

## PRESS RELEASE

### **Suez Cement and CARE Egypt to inaugurate renovated schools to improve Learning Environment through Community Engagement in Minya**

**Minya – 12 May, 2016** - Under the auspices of the Governor of Minya, his Excellency, Major General Tarek Nasr, Helwan Cement Company (HCC), subsidiary of Suez Cement Group of Companies, and CARE International in Egypt are to celebrate the inauguration of three renovated schools in Minya (Beni Khaled preparatory school, Beni Khaled El-Hadeetha primary school, Deir Gabal El Teer preparatory school). The General Director of the Non-Governmental Organizations engagement Unit in the Ministry of Education, Mrs Randa Halawa, and other representatives from the Ministry will also join in the celebration as key partners to the project.

Improving Learning Environment through Community Engagement project, which was launched in November 2014, was designed to improve the learning environment in five schools located in Minya Governorate through enhancing and strengthening the institutional capacities of the School Boards of Trustees (BoTs) and Education Departments within the Samalout district (Beni Khaled preparatory school, Modern Beni Khaled primary school, Deir Gabal El Teer preparatory school, El Sirareya preparatory school and Beni Khaled El-Gedeida primary School) enabling these entities to provide support to social responsibility and corporate engagement in their endeavours towards improving the infrastructure, educational methods and learning tools in target schools. The project targeted 3000 primary school students, 5 BoTs (parents & teachers), 5 student unions, 50 teachers and 25 supervisors.

Bruno Carré, Suez Cement Managing Director, commented on the project: “Suez Cement *Group of Companies (SCGC)* isn't only a driver of economic growth – we are an integral member of the community at large. This means we have a duty to find ways

*of bettering the lives of those in need. I am proud to say that we have made education a pillar of our comprehensive corporate social responsibility program that has only grown since we established SCGC 10 years ago. We plan to lead by example and hope others follow in our footsteps in promoting quality education”*

The project had three specific objective. The first was to support the improvement of the infrastructure of 3 schools in the aim of promoting a better learning environment, in addition to raising awareness among school management, teachers, and students, on the significance of preserving and sustaining the school infrastructure and resources. Secondly, it aimed to build the capacities of teachers, through providing technical and professional support and training programs, in order to enhance educational quality within their schools and improve learning outcomes and techniques. In the meantime, the third objective was to enhance Social Accountability and community engagement in the educational process within the targeted local communities and reactivate the vital role of school BoTs, which are consisted of the parents and teachers, in the educational development process.

Mrs. Amira Hussein, Education Program at CARE added “the students’ feedback on the project showed their appreciation and enjoyment of the camps implemented by CARE as it was the first time for them to join a fun school related activity. They also noted that the school has become more student-friendly after the intervention.” This comes from CARE’s belief that engaging children in camps and school activities offer them a better opportunity in life and encourages them to stay in school, and have a brighter future as tomorrow’s parents and community leaders.

CARE intends to work with the renovated schools in their future projects in order to guarantee sustainability of their projects.

**About Suez Cement:**

With an industrial network of five production facilities in Suez, Kattameya, Tourah, Helwan and El Minya, Suez Cement Group of Companies is one of the largest cement producers in Egypt.

The company has a long-standing history in the market, yet is innovative in launching new brands and products to meet market needs.

SCGC is home to more than 3,000 employees who participate in continuous training and advancement programs. The group has a comprehensive safety and environmental policy, which is imperative for building a sustainable environment for employees and communities where SCGC operates.

The group has provided materials for some of Egypt's most famous landmarks and is building its future around serving the market and growing customer demands.

**About CARE Egypt:**

CARE Egypt is an international nongovernmental organization that works with the most marginalized communities in Egypt as part of CARE International. CARE Egypt's work is focused primarily on Upper Egypt, where it works closely through a rights-based approach with the poor and marginalized, civil society and government institutions to improve livelihoods on a sustainable basis. Using community-generated strategies and local resource mobilization, CARE's work encompasses a number of different sectors including women's rights, education, governance, civic engagement and agriculture and natural resource management.