



Restoring Egypt's First Mosque—Amr Ebn El Aas

A high level of groundwater, resulting in part from leaking sewers and the rise and fall of the Nile, threatened the structural integrity of several buildings and monuments in Old Coptic Cairo. USAID and the government of Egypt jointly allocated more than LE57 million (\$15 million) to rescue the ancient monuments through a broader effort to improve the area's sewage system. The project salvaged six monuments in and around Amr Ebn El Aas Mosque, which, built in 642 AD (21 AH) was the first mosque established in Egypt.



Photo: USAID/Wafaa Faltaous

Before

For two decades, contaminated groundwater gradually rose in Old Cairo until it reached within 20 inches of the main floor of the 1,300-year-old Amr Ebn El Aas Mosque. The main floor of the mosque and other structural elements were threatened and urgent action was required to rescue the site from further deterioration.

After

The project lowered the groundwater under the main floor of the mosque to safe levels and the Supreme Council of Antiquities conducted restoration work to allow the return of worshipers and visitors. Improved sewage services installed as part of the project benefit the 140,000 citizens who live near the mosque.



Photo: USAID/Wafaa Faltaous

Before and After