

## Transforming Traditional, Top-Down Management of Egypt's Waterways Deemed Positive

Following a coordination meeting held recently in the Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation's Aswan Directorate, Eng. Hassan Osman, General Director of Irrigation expressed enthusiasm about the new integrated water resources management scheme saying, "operations under the new system are much better and are improving with time." Now that greater authority has been vested in the District Managers, and their technical teams have the equipment and training needed to collect and analyze



data, they are in a position to manage limited water resources more effectively. General Director Osman said the establishment of the Integrated Water Management Districts (IWMDs), and the elimination of the Inspectorate management tier, enable him to deal directly with District Managers and to take decisions immediately based on more current, localized data. Similar views were shared by other General Directors and Undersecretaries with Dr. Jeff

Fredericks, COP for the LIFE- IWRM Project and Eng. Gamil, Director of the Integrated Water Management Unit, MWRI during a round of meetings in the project areas of both Upper and Lower Egypt.

In less than six months, the project has supported formation of all 23 new Integrated Water Management Districts (IWMDs) proposed as part of this decentralization effort. With those formed during the pilot phase, a total of 27 IWMDs have been formed with USAID support covering all Districts in the five target Directorates of West Sharkiya, Zifta, Qena, and Aswan. In addition to



redefining administrative boundaries to unify irrigation, drainage, and ground water Districts, the Life-IWRM Project is supporting the Ministry in its efforts to implement a revised organizational structure with newly defined roles, responsibilities, and criteria for selection of IWMD staff. Reflecting project commitment to addressing gender in staffing, three of the newly appointed IWMD

mangers are women. The Life-IWRM Project also provides equipment and a variety of training opportunities for IWMD District Managers, Section Heads, and their staff engaged in turning the concept of integrated water management into a reality.