

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

# COUNTRY PORTFOLIO EVALUATION EGYPT

This report presents the main findings, conclusions and recommendations of the Country Portfolio Evaluation (CPE) of the UN Women Egypt Country Office, conducted between December 2021 and September 2022. A CPE is a systematic assessment of the normative, coordination and operational aspects of UN Women's contribution to development results related to gender equality and women's empowerment at the country level.

## Background of UN Women in Egypt

UN Women has operated in Egypt since the early 1990s. The Entity transitioned from the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) to UN Women in 2010. The Strategic Note is the main planning tool for UN Women's work to advance gender equality and women's empowerment through implementation of the Entity's integrated triple mandate of normative, coordination and operational work. The UN Women Egypt Strategic Note covers the period 2018–2022 and is closely aligned to the country's United Nations Partnership Development Framework, which covers the same period, and to the National Strategy for the Empowerment of Egyptian Women 2030.

UN Women Egypt provides integrated policy advice, capacity development and technical assistance, social mobilization and advocacy, and data and knowledge generation, among other functions, to inform policymaking and law-making. UN Women is the only United Nations entity with the exclusive mandate to promote gender equality, including leading and coordinating the accountability of the United Nations system to member organizations' respective gender quality mandates. UN Women also provides intergovernmental normative support at global and national levels, as well as direct support and service delivery.

## EGYPT COUNTRY CONTEXT



### POPULATION DEMOGRAPHICS

**104 M**

Over 104 million, 49.5% women as of December 2021.

**43%**

Live in urban setting, largest part of the population lives in only 9% of the total land area.



### KEY DEVELOPMENT RANKINGS

Ranked 116 out of 189 countries in the Human Development Index 2020

Ranked 129 out of 156 in Global Gender Gap Report 2021



### KEY NATIONAL COMMITMENTS ON GEWE

20 gender equality provisions in the Constitution and more than 19 laws and amendments strengthening women's rights since 2014

National Strategy for the Empowerment of Egyptian Women 2030 has 34 SDG indicators

National Council for Women and Egypt National Observatory for Women oversee and monitor the National Strategy for the Empowerment of Egyptian Women 2030

## Evaluation purpose, objectives and use

The evaluation was conducted primarily as a formative evaluation to support the Country Office and national stakeholders' strategic learning and decision-making for the next Strategic Note (2023–2027). The evaluation also had a summative perspective to support enhanced accountability for development effectiveness and learning from experience. Objectives of the evaluation included:

- Assess effectiveness and organizational efficiency in progressing towards the achievement of gender equality and women's empowerment results as defined in the Strategic Note.
- Support the UN Women Egypt Country Office to improve its strategic positioning to better support the achievement of sustained gender equality and women's empowerment.
- Analyse how a human rights approach and gender equality principles are integrated in the design and implementation of the Strategic Note.
- Identify and validate lessons learned, good practices and examples of innovation that support gender equality and human rights.
- Provide insights into the extent to which the UN Women Egypt Country Office has realized synergies between its three mandates (normative, coordination and operations).

## Intended users and uses of the evaluation

The primary intended users of this evaluation are UN Women management and Country Office personnel; the UN Women Executive Board, UN Women Regional Arab States Office, UN Women headquarters and other Regional and Country Offices outside the Arab States

region; target groups, their households and community members, programme and project partners; national and local governments in Egypt; civil society representatives; the donor community and other development partners; and the United Nations Egypt Country Team (UNCT). Intended uses include learning and improved decision-making to support development of the next Strategic Note; accountability for the development effectiveness of UN Women's contribution to gender equality and women's empowerment; and capacity development and mobilization of national stakeholders to advance gender equality and women's empowerment.

## UN WOMEN IN EGYPT

**US\$ 23,100,368**

Total budget 2018-2021

**TOTAL STAFF: 44**

Source: CO Organigram, January 2022

- 14 Staff
- 28 Service Contractor
- 1 Consultant
- 1 UNV

## 3 MAIN THEMATIC AREAS



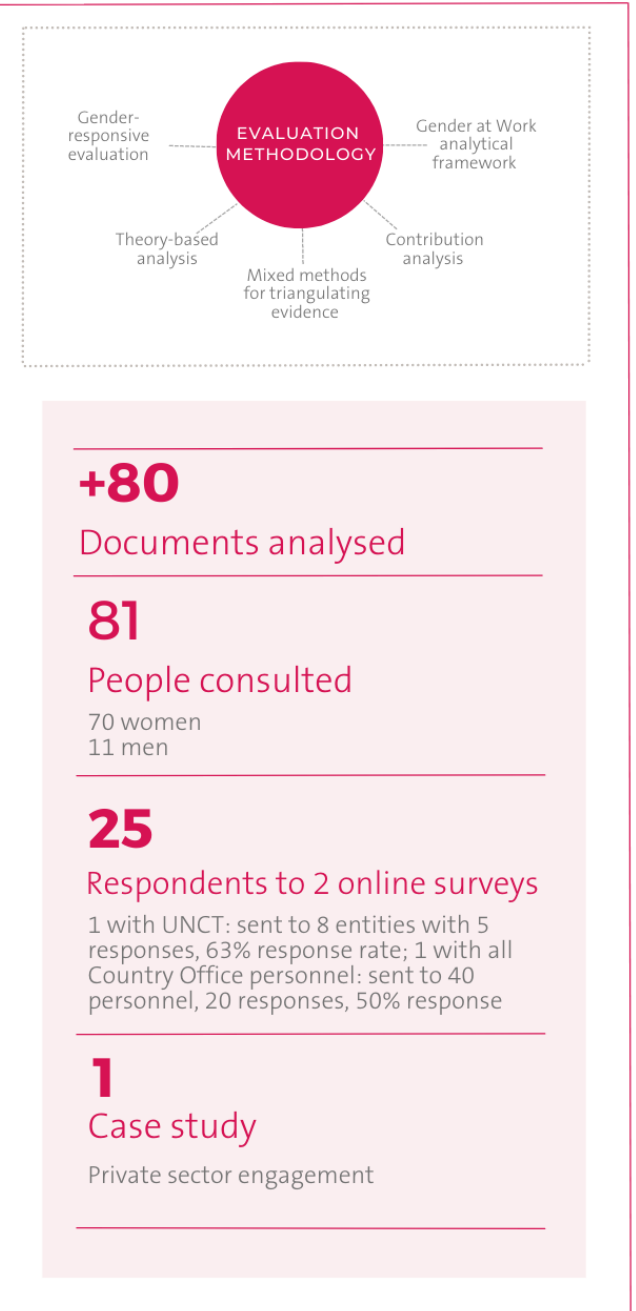
Elimination of  
Violence  
Against Women



Women  
Economic  
Empowerment



Peace,  
Security, and  
Humanitarian  
Action



## Conclusions and Recommendation

### Conclusion 1:

The Country Office sustained its relevance over implementation of the Strategic Note 2018–2022; demonstrated agility by adjusting its programmes to contribute to the response to COVID-19; and continued to deliver results despite frequent leadership changes. There is space to further consolidate its portfolio, avoid mandate overlap in the End Violence Against Women area, secure funding and intentionally aim for innovation.

The Strategic Note, its theory of change and programmatic interventions were designed to directly support the Egyptian government's international commitments and national priorities and contribute to the UN–Government of Egypt's Partnership Development Framework (2018–2022). The Country Office made a strategic decision to consolidate its portfolio under two key pillars of work – Women's Economic Empowerment and Ending Violence Against Women – under its current Strategic Note to achieve scale and impact. The Women's Economic Empowerment portfolio needs to be further consolidated to facilitate its transition from multiple projects to a comprehensive programme. Similarly, efforts should continue to avoid a “mandate overlap” with other entities in the Ending Violence Against Women area. The Country Office has supported some creative and novel initiatives, but it could be more intentional and methodical in its approach to innovation. The Country Office had multiple changes in leadership during the Strategic Note period, with stability at the Representative level only occurring during the final two years. Despite this upheaval, personnel remained valued by partners and stakeholders and personnel were reasonably satisfied with their workplace. Non-core funding declined during the period, creating a future challenge for the Country Office.



Based on Findings 1,8,9,11-12

### Conclusion 2:

The Country Office has invested in building multi-pronged partnerships to achieve scale and impact. The Country Office is regarded as an expert partner in gender equality and women's empowerment by the government, UN Country Team partners, the private sector and other stakeholders. It has acted as a convenor of government and civil society organizations. The Country Office has laid a foundation during this Strategic Note period for future expansion, scale and impact.

The Country Office has developed multi-pronged strategic partnerships as a key change strategy to “catalyse” large-scale impact and systemic change. It has established itself as a trusted and relevant partner of the government and its objectives and commitments. The Country Office has leveraged its coordination mandate, making use of the UN Country Team gender mechanisms for gender mainstreaming across UN agency programming. Fruitful inter-agency arrangements have arisen through joint programming between UN Women and other UN entities. The Country Office has also developed a more cohesive relationship with private sector companies to address the gendered employment challenges in the country. Despite limitation due to the Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) laws during a period of the Strategic Note, the Country Office has acted as an important convenor of government and civil society organisations. Overall, its partnership approach has laid a foundation for future expansion, but the results remain small in scale. These have a potential to reach both a wider geographic audience and/or target a specific demographic group in the next period but more work needs to be done to leverage the private sector partnerships and strengthen the engagement of civil society organizations to develop a greater normative role and capture the impact and lessons of partnerships to ensure they can achieve impact in scale and scope.



Based on Findings 2,4,6,10

### Conclusion 3:

The Country Office has contributed to creating knowledge and awareness of gender data and statistics; filled evidence gaps; and supported evidence-based policy and programming decisions. A more systematic approach towards filling gaps in the evidence base and continued engagement with the Egyptian government's statistical agency will yield more tangible results.

The Country Office through its partnership with Egypt's Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics has played an important role in raising knowledge and awareness about the need for gender data and statistics in Egypt. It is mainly because of UN Women's work that the gender statistics have been integrated in the Egypt's National Strategy for the Development of Statistics (NSDS). The Country Office has also invested in producing some relevant policy research and knowledge, reported to have been used to set the policy agenda and influence normative changes. In the case of gender statistics, this is a good start, but the momentum needs to be maintained to ensure the strategy is operationalized and the generated data is used to make policy and programming decisions. The Country Office would benefit from taking a more systematic approach to filling gaps in the evidence base to inform decisions about new research topics, and to make the evidence available in an accessible format to decision makers.



Based on Findings 3,5,8

## Conclusion 4:

The Country Office has demonstrated its commitment to the leave no one behind principle and has adopted a gender transformative approach through its programming. A stronger social relations approach; a systematic approach to identifying and targeting the most vulnerable groups; and a monitoring and feedback system to track the transformative changes would help to strengthen the Country Office's work.

The Country Office's portfolio appears gender transformative, with programming that addresses all aspects of socio-ecological life. The Country Office has made a concerted effort to respond to the needs of some of the most vulnerable women and girls. However, the Country Office and its UN Country Team partners lack a systematic response to the needs of other marginalized groups. There is room for a more systematic approach to operationalize leave no one behind commitments by assessing who is left behind and why; sequencing and prioritizing solutions; tracking and monitoring progress; and ensuring follow-up and review. A stronger social relations approach would be helpful to avoid backlash; identify gender-based violence risks in programming across the portfolio; and create scope for dialogue on some of the harmful impacts of gender norms. Almost all stakeholders interviewed as part of the evaluation process indicated that attitudes and perceptions about women in Egypt remain one of the most significant challenges to improving gender equality and women's empowerment. Such work requires long-term effort to grow the foundation laid during the Strategic Note period.



**Recommendation 1:** The Country Office should continue to consolidate the portfolio approach under the Women's Economic Empowerment and End Violence Against Women pillars for the next Strategic Note.



**Recommendation 2:** The Country Office should facilitate a UN Country Team strategy to engage civil society in normative advocacy.



**Recommendation 3:** The Country Office should develop a long-term, shared vision for change through its private sector partnership.



**Recommendation 4:** The Country Office should continue to strengthen the gender perspective in national statistics, production and availability of gender data and evidence and its use by policymakers and planners.



**Recommendation 5:** The Country Office should augment its social norms change interventions by strengthening its social relations approach involving work with families and communities to achieve and sustain social norms change.



**Recommendation 6:** The Country Office should embed targeted leave no one behind outcomes in the next Strategic Note.



Based on Findings 7,13,14