

## Foreword

The following submission is made by members of the United Nations Country Team (UNCT<sup>1</sup>) in Egypt, currently partnering with the Government of Egypt (GoE) in a Partnership Development Framework (UNPDF, 2018-2022). The submission provides information on this partnership on human rights in Egypt related to the respective UN mandates. The statement of the situation and recommendations are based on the UNCT's dialogue with the GoE in the context of the UNPDF.

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## 1. Women's empowerment and protection of rights

- 1.1. A new Constitution was adopted in 2014, including provisions for enhancing women's rights. Several national efforts took place since, including adoption of National Strategies to Combat Violence Against Women (VAW) (2015-2020), for Reproductive Health (2015-2020) and for the Empowerment of Egyptian Women (NSEW, 2017-2030). This laid the foundation for formulating further policies and programmes aiming to achieve the constitutional and international commitments ratified. The political will was leveraged, starting in 2016 with reshuffling the National Council for Women (NCW), which besides its strong leadership, included membership—for the first time— rural and disabled women, and a new law on the work of the NCW, providing space to elevate policies for women's empowerment.
- 1.2. Progress was made on women's representation in elected and decision-making bodies. Representation reached 25% in the cabinet of ministers, 25% of deputy ministers, 15% in parliament, besides 25% for women in upcoming local councils' stipulation in the constitution.<sup>2</sup> Despite all progress, the State Council and the Public Prosecution remain to be only for men. Multiple calls to appoint women in the State Council were made by defenders of women's human rights, including the NCW<sup>3</sup>.
- 1.3. The GoE, in cooperation with the NCW and with UN support, launched new initiatives to promote political participation and women's decision making, which, among others, include 700,000 national ID cards issued for free for rural women; building institutional capacity within the NCW; leveraged capacities of 25,000 women parliamentarians through trainings; dialogue with respective political parties on pertinent issues to women's participation and empowerment established, and increased awareness of 2,500,000 women in rural areas about political and citizenship rights.
- 1.4. **The UNCT invites GoE to promote women's political representation and participation and adopt policies that address structural barriers hindering women's occupancy of decision-making positions.**
- 1.5. Progress on economic empowerment was made by signing a MoU between NCW with the Central Bank of Egypt (CBE) to cooperate on women's financial inclusion. However, women entrepreneurs are still challenged with limited access to financial and non-financing services; to markets and technology; and business networks. The presence of many women associations and networks have supported women's participation in policy dialogue processes but has not reversed women's participation on paid employment, which has remained stagnant<sup>4</sup>.
- 1.6. Despite the GoE and UN's efforts to engage the private sector in supporting women's economic empowerment, the private sector only contributes on a limited scale to addressing structural gender equality. The lack of decent and inclusive working conditions limits women's employment to a narrow number of labour market segments in the private sector. In the public sector, the UN has supported capacities of 34 units in various ministries to ensure constitutional gender equality at the workplace<sup>5</sup>.
- 1.7. Disparities exists between men and women in access to livelihoods, jobs and economic assets particularly in rural areas, with less representation of women in rural institutions and with restrictions of their

mobility, thus reducing access to the labour market. To address this issue, in 2017 the UN worked with GoE to develop the NSEW and identified areas of support for its implementation.

1.8. The UNCT recommends for the GoE to

- a) strengthen women's economic empowerment as part of the inclusive growth and Sustainable Development Strategy (SDS) implementation, develop policies and initiate national programmes that promote equal access to productive resources, financial inclusion and decent employment across all sectors of the economy.
- b) revise labour laws to ensure equal right of women within the workplace.
- c) take further measures towards the protection of the rights of women who work in the informal sector, including, but not limited to seasonal and domestic workers.

1.9. As part of the National Strategy to Combat VAW, with support from the UN, several initiatives were put in place<sup>6</sup>. In addition, women's complaints offices were established, a hotline for family consultancy and the child helpline were setup, anti-sexual harassment units were established in eighteen universities and several awareness raising campaigns took place. Furthermore, medical guidelines for dealing with victims of gender-based violence (GBV) were issued. In preparation to launch the GBV units in public and university hospitals, the global modules on GBV Essential Service Package (ESP) were adopted and launched jointly with national stakeholders. Discussions are undergoing to adopt and setup an effective national referral pathway for VAW survivors.

Furthermore, GoE amended the law criminalizing FGM to introduce harsher punishments to the perpetrators<sup>7</sup>. According to Egyptian Demographic and Health Survey (EDHS), 1% of GBV survivors used existing GBV services<sup>8</sup>.

1.10. National efforts on GBV was supported by the UN through the upgrading of shelters overseen by the Ministry of Social Solidarity (MoSS). Support was extended to MoSS to revise its by-laws for women's shelters to be in line with international standards. Moreover, the capacities of support staff of MoSS and NCW were developed to respond more effectively to VAW, and Public Prosecution were technically assisted to strengthen their capacities on effective prosecution responses to VAW and the provision of support and protection of survivors.

1.11. The UNCT recommends to:

- a) ensure the social protection of women, including availing the appropriate mechanisms that encourage reporting cases of VAW, disclosure and help-seeking behavior among VAW survivors.
- b) amend existing laws, including the Personal Status Laws and adopt laws addressing all forms of VAW, ensuring the enforcement of women's human rights, this includes setting up protective mechanisms for women and girls in any stage of a judicial and non-judicial process.
- c) ensure a holistic approach to GBV, through engaging several key stakeholders and including institutionalization of capacity building and awareness-raising on existing ESP modules for all service providers and staff of relevant line ministries on GBV case management.

## 2. Child Rights

- 2.1. Within the framework of the national efforts directed at combating child labour, the GoE has established institutional mechanisms for the enforcement of law regulations and policies through the adoption of the National Action Plan Against the Worst Forms of Child Labour and Supporting Families (NAP 2018-2025). In 2017, in partnership with the UN and international organisations, the main action plan elements were concluded.
- 2.2. Moreover, at the policy level, GoE has formulated classification and inspection guidelines to ensure monitoring of children in conflict with the law throughout their stay in the social care institutions. The present Child Law (2008) complies broadly with international standards on justice for children, although some gaps, such as the lack of clear provision for diversion, remain<sup>9</sup>. The UN has worked with GoE to ensure the full implementation.
- 2.3. Furthermore, the UN supported the GoE in strengthening child protection mechanisms, including supporting the National Council for Childhood and Motherhood (NCCM) in the establishment of the National Task Force (NTF) on Children on the Move in 2018, enhancing governance and management towards provision of holistic child protection services through the national system. Two main outcomes of the NTF have been the development of a National Strategic Framework for the taskforce on Ending Violence against Children (EVAC) and the annex to the national case management Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) targeting refugee and migrant children, as well as child victims of trafficking.
- 2.4. **Based on the ongoing policy dialogue between NCCM, MoSS and UN, the UNCT recommends adopting and implementing the National Case Management Annex SOPs targeting refugee and migrant children, and child victims of trafficking. The Annex should provide attention to the vulnerabilities of young women and girls to violence in general, and sexual violence, abuse and exploitation. Currently, NCCM is leading a process on developing a costed action plan for EVAC, the GoE is encouraged to invest in public financing of child protection and child focused issues.**
- 2.5. In 2015, Egypt launched two national multi-sectoral strategies, namely the National Strategy to Combat FGM, and a National Strategy to End Child/Early marriage. The current rate of FGM is 91% in Qena (Upper Egypt), whilst the rate is 15% in Damietta (Delta region). Both strategies remain at the initial phases of implementation and require further coordination between national and local government, and other key stakeholders such as CSO and religious institutions. Through partnership with NCCM, the UN has provided policy briefs and public dissemination activities on reducing child marriage.<sup>10</sup>
- 2.6. **The UNCT recommends prioritising interventions in governorates with the highest prevalence of FGM and early marriage, including multi-sectoral coordination mechanisms and action plans for priority governorates. This includes taking on an active role in advocacy efforts around both phenomena, in consultation with health providers, education systems and religious leaders particularly in rural and poor urban zones.**
- 2.7. **The UNCT recommends that the GoE continues to develop the institutional mechanisms of and around the justice system to ensure that there is a holistic vision of the system for children, this includes:**

- a) Strengthening data collection and management;
- a) Building the capacity of specialized professionals within the field of justice;
- b) Establishing a multi-stakeholder approach for supporting children in conflict with the law, including working with CSOs to ensure that children have access to specialized legal counseling and that social workers' roles are strengthened in supporting such children.
- c) Ensuring children are consistently enrolled in rehabilitation programmes and detention is used as a last resort throughout judicial processes.

### 3. Right to health<sup>11</sup>

3.1. Egypt is progressing in eliminating Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTD). In 2017, WHO certified Egypt for successful elimination of Lymphatic filariasis. More work is ongoing for mass drug administration for school children to eliminate Soil-Transmitted Helminths supported by around 40 million tablets of mebendazole donated by WHO. GoE is progressing in eliminating Schistosomiasis. **More attention is needed to reposition the NTDs among the health challenges to be funded from domestic resources.**

3.2. The UN has supported the MoHP to ensure women's right to access quality Reproductive Health and Family Planning (FP) services. The FP programme still has several challenges related to accessibility and availability of FP services in rural areas, and a high discontinuation rate among FP users (more than 30%). Due to the limited number of female health providers in rural primary healthcare centers (PHC), FP services in rural areas are provided through mobile clinics, which face challenges to keep its regularity, and raises equity concerns between urban and rural women for equal access to FP services. Due to heavy case load on existing services, data shows concerns related to quality of FP counseling, and its possible linkage to discontinuation rate among FP users. Finally, FP services are weakly integrated within primary and secondary health systems (maternal and child services), and many rural PHC offer limited choice of modern FP methods, compared to urban PHC.

3.3. To ensure FP services are accessible, the UNCT recommends the GoE:

- a) to expand the provision of modern FP methods, as per WHO approved standards, in health facilities, including the private sector.
- b) to integrate FP services within maternal health services, as an integrated women Reproductive Health Package, including immediate Post-Partum FP counseling and services inside obstetric departments of all public and private hospitals.
- c) to strengthen the capacity and monitoring of health providers to provide quality, scientifically accurate and non-biased counselling.
- d) to intensify FP messages through media, noting the decrease of married women's exposure to FP messages (2014)
- e) to scale up efforts to encourage and support CSOs, active in rural and poor urban zones, to integrate FP provision and promotion, within their existing health services and outreach activities.

3.4. As of 2018, the GoE has pledged to support treatment for Egyptians and refugees living with HIV in Egypt through domestic government resources, following the interruption of foreign funding. The GoE has endorsed the "Treat all" policy recommended by the UN. Furthermore, as part of the GoE's growing efforts

to extend HIV testing and treatment coverage to high risk populations, the first voluntary testing and counselling (VTC) services inside three prisons<sup>12</sup> were established in 2018 through joint efforts with the UN. More so, aiming to serve the 2018-2022 National HIV/AIDS strategy, GoE – civil society partnership models have been established in 2018 to strengthen prevention efforts to key populations due to gaps in funding. As a result, a total of 169 key populations in three governorates were reached.

women's access to VTC services and their knowledge of HIV had been reported to be lower than men in 2014. As of 2018, the GoE, in close collaboration with the UN, has rolled out stigma free sexual and reproductive healthcare services for women living with HIV in three governorates.<sup>13</sup>

**Scaling up the integration of women living with HIV in government social protection programmes is recommended to empower them to lead healthier lives.**

- 3.5. MoSS and the MoHP in collaboration with the UN have launched the “First 1,000 days’ programme” for the prevention of stunting among the poorest and most food-insecure vulnerable groups. The programme targets pregnant and/or lactating women and children 0-24 months from Takaful beneficiaries, to receive nutrition screening, monitoring and treatment, to ensure equity in nutrition services to the most in need.

**The UNCT recommends strengthening monitoring programmes to access service delivery in health and nutrition to improve indicators, and allocate budgets as needed to improve the quality of services.**

#### **4. Human trafficking and migrant smuggling**

- 4.1. The Smuggling of Migrants and Trafficking in Persons (SOM/TIP) legal and policy framework in Egypt is in place. A national strategy on combating TIP (2016-2021) and a national strategy on combating illegal migration (2016-2026) are in place. The GoE has started preparations for one shelter for female Victims of Trafficking. Several CSOs have been trained to provide assistance to TIP victims and to actively engage in support provided in the shelters.

**The UNCT invites the GoE to**

- a) **prioritise the protection of victims of TIP and SOM to ensure effective victim identification by relevant authorities and ensure a protection sensitive system in place to identify and refer women and girls in need of international protection who are caught in mixed movement and could be subject to abuses including trafficking, and addressing women and girls’ vulnerabilities**
- b) **continue implementing the national anti-TIP and national anti-SOM strategies to ensure effective identification and prosecution of human trafficking and migrant smuggling cases by the relevant authorities.**

- 4.2. In 2018, GoE in coordination with the UN, started the development of a national awareness raising campaign on human trafficking and adopted the Blue Heart campaign<sup>14</sup>. Furthermore, positive progress on border control is being made, especially at the Mediterranean shores to stop boats engaged in the smuggling of migrants from the Egyptian coasts.

**The UNCT invites the GoE to further strengthen its capacities on regional and international cooperation with countries of origin and destination and to tackle social and economic aspects of migrant smuggling of Egyptian nationals by focusing on root causes of migrant smuggling.**

- 4.3. The National Coordinating Committee on Combatting and Preventing Illegal Migration and Trafficking in Persons is working towards the development of a national referral mechanism for victims of human trafficking.

**The UNCT invites GoE to finalise the development of the mechanism, drawing from international good practices, with a clear delineation of the roles and responsibilities of the entities involved operationalisation.<sup>15</sup>**

- 4.4. In cooperation with international organisations, GoE strengthened efforts to build the capacity of law enforcement officers, prosecutors and judges to combat TIP and SOM.

**The UNCT invites GoE to broaden prevention efforts, focusing on victims, perpetrators and third parties, with attention to sexual and reproductive vulnerabilities and rights of women and girls. Currently, there is no public access to progress or monitoring reports on the TIP and SOM strategies. The UNCT invites GoE to strengthen efforts to generate and consolidate evidence-based data on human trafficking and migrant smuggling from different sources.**

## **5. Migrants; Refugees; Right to asylum**

- 5.1. To address the irregular migration of unaccompanied and separated children from Egypt, NCCM, the legal representative for unaccompanied children whose families or the legal representative, thereof are unwilling to process their return to Egypt. Trainings of public prosecutors, judges, and border officers took place to adequately implement the new law, though full implementation is still pending.

- 5.2. In 2018, Egypt was a signatory of the Global Compact on Migration (GCM), which set targets to ensure protection and well-being of migrant workers including those moving to and from rural areas. The UN is supporting GoE to support national engagement in the process of developing the GCM and in the implementation of the New Urban Agenda, responding to rising rural-urban migration.

The limited number of decent employment opportunities and the declining agriculture productivity, the livelihoods and incomes of rural communities are among the drivers of migration, mostly from rural to urban areas. Migrant agriculture workers are among the most vulnerable due to the informal and unprotected nature of their work. An important number of migrants from rural Egypt migrate to neighboring countries, however there is an important flow of migrants returning to Egypt, mostly to urban areas.

**The UNCT encourages the GoE to put into place policies to integrate returning migrants and attract their skills and financial capacity acquired abroad to the development of their rural areas of origin.**

- 5.3. The UN has provided technical support and awareness sessions on the principles of migrant's rights enshrined in the International labour standards to GoE, employers and workers organisations. As a result, the new trade union law no.213/2017 abolished the pre-condition of Egyptian nationality to join trade unions. Furthermore, an action plan on institutional strengthening in labour migration was launched in cooperation with the UN in 2016. Nevertheless, GoE still faces challenges with the absence of labour migration policies to ensure the protection of migrant workers' rights and to coordinate the efforts of various players.

The UNCT encourages the GoE to:

- a) enact laws and measures necessary to complement the GoE's efforts concerning migration, including greater policy coordination to address the adverse drivers of migration and improve the governance of labour migration and the protection of migrant workers.
- b) ensure that migrant domestic workers have access to protection mechanisms, included in access to information on labour law protection and regulations that are applicable to their situation, including access to justice.
- c) develop a National Labour Migration Policy providing safe, regular, and productive employment for national workers abroad and migrant workers in Egypt. Data collection on migrant workers coming to Egypt is essential to determine the scope of the policy as currently no systematic collection of data of migrant workers exists.
- d) Furthermore, better enforcement of labour standards is needed to ensure non-discrimination against migrant workers in accessing employment opportunities in agriculture.

5.4. As of December 2018, a total of 245,000 persons had registered with UNHCR<sup>16</sup>. Asylum seekers and refugees generally have access to basic social services, but with a few limitations. However, access and outreach to persons in need of international protection in certain locations in the country (including in detention centers) is limited.

The UNCT encourages GoE to establish a specific mechanism, to identify, among the persons apprehended in mixed migration movements, those who are in need of international protection and facilitate their access to asylum procedures.

## 6. Counter-Terrorism

6.1. As an increased number of terrorist attacks have been taking place since 2015, GoE has issued Counter-Terrorism (CT) legislations, i.e. CT legislation and the terrorist organizations legislation (2015). Other legislations issued in 2018 tackled terrorism, e.g. legislation of electronic offences and the legislation on drones. Egypt has continuously played a dynamic role on CT efforts, where activities have been conducted for raising awareness against terrorism threats, building capacities and strengthening regional and international cooperation in responding to newly emerging forms of terrorism in the region<sup>17</sup>.

6.2. The UNCT encourages GoE to

- a) continue CT efforts through its revisited religious speeches, society-engaging narratives and other national CT mechanisms - in compliance with international human rights laws that Egypt is bound to - for countering the malicious effect of terrorist drawing narratives and channels.
- b) conduct a periodic revision of laws and take into account the evolution of emerging terrorist threats in compliance with the international human rights law.

## 7. Right to Education

7.1. The Education Reform Program, Education 2.0., builds on the Life Skills and Citizenship Education Framework (LSCE) that has been endorsed by the UN and international NGOs. Following ongoing dialogue with the UN,



the Ministry of Education and Technical Education (MoETE) adopted the LSCE framework and added additional two core skills to the framework.

- 7.2. To reduce the rate of deprivation of education, MoETE jointly with CSOs, increased the number of community schools to 5,000, and launched a Programme Combating School Drop-out, that aim to curb school drop-outs at elementary stage and to combat malpractices against girls. Furthermore, a Committee for Community Based Education Development was established by MoETE to develop a strategy for addressing the educational needs of out-of-school-children. Efforts are being exerted in aligning the community-based education text books and improving teachers' skills with Education 2.0. Meanwhile, the UN is targeting 6,000 community school teachers in 8 governorates in Upper and Lower Egypt, with training on basic skills needed to address the learning strategies of Education 2.0.

**The UNCT recommends increasing public finance to recruit teachers, to enable MoETE to scale up community-based education to accommodate out of school children.**

- 7.3. Meanwhile the education sector is facing challenges in securing adequate psycho-social services and counseling for adolescents, enrolled in different educational institutions, particularly young girls, and their parents, with focus on reproductive health and GBV-related issues, as well as combating FGM and Early/Child Marriage. Further challenges include involving and securing active participation of adolescents in programming and delivery of awareness raising and social services; and the recruitment of teachers to scale up the community-based education to accommodate out of school children.

**The UNCT recommends activating psycho-social counseling services for adolescents, in close collaboration with national and local partners.**

- 7.4. Based on dialogue between the UN and MoETE, it was determined that the LSCE framework resonates with the human capital needs of the country context for social and economic development, particularly with improving the learning outcomes of children, impact on economic growth, social cohesion and citizenship.

**Therefore, the UNCT recommends that GoE continues to mainstream the LSCE framework in schools to ensure that all children acquire the identified life skills and for schools not yet integrated the framework, strengthen extra-curricular activities as an integral aspect of the students' learning.**

- 7.5. Through the national school feeding programme, the GoE is encouraging access to schools and addressing short term hunger in schools. The UN is supporting the GoE at the policy level and through capacity strengthening to enhance the programme and is complementing it by providing daily nutritious in-school snacks reaching more than 2.5 million school children in 9,000 selected community and public schools. Furthermore, the UN has established a partnership with MoHP on health screening at schools, which will lead to a redesign of the school feeding nutritional content and meal design as **the GoE is encouraged to improve the quality of school feeding programmes.**

## 8. Economic and Social Rights; Development

8.1. The GoE has embarked on a reform programme and has implemented decisive measures to restore macroeconomic<sup>18</sup> stability, which are showing positive impact on the economy as market confidence is growing. Although the Egyptian pound showed signs of stabilisation, high inflation levels were reached in 2017, with the general prices increasing by 34.86% between 2017 and 2018, according to the CBE<sup>19</sup>. In response to this, the adoption and implementation of Takaful and Karama (T&K) Programme, has taken place from 2015, reaching 2,574,000 households by 2018<sup>20</sup>. The programme has been proven to initially have a major impact on monetary poverty.<sup>21</sup> The UN has been supporting the ongoing monitoring, evaluation and learning around T&K.

**The GoE is encouraged to continue its efforts to increase its focus on anti-poverty programmes in rural areas. While strong social protection systems exist, efforts are needed to improve their targeting, coverage and effectiveness.**

8.2. The UN supported MoSS and CAPMAS to measure the multi-dimensionality of poverty of children, finding that in 2014, three in every ten children were multidimensionally poor,<sup>22 23</sup> affecting approximately 10 million children. The UN also supported the publicization and generation of public dialogue around the results of the survey. **Given the demonstrated multi-dimensional prevalence of poverty and the impact to date of T&K, social programmes should continue to expand in a targeted manner to benefit all poor people and national budget allocations should prioritize fiscal space for social policy, with focus on rural Upper Egypt and female-headed households.**

8.3. In parallel, recognizing the negative impact that rapid population growth would have on achieving the SDS, the GoE launched a multi-sectoral National Population Strategy 2015-2030. In the area of youth development and empowerment, to adequately harness Egypt's Demographic Dividend. Under presidential leadership, several ministries launched initiatives, aiming at enhancing youth socio-economic integration, including their civic and political participation. With UN support, the GoE started a process to formulate a national multi-sectoral Youth Strategy with relevant partners and active participation of youth beneficiaries, adopting a comprehensive approach for youth development. As both strategies (population and youth development) are multi-sectoral, effective coordination and monitoring systems are required at the national and local levels.

**The UN recommends promoting integrated interventions to support youth access to decent jobs, and their healthy development and social integration in urban and rural areas, including, ensuring equal access by young women and men to sexual and reproductive health services, information and education and access to secondary and tertiary education, vocational training and professional training to promote the integration of young male and female graduates into the labour force.**

8.4. The labour market has not yet recovered pre-2011 levels: youth unemployment remains above 25%, and women's participation rates have not recovered. Informal and precariousness have increased significantly, by over 20 points, reaching close to 60 % of the workforce<sup>24</sup>. MoSS launched in 2017 Forsa programme aiming to build on T&K to link youth with job opportunities and provide them with training and skills development. The UN has supported MoSS in designing Forsa options and financing the set-up of a team of dedicated experts at the MoSS.

The UNCT encourages GoE to:

- a) raise awareness of the benefits of training, including information on the involvement of the social partners in the design and delivery of training and vocational guidance programmes and provide information on efforts taken to secure coordination among the institutions responsible for developing comprehensive and coordinated policies and programmes on vocational trainings.
- b) by continuing to implement socially oriented programmes, improve the accessibility of unemployment scheme and sustainable security schemes.

## 9. Institutions and Policies; Human Right Education and Training;

9.1. The Council of Ministers decided on 14 November 2018 to create a Supreme Permanent Committee for Human Rights to be the executive body to deal with human right issues. Its mandate includes preparing a national strategy for human rights and building a culture of Human Rights in Government as well as follow up on Egypt implementation of international commitments and comprehensive reporting.

9.2. The UNCT encourages the Supreme Permanent Committee to become fully operational and recommend it is capacitated adequately to be able to deliver on its mandate, and that the GoE further expands human rights education and training programmes in the country, targeting public service officials.

## 10. Freedom of Association

10.1. The UN has provided technical support and awareness sessions on the principles of freedom of association, right to collective bargaining enshrined in the International labour standards to the GoE, employers and workers organizations. As a result, the new trade union law no.213/2017 no longer refers to a specific trade union federation, which previously gave rise to trade union monopoly. Still, freedom of association remains a challenge, as the trade union law<sup>25</sup>, and its corresponding regulations and their practical application raise concerns impeding the full exercise of freedom of association, particularly on the establishment and functions of trade unions.

10.2. The UNCT encourages the GoE to:

- a) amend the trade union law ensuring minimum membership requirement at the enterprise level and at general unions and confederations are decreased, to not impede the right of workers to form and join the organisations of their own choice.
- b) eliminate from the trade union Law, provisions concerned with criminal penalties covered under the penal code and allow workers organisations to benefit from technical cooperation programmes and enjoy the benefits of international affiliation.
- c) repeal or amend provisions 124, 124 A and B and 374 of the Penal Code, so that no sanctions involving compulsory labour can be imposed due to peacefully participating in strikes<sup>26</sup> and to ensure the right to strike on the basis of ILO principles and jurisprudence is included in the labor code.

## 11. Persons with Disabilities

11.1. In 2008, GoE ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability (PWD)<sup>27</sup>, reflected its endorsement through the issuance of the law no. 10/2018 and the executive by-laws no. 2733/2018 on the Rights of PwD was approved by the parliament. The new law offers commitments by the GoE to PwD, including non-discrimination due to disability, or gender of the PwD.

11.2. The rehabilitation Law no.39/1975 stipulates a 5% quota for PwD in companies employing more than 50 workers. Nevertheless, companies still find it challenging to fulfil. PwDs tend to therefore be economically excluded and disadvantaged in finding decent jobs.

11.3. The UN in cooperation with ICT Trust Fund enhanced the capacities of relevant stakeholders<sup>28</sup> to provide accessible and inclusive services for youth with visual and physical impairments, and helped youth obtain more relevant skills. Furthermore, in 2018, the UN partnered with NCDA<sup>29</sup> with the aim to integrate PwDs in the private sector.

11.4. In 2018, the UN supported 150 inclusive schools in four governorates<sup>30</sup> to accommodate all learning styles and provide quality education for all children<sup>31</sup>. Moreover, a Presidential initiative, Nour Hayet, was introduced in 2019 providing screening and treatment of visual impairment in all primary public schools and communities most in need in Upper Egypt.

11.5. Together with CAPMAS, the UN has developed statistical briefs on the status of youth and children based on the national census data, which include analysis of information on children and youth with disabilities.<sup>32</sup>

11.6. The GoE is encouraged to:

- a) develop a strategy for disability to address the socio-economic and health needs of PwD;
- b) continue strengthening national bodies responsible for the protection of PwD against all forms of violations, to promote their social integration and their economic empowerment through their integration in the labour market;
- c) strengthen national institutional capacity to provide technical support to schools in the area of inclusive education;
- d) establish strengthened data mechanisms to ensure sex-disaggregated data of PwD can inform policies and institutional developments that address the needs of PwD.

## 12. Right to an Adequate Standard of Living

12.1. Inclusive, sustainable urbanization has a key role in improved adequate standard and quality of living both in existing and new areas. The National Strategic Plan for Urban Development 2052 enabled setting up key objectives for urban development, however there is a need to periodically revise and update this plan to continue serving the purpose of sustainable urban development. With support from the UN, the GoE, in this context, is revising its National Urban Policy including analysis of the current system of cities and urbanization trends to enable redirecting urban policies towards a more inclusive and sustainable urbanization<sup>33</sup>.

- 12.2. The UN has been advocating for the need to enable knowledge-based monitoring and redirecting of policies that affect quality of living in urban and rural areas. Analysis of the prosperity of Egyptian cities enabled the current set up of the urban observatory units that is envisioned to support improving the standard of living in urban areas<sup>34</sup>. Additionally, the UN is supporting the strategic planning process for urban development to enable improved prioritization of development projects based on multi-sectoral situational analysis and visioning.
- 12.3. Furthermore, the GoE, with UN support, conducted an analysis of the various upgrading approaches of urban areas and is currently conducting a study to re-categorize urban areas under the revised building law. The current revised law changes the previously labeled areas “unplanned/ re-planning areas” to “urban upgrading areas”. This change positively unpacks the potential of inclusive upgrading under the participatory city-wide approach which includes socio-economic and environmental drivers beside physical upgrading.

In this context the UNCT recommends:

- a) revising the national strategic vision for urban development 2052 in light of the latest development and changes in the urban context to ensure inclusive, people centered impact and adequate cities and human settlements.
- b) establishing policies to improve accessibility and availability of local economic opportunities, basic services and improved environmental status of existing and new areas.

### 13. Right to Adequate Housing

- 13.1. With support from the UN, in 2016, GoE issued a National Housing profile document<sup>35</sup>, based on an inclusive and consultative process. The profile indicated that the housing sector functions in an activity-based manner focused on construction of new housing units with little analysis of the results and impact on the housing gap and informality. To enable shifting from such activity-based policies, the Ministry of Housing (MoH) with support from the UN is finalizing the National Housing Strategy, expected to be published in 2019, and is envisioned to redirect the housing market towards a more result based, efficient and inclusive one.
- 13.2. In its efforts to upgrade the existing housing stock, and with support from the UN, the GoE conducted a comprehensive analysis<sup>36</sup> of all housing upgrading approaches used by the ISDF<sup>37</sup> since its establishment in 2008.
- 13.3. To date, nearly 85,000 housing units were availed to families previously living in unsafe conditions, and nearly 100,000 unit are under construction. Around 60% of completed unsafe areas upgrading projects are self-financed, followed by 24% of projects financed by the ISDF and 16% financed by other government agencies. 35% of the projects implemented were based on a self-upgrading approach, while 25% of the projects depended on provision of housing units outside of the area. Around 10% of the projects mitigated the reason of unsafety (mainly high voltage threat). Lastly, monetary compensation and the provision of alternative housing units in the area represented 6% each<sup>38</sup>.

13.4. There has been additionally, efforts in upgrading “unplanned areas”. ISDF conducted a rapid mapping of unplanned areas nationally and made suggestions for the improvement of its urban environment in the short term. The upgrading efforts conducted were able to transform the housing condition of many Egyptian families. This integration lead to a better comprehensive upgrading of some areas and safer more welcoming housing environment. However, financing upgrading projects by local governorates represented a challenge to many projects with the limited role of private sector and civil society.

13.5. The GoE is encouraged to:

- a) include more socio-economic components within the upgrading interventions and set up a monitoring and maintenance mechanism where the GoE plays a more enabling and regulatory role.
- b) expedite the publishing of the Egyptian National Housing Strategy, envisioned to support a more inclusive and sustainable adequate housing provision. Moreover, in cooperation with various relevant ministries, it is recommended to complement the strategy with policies and mechanisms to enable its implementation.
- c) ensure well balanced distribution of investments between existing and new housing stock, based on data and analytical process.

## 14. Right to Water and Sanitation

14.1. In 2018, Egypt received more than USD 400 million in loans for large scale water and sanitation units, trying to respond to the growing demand.<sup>39</sup> Additionally, 8.4 million people lack access to improved sanitation, mostly in rural areas. In rural areas, on average, the share of population without access to adequate sanitation was around 15%, compared with around 1% among urban dwellers. Formal census in 2017 shows that 270,497 inhabitant lack access to drinking water in urban areas and around 1 million in rural areas; and that 922,273 lack access to sanitation services in urban areas and around 7 million in rural areas. More than 75% of those deprived of access to safe water and sanitation live in rural areas<sup>40</sup>. By analysis of the type of sanitation, 73% of rural sanitation is through decentralized solutions, and 0.7% does not have access to drinking water at homes<sup>41</sup>. Despite having the water source available, water quality and quantity still represent a serious challenge in many rural areas<sup>42</sup>. The UN is engaged in ongoing dialogue with GoE to promote key solutions to water scarcity, and improvement of management of water.

14.2. The UNCT encourages the GoE to revisit its current water and sanitation planning system to enable a knowledge-based prioritization of investments maximizing impact and sustainability. Furthermore, there is a need to map and scale alternative low cost, innovative, and environmentally resilient water and sanitation solutions to complement large scale infrastructure, including in rural areas.



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<sup>1</sup> UN agencies participating in the joint report: ILO, IOM, FAO, UNESCO, UN Habitat, UNAIDS, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNDP, UNODC, UNWOMEN, WFP, WHO

## **1. Women's empowerment and protection of rights**

<sup>2</sup> In addition, the first ever female National Security Advisor to the President of the Government of Egypt (GoE), the first ever female Governor, and the first ever female Deputy Governor of the Central Bank were appointed, besides an increased appointment of female judges in courts of first degree.

<sup>3</sup> The Ministry of Endowments has appointed 144 female religious preachers across the 27 governorates to encourage women's engagement on issues that are pertinent to the religious discourse and the empowerment of women.

<sup>4</sup> Between 1990 and 2018, the percentage of Egyptian women actively participating in paid work only went from 23.17% to 23.15% (World Bank, September 2018), reaching its slight peak in 2015 with 25%. This can be attributed to adverse changes in women's opportunity structures. Gender equality is enshrined in article 11 of the Constitution, and further endorsed in section 35 of labour law no.12/2003 that prohibits discrimination in wages based on, among other grounds, gender. Still, the equal remuneration provisions of Labour Law do not fully reflect the principle of equal remuneration for men and women for work of equal value.

<sup>5</sup> In 2018, the UN signed an MOU with NCW that aims at promoting equality and non-discrimination in the workplace through trainings for governmental bodies including equitable opportunity units and labour inspectors. The UN further supported the NCW in the promotion of women entrepreneurship through policy support, in addition to creating job opportunities for women in selected areas.

<sup>6</sup> e.g. shelters to receive women survivors of violence were established in several governorates, NCW established task forces in four governorates<sup>6</sup> as a multi-sectoral coordination mechanism for combating VAW

<sup>7</sup> extending such punishments to anyone who escorts a girl to perform the practice, even the parents.

<sup>8</sup> As for shelters, Sexual Harassment units in universities are still timidly used by female students. Existing services are mainly focused on legal/protection support, with limited implementation and integration of "GBV Essential Service Package" into existing basic social services.

## **2. Child rights**

<sup>9</sup> The Child Law does not include a provision on the duration of pre-trial detention for children at 15 years or above. The Ministry of Justice, MOSS, in partnership with the UN, have provided several workshops and trainings around rehabilitation for children in conflict with the law, aiming at promoting alternative measures to deprivation of liberty as stipulated in the law.

<sup>10</sup> *NCCM Child Rights Observatory (2018). Policy for Action: Issue 1. Ending Child Marriage.*



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### 3. Right to Health

<sup>11</sup> The constitution places health as a priority on the national agenda with Article 18 underlining the importance of the right to health and access to quality health services. To achieve and accelerate progress towards universal health coverage (UHC), the Universal Health Insurance (UHI) law no.2/2018 was ratified. The new law replaces several laws, ministerial decrees and other directives governing insurance coverage of 58% of the population. Meanwhile, the new law mandates separation of financing from provision of health services, with the establishment of three new organizations, namely, “Universal Health Insurance Organization” as a financial contributor, “Health Care Organization” as a public provider, and, “Accreditation and Oversight Organization” for setting quality standards, monitoring quality and granting accreditation, and targets to reach a coverage of 100% of Egypt’s inhabitants.

<sup>12</sup> Over 2,500 detainees received VCT services in 2018 and over 1,500 attended communicable diseases awareness raising seminars.

<sup>13</sup> Stigma and discrimination continue to pose considerable challenges to the rights of people living with HIV to access health services. People living with HIV continue to report a negative attitude shown by healthcare providers upon revealing their HIV status, hampering access to VCT services; despite governmental efforts to address this chronic challenge.

### 4. Human trafficking and migrant smuggling

<sup>14</sup> A global awareness raising campaign to address the issue among vulnerable and at-risk groups

<sup>15</sup> This refers in particular to the cooperation with CSOs and non- governmental organizations in providing the required assistance, psycho-social support, housing, counselling and opportunities for training as relevant to victims of human trafficking and smuggling.

### 5. Migrants, refugees, right to asylum

<sup>16</sup> Egypt is a signatory to the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocols, as well as the 1969 OAU Refugee Convention, but has yet to enact national asylum legislation. GoE partners with the UN to regulate asylum registration and refugee status determination based on a 1954 MOU.

### 6. Counter-terrorism

<sup>17</sup> Owing to its geographical position and its leading role in MENA region and among neighbouring Sahel and African countries, GoE acquires the capacity to lead by example as a facilitator in the implementation of the universal legal instruments against terrorism, including the relevant Security Council Resolutions.

### 8. Economic and social rights, development

<sup>18</sup> In 2018, Egypt belonged to the group of low middle-income country according to the World Bank. Despite a recovery of the economic growth over the recent years (real GDP growth is expected at almost 5.3% in 2018, whereas it was 1.8% in 2011), poverty is in an upward trend according to the last available figures: 27.8% of the population lived below the national poverty line in 2015, versus 25.2% in 2010. In this context, the benefits of economic development do not appear to be enjoyed equally across all of society and challenges remain, including persisting income inequality, an urban/rural divide and vulnerabilities to minor shocks.

<sup>19</sup> Inflation is derived from the Core consumer prices index computed by the Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS).

<sup>20</sup> Egypt Voluntary National Review, 2018

<sup>21</sup> Breisinger, Clemens; Gilligan, Daniel; ElDidi, Hagar; El Enbaby, Hoda; Karachiwalla, Naureen; Kassim, Yumna; Kurdi, Sikandra; Jilani, Amir Hamza; Thai, Giang; Goessinger, Karim-Yassin; Moataz, Yasmine; and Petesch, Patti. 2018. Impact evaluation study for Egypt's Takaful and Karama cash transfer program: Synthesis report- Summary of key findings from the quantitative and qualitative impact evaluation studies. MENA RP Working Paper 16. Washington, D.C.: International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI). <http://ebrary.ifpri.org/cdm/ref/collection/p15738coll2/id/132717>

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<sup>22</sup> MOSS, CAPMAS and UNICEF (2017). *Understanding Child Multidimensional Poverty in Egypt*.

<sup>23</sup> In this context multidimensional poverty includes deprivation related to health, education, protection and nutrition

<sup>24</sup> CAPMAS Labour Force Survey, 2017.

## 10. Freedom of association

<sup>25</sup> The law includes requirement on the minimum membership, functionality, and receiving unions of technical assistance by foreign entities that if unmet, could lead to criminal sanctions for both workers and employer's organizations.

<sup>26</sup> [https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=1000:13100:0::NO:13100:P13100\\_COMMENT\\_ID:3343035:NO](https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=1000:13100:0::NO:13100:P13100_COMMENT_ID:3343035:NO)

## 11. Persons with disabilities

<sup>27</sup> [https://treaties.un.org/Pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=IND&mtdsg\\_no=IV-15&chapter=4#EndDec](https://treaties.un.org/Pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=IND&mtdsg_no=IV-15&chapter=4#EndDec)

<sup>28</sup> DPOs (disabled persons organisations), NGOs, Ministry of Communication and Information Technology, Ministry of Man Power, Ministry of Tourism, NCW, National Council of Disability Affairs, NGOs, Enterprises,

<sup>29</sup> The National Council of Disability Affairs

<sup>30</sup> Alexandria, Beheira, Sohag, Gharbia and Matrouh

<sup>31</sup> This includes identification of students with learning disabilities using a variety of tools, improving the knowledge and skills of teachers, providing appropriate learning aids and meeting accessibility standards.

<sup>32</sup> CAPMAS and UNICEF (2017). *Children in Egypt 2016: A statistical digest*. <https://www.unicef.org/egypt/reports/children-egypt>

## 12. Right to Adequate Standard of Living

<sup>33</sup> This includes mechanisms to foster competitiveness of cities, rural urban linkages, growth and population balanced distribution, and local economic development.

<sup>34</sup> [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L\\_ustz6g20c&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L_ustz6g20c&feature=youtu.be)

Right to Adequate Housing

<sup>35</sup> <https://unhabitat.org/books/egypt-housing-profile/>

<sup>36</sup> This study enabled a better understanding of the impact of various approaches and redirect efforts towards more inclusive and effective results.

<sup>37</sup> *Informal Settlements Development Fund*

<sup>38</sup> *Documentation of ISDF programmes, UN-Habitat 2019 (final report not published yet)*.

## 14. Water and sanitation

<sup>39</sup> *Egypt Demographic and Health Survey (EDHS) 2014*

<sup>40</sup> *EDHS 2014*

<sup>41</sup> *CAMPAS censuses 2017*

<sup>42</sup> *Interview with rural inhabitants from Edwa and Maghagha, 2017* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s0klvExH7qw>