



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### PRODUCTIVE EMPLOYMENT AND DECENT WORK FOR WOMEN IN EGYPT, JORDAN AND PALESTINE: JOINT PROGRAMME, UN WOMEN AND ILO

MID-TERM EVALUATION REPORT  
JULY 2023

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THIS REPORT PRESENTS THE MAIN FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE MID-TERM EVALUATION OF THE ILO–UN WOMEN JOINT PROGRAMME, PROMOTING PRODUCTIVE EMPLOYMENT AND DECENT WORK FOR WOMEN IN EGYPT, JORDAN AND PALESTINE (WORK4WOMEN). THE EVALUATION COVERED THE PROGRAMME PERIOD FROM JANUARY 2019 TO NOVEMBER 2022. THE EVALUATION WAS CONDUCTED BETWEEN NOVEMBER 2021 AND NOVEMBER 2022.

## The Joint Programme Work for Women

UN Women and ILO started implementing a multi-country Joint Programme in 2019 to promote decent employment opportunities for women in Egypt, Jordan and Palestine by addressing the structural causes of inequalities that women face in the region.

The Joint Programme aimed to contribute to Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5, particularly target 5.4 to “recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate”, and SDG 8, specifically target 8.5 to “full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value” and target 8.8 to “protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers, in particular women migrants, and those in precarious employment”.

The Joint Programme started as a 48-month long programme, from January 2019 to December 2022. In November 2021, it received an extension until December 2023, making it a 60-month long programme. The total budget of the Joint Programme was US\$ 13.1 million, funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida).

## Evaluation purpose, objectives and approach

The purpose of the Mid-Term Evaluation was two-fold: (a) accountability, to assess the programme’s overall performance and achievements against planned results; and (b) learning, by studying the nature and processes of interventions to determine which strategies and elements were working well and in which context to replicate or scale up the successful interventions and innovations. Therefore, the evaluation was primarily formative in nature but also included summative elements within its scope.

The objectives of this evaluation were to:

- a) Analyse the relevance of the Joint Programme’s objectives, intervention logic, strategy and approach at national and regional levels, as well as UN Women and ILO’s collaborative comparative advantage/added value in this area.
- b) Assess programme effectiveness in achieving planned programme outputs and outcomes, including unexpected results and factors affecting programme implementation and results (positively and negatively).
- c) Assess the efficiency of Joint Programme management, partnerships, governance and coordination mechanisms including the regional-level Joint Programme Strategic Coordination Committee and the National Joint Programme Steering Committees in progressing towards achievement of programme results.

- d) Review the strategies and mechanisms for outcomes' sustainability in the target countries as well as at the regional level.
- e) Assess the extent to which the programme was informed by gender, human rights and disability inclusion approaches and was contributing to gender transformative changes to advance and sustain gender equality and the empowerment of women.
- f) Identify and document lessons learned, good practices and innovations, success stories and challenges within the programme to inform future work.
- g) Provide strategic recommendations for the different key stakeholders for future programming.

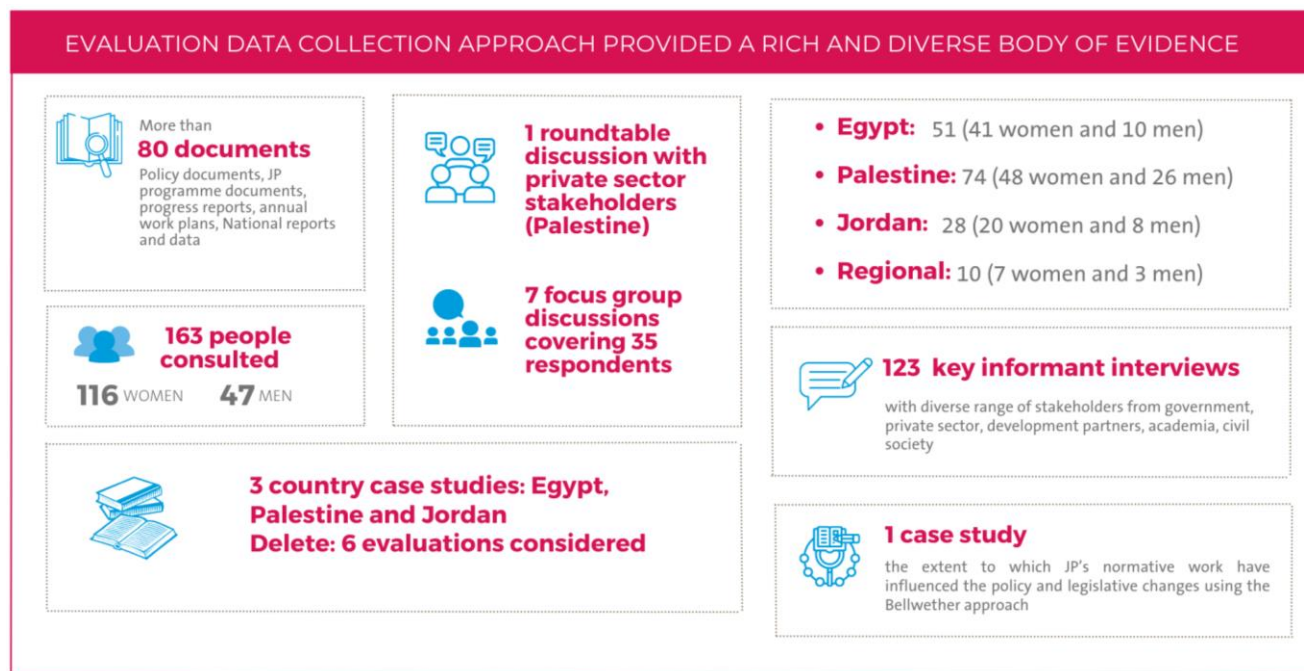
## Evaluation scope

The evaluation covered the programme period from January 2019 to November 2022\* and all aspects of programme implementation. It included three countries where activities were being implemented: Egypt, Palestine and Jordan, and the regional initiatives taking place at the Arab States regional level. The evaluation was conducted between November 2021 and November 2022.

*\*The initial scope was from January 2019 to December 2021. Due to a delayed start of the evaluation, the scope was extended to November 2022.*

## Evaluation design

The evaluation applied a theory-based approach and applied gender and human rights-based principles to evaluation, including a disability lens, through their incorporation into the evaluation questions and analysis approaches.



## Conclusions and Recommendation

### Conclusion 1:

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The Joint Programme is well aligned with national, regional and international policies, normative frameworks and strategies for promoting women's productive employment and decent work. Its Theory of Change and intervention logic is valid in terms of identifying and addressing structural and systemic barriers to facilitate women's participation in the labour market and in the world of work across the macro (laws and policy), meso (institutions and networks) and micro levels (communities and individuals). The Joint Programme could consolidate its portfolio by prioritizing, refocusing and scaling up certain interventions. Prioritization might be necessary to bring about concrete outcomes, when taking into consideration the limits of the Joint Programme budget compared to requirements to expand implementation.

**(Finding 1, 2, 5,6)**



**Recommendation 1:** The Joint Programme should consolidate its portfolio of interventions by prioritizing what has worked well and focus on these aspects for the rest of the programme period. Normative work; work with the private sector, particularly through Women Empowerment Principles (WEPs); and addressing gender-based employment segregation are areas that the programme should prioritize and focus on during its next phase.



**Recommendation 2:** Continue to strengthen monitoring and learning systems: develop more ambitious indicators, including to better capture social and gender norms change and the impact of media outreach and advocacy, impact of capacity strengthening interventions as well as the Joint Programme's contribution to normative changes; and develop a results verification system to strengthen data independence and data quality.

### Conclusion 2:

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The Joint Programme's multi-pronged strategic approach to partnership has been instrumental in achieving key results. However, there is a need to break the "compartmentalized" form of partnerships to amplify and sustain the programme's results. The Joint Programme has also targeted a cohesive relationship with private sector companies to address the gendered employment challenges in the targeted countries as well as in the Arab States region, particularly through the WEPs. As a trusted partner, it has the potential to achieve scale and impact by facilitating better exchange and collaboration between its partners.

**(Finding 6,9)**



**Recommendation 3:** The Joint Programme should break the "compartmentalized" form of partnerships and facilitate regular and systematic exchange between its partners to facilitate their involvement beyond their own area of collaboration with the Joint Programme.



**Recommendation 4:** The Joint Programme target countries should develop a national WEP strategy and road map based on the UN Women Regional Office for Arab States' WEP Strategy to develop and sustain a gender transformative private sector in the region.

### Conclusion 3:

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The Joint Programme brought the comparative advantage of UN Women and ILO together and successfully built on the technical complementarities of both entities creating opportunities for added value by enhancing the visibility and legitimacy of gender and decent work on the national agenda of the targeted governments. The programme has filled the evidence gap and supported evidence-based policy and programming decisions. However, its joint governance structures and inter-agency collaboration needs improvement to achieve women's economic empowerment in the Arab States region beyond a specific joint programme.

**(Finding 8, 10)**



**Recommendation 5:** The regional leadership of both entities should engage more regularly at a strategic level, beyond current formal engagements (at the Steering Committee), to discuss lessons learned from the partnership to achieve women's economic empowerment and to address bottlenecks and challenges when needed.



**Recommendation 6:** The Joint Programme should facilitate more strategic dialogues and discussions with its Steering Committees at the national and regional level to support national commitments and institutional arrangements to sustain and amplify the results contributed to by the Joint Programme.

### Conclusion 4:

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The Joint Programme has adopted a gender transformative approach through its interventions that addresses all aspects of socioecological life. It has made a concerted effort to respond to the needs of some of the most vulnerable women, but it lacks systematic inclusion of women living with disability who are further left behind. There is room for more systematic inclusion following the United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy and mandate.

**(Findings 13,14)**



**Recommendation 7:** The Joint Programme should embed plans for disability inclusion, and implement and monitor them in the remaining phase of the programme.