RESULTS SUMMARY

Proposal Draft Law on Confronting Hate Speech in Egypt

Author: Insert organisation (Year)

Find project on OpenAid

PROJECT

Title:	Forum for Intercultural Dialogue FID phase VI - “Promoting Intercultural Dialogue for Development, Capacity Building for Peaceful Coexistence and Cooperation, Phase VI”
Partner:	Coptic Evangelical Organization for Social Services (CEOSS)
Country:	Egypt
Period:	2019-2022

CHANGE

The National Council for Human Rights in Egypt together with 50 Egyptian lawmakers, senators, and politicians proposed a draft law on combating hate speech to the Egyptian Ministry of Justice in late 2022. The proposal entails the criminalisation of hate speech and a proposal to reformulate/activate existing constitutional articles related to non-discrimination. The existing law on “Disrespect of Religions”, does not protect against discrimination from a wider perspectives that includes stigmatisation, stereotyping, and polarization.

CONTEXT

Secterian hate speech has in recent decades escalated in Egyptian society as a result of the spread of fundamentalism irrespective of religious, political, or cultural differences. Fighting hate speech is crucial for peaceful coexistence and prevention of violent extremism among the communities Danmisson and its partner work in. Even though non-discrimination is stipulated in the Egyptian Constitution of 2014, there is no law that criminalizes hate speech as such in its broader concept - specifically not on religious grounds.

CONTRIBUTION

This change was made possible through Danmission’s continuous programmatic and financial support to CEOSS. Throughout the long-standing partnership, Danmission has been providing CEOSS with technical capacity development in project design, advocacy, the Human Rights Based Approach, gender mainstreaming, monitoring and evaluation, and exchange of best practices. The contribution was made in collaboration with the German development organisation – Bread for the World.

IMAGES



A Legislative vision for criminalizing hate speech” round table in Cairo. Photo: CEOSS



“Together Against Hate Speech” round table in Upper Egypt. Photo: CEOSS

See next page for more details →

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

ACTIVITIES

The draft law on combating hate speech was the result of four years of dialogue and advocacy efforts by Danmission's partner CEOSS. a) In 2019, based on consultations and previous programmes hate speech was identified as an advocacy issue. b) The Forum was established including lawmakers, governmental representatives, religious leaders, and intellectuals, in addition to representatives from universities, media leaders, national councils, and civil society to discuss how to tackle hate speech. c) A national-level advocacy campaign involving key influential figures was carried out by having panels, round tables, and conferences discussing the hate speech problems and calling for the need for laws combating hate speech. d) Joint cooperation was established between CEOSS and the National Council for Human Rights through the influence of the forum members. e) NCHR and CEOSS forum Legal experts members prepared a draft law and submitted it to the Ministry of Justice in late 2022.

LESSONS

Faith-based partners on the local level with contextual knowledge, can influence relevant key societal stakeholders to cooperate and collaborate to advocate for better legislation to promote and protect religious minorities. Another lesson learned is the importance of risk assessment of a legislative proposal – and its possible negative impact and possible violation of other human rights when a law is adopted and implemented.

EVIDENCE

The process (roadmap) to reach the draft law proposal from advocacy issue identification to conception to community mobilization until submission is supported by regular progress reports describing the dialogue activities that were held in hotspot areas. Media monitoring that shows increased coverage of the advocacy issue also supports this claim/process. The joint cooperation between CEOSS and the National Council for Human Rights is proved by written correspondence between the National Council for Human Rights asking for cooperation and CEOSS confirmation. Finally, the draft law proposal submitted to the Ministry of Justice constitutes an evidence-based reference.

DOMAINS

Development strategy priorities:	Democratic Values and Human Rights
Changes in the lives of people facing poverty, marginalisation or vulnerability	-
Changes in laws, policies and practices that affect people's rights	-X
Changes in the capacity of organisations and communities to support rights	-
Changes in partnerships and collaborations that support people's rights	-
Changes in participation of groups facing poverty, marginalisation or vulnerability	-