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Applied AI governance and deployment · Field partner on randomised evaluations · Institution-building in Egypt and East Africa

PROFILE

Ashoka Fellow and MBA-qualified founder with 14+ years building and running public-interest systems across Egypt and East Africa. Founder & CEO of Life From Water Foundation and Co-Founder & CEO of Mohandes AI. I deploy generative-AI systems in frontline operations and design the human-authority, verification and escalation controls around them. Life From Water has served as implementing NGO on randomised evaluations with Brown University, J-PAL and CERDI, which is where my habit of asking whether a result was measured or asserted comes from.

AI DEPLOYMENT AND GOVERNANCE IN PRACTICE

- Replaced a prompt-based safeguard in a live internal system with deterministic server-side controls after it failed in use. Consequential actions now require explicit human confirmation, permission re-checks at execution time and human-attributed audit logs. Working conclusion: instruction-following is not a control.
- Redesigned the authority structure of an operator-support assistant after observing that operators trusted a site engineer's contextual judgement over the model. The assistant was placed behind the engineer rather than in front of the operators. I treat this as formative design input, not as research.
- **WaterEye** — computer-vision monitoring of community-managed water units; operational MVP, field pilot from June 2026 at one village. Deliberately not an autonomous controller: it cannot alter dosing, pressure, pumps or valves, and a named human confirms every consequential action. Built on roughly 150 labelled images from a single camera; no ground-truth dataset and no accuracy claim is made.
- Scoped **Dr Water** around an operations layer rather than a retrieval assistant, which made the build harder but reduced the risk of advice given without operational context. Closed privilege-escalation, cross-tenant data-deletion and prompt-injection exposure in the same system.
- Authored Life From Water's organisation-wide AI Roadmap 2025–27.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Life From Water Foundation — Founder & Chief Executive Officer

Cairo / remote · entities in Egypt, Germany and Canada · Dec 2011 – present

- Delivered 3,105 water interventions across 259 villages in eight Egyptian governorates, of which 79 are treatment units, alongside 150 boreholes, 40 pipeline extensions, 15+ river-bank filtration systems and 1,200 household tap connections. Reach 1,615,769 people.
- Expanded operations to Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. 19 full-time staff.
- Designed community-based operation and maintenance models, including operator capacity building and structured service provision for decentralised treatment units.
- Established the LFW Experts Network, providing strategy and capacity-building support to water and development organisations across Africa.

Mohandes AI — Co-Founder & Chief Executive Officer

Cairo / remote · Jan 2025 – present

- Corporate AI training, consulting and digital products; lead development of Dr Water, a product for water-treatment operations and customer-service workflows.
- Delivered executive AI programmes for Dar Saleh, Halwani Brothers, Wadi Group, Impact U (stc and Ashoka) and Hassan Allam.

Specialised Egyptian Federation for Water & Wastewater — Co-Founder & Board Member

Cairo · Sep 2020 – present

- Co-founded with 28 other NGOs; supports joint R&D and national policy dialogue on water security.

Meska AI — AI Trainer · Microsoft Egypt AI Consultant community — Participant

Cairo · 2023 – present

- Scope and prototype Arabic-capable AI solutions; advise on evaluation and governance; deliver executive briefings on responsible, risk-aware adoption.

WaterWill — Co-Founder & CEO

Cairo / Nairobi · Aug 2018 – Jun 2024

- Exported modular water-treatment units to Kenya. Recognised by the World Bank Ideas for Action, featured by CNN, and won Global 1st Place, Resilience Track, ClimateLaunchpad.

Egybuilders Company for Steel Constructions — Strategy & Operations Consultant

Cairo · Jul 2016 – May 2018

- Strengthened HR, procurement, inventory, project-management and client-relationship systems for an established construction contractor.

RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

- 2022–24 Randomised evaluation, household water treatment — Brown University, J-PAL and Sawiris Foundation for Social Development; Life From Water as implementing NGO.
- 2023–25 Randomised evaluation, climate adaptation in agriculture — J-PAL, Egypt's Ministry of Agriculture and CERDI; 1,500 wheat and maize farmers.

- 2025 Baseline Study on Agricultural Practices — CARE Egypt and PepsiCo Foundation. 2024 Smart-Irrigation Policy Paper — same partners.

TEACHING AND SPEAKING

- Courses: AI Fundamentals; AI Crash Course for Professionals (Udemy and live cohorts); AI in Sustainability, AI Ethics, AI in Knowledge Management & Customer Service (Almentor); Mastering Perplexity for Research & Decision-Making (eYouth) — 27,000+ learners, Arabic and English.
- AI for Palestine — co-developer and lead trainer; 18 live sessions, 100 participants, 15 completed graduation projects, which is below enrolment and is the honest finding.
- TEDx, “AI: From Fear to Impact” (2026) · COP28, Dubai (2023) · UN ESCWA SDG Forum · USAID–AUC · Watrex Expo · TEDxYouth.

EDUCATION AND CREDENTIALS

MBA, Edinburgh Business School (Heriot-Watt University), 2018–2022, Merit · BSc Strategic Management & Innovation Technology, German University in Cairo, 2012–2016, Very Good · Evaluating Social Programs, J-PAL / AUC · AI Copilot Diploma, Meska AI (with Microsoft) · AI Fundamentals, University of Pennsylvania

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

Ashoka Fellow, systems change · Global Winner, World Bank and Wharton “Ideas for Action” · Global 1st Place, Resilience Track, ClimateLaunchpad · Misr El Kheir Award, 1st Place (national) · Perplexity Business Fellow · Tech to the Rescue, “AI for Changemakers”

PUBLICATIONS

- *Elevating Evidence on the Climate–Poverty Nexus* — contributing expert. Columbia University SIPA and Sawiris Foundation for Social Development, 2024.
- *Can Atmospheric Water Generators Resolve Egypt's Water Crisis?* — co-author. EcoMENA, 2023.
- *20 for 20: Life From Water's evidence-based journey in Egypt* — author. J-PAL MENA blog, 2023.
- *Water is Life: interventions for healthy water practices in Upper Egypt* — co-author. Sawiris Foundation for Social Development blog.

RELATED RESEARCH (CONTRIBUTOR, NOT AUTHOR)

Incorporating Cultural Context into Safe-Water Interventions: Experimental Evidence from Egypt — Buccione, G. & Rossi, M. A. (2023). Life From Water served as the implementing NGO and I am named in the acknowledgements. AEA RCT Registry AEARCTR-0009944. Not an authored publication; listed for context on field-research involvement.

LANGUAGES

Arabic — native · English — fluent