COMMUNITY SERVICES AND ENTERPRISE: a Strategic Plan, 2013/2017

1.0. Strategic Review.

1.1. In the 21st century, knowledge economy, Universities are seen as the catalyst for economic and social development. Increasingly they are recognised as having three “missions” – teaching, research and enterprise, what is traditionally known in Egyptian Universities as Community Service. Throughout the world, Enterprise is seen as a major contributor to economic development and universities are seen to have a significant role to play in the creation of a country’s enterprise culture. They do this in a variety of ways, namely by:-

1.1.i Producing enterprising graduates who are creative problems solvers, capable of seeing and taking opportunities, in the process bringing about change
1.1.ii Transferring knowledge to, in particular, the business community through training and consultancy
1.1.iii Commercialising knowledge - the intellectual property of their staff and students – by taking their ideas to market and spinning out new ventures.

1.2. In Egypt, there is an increasing awareness of the need to promote entrepreneurship and create an entrepreneurial culture in the country, consequent particularly on the 2009 speech of US President Obama. While successive Egyptian Governments have introduced measures to promote Enterprise in the economy, the role of education has been neglected, though there is recent recognition that Education is a major influencing factor in the creation of an enterprise culture and economy. Various extra curricular activities have been introduced to universities to raise awareness of the enterprise agenda and to equip students with the skills to start a business on graduation, while companies like Vodafone run courses on “soft” enterprise skill development. In a small number of universities there are now modules on Entrepreneurship, and the AUC is probably the leading university in this respect. Knowledge commercialisation is not highly developed in Egyptian universities, though AUC has recently announced its first spinout venture.

1.3. In the BUE, the early emphasis on enterprise has not developed for a variety of reasons, despite it being high on the agenda of British universities. However,

1.3.i Efforts are made through the curriculum to create enterprising graduates. The mission is to educate students “how to think not what to think” and the intention is that students should be active, autonomous learners, learning by doing (experientially). In the process, they acquire many of the attributes of the enterprising person, namely they learn how to solve problems, work in teams, communicate their ideas, etc., and have the opportunity to develop their leadership skills. In particular, in Business Administration, students are introduced to the concept of Enterprise and there is a degree specialism in Entrepreneurship. In Computer Science, there is a final year module on Entrepreneurship and Innovation. Outside the curriculum, there are a number of student initiatives ranging from opening commercial service ventures on campus to student clubs and societies (e.g Enactus). These activities demonstrate latent student interest.
1.3.ii Knowledge Transfer is conducted through the Centre for Consulting and Community Service, which offers training services to the Business Community. It
has a part-time Director (an Engineer) and operates primarily independently of the core University activity. In the academic year 2012/13, the Centre trained 799 people, generated an income of EGP 960950 (1203 EGP per person) and made a surplus of EGP 577693, demonstrating there is demand for such a service. However, the services on offer are mainly to do with Engineering and English language training and not all of the Faculties and Departments are involved, though they could be. Clearly there are pressures on resources but there is no coherent University policy or strategy on knowledge transfer nor any requirement for Faculties and Departments to be involved. In all probability some staff will have their own consultancy operations where they engage in knowledge transfer activities. The University has no policy on this.

1.3.iii **Knowledge Commercialisation** is not developed. A small number of staff, particularly in Engineering, have registered patents and probably some staff have private businesses based on their intellectual property, but there is no formal record of this and the University does not have a formal policy on it. A small number of BUE students has created start-ups on graduation but the majority either go into employment or are unemployed.

### 2.0. Strategic Objective

2.1 The University’s Strategic Plan for 2012 – 2017 states that the strategic objective for Community Service and Enterprise is that by 2017 the University will be:-

> **“an exemplary provider of knowledge, solutions, facilities and services to business, industry and society across a broad subject range, offering high quality expertise to stimulate and support demand for innovative solutions, knowledge transfer and collaboration in support of economic development”**.

2.2. From the above review, it would appear that the University’s strategic objective focuses on knowledge transfer, suggesting that perhaps it is somewhat limited. However, the subsequent discussion makes it clear that this is not the case, as the point is made that:-

> **“Within this broad strategy, the BUE will develop a specialism in working with new and established SMEs (small and medium size enterprises) using the expertise of both the students and the staff by:**

- Promoting enterprise (i.e. the ability to innovate, recognise and create opportunities, work in a team, take risks and respond to challenges)
- Assisting new and existing entrepreneurs to launch and grow their own ventures, whether social or business enterprises
- Working with stakeholders and British businesses in Egypt, often with reference to curriculum and programme development, to advance opportunities for students and graduates, fund professorships and sponsor facilities, etc.”

2.3. Even so, the strategic objective appears to neglect knowledge commercialisation and the creation of spin out and start-up businesses by both staff and students. This needs to be addressed and will be considered in this strategic plan, as it is believed to be of significance to the future of both the Egyptian economy and the future of the BUE.
3.0. Strategic Plan

3.1 Creating Enterprising Graduates.

BUE graduates should be known for their enterprise, whether self-employed or as employees. To achieve this, within the constraints of the Egyptian Supreme Council in particular and any professional accreditation bodies, Entrepreneurship modules should be made available in every degree programme and students should have an opportunity to learn how to start their own venture on graduation. Additionally they should acquire the attributes and skills of an enterprising person. This needs to be done, perhaps initially at least, by:-

3.1.i reinforcing the experiential approach to learning in the curriculum, including working on real-life projects and on internships.
3.1.ii introducing extra curricular programmes in soft skills, idea generation, business start-up.
3.1.iii Creating enterprise laboratories and encouraging students to set up new ventures on campus
3.1.iv Building links with employers to ensure that the BUE students have the knowledge and skills they are seeking
3.1.v Offering a BUE Certificate for students participating and succeeding in such programmes.
3.1.vi Organising student competitions and encouraging the growth of student-led initiatives.

3.2. Knowledge Transfer

3.2.i Build on the current activities of the Centre for Community and Consulting Services, in order to meet the University’s broad strategic objective of becoming a leading institution in Egypt for the provision of knowledge transfer in order to advance industry, the professions and society.
3.2.ii Each faculty shall be required to appoint someone with responsibility for developing links with the employer and supplier (educational) communities, identifying their needs, formulating a knowledge transfer plan and ensuring its implementation
3.2.iii Build “research”/consultancy links with employers, possibly using students to work on real-life projects
3.2.iv See knowledge transfer as an integral part of the University’s academic activities and allow for it in workload planning and the Performance Development Review.
3.2.v Organise Conferences on topics relevant to the research interests of the staff and the interests and needs of Egypt.

3.3.Knowledge Commercialisation

3.3.i. Given the needs of contemporary Egypt and the ethos of the institution, it may
be argued that the BUE should become the leading academic institution in Egypt for the commercialisation of knowledge. However, because of the lack of reference to this in the current strategic plan, this needs to be agreed, but if it is accepted, then academics and students need to be:
- research active and aware of the potential commercial applications of their research
- encouraged to commercialise their ideas/inventions and rewarded for doing so
- supported and helped to bring their ideas to market.

4.0 Implementation Plan

4.1. To achieve its Enterprise and Community Service Strategic Objectives and Plan, the BUE needs to:

4.1.i Appoint a permanent Director of the Centre for Community and Consulting Services and an Enterprise Director to work with the Faculties and Departments and, as appropriate, the Students’ Union, on the formulation and implementation of their Enterprise and Community Service strategies
4.1.ii Establish an Enterprise Committee, with representation from each of the Faculties, as well as the Students’ Union, that co-ordinates the activities across the University.
4.1.iii Agree targets and activities
4.1.iv Build links with employers and employer organizations in Egypt both centrally and through Departments
4.1.v Formulate a policy on knowledge transfer and commercialisation that rewards both individuals and the University. In particular, it needs to address the issue of the “private” enterprise activity of the staff.
4.1.vi Address the issue of ownership of intellectual property and the potential tension between the pressures on academics to publish and the need to commercialise new knowledge
4.1.vii Establish an enterprise support network that can provide both expertise and access to funding.
4.1.viii Create an enterprise fund to assist with the costs of start-up, including market research
4.1.ix Seek funding from external sources both within Egypt and outside.
4.1.x Build an incubator and/or science park that can not only provide suitable start up accommodation and support but can generate income and can act as a research and teaching laboratory.

5.0. Strategic Outcomes

5.1. By 2017, the end of the planning period:

5.2 Enterprising Graduates

5.2.i. Entrepreneurship modules should be included in the curriculum of all degree programmes and students should be aware of the self-employment
option.
5.2.ii. Extra curricular entrepreneurship programmes should be available on campus involving idea generation and business planning activities.
5.2.iii. The Enterprise skills of all students should be developed, both within the curriculum and through extra-curricular activities.
5.2.v. There should be a BUE certificate for students taking and succeeding on the enterprise skills extra-curricular module.
5.2.vi. Students in all Departments should work on real-life projects and have the opportunity for work-based learning through internships.
5.2.vii. The University should have built an incubator in which students (and staff) may start their own businesses and it should be operational.
5.2.viii. A sizeable number of students should have started their own businesses.
5.2.ix. The BUE should have developed close partnerships with employers and its graduates should be highly employable.

5. 3. Knowledge Transfer

5.3.i. The University will have an established policy on knowledge transfer that requires all academic departments to be involved. The Policy will include a policy on the private knowledge transfer/consultancy activities of the staff and will state how the income from knowledge transfer activities will be allocated to the Centre, the Departments and the providers. It will state also, how knowledge transfer should be included in the University workload model and the PDR.
5.3.ii. A permanent Director of the CCCS will have been appointed, reporting to the PVC for Enterprise and Community Service.
5.3.iii. Each Department will have an officer responsible for knowledge transfer and building links with the employer community, and each Faculty will have a Co-ordinator or Vice Dean responsible for co-ordinating knowledge transfer activities across the Faculty and for representing the Faculty on the appropriate committee(s).
5.3.iv. An employer liaison committee will be operational. It will include representatives from across the University (including the student body) and senior managers of prominent employers and their representative organizations. It will deal with:-
- issues relating to Teaching and Learning both within and outside the curriculum
- internships and work-based learning
- consultancy and knowledge transfer
- joint/collaborative research
5.3.v. There will be an Enterprise and Community Service Committee, which will have on it representation from the Faculties and the Teaching and Learning and Research Committees, as well as the student body. The Employer Liaison Committee will report to it.
5.3.vi. The Centre for Consulting and Community Service, working with and through the academic departments, will have a turnover of least 5 million EGP by the end of the planning period and will offer a wider ranging,
comprehensive programme of short-courses.

5.4. Knowledge Commercialisation.

5.4.i The University will have built a Business incubator and commenced the development of a Science Park for new knowledge-based businesses.
5.4.ii. An Enterprise Director will be in post working with and through the Departments.
5.4.ii. A network of support for new ventures, including access to finance, legal assistance and marketing, with have been established.
5.4.iii. Both students and staff will be able to receive advice and support to start their new ventures (both spin-outs and start-ups) in the incubator which will be open also to members of the public (i.e spin-ins).
5.4.iv. There will be an accepted policy on the exploitation of intellectual property and the rewards to the “inventors”, whether staff or students.
5.4.v. Training programmes will be offered to assist both staff and students to learn how to bring their ideas to market and to spin-out or start-up a new venture.
5.4.vi. Enterprise creation in the form of student start-ups and staff spinouts will be an established feature of the University, for which it is known.

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