

Maha Ismail

Summary

- As the Managing Director of Cairo Center for Development Benchmarking- CDB, I am responsible for running all facets of the business. I have a proven executive management track record and over 20 years of experience driving research management in the Development industry in topics related to social policies, labor market, education, and poverty. Prior to joining CDB, I served as Undersecretary and the Technical Office Manager at the Egyptian Cabinet of Ministries, Egypt; responsible for all policy research management activities, Previously, I worked as a Monitoring and Evaluation Expert running evaluations for the government public policies, services and projects. I earned Ph.D. degree of the Euro- Mediterranean Studies from Cairo University. I got a Master of Public Administration from Mohammed Bin Rashed School of Government in a joint program with Harvard University and I studied Diploma of Decision Support Systems on Economic modeling and Advanced statistics.

Professional Experience

- **Currently: Managing Director - Cairo Center for Development Benchmarking- CDB (2015- now):**

My work at CDB covers Economic and social analysis on the Macro and Micro levels. we have a wide range of reputable partners as well as customers; including Government entities, UN Agencies and NGOs; such as Princeton University Press, Penguin, American University in Cairo AUC, Coptic Evangelical Organization for Social Services (CEOSS), Plan International, Care International, Drosos Foundation, The Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab, TVET, Egyptian Tourism Federation, Ministry of education, Ministry of Investment and International Cooperation, Ministry of Trade and Industry, Ministry of Agriculture, Mediterranean Agronomic Institute of Bari- CIHEAM IAMB, Bread for The World- Germany, USAID, Education For Employment EFE, International Education Institute, United Nations Development Program- UNDP-, United Nations Industrial Development Organization- UNIDO, German Development Institute, Danmission, Hands Along the Nile Development Services, Education Development Fund, Italian Agency for Development Cooperation, Arab Women Organization, EuropeAid, Affordable Housing Institute and others.

- **Currently, Gender Expert: Hands Along the Nile Development Services, Inc.,** the project “Activating the Private Sector for Women’s Economic Rights in Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia”, 2020. The project aims to activate and equip the private sector to lead and participate meaningfully in advancing women’s economic rights, with the support and cooperation of civil society, government and policy makers. Main activities include regional training and networking; setting up a framework in

the wider region; training and networking at the country level; implementing and documenting practical activities; sharing information to benefit future strategies and activities.

▪ **Currently: Monitoring and Evaluation Consultant - The American University in Cairo**

Working on the final Evaluation of: "[Safe Cities Final Evaluation](#)" for UN Women. this project is one of the global initiatives to promote an integrated community-based approach to address issues and forms of Violence against Women and Girls (VAW&G) in public spaces. The program works through members of the community to empower, raise awareness, and provide technical support to make public spaces safer for women and girls, and improve the quality of life for entire families and communities through the creation of safe neighborhoods and communities. UN Women Egypt, in partnership with the government and civil society organizations, provides assistance to three I underprivileged informal settlements in Greater Cairo which has created space for partners to participate in the design and implementation of different community-based interventions to eliminate VAW&G.

Career History

- **2019/2020: Research Consultant - The American University in Cairo**, Supervising the World Bank Enterprise Survey 2019/2020.
- **Independent Research and Evaluation Consultant**, several Agencies (2015)
- **Technical Office Manager**, Egyptian Cabinet of Ministries, Egypt (2013-2014)
- **Political Research Manager**, Egyptian Cabinet of Ministries, Egypt (2012)
- **Monitoring and Evaluation Expert**, Egyptian Cabinet of Ministries (2011)
- **Research fellow**, Mohammed Bin Rashid School of Government (MBRSG), Dubai (2010)
- **Public Policy Analyst**, Egyptian Cabinet of Ministries- 2003-2009)
- **Research assistant**, Faculty of Economics and Political Science, Cairo University

Education

- **Ph.D. of Euro- Mediterranean Studies**, Faculty of Economics and Political Sciences, 2015-
- **Master of Public Administration**: Mohammed Bin Rashid School of Government (MBRSG) in cooperation with Kinney school of Government, Harvard University (2010)
- **Diploma of Decision Support Systems**, Information Technology Institute, Cairo, (2003)
- **Bachelor degree of Political Sciences and Economics**: Faculty of Economics and Political Sciences, Cairo University (2000)

Recent Consultations

- **DANMISSION & Coptic Evangelical Organization for Social Services- CEOSS:** The Baseline study for the project “Towards Resilient Egyptian Communities and Civil Society in Egypt- Phase II”, 2020. The project targets to build the capacities of 30 NGOs using the capacity building approach and create 5 local social incubators to offer the technical support of the 30 NGOs during the project implementation, the project also has a gender marker to serve 50% of women, 25% of them with disabilities.
- **Hands Along the Nile Development Services, Inc.,** Gender consultant on the project “Activating the Private Sector for Women’s Economic Rights in Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia”, 2020. The project aims to activate and equip the private sector to lead and participate meaningfully in advancing women’s economic rights, with the support and cooperation of civil society, government and policy makers. Main activities include regional training and networking; setting up a framework in the wider region; training and networking at the country level; implementing and documenting practical activities; sharing information to benefit future strategies and activities.
- **The European Commission & CEOSS:** final evaluation of the project “Improving Livelihoods of Urban and Rural Poor Women Dependent on Informal Sector in Egypt”, 2020. The project aimed to improve quality of life for poor women dependent on informal sector in 30 Egyptian rural and urban communities through capacity building and empowerment activities , Enhance capacity of civil society to further contribute to reducing poverty and marginalization of poor urban and rural women, and support 5,000 uneducated (no or minimal education) women who are economically active in the informal sector. In Upper Egypt, action focused on rural poor women who are active in informal agricultural sector, as this is a predominant type of activity in these areas; 30 CBOs in target communities; 30 Elected committees (ECs) representative of the target groups; and 3 Trade Associations.
- **Dubai Cares & Care International:** Baseline Study for the project “Ensuring Supportive and Safe Quality Education for Girls in Upper Egypt”, 2018. The project aimed to improve the quality of education for girls in a safe and engaging school environment in three governorates in Upper Egypt: Minya, Beni Suef, and Assiut. this project implements several tested approaches previously experienced in recent years with the purpose of ensuring that the intervention has a comprehensive developmental impact. These approaches, including improving the education quality and providing more equitable resource allocation and decision-making for education at the household level, elucidate the factors of girls’ empowerment that in turn shift the structures (policies, norms, and institutions) and relationships (family and communities) that govern gender, educational, economic, and social inequities.
- **Arab Women Organization and UNDP:** Monitoring Report on the role of Arab Women in achieving SDGs, 2018. The project tackled the progress over the last decade: specially girls education, forced early marriage, serving in parliament and positions of leadership, women labor and Economic rights, and laws that advance gender equality, discriminatory laws and social norms, and physical or sexual violence.
- **The European Commission:** Research team leader, Women Working in the Informal Sector in Egypt: current situation and possible interventions, 2016. The project aimed to improve quality of life for poor women dependent on informal sector in 32 Egyptian rural and urban communities through capacity building and empowerment activities, enhance capacity of civil society to further contribute to reducing poverty and marginalization of poor urban and rural women.

- **German Development Institute D.I.E**, Project team leader, The Egyptian Industrial Firm Behavior Survey (2020).
- **Drosos Foundation**: Baseline Study and M&E Consultancy for the creative industries entrepreneurship project in Egypt, 2020
- **USAID Egypt**: Project team leader, “Designing and facilitating a Labor Market Assessment to complement the capacity building services for the American University in Cairo, the British University in Cairo and Arab Academy for Science, Technology & Maritime Transport Graduates”, 2019
- **The British University in Egypt**: measuring the effect of social media on MSMEs performance in Egypt, 2019
- **United Nation Industrial Organization- UNIDO**: Final Evaluation of Green Trade Initiative in Egypt
- Evaluation of Development center for directors and teachers of technical schools, CDB, Education Development Fund, Ministry of Education, Egypt, with the Ministry of Trade and Industry, 2019
- **United Nation Development Program UNDP**: Evaluation of Solid Waste Management in Minya Governorate, Egypt, with the Ministry of Environment, 2018
- **The Italian Agency for Development Cooperation**: Evaluation of Robikki Leather City: relocation, service Quality and growth, 2018
- **European Union- TVET program**: Evaluation Survey for The Vocational of Government/ Public and Business Sector Training Centers in Egypt with the Ministry of Trade and Industry, 2018
- **The Italian Agency for Development Cooperation**: A Macro Evaluation Study for the Second Debt Swap Agreement, with The Egyptian Ministry of International Cooperation, 2018
- **MIT, Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab J-PAL**: Experimental Design, improving Training for Youth Unemployment in Egypt, CDB, with the American University in Cairo, 2016
- **Coptic Evangelical Organization for Social Services & Bread for the World**: final Evaluation of the Integrated Development program (IDP), 2019.
- **Plan International**: Baseline Study, tackling root causes of irregular migration and supporting integrated communities in Alexandria, 2018
- **Plan International**: Baseline Study for the project Strengthening Resilience and Well-being of Syrian Refugee Children and Their Host Communities, 2018
- **Plan International**: Final Evaluation Phase out from Sponsorship Communities in Alexandria, 2018

Publications

Books

Managed the contracting, distribution and translation of the global bestselling Economic Books to the Arabic Languages by signing official agreements with the original publishers including Princeton University Press, Penguin Group, house of Anansi Press, and Mariner Books, and the translation included:

- **The End of Poverty**, by Jeffrey Sachs, the American economist, public policy analyst, and former director of the Earth Institute at Columbia University, CDB, The Penguin Press
- **Should we tax the rich more?** By Arthur Laffer, George Papandreou, Newt Gingrich, and Paul Krugman (Noble Prize Winner), CDB, House of Anansi Press.

- **The great escape health wealth and the origins of inequality**, by Angus Deaton (Noble Prize Winner), CDB, Princeton University Press
- **Portfolios of the Poor: How the World's Poor Live on \$2 a Day**, by Daryl Collins, Jonathan Morduch, Stuart Rutherford & Orlanda Ruthven, CDB, Princeton University Press
- **The new geography of jobs**, by Enrico Moretti, CDB, Mariner Books
- Editor of the printed Arabic copy of **Doing Global Science a Guide to Responsible Conduct in the Global Research Enterprise**, CDB, Princeton University Press, InterAcademy Partnership.

Research Reports

- 2019: Designing and facilitating a Labor Market Assessment to complement the capacity building services, International Institute of Education & USAID
- 2019: A Macro Evaluation Study for the Second Debt Swap Agreement, The Italian Agency for Development Cooperation and The Egyptian Ministry of Investment & International Cooperation
- 2019: Final Evaluation for the Integrated Development Program (IDP), CEOSS and Bread for the World.
- 2018: Strengthening Resilience and Well-being of Syrian Refugee Children and Their Host Communities-Baseline Study - Plan International Egypt
- 2018: Women and achieving SDGs in the Arab Region, United Nations Development program
- 2017: Ensuring Supportive and Safe Quality Education for Girls- Care International, Dubai Cares, Baseline Study.
- 2017: Tackling root causes of irregular migration and supporting integrated communities in Alexandria, - Plan International Egypt
- 2017: Final Evaluation Phase out from Sponsorship Communities in Alexandria, - Plan International Egypt
- 2017: Evaluation of Vocational of Government/ Public and Business Sector Training Centers in Egypt, European Union, Ministry of Trade and Industry
- 2016: Doing Global Science, Editor of the Arabic Version of the Book, Cairo Center for Development Benchmarking- Princeton University.
- 2016: The current situation of Women Working in the Informal Sector.
- 2015: The Role of North Africa factor in shaping the future of Yemen unity, Third Gulf Research Meeting, Cambridge University.
- 2013: Integrating Iraq in the Gulf: Possibilities and Threats, Fourth Gulf Research Meeting, Cambridge University.
- 2012: Evaluation of Government Housing Policies in the Gulf Region, Third Gulf Research Meeting, Cambridge University.
- 2009: Facebook: new pattern of social communication, Sinai University Annual Conference, Sinai University, Egypt.
- 2008: The Socio Demographic and Personal Characteristics of Those Who Value Imagination to Encourage Children to Learn at Home: A descriptive study in Egypt, presented at UNESCO conference on "Building the Scientific mind", UNESCO.

Strategy Papers

- 2011: Monitoring and Evaluation manual for Public Sector organizations, Egyptian Cabinet of Ministries.
- 2011: The organizational structure of Medical and Social Care Fund for families and injured of January 25th Revolution, Egyptian Cabinet of Ministries.
- 2011: Information and Decision Support Center Yearbook (Editor), Egyptian Cabinet of Ministries.
- 2007: The Egyptian Education, Training, and Employment Observatory Strategy, Egyptian Cabinet of Ministries.

- 2006: Financial and administrative reconstruction of sports sector in Egypt, Egyptian Cabinet of Ministries.

Policy Advice

- 2014: the state role in the constitutions: comparative study, 2014 Constitutional committee.
- 2012: How Egyptian government can switch from using Line Item Budget to Performance Based Budget? Egyptian Cabinet of Ministries.
- 2011: Possible alternatives for Minim Wages' policy in Egypt, Egyptian Cabinet of Ministries
- 2011: Reforming Government Public Service in Egypt, Egyptian Cabinet of Ministries.
- 2010: What does it mean to be African refugees in Egypt? Evaluation of UNHCR policies toward refugees in Egypt. Dubai School of government, UAE.
- 2010: Foreign Debt Sustainability in Egypt, Dubai School of government, UAE.
- 2006: Evaluating the role of Social Development Fund in creating jobs in Egypt, Egyptian Cabinet of Ministries.
- 2005: The Alternatives of Electricity Subsidies in Egypt, Egyptian Cabinet of Ministries .

Technical studies

- 2015: the role of local self-governance in achieving economic development, Euro-Mediterranean experiences.
- 2010: Is food security a policy issue in Egypt, Dubai School of government, UAE.
- 2010: Food subsidy in Egypt; Skewness of Targeting Mechanism, Dubai School of government, UAE.
- 2010: How changes in marriage policies can affect population increase in Egypt, Dubai School of government, UAE.
- 2010: Fiscal Assessment Exercise On "Bait El-Khair: Non-Profit Charitable Association", Dubai School of government, UAE.
- 2008: Blogs as a new Social Sphere in Egypt, Egyptian Cabinet of Ministries
- 2007: Egyptian migration policies toward European Union, Egyptian Cabinet of Ministries
- 2006: The Internationalization of the Egyptian companies, Egyptian Cabinet of Ministries.
- 2005: Economics of Fertilizer Industry in Egypt, Egyptian Cabinet of Ministries.
- 2004: Fertilizers Market in Egypt 'The crisis and the solution', Egyptian Cabinet of Ministries.

Methodology Papers

- 2011: Methodology for Evaluating Scientific Research, Egyptian Cabinet of Ministries.
- 2005: Discrepancies of Tourism Statistics, Egyptian Cabinet of Ministries.
- 2005: Discrepancies of investment Statistics, Egyptian Cabinet of Ministries.
- 2007: Egyptian Human Capital Index: Theory and Application, Egyptian Cabinet of Ministries.
- 2004: Discrepancies of Unemployment Statistics, Egyptian Cabinet of Ministries.
- 2004: International experiences in Improving Food Subsidies System, Egyptian Cabinet of Ministries.

Professional Skills

Management Skills

- Forward planning and strategic thinking
- Problem solving and decision-making
- Organization and delegation
- Communication and motivation
- Mentoring, motivating and team management
- Interpersonal skills

Languages

- Arabic: Mother Tongue.
- English: Fluent Writing and Speaking.
- Toefl iBT and GRE certified

Software

- CSPPro, Survey CTO, SPSS, STATA, WinQSB, and Oracle Applications

References

- Prof. Nicolas D. Chauvan, Department of Economics, Sciences-Po Paris.
- Prof. Hoda Rashad, The American University in Cairo
- Amb. Mohamed El-Orabi, Egypt former Minister of Foreign affairs