encountering during the age of globalization. These conferences also aimed to mobilize Egyptian scholars abroad for the purpose of engaging them in Egypt's development. Towards this end FOESA, with the assistance of the Egyptian government, has hosted 16 different conferences on a biannual basis beginning in 1974 and ending in 2005[197].

The main goal of these conferences has been the strengthening of ties between Egyptian experts in Egypt and in the diaspora and benefiting from the expertise of Egyptian scholars abroad. These conferences seem to have been at least partially successful in doing this as Egyptian scholars abroad, as well as highly skilled diaspora associations such as the Association for Egyptian-American Scholars, have attended and presented papers in these conferences. Badran claims that these conferences have been very successful and that many Egyptian scholars abroad attended over the years with much zeal. It is interesting to note that these conferences have been held in various areas of science and development[198]. As can be seen in the table below, the conferences seem to have touched upon many of Egypt's development priorities.

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[197] Mostafa El Naggar, "The President of Egyptian Scientists Abroad Asks for More Attention from the Government," *El Youm El Sabae*, February 17, 2010. http://www.youm7.com/News.asp?NewsID=190758

[198] Ibid.

**Table 5.1: FOESA Conferences 1974-2005**

| Year | Conference Title |
|------|------------------|
| 1974 | Organizing Modes of Communication with Egyptian Scholars Abroad |
| 1974 | Development of the Desert |
| 1978 | Development of the Countryside as Source of Complete Development |
| 1980 | Development under the Umbrella of Peace |
| 1982 | The Role of Science and Technology in Egyptian Development |
| 1984 | Environmental Problems of Development |
| 1986 | Economic Development in Egypt |
| 1988 | Education in Egypt |
| 1990 | Egypt's Human Resources |
| 1992 | Water Resources and Development in Egypt |
| 1994 | Energy and Continuous Development in Egypt |
| 1996 | Unemployment in Egypt |
| 1998 | Development of the Desert in the Third Millennium |
| 2001 | Modernizing Egypt |
| 2003 | Human Development in the Third Millennium |
| 2005 | Information Technology and its Role in Development |

Source: Badran, Ibrahim. Interview by Iman Dawood. Cairo, Egypt. April 22, 2012.

Furthermore, we found that the success of these conferences, at least in the beginning, can be traced, at least in part, to the Egyptian government's commitment. Although FOESA was the

main organizer of these conferences, the ministry concerned with emigration at the time played a large role in these conferences. The government was responsible for both sponsoring and funding these conferences. These conferences seem to have been most effective during the first decade. After about the first ten years of conferences, however, Badran explains that the economic situation of the country deteriorated and the United Nations had to assist the government in funding these conferences. Dessouki also explained in an interview that although these conferences were effective in the beginning, they gradually decreased in effectiveness. It seems as though besides funding problems, FOESA itself began to have internal problems especially after the death of its president Mahmoud Mahfouz. Badran also traces this decreasing effectiveness to the deteriorating role of the MME which he believes has dwarfed over the years.

The final set of conferences we will review in this thesis is one hosted by the Association of Egypt-American Scholars (AEAS). An NGO founded in 1971, the AEAS is similar to the FOESA in that it aims to contribute to the scientific and cultural development of Egypt. It has approximately 600 members who reside in either Canada or the United States[199]. This AEAS has been formally recognized by the Egyptian government and has hosted, under the sponsorship of the Egyptian government, multiple annual conferences. Some of these annual conferences have been hosted abroad while others have been hosted in Egypt. Both the 2006 and 2008 conferences, for instance, have been held in Egypt. The 2006 conference was held in the National Research Centre in Cairo under the patronage of Hany Helal, former minister of the MOHESR and Hany El Nazer, President of the National Research Centre. This conference's theme was: "Enhancement of Higher Education and Scientific Research in Egypt." Alongside

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[199] "About AEAS," AEAS Scholars, http://www.aeascholars.org/aboutus.php, (Accessed April 17, 2012).

this conference there was another meeting with members of AEAS with Hany Helal where programs such as the establishment of Centers of Excellence, the Higher Education Enhancement Program, Egypt E-Learning University, and Faculty Leadership Development Program were discussed[200]. In 2008 the theme of the conference was "Cooperation between Egyptian Scholars and Scholars Abroad." The conference was once again hosted under the patronage of Hany Helal but this time at the Supreme Council of Universities on the Cairo University Campus. Approximately 500 conference delegates and guests including leaders of higher education in Egypt, university presidents, and heads of research institutions attended this conference[201]. It is important to note, however, that the government role in these conferences seems to be quite limited. Salama explained in an interview that besides sponsoring these conferences the government didn't do much else.

## 5.6 Cooperation and Joint Projects

The nature of our highly transnational world has allowed many countries to benefit from the participation of highly skilled diaspora members in home country projects. Cooperation between highly skilled members of the diaspora and home country scholars, professionals, and policymakers is now possible via both actual temporary visits to the homeland and virtual participation. This section will discuss the Egyptian government's attempts at involving highly skilled diaspora members in home country projects via actual visits. The next section of this chapter will discuss the Egyptian government's attempts at the virtual participation of the diaspora.

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[200] "2006 Conference," AEAS Scholars, http://www.aeascholars.org/conferences/conf_2006.php. (Accessed April 17, 2012).

[201] "2008 Conference," AEAS Scholars, http://www.aeascholars.org/openingceremony.php (Accessed April 17, 2012).

It seems as though the Egyptian government has particularly recognized the benefits that can be accrued from cooperation with highly skilled diaspora members, especially scholars and scientists, in the fields of education and research in Egypt. Salama explains that the government has enlisted the services of diaspora members particularly in the field of education and scientific research. In 2005, for example, the government invited diaspora members to partake in the formulation and planning of Science, Technology, and Innovation (STI) policy. Numerous scholars from the diaspora attended the STI conference held in Cairo towards that end. One of the main sessions of the conference was on how to best benefit from the diaspora's skills and expertise. According to Salama this was one of the beneficial forms of knowledge transfer that have taken place. Similarly, the Egyptian government has previously invited members of the Egyptian diaspora to join the Supreme Council of Scientific Research. The main reason behind this, according to Salama, relates to the government's recognition of the value of the expertise in the diaspora.

It also seems as though the government has recognized the benefits that could be accrued from enlisting the services of Egyptians from the diaspora in the evaluation and accreditation process of the educational institutions in Egypt. The Ministry of International Cooperation (MOIC) approved a budget of one million dollars to this end in December of 2009[202]. These funds were to assist the government in the identification and selection of Egyptian scientists in the diaspora and then in the design and implementation of workshops to channel this expertise. The National

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[202] Abd El Raouf Khalifa "One Million Dollars for the Participation of Egyptian Scholars Abroad in the Development of Higher Education," December 29, 2009
http://digital.ahram.org.eg/articles.aspx?Serial=21502&eid=1512.

Authority for Quality Assurance & Accreditation of Egypt (NAQAAE) is currently the main body responsible for the implementation of this program. As can be seen in their initiative's conceptual framework, NAQAAE seems to be well aware of the benefits that can be amassed through cooperation with highly skilled Egyptians in the diaspora. The conceptual framework reads:

- Our conviction that education can be developed only by Egyptian *brains*.
- Our human resources outside of Egypt is a natural extension of the Egyptian main *Societal Capital*.
- Our deep belief that Egyptian scientists abroad will give their time and experience only when they feel that the country is *committed and have a clear vision* for educational development and that they are an *integral part of educational reform*
- Egyptian scientists abroad reached *the critical mass* with diversified experience in almost all areas of knowledge.
- The understanding that *Quality Assurance* of educational institutions is the *gateway* to our educational reform.
- Establishing a *sustainable functional* linkage between NAQAAE and Egyptian international scholars.
- Establishing *institutional linkage* between NAQAAE and international educational institutions through the Egyptian scholars
- Casting substantial *transparency* on the evaluation process by Internationalization of the reviewers team
- Transferring the *good practices* and the accumulative experience of the Egyptian scholars to our educational institutions[203]

In an effort to implement this conceptual framework, NAQAAE held its first meeting with diaspora members in June 9-10, 2010. Although its effectiveness is unclear, approximately 100 scholars from the diaspora working in the United States, Canada, and Europe attended the meeting. Multiple workshops in different disciplines such as engineering, medicine, and technology were also held throughout these days[204]. It is unclear whether or not NAQAAE has

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[203] 'The Initiative Conceptual Framework," last modified September 22, 2010, National Authority for Quality Assurance & Accreditation of Education-Egypt, http://naqaae.org.eg/en/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=96.
[204] "The First Meeting for Egyptian Scholars Abroad," NAQAAE, http://www.naqaae.eg/services/co-operation-activity/318-2010-06-13-10-09-33.html, (Accessed April 29, 2012).

held another meeting towards this end as there is no mention of such a second meeting for diaspora experts. Hence, we are unable to determine whether this was a onetime attempt or whether NAQAAE has actually successfully implemented its conceptual framework and facilitated the transfer of knowledge from diaspora members. Nevertheless, it seems as though the lack of updates on NAQAAE's website signifies that there has not been much follow up following this first meeting.

Another similar move towards the establishment of cooperation between scholars in the diaspora and scholars at home relates to the establishment of educational facilities.  Salama explains that the government has indeed invited Egyptians from the diaspora to partake in the development of universities in Egypt. The first example of this, he explains, was the consultation of Egyptian scholars abroad in matters related to the establishment of Nile University. Likewise, the Egyptian cabinet's approval of the establishment of Zewail's City of Science on Technology on May 11, 2011 is another example of this[205]. This approval signifies the Egyptian government's readiness to allow Egyptian scholars from the diaspora to play a role in the establishment of educational institutions in Egypt. Once established it seems that Zewail's City will play a large role in transferring knowledge from Egyptians in the diaspora as many renowned Egyptians abroad are already on the university's board of trustees.

Finally, a note can be said about joint-projects. As apparent in the literature review, governments such as the Chinese government have often facilitated that participation of their diaspora members in joint-projects between home-based scholars and professionals. While it is true that joint-projects of this type have in fact been carried out in Egypt, Salama explains that these joint-

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[205] "The City," Zewail City, http://www.zewailcity.edu.eg/the-city (Accessed April 29, 2012).

projects have not been carried out in an organized manner. The Egyptian government does not seem to have played a central role in the setting up of these projects or in facilitating them. Instead, any joint projects that have been conducted of this type have been as a result of the individual efforts and initiatives of scholars and professionals either in the diaspora or in home country institutions. It seems as though programs aimed at facilitating the establishment of joint projects are unfortunately missing from the Egyptian government's knowledge transfer policy.

**5.7 Virtual Participation**

As we have briefly mentioned before, the emergence of new information and communication technologies has been one of the main reasons behind the increased interest in diasporas. These new technologies have aided in the transnationalization of the world and have allowed members of the diaspora to continue to take part in home country affairs while still physically being in their host country. So as opposed to physical forms of participation discussed such as the TOKTEN program, conferences and workshops, cooperation and joint projects discussed above, new technologies have particularly facilitated what is often referred to as the virtual participation of diaspora members. This is what Gamlen has termed as the virtual cluster approach to knowledge transfer[206]. Woldentensae also discusses this type of knowledge transfer explaining that "virtual participation provides opportunities for involvement of the intellectual Diaspora in activities such as module preparation for distance teaching and e-learning, sharing of information with local counterparts, collaboration on researches and other development projects[207]."

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[206] Alan Gamlen, "Diaspora Engagement," 16.

[207] Yohannes Woldentensae, "Optimizing," 5.

Such uses of information and communication technologies seem largely absent from any Egyptian governmental activities. The only mention of the use of such technologies can be seen more than ten years ago in the year 2000 when Ahmed El Amaway, minister of the MME at the time, had announced a new program for the diaspora. This new program was aimed at both improving the services of the Egyptian government for Egyptians in the diaspora and for facilitating links with highly skilled members in the diaspora and benefiting from their experience and skills. One of the components of this new program involved the use of video conference technology to organize seminars with the diaspora[208]. The main topic of these seminars was on how to best achieve the participation of the Egyptian diaspora in development projects and transfer its knowledge. When asked about this program, Farrag who has been an official in the Emigration Sector of the MME for twelve years explained that in reality no such virtual participation by the diaspora had taken place. He clarified that just because a program was announced or written about in newspapers does not mean it actually took place in reality. He also argued that everything published about the activities of the MME, especially starting in 2001 through 2009 painted a "rosy" image of the situation. He said that you cannot actually trust anything written during this time. Hence, it seems as though the Egyptian government has not been able to facilitate the virtual participation of Egyptians in the diaspora and has not been able to channel their skills and expertise in this way.

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[208] Mohamed Abd El Shafy, "A Program for the Welfare of the Diaspora and Benefiting from their Experiences and Abilities," Al Ahram. October 6, 2000. http://www.news-bank.net/cached-version.aspx?id=hrm-206659&highlight=%D9%85%D8%A4%D8%AA%D9%85%D8%B1%20%D9%84%D9%84%D9%85%D8%B5%D8%B1%D9%8A%D9%8A%D9%86%20%D8%A8%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AE%D8%A7%D8%B1%D8%AC%20%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B9%D9%84%D9%85%D8%A7%D8%A1

Woldentensae adds to the definition of virtual participation though expanding it to include different types of virtual participation. He explains that the transnational nature of this world allows other means of participation by the diaspora through "remote resource mobilization such as donation of books for high schools, sending computer facilities to enhancing the use of ICT in universities or providing medical equipments for local hospitals"[209]. This more than the previous type of virtual participation may be more present in the case of Egypt. Although there are no concrete programs to facilitate such remote resource mobilization, interviews conducted with state officials who had previously been posted in areas where the Egyptian diaspora is hosted expressed how this type of participation does indeed occur although in a dispersed and unofficial manner. Elgemeie explained, for example, that when he was a cultural attaché for the MOHESR in Berlin that he often oversaw the resource mobilization of this type. He says that he organized many donations of medical equipment for example. Dessouki also explained during an interview that there have been various cases where members of the Egyptian diaspora (especially academics) have mobilized the donation of books for Egyptian public universities. It seems as though perhaps this indirect form of virtual participation is more common and has occurred as a result of personal initiatives as opposed to governmental initiatives.

**5.8 Conclusion**

In this chapter we looked at the Egyptian government's attempts at extracting obligations from its diaspora through investment policies. Since the highly skilled diaspora's human capital is the focus of our research, we devoted the majority of this chapter to examining the knowledge transfer policies and programs of the Egyptian government as opposed to the other forms of investment policies such as diaspora investment. Acknowledgement of the importance of the

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[209] Yohannes Woldentensae, "Optimizing," 5.

diaspora's human capital was found in Law 111, the MME's policy documents, and the NDP's statements. Nevertheless beyond a simple acknowledgement and a declaration of intent to find ways to benefit from this human capital, Egypt did not have any other formulated policies specific to this purpose. It is not surprising, then, that we were unable to find too many governmental initiatives towards this end. We were able to find and reviewed in this chapter: the TOKTEN program, databases for the highly skilled diaspora, conferences hosted for the diaspora and specifically for scholars and experts in the diaspora, cooperation and joint projects, and incomplete attempts by the government to achieve the virtual participation of the Egyptian diaspora.

We did not find the TOKTEN program to be of great success mainly as it dwindled in effectiveness following the first six years of its implementation. The number and duration of consultations have not been very great and the fields and origins of consulted diaspora members have also been quite limited and not necessarily in correspondence with the needs of Egypt. Moreover, the program did not establish the greater goal of creating links between institutions in Egypt and those in diaspora-hosting countries. We also found that attempts by various agencies of the Egyptian government to create a database of highly skilled Egyptians in the diaspora have been numerous yet largely unsuccessful over the years. The number of different bodies independently trying to establish such a database definitely signifies great redundancy and points to the lack of coordination in Egypt's diaspora engagement policies. Likewise, the recent participation of NGOs in the creation of these databases points to the failure of the Egyptian government in achieving this and at the need for NGOs to fill this gap. Such a trend can also be seen in our third activity, conferences and workshops, as these have also been repeatedly held by

NGOs instead of governmental agencies. The ones that have been held by NGOs have no doubt been more successful than those hosted by the government since such government conferences have ignored human capital and focused instead on financial capital. It is important to note, however, that NGO efforts, such as those of the FOESA have not been free of problems especially as of late. Nonetheless, the recent demise of FOESA although is independent to the NGO itself is also dependent on the gradual demise of the MME. Finally, we also observed Egyptian government attempts at the initiation of the virtual participation of the diaspora. We found that videoconferencing, for example, was only announced but that it did not take place in reality. Instead we noticed individualized, dispersed, and unofficial forms of virtual participation initiated by the individuals of the diaspora itself.

As with the capacity building and extending of rights policy types, Egypt's knowledge transfer policies are also deeply lacking. However, they are even in a worse state than the previously discussed policies. Overall they tend to suffer from an incomplete understanding as to how to best utilize the diaspora's human capital. This is evidenced by the fact that in no policy document of the Egyptian government has there been concrete and detailed policies on ways to achieve the transfer of the diaspora's human capital. Furthermore, the bodies involved in the implementation of this policy are numerous and do not seem to coordinate with one another. There is a complete absence of an overall guiding framework or strategy for knowledge transfer in Egypt.

As mentioned briefly above, we also observed the participation of multiple NGOs that have been perhaps playing an even bigger role in facilitating the diaspora's human capital contributions

then has the Egyptian government itself. It seems as though international NGOs (such as the UN in the case of the TOKTEN program) as well as national NGOS (such as The Age of Science, FOEASA, and AESA) have been the main initiators and implementers of knowledge transfer policies in the absence of serious efforts by the government. Minessy attempted to explain the reason behind the government's general negligence by attributing it to what is often referred to as *'uqdet-al-khawaja* or Westerner's Complex i.e. Egyptians' belief that they as Egyptians are incapable of producing anything valuable, that only the *khawaga* or the Westerner could produce something of value, and that anything produced in the West or by the West would be better than that produced at home. Furthermore, Minessy explained that he lack of serious efforts can be attributed to the generally low demand for such experts in Egypt—as universities, research institutions, and other workplaces in Egypt are on the whole uninterested in benefiting from such qualified personnel. Badran expanded on this by attributing the general negligence of the government to its deteriorating state over the years. He explained that although many initiatives were successful in the beginning, they have decreased in effectiveness as has the Egyptian government (and especially the MME) over the years. It is no surprise then that attempts by the Egyptian government to benefit from the diaspora's human capital have not been very serious. The general failure of the government's knowledge transfer programs suggests that it is unlikely that any serious knowledge transfer is taking place as a direct result of their policies and that if any knowledge transfer is taking place it is most likely happening either through programs of NGOs or in a haphazard manger through personal initiatives.

## CHAPTER SIX:

## THESIS CONCLUSION & POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

### 6.1 Conclusion

This thesis has examined the state of Egyptian government policies towards highly-highly skilled emigration in general and the diaspora in specific. We found that Egypt's policy towards highly skilled emigration has not changed recently and that it has, since the time of Sadat, continued to be one of encouraging emigration in order to benefit from the diaspora's financial capital (e.g. remittances) and to decrease unemployment at home. We also noted that although at an earlier time restrictions were in place aimed at inhibiting the flight of specific human capital, such restrictions have now been removed and Egypt's policies do not give much serious thought to the disadvantages associated with the loss of essential Egyptian human capital. Since Egypt's highly skilled emigration policies have been quite liberal they have allowed high migration rates and have led to the creation of a sizable diaspora. We pointed out the increasingly high skill level of this diaspora and the importance of engaging such a highly skilled diaspora for the purposes of Egypt's development.

We then examined Egyptian government policy towards the diaspora utilizing Gamlen's concept of "transnational governmentality" and his impending policy typology. We discovered that, like most countries with large diasporas, Egypt is in fact interested in transnationalizing governmentality to include its diaspora. We observed that Egypt's policies towards the diaspora include capacity building policies that are aimed at symbolically building a nation and incorporating the diaspora into it with the help of various institutions that have built to help

govern the diaspora. We lamented the deficient set of Egyptian institutions pointing to the lack of a ministry specific to the diaspora, the weak and ineffective consultative diaspora body, the uncoordinated and often redundant nature of these policies, and the tension between different institutions in charge of implementing these policies. Moreover, we observed that Egypt does in fact extend rights to its diaspora. Politically speaking, the diaspora has had the right to dual nationality for decades but has only recently been allowed to vote while abroad via their national ID. We welcomed this development but noted the absence of parliamentary representation for the diaspora. In terms of social and civil rights, although we found them to exist on paper (vaguely alluded to in Law 111), in practice we found that the extension of such rights is generally only relevant to the low skilled diaspora and even then has not been very successful due to the perceived (and likely actual) inefficiency of Egyptian governmental bodies abroad.

After looking at the government's capacity building and extending of rights policies, we devoted the rest of our research to the government's diaspora policies aimed at extracting obligations via investment policies from the diaspora and more specifically aimed at transferring knowledge from the diaspora. Although we did find mention of the importance of the diaspora's human capital in Egypt's formulated policies they were not clearly formulated. Furthermore, we were not able to find a coherent set of policies aimed at facilitating the diaspora's human capital contributions. We did come across a limited number of initiatives aimed at transferring the diaspora's human capital such as the TOKTEN program, databases of the highly-highly skilled diaspora, conferences and workshops, cooperation and joint projects, and virtual participation. These initiatives were successful to varying degrees but more often than not were initiated or mainly implemented by an NGO, lacked in implementation, and were quite unfavorable to any

real great knowledge transfer. Likewise, repeated calls for the transfer of the diaspora's financial capital seem to have overshadowed any calls for the diaspora's human capital contributions. Mistrust between the government and the diaspora was perceived by government officials who argued that it has impeded the participation of diaspora members in government initiatives. Finally, the deteriorating state of these programs was noted and was traced to the concurrent deterioration of Egyptian government institutions and particularly the MME.

It seems as though the Egyptian government's policies towards skilled emigration and the diaspora do not compose a clear and comprehensive policy framework (especially since they fail to seriously acknowledge the benefits that can be amassed from engaging the diaspora and facilitating its human capital contributions). Likewise, the policies that do exist and are properly formulated are not always implemented as they are formulated. It is especially important to keep in mind that the ineffectiveness of the government's knowledge transfer programs is not only because of the weakness of the institutions and programs in and of themselves, but because of the government's inability to properly pursue the first two types of diaspora engagement policies. As Gamlen has pointed out, "The strength of states' claims to legitimately extract benefits from 'their' diasporas arguably flows from their reciprocal provision of benefits[210]." In other words, unless the Egyptian government is able to symbolically build a nation state and incorporate the diaspora into it and extend to it political, social, and civil rights it is unlikely that the diaspora will be willing to participate in the government's knowledge transfer programs. The Egyptian government's policies are ineffective at engaging with the diaspora and strengthening ties with them and hence are generally not conducive to knowledge transfer for the purposes of Egypt's development. Although some knowledge transfer does no doubt occur, it is does not always take

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[210] Alan Gamlen, "Diaspora Engagement," 13.

place in a systematic manner through government programs but instead often takes place in a haphazard, individualized, and self-initiated manner.

**6.2 Policy Recommendations**

The results of this research have identified that Egyptian government policies towards the diaspora could definitely benefit from being more conducive to both diaspora engagement and knowledge transfer. Hence, this research will present some policy recommendations aimed at improving the state of the Egyptian government's highly skilled emigration and diaspora engagement policy. These recommendations are also meant to eventually amplify and accelerate the diaspora's human capital contributions. Such recommendations are extremely important now as a change in government and possibly also in policy are imminent for the first time in decades. We hope these recommendations assist Egypt's new policymakers in shaping the country's future.

*Know the Diaspora*

As was mentioned many times throughout this thesis, Egypt suffers from a severe absence of accurate and comprehensive data on Egyptian emigration in general and the diaspora in specific. Such a paucity of information is deeply troublesome as it makes effectively engaging with the diaspora incredibly difficult. Perhaps the first step that needs to be taken by the Egyptian government towards the establishment of a more effective diaspora strategy is that of improving the quality of data collection. The Egyptian government is in desperate need of accurate and up to date data about the size of its diaspora, its location, members' education and skill levels, as

well as members' occupations. This information should not just be collected about migrants in the diaspora but other members of the diaspora also. The absence of such data as well as the absence of a comprehensive database on highly skilled diaspora members is amongst the greatest obstacles to diaspora engagement and knowledge transfer, for how could a government that does not know its diaspora engage with and benefit from its diaspora?

*Establish a Comprehensive Policy Framework*

One of the main findings of this thesis pointed to the absence of a comprehensive emigration policy framework. We found that although some diaspora engagement policies do exist, they are not part of a comprehensive emigration policy and they are often not formulated in a way that makes them effective. The Egyptian government must devise a clear, comprehensive emigration policy with a diaspora engagement strategy at the center in order to maximize the benefits that can be amassed from its rich diaspora. This policy framework needs to be composed with the help of all relevant ministries especially the MOFA, the MME, the MOHESR, the MOI, and the MOICT. These ministries must cooperate to come up with a better structured emigration policy and a diaspora engagement strategy that is clear, coherent, and removes all the current redundancies and inefficiencies. It is especially important to note that both the emigration policy and diaspora engagement strategy must be directly linked to the development priorities of Egypt both in formulation and in practice. Likewise, this diaspora strategy must be comprehensive not only in the sense that it formulates a framework complete with capacity building, extending rights, and extracting obligations policies, but also in the sense that it incorporates the entire Egyptian diaspora. One of our findings of this research pointed to the focus of the Egyptian government only on diaspora members in the United States. Such a narrow focus ignores and consequently misses out on the benefits that can be amassed from such a rich and diverse

Egyptian diaspora. The strategy should also encompass the diaspora and not just migrants as there are no doubt a lot of resources that could be useful to Egypt's development.

*Take into Account Differences in the Diaspora*

As our historical chapter has shown, the Egyptian diaspora is not uniform. The Egyptian diaspora is located in both OECD countries and in Arab countries and takes on very different characteristics in each of these areas and even within these areas. Data about the diaspora needs to be studied in order for the diaspora engagement strategy to be able to into account these differences and thus be effective. We have noted that both permanent emigration to OECD countries and temporary emigration to Arab countries are present in the case of Egypt. We have also noted differences in skill level between these two areas and between countries within these areas. We noted for example that the Egyptian diaspora in Italy has a much lower skill level than that of the diaspora in Canada. Yet we have not noted in Egyptian government policy much attention to regional differences. The Egyptian government policy is currently focused on interacting primarily with members of the diaspora hosted in the United States. While this may seem to make sense since there the diaspora in the United States boasts a high skill level, a focus on diaspora members in the United States is not sufficient. Egyptian government policy needs be focused on diaspora members, for example, who work in sectors and occupations that could be useful to Egypt's development. The nature of the Egyptian government's interaction with diaspora members in OECD countries who are permanently settled should be different than the Egyptian government's interaction with diaspora members who are only temporarily in Arab countries. Hence, after careful analysis of the state of the Egyptian diaspora around the world, Egyptian government policy needs to be adjusted to reflect nuances within the diaspora.

*Consult the Diaspora*

While composing the diaspora strategy discussed above, it is crucial for the Egyptian government to consult the diaspora. Since we have found that many diaspora members feel mistrust towards the Egyptian government, it is essential that the government invite diaspora members to share their views on the government's policies. In order for Egypt's diaspora strategy to work it must be coauthored and the diaspora must feel as if it has had a role in formulating it. Furthermore, the Egyptian government needs to allow for a more independent diaspora consultative body since as we have seen the General Union for Egyptians Abroad suffers from many problems. An effective consultative body will also no doubt improve the chances of more successful diaspora engagement policy that leads to more profound knowledge transfer through the diaspora.

*Establish an Emigration Ministry*

As we have seen in several countries with large diasporas, a ministry dedicated to emigration matters is an important part of successful diaspora engagement. In the case of Egypt even employees of the MME expressed their concern over the lack of an independent ministry for emigration and the diaspora. Since Egypt is a country of high migration rates and the Egyptian diaspora consists of almost 10% of the Egyptian population, it is important to have an effective institution that deals with emigration matters and serves the diaspora. Establishing such a ministry would ensure that all three policy types discussed in this paper would be implemented in a more effective manner. Such a move is very essential as currently no government body has the capacity to fully engage with the diaspora and maximize the benefits that can be accumulated from the emigration of so many Egyptians.

*Update the Legal Framework*

Along with a more comprehensive diaspora engagement policy framework, there is a major need for an update of Egypt's legal emigration framework. The current law in place (Law 111) was passed in 1983 and is no longer that applicable to situation in Egypt. The law is outdated since it was originally passed before it became clear which governmental bodies in Egypt would be responsible for each task related to the diaspora. The current law assigns everything to the "ministry concerned with emigration" although the reality of the matter is that there are multiple governmental bodies involved in diaspora engagement policy formulation and implementation. Furthermore, the current law does not clarify enough the rights appointed to the diaspora. Although a new law was passed to give Egyptians in the diaspora the right to vote, such an essential right should be included in Egypt's main emigration law. Finally, it should be noted that Egypt's emigration law is very vague in that it does not specify how exactly the government will benefit from the diaspora's human capital for example. A more updated legal framework should include such essential details.

*Improve Institutions' Capacity*

As we have mentioned throughout this thesis, there is a major gap (especially in certain areas) between the formulation of policies and their implementation. In some cases Egypt does have the appropriate policies but they are simply not implemented as formulated. To decrease this gap it is essential that the relevant governmental institutions undergo capacity building. Although, for example, the Emigration Sector of the MME recently underwent capacity building as part of the IMIS project begun in 2001, such institutions are in desperate need of capacity building. Visits to these institutions for the purpose of this thesis' fieldwork brought to light the dire circumstances

of Egypt's governmental institutions. More attention needs to be paid to the effectiveness of these institutions. Furthermore, employees of these institutions should be selected in a more appropriate manner as currently these institutions are lacking the appropriate human capital.

*Pay More Attention to Rights of & Services to the Diaspora*

This thesis reviewed more than just the Egyptian government's knowledge transfer programs since it was understood that for these programs to be successful the Egyptian government must first effectively implement capacity building and extending services policies. We were distraught though to find though these policies are not implemented as they are formulated. Such a situation is cause for distress since the benefits that can be amassed from the diaspora are to a large part dependent on the Egyptian government's ability to communicate and maintain strong links with the diaspora. Moreover, they are dependent on the success of the Egyptian government in extending to the diaspora the rights and services that would make them feel as though they are citizens governed by a legitimate sovereign.

*Regain the Trust of the Diaspora*

The Egyptian government has over the years generally lost legitimacy in the eyes of Egyptians both home and abroad (as evidenced by the January 2011 uprisings). This is even more so an issue with agencies that deal directly with Egyptians abroad. Many policymakers in the agencies visited for the sake of this research expressed that there is mistrust between diaspora members and the government which leads diaspora members to shy away from engaging with Egyptian government agencies whether in host or home countries. Such mistrust is extremely damaging not only because it reduces the effectiveness of attempts by the Egyptian government to reach out to the diaspora but also because it reduces the effectiveness of any government initiatives

aimed at transferring the diaspora's human capital. Government bodies need to revamp themselves and ensure higher quality of services to the diaspora. Furthermore, government bodies need to advertise these better services in order that they may gradually change their current negative reputation. Only by regaining the trust of Egyptians in general and the diaspora in specific will the diaspora seriously engage with the Egyptian government and participate in its diaspora engagement and knowledge transfer programs.

*Make Use of ICT*

As has been previously mentioned, one of the main reasons diasporas have gained popularity in the literature in recent years is definitely related to the emergence of so many new ICT tools. The Egyptian government must recognize the benefits of the use of such tools and help to make them available in government institutions and facilities. These new ICT tools would help the Egyptian government implement virtual participation programs and facilitate joint projects. Likewise, these new tools could facilitate the emergence of intellectual networks of Egyptians in the diaspora. The Egyptian government needs to pay more attention to these tools in order for it to compete in today's highly knowledge based world.

*Coordinate with NGOs*

Our research brought forth several notable efforts by NGOs such as FOESA, AEAS, and the Age of Science. These NGOs all partook in efforts to facilitate knowledge transfer whether through establishing a database of highly skilled Egyptians or hosting conferences for the transfer of knowledge from Egyptian scholars in the diaspora. Since these efforts already exist, it is important for the Egyptian government to coordinate with these bodies in order to remove

redundancies and inefficiencies. NGOs could also play an important role in areas that require the trust of the diaspora since this is one of the major weaknesses of the Egyptian government.

*Coordinate with Host Countries*

No doubt one of the most important factors that determine diaspora engagement levels and impact is host country policy. While such a topic is out of the scope of this research, it is still important for us to acknowledge the importance of this factor. There are definite benefits to be amassed from home country coordination with host countries. Diaspora policies need to be beneficial to the home county, the diaspora, and to host countries. Aligning these three elements will no doubt increase the chances of success for a country whose institutions suffer from a lack of capacity.

*Elevate Status of Research & Education*

Finally, one of the most important moves that could increase the possibility of more profound knowledge transfer from the Egyptian diaspora relates to the status of research and education in Egypt. We cannot ignore the collapsing state of research and education in Egypt. In order for the diaspora's human capital to benefit Egypt, Egypt must be in a state as to receive it and make use of it. Hence, a larger budget must be directed towards educational and scientific research institutions and facilities in Egypt. Research facilities must be upgraded so as to allow Egyptian diaspora members to operate effectively when they collaborate in joint projects or visit as consultants. Likewise, a larger budget needs to be allocated for these knowledge transfer programs.

**6.3 Thesis Limitations**

It is important to mention here some limitations of this thesis. First of all, as we have previously mentioned in chapter 1, this thesis mainly concentrated on the Egyptian government's formulated policies. In some instances when data was available about initiatives and programs of the government, this thesis actually assessed their effectiveness such as in the case of the TOKTEN program. However, this was not the norm as most government bodies visited either did not possess or did not make available data about their implemented programs. Since such data was usually not available, this thesis had to depend on interviews with employees of these government bodies in order to extract information about the programs. Egyptian officials were interviewed about formulated policies and asked about whether these policies have been implemented as they were formulated or if there has been a large gap between formulation and implementation. Officials were also asked about the effectiveness of these policies. This method was not free of weaknesses, however. Although we were pleasantly surprised to find that Egyptian officials were generally on the whole willing to constructively critique government policies, there were exceptions to this. One of the interviewees, for instance, was not willing to engage in a critical discussion about Egyptian policies. When asked about the limitations of the program he was in charge of, he simply would not acknowledge that there could be any limitations.

There were also other limitations of this interview method. One of the major obstacles we encountered while researching was that Egyptian officials interviewed did not seem very knowledgeable about the work of their agencies. This was even the case with some of the senior officials interviewed who had been in the same ministry for years; hence, interviews at times had

to be conducted with numerous employees of the same government body. This is a finding, in and of itself though, as it definitely points to the nature of Egyptian institutions and points to the desperate need for building their capacities.

Finally, a note must be said about the potentially incomprehensive nature of the data collected about Egyptian government policies and initiatives. Although this thesis sought to report on all Egyptian government policies and programs relevant to this thesis, we can imagine that we did not manage to review 100 per cent of these initiatives .We did in fact include all the initiatives we came across and feel like they give an accurate image of the current situation of Egyptian government policies towards the diaspora and its human capital.

**6.4 Further Research**

Since looking into the effectiveness of diaspora engagement policies and programs was out of the scope of this research, we think that it would be interesting for future research to be aimed at examining in depth the various policies and programs that we were able to identify through the course of this research. A special focus on Egyptian institutions and their capacities would also be enlightening. Furthermore, we think that examining the efforts of NGOs aimed at engaging with the diaspora and specifically the highly skilled Egyptian diaspora would be especially interesting since as we have seen throughout the course of this research there are numerous NGO who engage in this. It would be especially interesting to see whether these initiatives can actually act as an alternative to the currently flawed Egyptian government policies and programs. We also think that further research should be conducted on the various Egyptian diaspora associations. We believe that these associations could play a very large role in diaspora-homeland interaction and in channeling the diaspora's various forms of capital to Egypt for the purposes of

development. Finally, we recommend that research on the actual highly skilled Egyptian diaspora be conducted in an effort to become better acquainted with the diaspora and in order to understand how the various elements of Egyptian government diaspora policy affect them. The diaspora's perspective on this issue is crucial to understanding any successes or failures of Egyptian government policy towards the diaspora and in formulating more appropriate and better welcomed policies.

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