



PHOTO & CAPTION

Extending Phone Service to Millions



Photo: Moataz Anber, General Dynamics

Increasing the availability of telephone service in poor areas like Manshiet Nasser has contributed to economic and social development.

Along with other utility services, reliable telecommunications enable businesses to flourish and meet the needs of citizens. Faced with an aging analog infrastructure, Egypt saw an opportunity to increase its people's standard of living by modernizing its system. With support from USAID, Telecom Egypt switched to digital, improving and expanding telecommunications networks in Cairo, Alexandria and other cities. Hundreds of thousands of new telephone lines have been installed, which now serve more than four million Egyptians, even in the poorest areas.

Manshiet Nasser, a settlement on the outskirts of Cairo, is one of those poor areas. Highly urbanized, Manshiet Nasser has both lower than average literacy rates and higher than average infant mortality rates. Before the USAID project, it also lacked a local telephone exchange.

Today, Manshiet Nasser claims 16 telephone lines per 100 people, exceeding the Cairo Governorate average of 12 lines per 100 people. Manshiet Nasser can also claim to finally have an integral part of the infrastructure necessary for modern commerce and economic and social development.