

## **Success Story: Water and Stability Project-**

### **Water Users Association in Kafr El Sheikh gets rewarded on World Water Day :**

CARE Egypt implemented a project named Water and Stability from 2006 until 2009 funded by the Dutch Government. The project investigated the irrigation water distribution process in a variety of circumstances, assessed actual user participation, and developed strategies to deal with issues of conflict and non-compliance. The goal of the project was to advance community social cohesion and stability (inclusion, fairness, effective use of water and protection of the environment) amongst the irrigation water users and between the users and the Government of Egypt. The project was implemented in four governorates, one of which was Kafr el Sheikh. Within Kafr El Sheikh one of the participating villages was Al Qun.

In Al-Qun conflicts over water are most severe during the summer season, which is the rice cultivation period. There are a number of direct causes of these conflicts, starting with the over cultivation of rice –beyond the quota allowed. Al-Qun also suffered from technical problems in the irrigation system. There was also an imbalance/ disproportion between the water quota of Sheikh Ibrahim canal and Adarbaga canals leaving farmers on Sheikh Ibrahim canal with less water. Farmer's attitudes also aggravated the problem; for example, all farmers tend to start planting on the same dates without attempting to organize or coordinate with each other. Moreover, farmers had little confidence in the management boards of the Water Users Association (WUA). Therefore one of the main components of the project was to build the capacities of the WUAs in the field of conflict management over water irrigation and best usage of water as well as supporting the WU Associations to define their vision and mission. As a result, the al Qun WUA agreed on implementing a set of activities, such as:

- Lining a local irrigation canal.
- Farming rice on terraces which saves up to 30% of water
- Repair of water pumps.
- Peacefully manage conflict over water with the support of the customary council arbitrator.

The Al Qun WUA succeeded to disseminate the knowledge and experience they acquired, to other WUA on the district level.

Al Qun WUA efforts did not go unnoticed, in fact the Ministry of Water and Irrigation chose the association as a model while receiving Sudanese visitors. Moreover, on World Water Day the Ministry held a competition regarding the most active associations implementing activities related to water. Al Qun WUA participated and won second place for "their efforts to develop and preserve resources and their protection of the environment"



