September 2012

ALEXANDRIA TRUST

World Class Education in the Arab Region

Strengthening Dialogue and Public Voice

Prospects for a New Higher-Education Publication in the Arab World

Report of the 2012 Cairo Workshop

Executive Summary

In May of 2012, the Alexandria Trust convened a workshop in Cairo with a wide variety of thought leaders, from countries ranging from Bahrain to Morocco, to discuss the prospects for a new regional higher-education publication for the Arab world. The workshop, which had about 50 participants, was also aimed at discovering key higher-education issues that such a publication might cover and debates that the publication might help to shape.

Participants discussed the challenges facing higher education in the region; the need for reform and the hunger to share ideas and information; the role and importance of journalism education in higher education; and the potential value of a publication dedicated to unbiased, credible news coverage, commentary, and analysis about university life in the Arab world.

The workshop included presentations from experts on each of these topics and concluded with a discussion about the proposed publication: what it should seek to achieve, how it should be constructed and managed, and how it could best reach and respond to the needs of its target audience, the higher-education community in the region.

What follows is a synopsis of this rich and wide-ranging dialogue. Participants are not identified individually because the workshop was conducted under Chatham House rules.

Key Workshop Themes and Conclusions

The broad political and geographic spectrum of participants at the workshop felt that a new publication focused on higher education in the Arab world could make an important contribution. Virtually no opposition was voiced to the idea, though participants did stress that such a publication should be based in the region and should have a strong Arabic-language component. None of the participants or dozens of others interviewed or contacted before and after the workshop knew of a publication that served universities across the region and met their needs, nor did they know of a publication or a broadcast channel that provided strong, analytical coverage of education.

Workshop attendees felt that a publication could help higher education in the Arab region by:

- Creating a "safe space" where professors, administrators, and government officials could debate educational issues and policies, share problems and solutions, and exchange ideas.
- Catalysing a genuine discussion about how to measure quality in universities and how to improve it, thereby challenging and prompting the Arab higher-education sector to improve.
- Improving communication and easing fragmentation among universities.
- Increasing interaction among students, administrators, and civil society for discussions of what rapidly evolving societies and governments need from their universities, and strengthening the values of the Arab Spring.
- Serving as an advocate for academic freedom in the region and illuminating when that freedom is suppressed.

- Helping universities to share data and use that data as a force for institutional change.

The workshop discussions about important issues in higher education in the Arab world revealed three key tensions. Perhaps not surprisingly, given the authoritarian governments present in much of the Arab region, the dominant tension was between university autonomy and government control. Another tension was between the concept of universities as marketplaces where knowledge is delivered as a commodity and the concept of these institutions as homes of scholarship and culture. Lastly, the rapid growth of private universities in the region has created a tension between those institutions, many of which are of low quality, and public institutions. Underlying that tension is the debate about whether education is a public good or a private benefit. Of course, the severe under-financing of public universities in many Arab countries is putting additional stress on those institutions.

Another underlying theme of the workshop was the need for a liberal-arts approach to teaching and learning that would more broadly educate citizens and would include emphasis on the humanities and social sciences, not just engineering, medicine, and other specialties. In short, the need is for education as civic engagement, not just education for employment.

A Note From Salah Khalil
Founder, Alexandria Trust

September 2012

Dear Colleagues,

The workshop we held in Cairo, summarized in this report, was a crucial and inspiring moment in the life of the Alexandria Trust. Established in 2011, the Trust is an Arab foundation committed to restoring world-class standards of education across the Arab region, recapturing the traditions of ancient Alexandria as the world's centre of learning. Our first signature project is to establish an independent publication dedicated to high-quality, independent reporting and analysis of issues facing the higher-education community in the Arab world.

In Cairo we heard a strong message from that community that there is a great need for such a publication. The diverse group of higher-education administrators and leaders from across the Arab world who participated in the workshop urged us to move forward to create a publication in the region, for the region, that can illuminate key issues, advance dialogue, and catalyse needed reform to ensure that regional institutions expand their capacity to unlock the talent and potential of Arab learners by giving them a strong intellectual foundation to become active citizens and leaders.

As we move forward with launching the publication in the coming months, we are committed to sustaining and building upon the dialogue that began in Cairo. Indeed, all of our work is grounded in the Trust's identity as a foundation established by Arabs for Arabs that listens deeply, engages broadly, and seeks high-impact and lasting solutions to the challenges facing education in the Arab world.

Salah Khalil

Acknowledgments

Table of Contents

A Higher Education Publication for the Arab World

To set the context for the workshop, the Alexandria Trust shared information about its vision and plans to launch a higher-education publication in the Arab world.

The vision of the Alexandria Trust, a foundation established by Arabs and based in London, is to restore world-class standards of higher education in the Arab world and to support the development of a new generation of citizens across the region who can serve as active and informed participants in their societies.

One of the ways the Trust will seek to achieve this vision is through the creation of an editorially independent publication that will provide balanced, accurate, and insightful coverage of academic life in the Arab world. Its purpose is to illuminate the realities of higher education in the region and to create a platform for communication and the sharing of information and ideas for those involved in higher education in the Arab world and beyond. It will also seek to be a link between higher-education professionals and policy makers, and to encourage transparency, accountability, and reform through the analysis of data.

The publication will be led by David L. Wheeler, who most recently spearheaded the *Chronicle of Higher Education*'s global expansion and has more than 25 years of experience in higher-education journalism. David's experience will be paired with that of journalists and advisors within the region. The publication will recruit experienced and skilled writers to report news and trends and will be comparable in style to the *Chronicle* or *Times Higher Education*, rather than a peer-reviewed academic journal. (Although the Trust's original working title for the publication was the *Arab Journal of Higher Education*, this has been changed to the working title of *Arab University News*, to clarify this point. A title that works as well in Arabic as in English is still being sought). Academics and senior administrators will also be invited to write analyses and commentary. The publication will tackle issues of critical importance to the higher-education community, including governance, funding, privatization, quality assurance, pedagogy, and technology, among others. Once launched, the publication is expected to appear at least quarterly in print and will have a robust, interactive companion website. It will have a bilingual – Arabic and English – approach to content. The Trust anticipates launching a pre-publication online-and-email newsletter early in the fall of 2012, establishing a prototype website by the end of 2012, and fully launching the publication in March of 2013.

The publication will also convene events to connect higher-education leaders within the region, to encourage dialogue and to introduce them to academic leaders outside the region. In a later phase, the publication will seek out ways to train early-career journalists from the region to cover education.

Nurturing the Spring in Arab Higher Education:
Challenges, Trends, and Prospects

A panel of experts framed a discussion among participants about the key challenges facing higher education in the Arab world. Egypt, Jordan, and the Gulf served as case studies.

Egypt: The Struggle Over Autonomy and Governance

The Egyptian context centres on a struggle between higher-education institutions and the state over governance and autonomy. At Cairo University, for example, increasing government control beginning in 1925 and the introduction of tighter regulations governing university affairs resulted in a decades-long struggle between the institution and the Egyptian government. Questions about the purpose and role of higher education arose, while increasing limitations on academic and creative freedom led to sharp declines in academic standards.

Beginning in the 1990s, concerns about "neoliberal" approaches to higher-education reform emerged, particularly with regard to projects established in Egypt by the World Bank, which included a call for the privatisation of some institutions. Concern centred on the potential dangers of transforming free higher education into a business endeavour – an approach sometimes justified as necessary due to scarce state resources, with high unemployment often used as evidence of the failure of the public system. As demand from a burgeoning population of young people continued to weigh on the system, legislation allowing the establishment of private and foreign institutions was introduced, and new private institutions, some of questionable quality, quickly proliferated. The commodification of knowledge, and the emphasis on educational goals driven by the labour market, led to a decline of the humanities and social sciences as academic subjects and the de-politicisation of the academic sphere.

In 2003, the March 9 Group of Egyptian academics was formed as an activist effort to resist and challenge practices that were undermining higher education in the country. After the onset of the Arab Spring, the March 9 Group achieved some important changes, including the replacement of state security guards on campus with civilian guards accountable to university presidents rather than to the interior ministry.

Continuing challenges for the higher-education community in Egypt include the lack of access to information, which obstructs research and hampers reform and innovation. Few connections exist among universities, research institutions, and archives. Restrictive and overly bureaucratic regulations, such as the application process for researchers and limits on the use of data, are also problematic. The research enterprise and attempts on the part of academics to obtain information are too often viewed as threatening by the state.

Jordan: Government Control, Lack of Information

Higher education in Jordan has long been impacted by the ruling regime's perception that the sector is a threat to the state, a situation often attributed to the spread of Pan-Arabist and Baathist ideologies across the Arab world at a time when Jordan had no universities and relied on foreign institutions to educate its young citizens.

The first Jordanian institutions were established under martial law in the 1960s and 1970s, and measures of control included involvement of state intelligence in student affairs departments; coercion of students; the banning of student unions (only the Muslim Brotherhood was allowed to function as a charity on campus); processes for the distribution of grants to students from different tribes that forced allegiance; and severe limitations on media coverage of higher education.

The result has been violence on campuses, a deepening divide among Jordanians of different backgrounds, and demands for reform from the academic community. After martial law was lifted in the 1990s and private universities were established across the country, some space for activism opened. This activism has focused mainly on the poor quality and lack of facilities at private institutions.

The Gulf States: Privatisation and Internationalisation

With governments and public universities unable to meet the rising demand for higher education, the Gulf States have turned to privatisation and the outsourcing of higher education in order to create opportunities for their own citizens and to seek to match global educational standards. While the result has been a significant and rapid growth in the number of programs established by foreign universities in the region and an enormous investment in building education hubs across the Gulf, workshop participants raised serious concerns about the outcomes of these efforts.

Too often, it was noted, the result has been a "parachuting" into the countries of foreign staff and faculty who are isolated from social and political realities. A lack of local engagement among students is another problematic result, as are divisions based on identity, culture, and language through which the local population is marginalized within its own institutions. The training of local professors and other educators is poor.

More on Internationalisation

Some academics in the region view internationalisation as a positive, while others see it as a problematic influence. Some key themes emerged in the workshop conversation.

Internationalisation can take many forms. The privatisation of domestic institutions by foreign corporate entities is one. This can be either direct or – as in the introduction of fee-based programs within public universities – indirect. Another form is leveraging higher education as an export – an economic asset for the country that requires strategies to recruit foreign students. "Parachuting" refers to universities from outside the region that establish programs or campuses in Arab countries, too often without an adequate appreciation of local needs and political and cultural realities. Sometimes such institutions are established as part of a development strategy in a disadvantaged area, but again, this is too often done without regard for local market needs and thus creates unsustainable institutions without a clear benefit for the country.

Concerns about the dominance of a neoliberal approach were again raised in this context, with an emphasis on the need for caution when countries open their higher-education sectors to private entities. Corporate interests closely tied to the state can be driven by self-interest and may set priorities that are not in line with the needs of students and society.

On the other hand, private universities can often more swiftly modernise than public ones, can more rapidly introduce innovation, and can effectively shift some of the burden of financing education from the government to students and their families. The debate centres on whether education is a public benefit or a private good. While countries and their universities need to preserve their cultures and ensure that their local needs and priorities are being effectively met, international partnerships and internationalisation, when managed properly, can introduce new best practices without doing harm. It is also a legitimate source of debate whether Arab public universities are at risk more from the weight of their own bureaucracies than from the outside influences of globalisation.

Summary: Key Higher Education Challenges in the Arab Region

Poor standards, government interference, and the withering of academic innovation and vibrancy are widespread in the Arab world and are significant concerns. Stronger guarantees for academic freedom, along with an education system robust in the humanities and social sciences that encourages a culture of civic engagement, are urgently needed. Without them, fundamentalism and religious extremism can spread quickly, and undemocratic regimes can easily persist.

To tackle these challenges, several necessary steps were highlighted in workshop discussions:

- Improving the social standing of teachers, professors, and educators
- Embedding education as a core element in a country's overall strategic planning
- Understanding the global context and the value of exchanging ideas as a path toward successful reform
- Increasing funding for research, especially in the sciences
- Ensuring professional autonomy and independence
- Promoting academic freedom, critical thinking, and accountability

Concept of a Liberal-Arts Approach in Education

The value of a liberal-arts approach to education broadly was emphasised in the workshop.

The concept of a liberal-arts education is poorly understood in countries like Egypt because the practice itself is often missing; this is common across the region. Too often, the emphasis in higher education is on encouraging specialisation in fields such as engineering and medicine, at the expense of the humanities and social sciences. Perversely, in Egypt for example, it is the poorer-performing students who are admitted to humanities programs. The sphere of extracurricular activities, through which students gain in confidence, broaden their interests, and practice engagement, is also neglected. More broadly, the notion of an interdisciplinary approach to higher education does not exist in the Arab world.

In order to foster engaged citizenship, institutions must encourage critical thinking, self-expression, and tolerance for diverse perspectives. These elements are often missing, and they are all elements of a liberal-arts approach. Advocacy and the sharing of information and best practices related to the liberal-arts approach to education are greatly needed.

Journalism Education: Unlocking Potential, Encouraging Debate

A panel of experts discussed the current state of journalism in the Arab region and its prospects for assuming a role as a "thoughtful critic" of higher education in the region.

Journalism, particularly in light of the Arab uprisings, reflects a struggle between two clashing ideologies: a conservative ideology based on tradition and religion and a modern secular ideology. There is broad agreement that unfettered, unbiased media coverage that gives voice to the concerns and needs of a society, as well as broad access for citizens to sources of reliable information, are vital to the flourishing of countries in democratic transition. Fostering media engagement and encouraging journalism education have not been priorities of Arab governments.

This has resulted in a lack of information and critical analysis of issues of public concern, which includes the higher-education sector. In Jordan, as mentioned earlier, journalists for many years were effectively barred from higher-education institutions. Since protests in 2011, access has begun to open up, but structural impediments to media freedom persist.

Journalism education is lacking and greatly needed across the region. There are very few graduates of journalism programs in the region and few professionally trained reporters. The notion of accountability in the profession is also weak, which results in a general lack of regard for journalists in society. In Morocco, journalism education is relatively new – the first institute for the study of media and journalism was established in the 1960s – and it functions under the umbrella of the ministry of communication rather than the ministry of education. In Egypt, journalism education has focused on teaching skills, at the expense of critical content such as history. Journalists are, by and large, ill-equipped to produce well-informed writing and analysis.

Preparing journalism professionals through the teaching of topics such as the theory, history, and ethical and legal underpinnings of journalism, as well as practical issues such as the use of technology and investigative techniques, should be a bigger priority.

When it comes to covering higher-education issues, reporters find it difficult to understand academic and scholarly work, and there is a need for professors and researchers to develop skill in "translating" their work into language that is more accessible to the public.

The Hunger for Data: For Understanding and Reform

One of the biggest issues facing higher education in the Arab world, workshop participants noted, is the lack of data. Related to this are inconsistencies in standards and vocabulary regarding data and statistics in the region, and a traditional reluctance of institutions to share information. The workshop highlighted several projects focused on the collection of information and statistics on higher education in the Arab world and beyond.

The collection, analysis, and interpretation of data and statistics help higher-education governance bodies conduct effective strategic planning. Definitions play an important role in assessing universities, especially when comparing data from different countries or universities. Institutions in the region often vary in their understanding of specific terms, making glossaries an important part of databases. In addition, the political context in Arab countries can be an obstacle to the collection of information. For example, in Egypt, government approval must be obtained in order to conduct a survey, and content can be edited or removed at the government's discretion. Ministries of education in many Arab countries are extremely reluctant to share information with the public or with research institutions.

Despite the institutional reluctance to share information, a few initiatives in the region are collecting information. Some of these are noted below. The concern of some participants at the workshop was that this information is often not utilised in the development of institutional strategic plans. There is a need to highlight success stories that illustrate how the use of data in strategic planning can improve higher education.

A Selection of Key Projects and Databases

A Collaborative Approach in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA): The University Governance and Quality Assurance Program

The World Bank, in partnership with the Agence Française de Développement, the Marseille Centre for Mediterranean Integration (CMI), and ministries of higher education across the MENA region, has established the University Governance and Quality Assurance Program. The project has three focal points: university governance, financial sustainability, and internationalisation.

Data collection was conducted through the use of screening cards distributed to 40 universities across four countries (Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia, and Palestine) that sought to measure five dimensions of governance: context, management orientation style, autonomy, accountability, and stakeholder participation. The results of the submissions were published in a 2011 report entitled *Breaking Even or Breaking Through.*

The report also proposes strategies for financing higher education at a time of economic crisis, and draws comparisons to OECD countries at various phases of development, through the use of statistics on higher-education spending in the region.

Among the report's conclusions:

- Projections regarding future enrolment rates, as demand continues to increase, are a key tool for anticipating funding requirements.
- The monitoring of resources is necessary to evaluate effectiveness.
- Policy makers will develop financing strategies based on their own priorities.
- In order to develop sustainable financing strategies, resources must be used more effectively, budget allocation should be results-based, and private-sector development should be promoted in addition to cost sharing, since the public sector cannot finance education alone.
- Institutions and governments should also aim to generate revenue and build endowments.

A follow-up report was released in May 2012 entitled *Universities Through the Looking Glass.* It identifies various governance models and strategies for assessing governance, to encourage benchmarking. The report suggests that by looking at benchmarking, university governance bodies can better assess their performance, identify their strengths and weaknesses at the institutional level, and use the results as a basis for comparisons at the country level and at the international level. The report can be downloaded at http://bit.ly/RjVS68

The University Governance and Quality Assurance Program has an online tool that includes the screening-card results, with spider charts that are visual representations of the various governance models used by universities, in addition to searchable country profiles of higher education. The tool seeks to offer a safe, private interactive space for practitioners of university governance to discuss their screening-card results and to share and discuss the results of reform measures. It offers an additional public forum for discussion with anonymous information to form a MENA-wide picture of governance.

A Community of Practice: community.cmimarseille.org
A private, moderated online community for program participants, with reports, resources, a blog, calendar of events and internal Twitter function

University Governance and Quality Assurance website: http://cmimarseille.org
A dynamic public-information centre with governance surveys, data tools, higher-education indicators and other resources

Institutional Research and Assessment Resources In and Outside MENA

Databases Within the Arab Region

MENA Association for Institutional Research http://www.mena-air.org/MENA-AIR/
MENA-AIR is affiliated with the Association for Institutional Research in the United States.

Arab Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education http://www.anqahe.org
Includes a glossary of terms for quality assurance in Arabic, French and English

Private University Council in Kuwait http://www.puc.edu.kw/

Offers data on enrolment and admissions, as well as accredited universities

UAE CAA (Commission for Academic Accreditation) https://www.caa.ae/
Collects data on accredited universities in the region

Databases Elsewhere

The Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS)
http://www.nces.ed.gov/ipeds

The *National Center for Educational Statistics* is a large and statistically rich website into which every institution in the United States must report data, as a means to ensure transparency. It includes a glossary with definitions. http://nces.ed.gov

National Association of College and University Business http://www.nacubo.org
Consists primarily of financial reports

Association of American University Professors (AAUP) http://www.AAUP.org
Includes the publication *of Academic Freedom,* a solid source for evaluation and article-writing

Student Surveys Across Institutions

NSSE (National Survey of Student Engagement): http://nsse.iub.edu/

Cooperative Institutional Research Program http://www.heri.ucla.edu/
A survey of college freshmen originally developed by the Higher Education Research Institute in the 1960s and modified over the years

AHELO (Assessment of Higher Education Learning Outcomes)
http://www.oecd.org/edu/ahelo
An OECD project

UNESCO Institute for Statistics http://www.uis.unesco.org
Includes reports on higher education

Database of Higher Education Funding Opportunities in the Arab Region

Higher Education Funding Opportunities, an online directory, is a project launched in 2008 by the Bibliotheca Alexandrina with funding from the Ford Foundation. The project's aims were to identify higher-education donors in 12 countries – Egypt, Tunisia, Morocco, Algeria Lebanon, Jordan, Kuwait, UAE, Palestine, Bahrain, Qatar and Saudi Arabia – and to provide students and institutions in the region with information about them. The project also seeks to encourage social responsibility in the corporate sector, and to establish channels of communication among donors in the Arab world, in order to avoid duplication of efforts and to diversify focus.

The research shows that demand for higher education funding far outstrips supply. Gathering information about funding can be challenging due to social, cultural, and financial factors. Financial support, for example, is often perceived as alms or charity. Institutions are thus often reluctant to share their financial information or information on their funding activities. The priorities of society also enter in, as support for the poor is prioritised over supporting higher education due to charity expectations. There is also a general lack of awareness about the importance of philanthropy. Further, a culture of transparency is absent, making institutions uneasy about revealing financial information.

A second phase of the project is in development and will include updated data, workshops, training, guidelines on completing applications, and an interaction page.

An Independent Publication on
Higher Education in the Arab World: Looking Ahead

Throughout the workshop, participants shared ideas and recommendations about how an independent publication covering higher education in the region could respond to key challenges facing the sector. They also offered suggestions about how the publication might be designed and run, how it could be of greatest value, and challenges and opportunities to keep in mind moving forward. Below is a summary of the discussion.

The publication should be of high quality, able to deliver credible and unbiased news, analysis, and commentary focused on those who work in Arab higher education and those in Arab society and government who have a stake in it. A secondary audience is academic leaders outside the region who are interested in establishing ties with Arab universities.

Mission and credibility: The publication should have a clear mission statement and be transparent about its background, financial support, and organisational partners. Integrity is essential.

Content: The publication must seek out experienced, high-quality writers and foster an environment that allows them to develop a keen understanding of the higher education community across the region – including coverage beyond major metropolitan areas and elite, well-known institutions. Constructive criticism should be an integral part of the publication's role, as it shines the spotlight on both success stories and problem areas. Writers should carefully balance various points of view when covering potentially divisive issues.

The publication has the opportunity to fill a great need: to connect the practitioners in higher education with the policy makers, to bring the concerns of the public to decision makers, and to encourage open discussion about the development and purpose of policies that impact the field.

Many topics in need of coverage were mentioned, including:
- Education policy and reform efforts
- The financing of higher education
- Unemployment and the failure of the labour market to absorb university graduates
- The use of data and statistics — possibilities include creating an information-gathering system in which all universities in the region could participate
- The importance of the humanities and social sciences and a liberal-arts approach to higher education
- The Arabisation of successful international practices and reforms
- New discoveries and trends in teaching and education technologies

Participants also encouraged the use of surveys to establish a better understanding of the state of higher education in the region today.

Structure: An editorial advisory committee, some participants noted, could be helpful in planning and as a touch point on the key issues of the day. Such a committee should be

composed chiefly of individuals in the Arab higher-education world, including some with expertise in journalism and publishing. Numerous other issues related to the publication were raised as needing attention, including funding, advertising, and sustainability.

Technology: Participants encouraged broad utilisation of online media to reach the publication's target audience. Although Internet connectivity and access to computers and phones varies widely across the region (only 35.6%[1] of the MENA region is connected to the Internet), the numbers are growing, and an integrated multimedia approach is viewed as essential to creating a forum that encourages discussion and engagement, in addition to distributing information. Online media provide an easily updateable, low-cost means of publication that has added attractiveness because periodical subscriptions are not common in the region. The use of social media such as Facebook and Twitter was also encouraged. With regard to a print edition, participants encouraged a good balance between short articles and in-depth analysis that complement one another. Some noted that a bi-monthly publishing schedule could be challenging and suggested considering a quarterly timeline.

Language: Arabic is necessary as the key language of the publication, participants said, because the target audience is mainly Arab. The majority of Arab faculty members cannot write in foreign languages. English could risk being the language of exclusion, not inclusion, and if used exclusively would engage only the few and would create unnecessary divides.

Participants strongly encouraged a bilingual approach – Arabic and English. The use of two languages – with the possibility of adding French as a third language later – would maximize the publication's ability to reach its broad audience. With engagement across Arab higher education fragile, and a lack of channels for the exchange of ideas among institutions a significant obstacle, the use of classical Arabic was viewed as a way to help bridge these divides. The challenge of translation was also addressed. Participants recommended that news articles and reports on data be translated into English and that some articles be written in English, but that the main articles should not be translated, given the impossibility of translating cultures. Articles written in English would benefit those outside the region who wish to better understand higher education in the Arab world and are interested in exploring partnerships.

Training and recruiting journalists: The publication should be clear about its goals with respect to journalism training and education. Investigative journalism was highlighted as an area of the profession in particular need of attention. The Arab Reporters for Investigative Journalism (ARIJ) and the Heikal Foundation were mentioned as potential partners. A mentorship program that pairs young professionals with more senior counterparts could also be useful. The potential convening role of the publication was also raised. Participants saw great value in convening Arab experts on higher education to work together on such topics as the creation of an educational model based on democratic values.

Summary: The consensus among participants was overwhelmingly in favour of a publication like that proposed by the Alexandria Trust. Among participants and those interviewed separately on the subject, no one was aware of a publication with a similar focus and mission.

---

[1] http://internetworldstats.com/

Appendix 1
A Closer Look at Higher Education in Egypt: History and Prospects

A special presentation from the workshop about Egypt's higher-education system is summarized below.

Cairo University was established by independent men and women in 1908 and came under government control in 1925. It was the first university in Egypt. The goal of the institution's founders was to support the modernisation of the country and to promote technical and intellectual advancement. Freedom of thinking, support for the sciences, and critical thought were founding values.

During its first few decades of existence, the university succeeded in meeting these goals and had a strong impact beyond its campus, playing an important role in society at large. Students had to pay tuition, but scholarships were also abundant. There was funding for scientific research, and classroom sizes were small enough to allow for good mentoring relationships and individual guidance.

In the 1960s, however, the Egyptian university system began to deteriorate, primarily due to an exponential rise in student numbers, which the university could not accommodate. Classroom size grew, but university facilities were not modernised and expanded to accommodate the growing student population. Another major change was that higher education became free of charge, and the state could not meet the financial needs of the sector. Low faculty salaries and a lack of funding for scientific research precipitated a lack of interest and engagement on the part of professors and encouraged brain drain. Distinguished educators left for the Gulf in search of better pay.

Today in Egypt, students find access and opportunity limited; the labour market has difficulty absorbing university graduates; educational processes and inputs are of poor quality; research is not robust, and is not connected to national and global innovation efforts; academic corruption and government interference are common; and the humanities and social sciences are neglected.

To move forward and harness the promise of the Arab spring in Egypt – and to return to the foundations of strong and effective education present in the country's history – the purpose of higher education in the country needs to be clarified. The issue of unemployment among college graduates must be confronted head on, and there must be a better balance between autonomy and state control. Research and innovation must be revived through substantial investment, and better strategic planning is crucial.

The tide of change and the success of organisations such as the March 9 Group are clear indicators that Arab universities are ready to engage in debate, seek reform, and accept constructive criticism.

Appendix 2: Workshop Participants

Abdein, Dr. Hasan
Department of Minorities and Communities
Organisation of Islamic Cooperation
Saudi Arabia

Abdelwahab, Ms. Hala
Director, Resource Development
Department
Bibliotheca Alexandrina
Egypt

Abdou, Mr. Hassan
Director, MACAT
Trustee, The Alexandria Trust
London

Abul Ghar, Dr. Mohamed
Professor of Gynaecology
Cairo University
Egypt

Al-Hamarneh, Dr. Ala
Centre for Research on the Arab World
Institute of Geography
University of Mainz
Germany

Andoni, Ms. Lamis
Independent Political Analyst
Jordan

Ask, Ms. Renae
Economic and Political Affairs
Embassy of the United States of America
Egypt

Barry, Ms. Jennifer
Consultant
World Bank, Center for Mediterranean
Integration
France

Barsalou, Dr. Judy
Political Science Department
The American University in Cairo
Egypt

Berenger, Dr. Ralph D.
Associate Professor
Department of Mass Communication
American University of Sharjah
United Arab Emirates

Clarke, Rt. Hon. Charles
Former Secretary of State for Education
Visiting Professor to the School of Political,
Social, and International Studies
University of East Anglia
United Kingdom

Crehan, Mr. Thomas
Team Leader, Higher Education
United States Agency for International
Development
Egypt

Duffy, Dr. Matthew J.
Assistant Professor
College of Communication and Media
Sciences
Zayed University
United Arab Emirates

ElAmine, Dr. Adnan
Lecturer
American University of Beirut
Lebanon

El Khawaga, Dr. Dina
Senior Program Officer
Sciences Po
France

El Moudni, Dr. Abdelatif
Secretary General
Higher Council of Education
Morocco

Elsadda, Dr. Hoda
Founding Member
The Women and Memory Forum
Egypt

Fahmy, Dr. Khaled
Professor & Chair
Department of History
American University in Cairo
Egypt

French, Mr. David
Executive Director
The Alexandria Trust
United Kingdom

Gholam, Ph.D. Ms. Ghada K.
Programme Specialist in Education
United Nations Educational, Scientific, and
Cultural Organisation (UNESCO)
Egypt

Ghubash, Dr. Rafia
Professor of Psychiatry & Former
President of the Arabian Gulf University
United Arab Emirates

Gohar, Mr. Karim
Founder & Director
Bedayaat Foundation
Egypt

Guy, Ms. Frances
Representative UN Women
Trustee, The Alexandria Trust
Iraq

Hamdy, Dr. Naila Nabil
Assistant Professor
Department of Journalism and Mass
Communication
American University of Cairo
Egypt

Hoke, Mr. Dean
Manager, Member Relations and
Communications
Ankabut Project
Khalifa University
United Arab Emirates

Ibrahim, Dr. Barbara
Founding Director , John D. Gerhart Center
for Philanthropy and Civic Engagement
The American University in Cairo
Egypt

Jad, Dr. Islah
Director
Institute of Women's Studies
Birzeit University
West Bank, Palestine

Kattan, Dr. Emmanuel
Project Manager, Our Shared Future
British Council, British Consulate-General
USA

Khalil, Mr. Salah
Founder, Trustee
The Alexandria Trust
United Kingdom

Khamis, Ms. Sahar
Head of Programmes, Education
British Council
Egypt