

## Egypt

### Part 1: Situation update in the country

#### Socio-economic context

In 2018, Egypt continued to benefit from political, economic and fiscal stability. Economic growth was high, with gross domestic product (GDP) growing at 5.3 per cent in 2018, and forecast to continue to grow in the coming five-year period. According to the latest available estimates (Multiple Overlapping Deprivation Analysis 2017), over 10 million children in Egypt are living in conditions of multiple deprivations related to lack of access to basic services and support mechanisms. The prevalence of poverty has been increasing since the early 2000 and according to the most recent data available (Household Income, Expenditure and Consumption Survey/HIECS 2015) more than one in four Egyptians (28 per cent) are estimated to be living below the national monetary poverty line. Recent economic reforms, such as the slashing of energy subsidies and the VAT reform – while they are beneficial as they free up state budget resources from recessive usage – have hit harder the poorest segment of the population and are likely to have further increased poverty.

The Egypt Five-Year Macroeconomic Framework and Strategy (2015-2019) recognizes the challenge of increasing poverty rates and widening income gaps and caters for a national social policy framework addressing the inter-generational development challenges. In this context, the Government is scaling up social protection mitigating measures through its flagship cash transfer programme Takaful and Karama (TKP), reaching some nine million beneficiaries.

This positive policy focus towards the reduction of inequality needs to be sustained and accelerated to counter the effects ensuing from the economic reforms and the sustained demographic expansion experienced by the country. With an annual growth of 2.6 per cent, the population of Egypt is forecast to increase to 128 million by 2030 (UN Population Projections). While the proportion of children in the population is likely to reduce, the share of adolescents is projected to reach 20 per cent in 2030, when Egypt will be home to some 24 million adolescents. Such fast demographic expansion poses increasing challenges to the country's ambition to expand the provision of quality basic services and reduce poverty and inequality.

The Government of Egypt's commitment towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is embodied in the "Sustainable Development Strategy: Egypt Vision 2030" (SDS). While the country is on track to achieve the SDGs related to child and maternal health as well as basic education, progress in achieving those related to higher education, quality of education, stunting and obesity, female employment and empowerment remained constrained.

Sustained migration from rural areas poses increasing challenges to urban areas. Despite relatively higher productivity and economic growth rates in metropolitan cities, poverty has reportedly increased also in urban areas (*HIECS 2015*). Rural migrants can suffer from discrimination because of their lower educational level, different work attitudes and limited social networks.

Socio-economic, gender and geographic disparities are wide. Available evidence shows that

large households living in rural areas, children, women, the less educated, those working in the informal sector and the agricultural sector workers are the segments of the populations that is being left behind (*Nassar & Biltagy, 2017*).

Youth (15-24 years) unemployment is high in Egypt at 34 per cent (*World Bank*). Low job quality is a key determinant of unemployment as many youth prefer to be unemployed rather than be in low-quality jobs. Informal employment is also a challenge as it impacts on the quality of jobs among working youth. Only 6 per cent of wage workers with less than secondary education had access to work contracts. The number of unemployed young women (1.3 million) was more than double that of unemployed young men in 2013 (*School to Work Transition Survey, 2013*). The unemployment rate among female youth was more than five times that among male youth according to the same source.

### **Humanitarian situation**

Egypt continued to be a key country of destination and transit for refugees and other migrants. At the end of November 2018, there were 242,983 registered refugees and asylum seekers in Egypt, of whom 93,895 were children. Forced migration and internal displacement due to conflicts in Syria, Iraq, Libya and Yemen have led to a significant caseload of refugees; and ongoing displacement in Sudan and South Sudan as well as unrest in Ethiopia and Eritrea continue to force people to seek safety in countries like Egypt. In addition, there are a significant number of unregistered Syrians and others within the Egyptian borders (*United Nations High Commission for Refugees/UNHCR*).

Refugee children have been given legal access to public education and public health services. While there have been improvements in enrolment rates, barriers related to school access and retention remain, particularly for non-Arabic speaking African refugees. A positive development is the ministerial decree allowing refugees to access basic maternal and health services free of charge; language and sociocultural barriers remain, constraining refugees' access to health services. During displacement children are particularly at risk of violence, abuse and exploitation, psycho-social distress and family separation.

As at November 2018, 4,054 unaccompanied and separated children were registered by UNHCR, including 2,516 unaccompanied children and 1,538 separated children. These children face extensive protection issues affecting their safety, well-being, and development. Northern Sinai continued to suffer from instability resulting in additional limitations to children's access to basic health, nutrition and education services. The instability in the region led to the displacement of communities and increased psychosocial distress amongst children and disruption to children's educational and social wellbeing. Large numbers of students were unable to complete their second semester in the 2017-18 school year and enrol in the 2018-2019 school year. Marginalised groups require support to guarantee more equitable access to services.

### **Child survival, health, nutrition**

While the most recent survey data dates to 2015, global estimates indicated that under-five mortality has been decreasing and reached 23 per 1,000 live births (*UNICEF State of the World's Children Report 2017*). Infant mortality (19 per 1,000 live births) accounted for 83 per cent of overall under-five mortality, while neonatal mortality (13 per 1,000 live births) accounted for 57 per cent. Gender and socioeconomic disparities in key child survival, health and nutrition

indicators persist (DHS 2014). While more than 95 per cent of Egypt's population lives within five kilometres of a health facility (*Nassar & Biltagy, 2017*), the quality of public health care is constrained by the shortage of qualified staff and essential supplies and lack of updated and enforced clinical guidelines. The Government has developed quality accreditation standards for primary health care and hospitals based on international guidelines, however full adoption is yet to be achieved.

Although an estimated 60 per cent of Egyptians have health insurance through the Government's Health Insurance Organization, fewer than one-quarter of households use this insurance, due in large part to concerns about the quality of care in public facilities. Moreover, vulnerable groups, including informal sector workers, the poor, and dependents, are not covered. As a result, almost half of patients seek care in private clinics and hospitals, where they incur higher out-of-pocket costs (*World Bank 2015*). In 2017, the Government endorsed an ambitious plan to expand the health insurance system, that aims to cover additional 30 per cent of the population in the next 15 years.

The national strategy for sustainable development, SDS, adopts the principles set by SDGs on global maternal, child and adolescent health. It will be important that these principles are fully translated through the acceleration of interventions for the most vulnerable populations.

In the past decades Egypt has made significant progress in increasing households' access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation. The World Bank diagnostics of the capacity of Egypt to reach SDGs with available financial resources and based on current trend of the investment, shows that the country is on track to achieve the targets on improved drinking water sources and access to improved sanitation facilities.

Egypt was one of the 36 countries where 90 per cent of the global burden of malnutrition falls (*Lancet 2013*). The nutrition context remains challenging, with one in five children aged under 5 years stunted (above the regional average) and 15 per cent of children overweight. Among children and adolescents aged 5-19 years, 35 per cent are overweight. Data also indicated high levels of anaemia among both children (27 per cent) and reproductive age women (25 per cent). The "double burden" of malnutrition constrains human capital development by increasing morbidity and mortality, decreasing cognitive, motor, language and socio-emotional development and increasing healthcare expenditures. Ultimately, this limits the ability of younger generations to grow out of poverty and contribute effectively to Egypt's development. Based on projected progress in nutrition indicators and current funding levels, Egypt risks being unable to achieve the SDGs.

While Egypt is a low-risk prevalence country, there has been a significant increase in the number of new cases of HIV infection over the past years. The coverage of women who are pregnant with antiretroviral drugs for prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV was low, at 9 per cent in 2017 (*UNAIDS*). This is matter of concern, since without timely treatment, half of the children living with HIV are likely to die by the age of two. The new national HIV strategy 2018-2022 adopts global targets in prevention, coverage, and treatment, including for mothers, children and adolescents.

### **Early childhood development (ECD)**

It is estimated that close to four million children aged under 5 years in Egypt are at risk of not reaching their full developmental potential, due to poverty, poor nutrition and a lack of access to early enriching opportunities. Ultimately, this limits the ability of younger generations to grow

out of poverty and contribute effectively to Egypt's development. Early childhood development is one of the national priorities, and in 2019 Egypt will develop a national ECD strategy to guide scaling up of ECD services.

In 2018, just 8 per cent of children aged under 4 years had access to nurseries. Despite the increasing trend in the net enrolment ratio in pre-school education (from 21 per cent to 24 per cent between 2011 and 2018), with virtually no gender disparities, it is unlikely that Egypt will meet the ambitious 2030 target of 80 per cent enrolment.

The national labour laws do not allow working parents and caregivers sufficient time and resources to care for their children, with only four months of paid maternity leave and no paternity leave. UNICEF calls on the Government and private sector to review their policies to allow parents to give the best start in life to their children.

## Education

With over 21 million students enrolled (excluding tertiary education), the Egyptian education system is the largest in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. The school population continued to grow rapidly and school construction struggled to keep the pace, as testified by the increasing trend of pupil-classroom ratio in public schools that in 2018 reached 50, compared to 48 in 2017. With net enrolment ratios of 97 per cent in primary and 81 per cent in secondary education and virtually no gender gaps in enrolment, socio-economic and geographical disparities remain among the key determinants of the access to education in Egypt. The number of children dropping out of basic education (primary and preparatory) is high at over 200,000 per year, mostly from poor families and in remote areas.

Pre-primary education remains an area where large gains can be made in terms of enrolment ratios and quality. Standards need to be set and followed for hiring teachers and staff involved with the educational process. In addition, there is a need for a quality training and accreditation system for teacher and other staff to be established, as well as for in-service training.

The quality of education remains a challenge preventing children from developing to their full potential and contributes to the low completion ratios. Half of the students in school do not have the foundational skills in mathematics and science: just 47 per cent of the grade 8 students reached the low benchmark of an international learning achievement tests in mathematics and 42 per cent achieved it in science (*TIMMS and PIRLS, 2015*). Teaching methods are rigid with insufficient focus on pupils' participation.

Technical and vocational education and training (TVET) in Egypt had some 1.7 million students enrolled in 2017 (*Ministry of Education and Technical Education/MoETE*). In the last school year some 450,000 graduated from the TVET system of whom 43 per cent were females (*Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics/CAPMAS, 2017*). Despite its large scale, the system struggles to supply the economy with an adequately skilled labour force. The informal sector is a large-scale employer that is more tolerant to a poorer skillset, however it generally offers lesser quality jobs with low salaries and greater job instability. Also, there is a mismatch between the needs of the labour market and the profile and skills sets of the TVET graduates (*Population Council, 2018; ENID, 2012*).

In 2018, the National Assembly approved a new law on the provision of education for children with disability. This is a positive step forward towards a more inclusive school system. The full

operationalisation of the law will require additional data and knowledge on children with disabilities in Egypt. Operational procedures for implementation will have to be developed, including on teacher training, the provision of special learning materials, and improvements to the physical accessibility of classrooms.

## **Child protection**

In recent years Egypt has made progress in strengthening the legal framework for the protection of children from violence, abuse and exploitation. Current government and partners' efforts aim at ensuring full implementation of the existing legal framework. To this end, the availability of a professional work force is a crucial element. The establishment in 2017 of an intergovernmental task force on Elimination of Violence Against Children (EVAC) and of the launch in 2018 of the new EVAC strategic framework were positive developments.

Physical punishment of children remained widely practiced with 43 per cent of children nationwide subject to severe physical punishment. There are marked regional differences: the practice is as high as 64 per cent in Qena in Upper Egypt and much lower in Frontier region at 20 per cent.

Despite being prohibited by law, female genital mutilation/cutting remains prevalent in Egypt, affecting an estimated 61 per cent of adolescent girls, according to the latest available data from 2014. There is high social support for female genital mutilation, with 70 per cent of men, and more than half of women countrywide approving the practice (International Men and Gender Equality Survey *IMAGES 2018*).

Gender-based violence is prevalent and also has a high level of social acceptance. According to a recent survey (*IMAGES, 2018*), men and women alike reported high rates of men's use of violence against women. Child marriage is a serious concern, with nearly one in every 20 girls (4 per cent) aged 15 to 17 years and one in every 10 (11 per cent) adolescent girls (15-19 years) either married or previously married, with highest prevalence in rural areas (*Census 2017*).

## **Part 2: Major Results including in humanitarian action and gender, against the results in the Country Programme Documents**

UNICEF's programming cooperation in Egypt aims at supporting the country's efforts to progressively tackle the development challenges highlighted in the first part of this Report and progress towards the achievement of the SDGs. All UNICEF interventions in Egypt fall within the context of the Egypt United Nations Programme Development Framework (UNPDF), coordinated by the UN Resident Coordinator Office in Egypt. The year was the first of implementation of the 2018-2022 UNICEF Egypt Country Programme of Cooperation.

### **Goal Area 1: Every child survives and thrives.**

The Child Survival and Early Development Outcome in the 2018-2022 UNICEF Egypt Country Programme Document (CPD) contributes to the achievement of the UNPDF Outcome 2 Social Justice, Output 2.2 (Quality inclusive health and nutrition) and 2.5 (HIV prevention and response). The UNICEF intervention has four pillars: 1) good health, 2) adequate nutrition, 3) opportunities for early learning, and 4) responsive care giving.

### **Good health**

UNICEF, in partnership with the Agence Française de Développement (AFD) and the Ministry of Health and Population (MoHP), implemented an essential package of maternal and child health care services in Ismailia, Sharkia and Dakahliya governorates. In 2018, UNICEF developed capacity of local health teams (300 health supervisors, 220 physicians and nurses and 330 community health workers) on evidence-based planning and data management, integrated maternal and child health, nutrition and counselling skills. Equipped with new knowledge and improved counselling skills, they have mobilized communities to participate in the health system delivery.

The intervention resulted in a significant increase in the utilization of health services, including an increase in the percentage of women who completed four antenatal visits from 16 per cent in October 2017 to 32 per cent in October 2018 and a 25 per cent increase in the number of growth monitoring visits. MoHP, AFD and UNICEF are planning to scale up the project to the remaining governorates.

UNICEF, in partnership with MoHP, supported the inclusion of prevention of mother-to-child transmission (PMTCT) of HIV into the HIV/AIDS National Strategic Plan (2018-2022). The operational plan was developed and PMTCT interventions were initiated in eight priority governorates.

The UNICEF-supported health interventions focussed on the poorest children and women in targeted governorates, including refugees, and children from slum areas.

### **Adequate nutrition**

UNICEF and the World Bank produced an investment case on nutrition that served as basis for the development of the new National Nutrition Strategy and its costed action plan. It is expected that the new national nutrition strategic framework will catalyse increasing domestic and donor funding and guide a more comprehensive multisectoral approach to tackle malnutrition.

To strengthen the delivery of nutrition interventions within the primary health care sector, UNICEF supported the development, testing and roll-out of a revised standardized training package for “the First 1000 days”. The package equips primary health workers with the skills required to improve counselling and delivery of nutrition prevention and treatment services. The training of health workers, based on the new standardized package, started in 2018 and will be completed in 2019.

UNICEF technical assistance and advocacy resulted in the introduction of core nutrition indicators, such as breastfeeding in the first hour, exclusive and continued breastfeeding, stunting and underweight, into the national health information system. Availability of data on these key nutrition indicators is expected to improve evidence-based planning and monitoring of nutrition interventions in the country.

UNICEF in collaboration with the Government succeeded in amending the Child Health Cards with the inclusion of new growth monitoring standards and ECD messages, promoting a holistic approach to child development. UNICEF supported the printing of 600,000 copies of the new cards. The Government will produce the revised cards to reach some 2.5 million parents annually with crucial messages and information.

### **Early learning opportunities**

Under the leadership of the Ministry of Social Solidarity (MoSS) and UNICEF, early childhood development has been positioned as one of the national priorities in Egypt. In 2018, UNICEF focused on building a conducive environment for the achievement of ECD results in the coming years.

UNICEF and the Government developed the situation analysis that will inform the development of the national ECD strategy. Other milestone processes moved forward in 2018, including the work on the Early Learning and Development Standards (pre-school, 0-6 years) and the costing of different models of ECD services. With UNICEF advocacy, the Government allocated US\$14 million for private sector and civil society organizations to establish nurseries nationwide. UNICEF supported the design of two nursery models (home-based nursery and ECD voluntary centres) and their small-scale implementation started in 2018 in collaboration with MoSS, MoYS and NGOs. UNICEF partnered with Queen's University and Ain Shams University to document the models, the impact of the intervention and assess the feasibility of upscaling.

UNICEF worked with the Ministry of Education and the World Bank to increase children's access and quality of kindergartens. In 2018, the World Bank provided a US\$100 million loan to the Government to scale up kindergartens, train caregivers and establish national standards.

UNICEF Egypt launched the ECD Lancet papers in an event that attracted high-level participants from the Government, academia, developmental partners and civil society. In the event, the Minister of Education emphasized the urgency to invest early to improve the quality of education and retention and the MoHP representatives shared the vision to mainstream ECD in primary health care services.

### **Responsive care giving**

UNICEF Egypt developed a social and behavioural change communication (SBCC) model that recognizes positive parenting and girls' empowerment as key to address the root causes of behaviours harmful to children. A summary of the results achieved in 2018 are included in model refer to section 2.8.

## **Goal area 2: Every child learns**

UNICEF education interventions are a part of the Outcome on Learning and Protection of the 2018-2022 UNICEF Egypt Country Programme. They contribute to the achievement of the UNPDF Outcome 2 (Social Justice), Output 2.1 (Equitable access to education) as well as UNPDF Outcome 1 (Prosperity) and Output 1.2 (Skills development and employability).

### **Support national education reform through development of curriculum frameworks**

In the context of the new National Education reform, led by the Minister of Education and Technical Education, UNICEF supported the development of a new grade level curriculum framework. It was used by the MoETE to design the new textbooks rolled out to all schools in September 2018, reaching more than 1.3 million pupils. UNICEF's contribution included equipping the staff of the MoETE's Centre of Curriculum and Instructional Materials Development (CCIMD) with the know-how to develop a life-skills based curriculum framework and institutionalize this knowledge and expertise within the MoETE.

UNICEF was well-positioned in the reform programme through its regional Life Skills and Citizenship Education (LSCE) framework that was endorsed by MoETE as cornerstone in the design of the new National Curriculum Framework. In 2018, UNICEF provided extensive technical support to the CCIMD to enable their national experts to design the curriculum frameworks for pre-primary and Grade 1, integrating the LSCE framework, both in the new learning outcomes as well as in the MoETE's approach to teacher training and to classroom based assessment tools. Six technical workshops were conducted, providing training to 35 national curriculum development experts. The MoETE trained 138,000 teachers on the new textbooks for pre-primary and Grade 1.

### **Inclusive education**

UNICEF interventions aim at creating schools that are more inclusive for children with disabilities. In 2018, with support of the European Union (EU), 95 resource rooms were set up in schools and provided with educational materials. A total of 1,368 teachers, psychologists, social workers and school principals were capacitated in inclusive education and on supporting children with disabilities. In the 95 schools, 1,036 pupils with mild disabilities enrolled. In addition, UNICEF supported establishment of five community-based schools in poor rural areas that resulted to the enrolment of 1,077 children who were previously out-of-school.

### **Life skills education**

UNICEF supported the Ministry of Youth and Sport (MoYS) in scaling up of the Civic Education and Student Unions programme, implemented jointly with the student unions of MoETE. In 2018, 179 new civic education facilitators affiliated to the MoYS and the student unions were trained as trainers in engagement and participation, including rights and responsibilities, citizenship, how to plan and implement initiatives, as well as participation and engagement within the school system. The trainers then cascaded the programme by training 8,588 adolescents and youth, of whom 4,176 were females. As a result of their participation in the civic engagement skills development training programme, 5,633 training beneficiaries, including 2,423 females, actively engaged in initiatives through the student unions mechanisms and youth centre platforms. The initiatives addressed crucial issues such as combating violence and harassment, gender equality, sense of ownership of school properties, education without private tutoring, positive behavioural change, morality, and commitment to ethics. The student unions initiatives implemented in the 90 schools benefited from high level of collaboration and responsiveness from school management. A remodelling of the programme commenced and includes updating of the training modules and the use of the LSCE framework as an overarching approach for the programme.

In 2018, the Meshwary (My Journey) project empowered 15,019 adolescents and youth, including 5,440 females, through training on skills development and/or career guidance. The project, which is led by the MoYS, is being implemented in 11 governorates. In addition, in 2018 a new mechanism was established, using Meshwary master trainers, which allowed expansion of the project to seven other governorates, providing an additional 1,048 young people with skills development training. In 2018, the project adopted a new approach based on the LSCE as overarching framework and investing in young people not only as beneficiaries but also as agents of change. The new approach was implemented in Upper Egypt with support from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), with a focus on girls' empowerment as a mean to address harmful practices, such as child marriage and female genital mutilation. Leveraging the private sector to provide internships and on-the-job training opportunities to Meshwary graduates to enhance their employability skills, Hilton and UNICEF signed a five-year memorandum of understanding to provide internship opportunities

to 750 young people graduated from “Meshwary” (70 per cent female). To date, 40 graduates have enrolled in internships with Hilton. Within the overall framework of the Life Course Approach, Meshwary is among the main interventions supported by UNICEFEgypt as part of the Young People Agenda (YPA) and contributes to three of the YPA regional priorities, namely: skills development, training and decent work and girls empowerment.

### **Goal area 3: Every child is protected from violence and exploitation**

UNICEF child protection interventions are a part of the Learning and Protection Outcome of the 2018-2022 UNICEF Egypt Country Programme. They contribute to the achievement of UNPDF Outcome 2, Social Justice, Output 2.3 (Strengthening national systems for the protection of vulnerable population) and Outcome 4 (Women), Output 4.4 (Women empowerment).

#### **Child protection system strengthening**

In 2018 UNICEF, with funding from the EU, USAID and other donors, continued supporting Government’s efforts to strengthen the national child protection mechanisms.

Substantial progress was achieved with the number of cases being dealt with through the system increasing to 16,571 from to 9,725 in 2017. The increase in the system capacity was the result of the expansion in the number of child protection committees (CPC) which are functional in 70 districts, up from 41 at the end of 2017. The committees cover 20 per cent of the country, an increase from 10 per cent in 2017). In addition, there was increased access to the Child Helpline that in 2018 responded to over 300,000 phone calls, double the number of calls received in 2017.

UNICEF advocacy and support resulted in 591 social workers being assigned to child protection case management services in CPCs and supporting NGOs. In 2018, UNICEF also supported training of around 800 child protection staff and functionaries on case management and psycho-social support. A series of training sessions were conducted for the Child Helpline workers to better respond to the increasing number of calls. Overall, child protection interventions directly benefited around 90,000 children, including children on the move.

During 2018 UNICEF continued working with the Ministry of Social Solidarity and the National Council of Childhood and Motherhood (NCCM) in strengthening the social workforce for children-at-risk. Key areas of progress included establishing a case management system within the MoSS institutional infrastructure. UNICEF drafted the operational guidelines for the functioning of the case management Unit in MoSS which is expected to replace the existing system of service referrals between different departments, resulting in more effective prevention and response to violence against children.

UNICEF technical support to the Ending Violence against Children National Taskforce was instrumental for the development of a national EVAC strategic framework that was launched in February. The strategic framework clearly identifies the child protection services and the roles and responsibilities of different stakeholders. A costed National EVAC Action Plan is being developed and will allow the operationalisation of the strategic framework. This effort was supplemented with action plans being developed with relevant ministries. For example, an action plan has been developed with the MoETE to address violence in schools.

UNICEF continued to work with the MoSS on the social workforce reform agenda aiming to achieve an efficient allocation and distribution of a specialized child protection workforce.

UNICEF supported a national profiling study of all social workers and caregivers working in MoSS child protection functions, the first comprehensive mapping exercise of the social workforce in Egypt. UNICEF also engaged in multi-stakeholder consultations to develop an accreditation scheme for social workers, aiming to standardise and enhance the social work professional practice. Through UNICEF's collaboration with the American University in Cairo, a background paper on global best practices in social worker accreditation was developed to guide national consultations.

### **Justice for children**

UNICEF continued to provide support to national authorities for the implementation of the national legislation and international standards. UNICEF contributed to the issuance of a new circular by the Public Prosecutor on the activation of child protection committees (CPCs) and the reform of the criminal justice system for children. The circular strengthens the coordination between prosecution and the committees to ensure timely and effective interventions in cases of children at risk and child victims. UNICEF supported the Prosecution office and the Ministry of Justice in drafting the guidelines on the rights of child victims and witnesses of crimes. These guidelines will assist law enforcement professionals in applying child-friendly procedures when dealing with children.

UNICEF in partnership with the Ministry of Justice and the Office of the Public Prosecution and in collaboration with Terre des Hommes, supported a capacity building programme to train justice for children professionals on child law, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and international standards. The training reached 175 judges from child courts in 23 governorates, 15 police officers, 18 social experts and child protection committee representatives. The increased capacity of these professionals strengthens the rule of law and promotes the realization of the best interest of the child.

In 2018, UNICEF through its partnership with EFACC NGO, provided 2,074 children in contact with the law (of whom 128 were girls) with legal support. Of these children, 20 per cent of children in conflict with the law accessed alternatives to detention and non-custodial sentences and 1,361 children were provided with social assistance.

UNICEF's advocacy efforts and technical support was instrumental to the approval by the Public Prosecutor of the pilot project on 'Diversion with a Restorative Justice Approach'.

### **Addressing harmful practices**

In 2018, the Government launched the National Strategy for Childhood and Motherhood (2018-2030) with technical support from UNICEF. It includes provisions for the abandonment of female genital mutilation and ending child marriage as priority topics.

The harmful practices agenda is being mainstreamed into the child protection systems' work. In collaboration with NCCM, UNICEF built capacity of 63 officials from child protection committees on female genital mutilation. In addition, the female genital mutilation response was incorporated into the training for judges and prosecutors in 23 governorates as part of UNICEF-USAID Girls' Empowerment partnership. As part of a Joint Programme with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), UNICEF supported female genital mutilation community dialogues in collaboration with national partners and religious leaders, with two public declarations being made with the active participation of 2,215 families. In addition, more than 9,000 girls received support related to female genital mutilation in collaboration with MoHP and the ACDA NGO. More girls were saved from female genital mutilation as 154 families made commitments not to

cut their second daughters.

#### **Goal area 4: Every child lives in a safe and clean environment**

UNICEF Egypt engagement in this area focuses on the provision of water and sanitation in schools and contributes to UNPDF Outcome 2 (Social justice) Output 2.3.

##### **Provision and access to water and sanitation in school**

In 2018 UNICEF supported rehabilitation and maintenance of water and sanitation facilities in 67 primary schools resulting in 57,338 pupils gaining access to improved water and sanitation in schools. UNICEF, in partnership with Unilever, also supported interventions that raised awareness and promoted healthy behaviours related to water, sanitation and hygiene reaching 291,730 pupils in 367 primary schools in seven districts. These interventions used a cascade training method whereby 1,800 teachers were trained by 105 water company trainers and then made use of the contents of the training in classes throughout the school year.

The model benefits from a partnership fostered between State-owned water companies and the MoETE. It aims at complementing the existing system whereby MoETE provides water and sanitation in schools through the schools building authority.

#### **Goal area 5: Every child has an equitable chance in life**

UNICEF Egypt, through its Social Policy Monitoring and Evaluation programme, contributes to national efforts to fight extreme poverty, exclusion and other barriers holding back deprived children from their full development. UNICEF interventions contribute to UNPDF Outcome 2 (Social Justice) Output 2.3.

##### **Strengthened the national social protection**

Social protection is a crucial area of intervention for the Government to tackle poverty and the high levels of inequality in income distribution as well as in access to basic social services. UNICEF's support to the MoSS in this area aims at generating evidence and build capacity to strengthen the national Takaful and Karama (TKP) cash transfer programme, the largest cash transfer programme in the region, reaching more than five million children.

UNICEF supported an 'Assessment of the Readiness of Health and Education Services'. The assessment provided important insights on the bottlenecks and gaps related to the availability, accessibility, affordability and utilization of health and education services which are used as conditions for beneficiaries to be enrolled in the TKP. The assessment identified shortfalls in the communication between the TKP and the household beneficiaries. It found that many beneficiaries were not fully aware of the conditionalities nor of other aspects related to the functioning of the programme. To address these shortfalls, the MoSS is preparing a nationwide campaign to raise households' awareness on how the programme functions and on the conditionalities beneficiaries must comply with to access the programme. The MoSS commenced consultations with Ministry of Health and MoETE to address the health and education supply-side issues identified by the Assessment.

UNICEF also supported strengthening of the child focus of the monitoring and evaluation system of the TKP, involving establishing South-South cooperation with the International Poverty Centre (IPC). UNICEF and IPC produced two advisory notes, one on health and the other on education, that provide guidance on how to implement the monitoring of programme

conditionalities.

The evidence generated by the service readiness assessment and the advisory notes on health and education provide important knowledge that is also being used for the development of the national social protection strategy.

### **Adolescent and youth development**

UNICEF Egypt programming for and with adolescents and youth is articulated in a number of developmental and humanitarian interventions in different sectors. In adolescent protection, UNICEF interventions include prevention of gender-based violence and FGM (see 2.3.1 and 2.3.3 of this Report) and provision of community-based psychosocial and life-skills education to youth migrants (2.6.1).

In relation to youth education and employability, UNICEF continued to support several life skills programmes, including Meshwary, a digital literacy programme, and a youth initiative in universities, whose results are mentioned elsewhere in this Report. UNICEF also harnessed the private sector to provide internship programmes as part of Meshwary. Youth engagement was promoted through large-scale social media campaigns on issues related to their well-being as well as on the State budget and through a civic education programme.

UNICEF also provided support to generating knowledge on youth through analytical documents (2.10) and UNICEF supported the MoYS on the development of a multi-sectoral adolescent policy expected to be completed in 2019.

### **Humanitarian response**

UNICEF Egypt, in collaboration with the Government and partners, works to address the resiliency and early recovery needs of the refugees and the host communities by promoting education, health, protection and engagement opportunities for children. UNICEF Egypt humanitarian action is part of the MENA region Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP) which is the region-wide response to assist Syrian refugees and the communities hosting them.

In 2018, UNICEF Egypt developed an emergency preparedness plan. Based on the risks identified in the plan and the minimum preparedness standards, UNICEF assessed its operational preparedness and addressed gaps in capacities, procedures and coordination systems to increase its ability to respond to humanitarian needs.

#### **Providing children on the move with protection, education, health and social protection**

In 2018, UNICEF continued to expand its child protection response programme to refugees, migrants and host community. This was through the implementation of community-based child protection and life-skills programmes in 16 governorates via the network of family centres and family clubs within primary health units. In 2018, 76,512 children, youth and adolescent migrants and refugees as well as from host communities (of whom 37,801 were females), were enrolled in UNICEF-supported community-based psychosocial and lifeskills programmes. A total of 8,151 (3,660 female) children, youth and adolescents from the same communities were supported with the case management services to address violence, neglect abuse and exploitation. A total of 15,218 parents, including 14,464 mothers, enrolled in positive parenting programmes to address violence against children within the family. Specialized services, including speech, physical and art therapy and specialised psychosocial support were provided to 861 children with disabilities.

The establishment in 2018 of the National Task Force on Children on the Move was an important milestone to improve governance and management towards provision of holistic child protection services through the national system for children on the move. UNICEF technical support was instrumental for the establishment and functioning of the National Task Force. A major outcome of the Task Force was the development of the Annex to the national case management standard operating procedures (SOP) targeting refugees and migrant children, as well as child victims of trafficking. The SOP includes legally-binding provisions guiding state and non-state actors in the child protection sector.

In 2018, UNICEF supported the establishment of child protection safeguarding mechanisms in 91 public schools which have highest percentage of migrant children. Around 50,000 pupils attend these schools. UNICEF trained 400 teachers, social workers, members of the education directorates, school psychologists and headmasters on child protection policies, child-to-child programme, case management, positive discipline, positive reinforcement techniques, conflict resolution and mediation skills. The establishment of safeguarding mechanisms led to a safer environment in schools through the development of specific codes of conduct, the appointment of child protection focal points and the application of procedures such as strong compliant mechanisms to combat abuse and violence in school. The system also increases children's awareness on how they can protect themselves and identify specific forms of abuses.

UNICEF continued to monitor children held in detention with a focus on migration routes in Aswan and the Red Sea. UNICEF and partners managed to access, advocate for release and provided humanitarian assistance to 357 detained children including 157 unaccompanied and separated children in seven detention centres. UNICEF provided individual case management, distribution of non-food items and provision of psychosocial care as well as referral to the appropriate services. At the end of 2018, 13 children remained in detention.

In 2018, UNICEF Egypt established 65 community kindergarten classrooms providing an enabling learning environment to 2,125 refugee and migrant children, of whom 996 were female. UNICEF also supported 7,792 () refugee and migrant pre-primary age children, of whom 3,742 were female, to access education through provision of education grants. The grants, which cover the costs of school fees, uniforms and school books, are instrumental to minimize the interruption of education due to lack of basic means to cover the costs related to schooling.

UNICEF also supported basic renovation and maintenance of 326 schools benefiting 15,103 Syrian refugee and migrant children enrolled in public schools. The interventions aimed at creating an enabling and safe learning environment. Additionally, 1,267 Syrian refugee children benefitted from the establishment of resource rooms in their schools. The resource rooms make educational materials, stationary, information technology and furniture available to students, as well as assessment tools for teachers. Seventy-two school staff, of whom 62 were female, were trained. The different training packages equipped the school staff with skills to provide an inclusive learning environment to refugee and host community children.

Security-related constraints in part of North Sinai resulted in the sudden interruption of the school year 2017/2018. UNICEF, in collaboration with the Egyptian Red Crescent in North Sinai, conducted a back-to-school campaign to support the return to education of children living in affected areas. As part of the campaign around 60,000 students received basic school supplies such as bags and stationary.

UNICEF support to the MoHP was instrumental in increasing and improving the quality of public primary health care services provided to refugees, asylum seekers and the host communities. UNICEF supported the MoHP in training health teams (physicians, nurses and sanitarians) in 162 primary health units and provided equipment to respond to the increased number of beneficiaries. UNICEF-supported interventions provided 30,987 migrant children (including 14,974 females) with routine immunization and growth monitoring and 16,741 childbearing-age women with healthcare services.

UNICEF and the MoHP trained 350 community health workers (Syrians and Egyptians from host communities) to conduct household outreach health activities. The aim was to raise awareness of Syrian families on key health and nutrition issues for children and women and encourage Syrian refugees to use the free-of-charge public primary health units. In addition, 250 PHUs staff were trained to provide families with key health and nutrition-related messages. UNICEF in partnership with the MoHP, provided psychosocial support to Syrian and Egyptian children from the host communities, adolescents and their parents in 80 familyclubs within the primary health units in the 16 governorates.

UNICEF, jointly with UNHCR, supports a cash grant to meet the beneficiaries' basic needs. The programme continues in the 2018-2019 winter season with UNHCR and UNICEF providing a joint response to 3,800 sub-Saharan African and Syrian unaccompanied and separated children with a one-off grant of around US\$55 (1,000 Egyptian pounds) per child.

### **Winning support for the cause of children from decision-makers and the wider public**

In 2018, communication efforts focused on developing awareness raising campaigns coupled with ongoing visibility efforts showcasing UNICEF work in Egypt to move forward the agenda for children rights and position the organization as the voice for children in Egypt. Beyond large-scale social media campaigning, public and media dissemination were used, resulting in at least 130 mentions of UNICEF activities in national and regional media.

On digital platforms, UNICEF ranked top among comparable international organizations in Egypt and has the third-largest of the agency's Facebook platforms globally, with more than 2.2 million followers. This audience has steadily increased on Facebook (over 5 per cent), Twitter (over 14 per cent) and Instagram (over 84 per cent). In addition, UNICEF extended its outreach in Egypt by adding two social network platforms: a LinkedIn account and a Twitter account for the Representative focusing on key advocacy topics and engaging with opinion leaders and policy makers. The UNICEF Egypt website was revamped in 2018, making it more user-friendly and expanding its outreach in Arabic and English, which led to a 542 per cent increase in website users.

### **Promotion of social and behavioural change communication**

The country programme recognizes positive parenting and girls' empowerment as key drivers of change that can tackle the root causes of individual and societal behaviours that are harmful to children. In this context, UNICEF developed an SBCC model to address knowledge, attitudes and practices. The model utilizes multiple platforms, at community and national level and different strategies including media advocacy, campaigning, community engagement, social marketing and knowledge sharing opportunities. The main platforms are faith-based organizations (FBOs), the Egyptian Youth, primary health units, community health workers, , television drama production, and partnerships with the Supreme Council for Media Regulation

and the private sector.

In 2018, UNICEF Egypt continued to partner with faith based organizations and youth-centred fora as key platforms to implement the SBCC model. In collaboration with its partners from EI-Azhar and BLESS, UNICEF trained 365 Muslim and Christian religious leaders on issues related to violence against children and harmful practices. Following the training, religious leaders reached 16,000 FBO youth volunteers and 41,290 community members with messages addressing violence and harmful practices, including child marriage and female genital mutilation. The intervention also involved the production of 12 episodes of a docu-drama to be used by religious leaders as an innovative tool to enhance a harmonized narrative at community level and nationwide through mass media dissemination.

Through the Egyptian Youth Initiative in collaboration with National Population Council and the MoHP, UNICEF established a network of 1,200 students in 12 universities across Egypt. The students were trained on issues related to healthy lifestyle, family welfare and harmful practices and community engagement. The network managed to reach 27,200 peers and 62,800 community members, in addition to document best practices at community level and generate content for a dedicated digital platform.

To establish a mainstream platform modelling positive behaviours, UNICEF is co-producing an entertainment for education (edutainment) television serial drama on parenting, focusing on ECD and girls' empowerment. By selling the drama to national and regional broadcasters, UNICEF will generate revenue to sustain the production costs of a second series.

UNICEF Egypt established new partnerships with the Supreme Council for Media Regulation, through which Egypt is developing a Code of Conduct for Children in Media platforms, and with Unilever which resulted in a cause-related marketing campaign with a reach of 22 million on social media.

UNICEF Egypt, in partnership with NCCM and the MoETE conducted a multimedia campaign #IamAgainstBullying on TV, radio, print, billboards and social media. The first part of the campaign focusing on cyberbullying used infographs, videos with social media influencers and national UNICEF Goodwill Ambassadors, and master classes with positive parenting experts. The campaign had a social media reach of 17 million and 730,000 engagements (a 5 per cent engagement rate). It also triggered a large demand from parents for additional information on how to address the risks faced by children in the digital age. The video had 3.7 million views.

The second part of the campaign had a reach of almost 100 million on social media and an engagement of 4.5 million (8 per cent engagement rate). Several national celebrities, individuals, news and talk show anchors organically picked up on the topic and dedicated social media posts, news reports, radio and TV shows to the issue of bullying, making the campaign viral. The video was seen 21 million times. The campaign also triggered higher demand of services from national institutions. For example, the number of phone calls received by the Child Helpline after the campaign climbed from an average of around 18,000 per month to close to 65,000 per month.

Using similar tools, in June UNICEF Egypt joined the global movement to celebrate Father's Day, through a five-week digital media campaign, with a focus on 'Super Dads' and parenting tips promoting positive parenting for healthy brain development. The campaign had a reach of 35 million on social media, and 750,000 engagements (5 per cent engagement rate). The video

was seen more than six million times.

### **Addressing gender imbalances**

Gender-responsive programming is a global UNICEF priority, as spelled out in the Strategic Plan 2018-2021. UNICEF Egypt interventions promote gender equality in the framework of the 13 priority areas included in the organization's Gender Action Plan (GAP). Gender is mainstreamed in the different areas of UNICEF programmes and prioritises interventions that address gender discriminatory roles and practices in support of adolescent girls.

The main gender results in 2018 included the development of the National EVAC strategic framework (see 2.3.1); progress on the national framework on towards the abandonment of female genital mutilation (2.3.3); establishment of child protection safeguarding mechanisms in 91 public schools to prevent violence, including gender-based violence (2.6.1); implementation of the SBCC model to change social norms and address the root causes of gender-based discrimination (2.8), and; support to the essential package of maternal and child health care services that resulted in increased in antenatal visits (2.1). UNICEF also produced a policy brief on ending child marriage, an analytical document used for advocacy and evidence-based programming.

### **Using the power of evidence to drive change for children**

UNICEF Egypt continued to work on increasing the availability, access and use of up-to-date data and evidence on children's rights. Access and availability of data was enhanced through the development of two mobile applications, one on the SDG indicators and the second on children in Egypt, and an interactive dashboard providing data on SDGs in Egypt. These platforms provide a user-friendly, one-stop source to access the main up-to-date data on children and women rights. In pair with these efforts, UNICEF, jointly with CAPMAS, developed several knowledge products, including two analytical papers, on violence against women and on children, and two statistical briefs, on children and on youth. The papers provide insights into crucial child and women's rights.

Data use was also promoted through UNICEF support to the Child Right's Observatory of the National Council of Childhood and Motherhood. This included the production of a policy brief on ending child marriage. The policy briefs have proven an effective tool in increasing public and stakeholders debates on key child right deprivation issues in Egypt. Data snapshots on child malnutrition and children, adolescents and HIV/AIDS were published and disseminated to shed light on areas of child deprivation and UNICEF's contribution in mitigating them.

UNICEF conducted a poverty dynamics study, based on which UNICEF developed a policy note that served as key reference for the UN Mainstreaming, Acceleration and Policy Support process in Egypt. The study was used as basis to establish the baselines and identify key bottlenecks for the achievement of the SDGs and identify accelerators. The study and policy note are also informing the Government's work toward the update of the national Sustainable Development Strategy 2030 and the localization of SDG targets.

UNICEF increased access to information and public debate on the Egypt State budget and spending in key sectors related to children's rights'; which in turns contributed to enhance accountability of key stakeholders. In this regard, as part of the Government-led Citizen Budget initiative UNICEF produced four infographics on the 2018 State budget and used them in a

large-scale social media campaign in which innovative tools were used for posts on public finance. Among them were 'Vox Pop': street interviews used to provide a snapshot of public opinion on public spending. The social media campaign achieved a large reach of 63,632 through the UNICEF social media platforms and additional 10,000 through the Ministry of Finance Facebook page. The Vox Pop and the infographics generated many questions in the social media. To respond to them, UNICEF produced a video that was watched 7,200 times. The people reached were mainly youth. Their high level of engagement in the social media is a testimony to the interest that the use of public funds generates when it is presented and discussed in a non-technical manner.

## Part 3: Lessons learned and constraints

### Lessons learned

#### **Leveraging innovation to enhance UNICEF programme results and private sector partnership engagement**

The assessment of the in-country fundraising portfolio potential conducted in 2017 indicated a growing interest among private sector partners (PSP) in engaging with UNICEF on innovation and entrepreneurship related initiatives.

Hence, in 2018 UNICEF Egypt ran a one-year modelling in collaboration with the UNICEF Office of Innovation in headquarters. The modelling aimed at developing and testing scalable mechanisms to mobilize start-ups for children. During 2018, UNICEF Egypt promoted the UNICEF Innovation Fund - a global venture fund that supports technology start-ups to innovate for children with up to US\$100,000 - to incentivize local start-up companies to work for children in alignment with UNICEF Egypt's programme priorities. Eighty-two locally developed innovations for children were submitted; the highest number of submissions per country (30 per cent of global submissions). Following this success, UNICEF Egypt shared a report including a detailed guide for country offices to engage start-ups locally using the Innovation Fund. In December, UNICEF selected its first Egyptian start-up company for the Innovation Fund. This was an Internet-of-Things (IoT) start-up that uses technology to monitor water quality in real-time. By investing in this technology, UNICEF aims to support programmatic work in Goal Area 4 of the Strategic Plan – Every child lives in a clean and safe environment.

In addition to engaging the innovation community locally, UNICEF Egypt explored all previous investments in open-source technology solutions by the Global Innovation fund for localization and integration into the country programme. The collaboration with the Office of Innovation enabled access to 60 innovative technology solutions that have been supported by and/or piloted in a UNICEF programme country. These are all solutions that are licensed as creative commons and that are free to edit, use and redistribute. Two solutions have been identified and agreed upon with the Government and will be piloted in 2019 to support programmatic work:

- Rapid Pro: A real-time communication platform to be used as a two-way communication channel to reach the most vulnerable, focusing on parents of children aged below 5 years;
- UPSHIFT: A designthinking-based curriculum to be used to help children improve problem solving and entrepreneurial skills.

To mobilize start-up companies to innovate for children, and to widen the scope of PSP engagement, UNICEF Egypt designed a model where accelerators would implement a

customised support programme for start-up companies with innovative solutions that can benefit children and young people. This initiative aims at incentivising the private sector to systematically support open source innovation; a milestone to enlarge the pool of technology solutions for children and a first-of-its-kind task that asserts UNICEF's leading role in advancing innovation for good.

In collaboration with the UNICEF Regional Office for the Middle East and North Africa and the UNICEF offices in Tunisia, Lebanon, and Jordan, the Regional Accelerator Initiative was launched. It received 11 proposals from the strongest implementing partner candidates in MENA. The first cycle of the Accelerator will be launched in 2019 with the financial support of corporate partners.

In 2019 and beyond, UNICEF will continue to leverage the rapid growth of start-ups and small and medium-sized enterprises in Egypt to improve results for children in all relevant programme areas. Start-ups have shown great potential to reduce programme implementation cost and/or improve programme results. Moreover, they have shown commitment toward using technology to improve the lives of children and young people, as did the major corporate partners. In addition, UNICEF Egypt will continue to collaborate with colleagues in other countries sharing lessons learned to accelerate innovation for children.

### **Engaging in Egypt's education reform process**

Egypt is undergoing a bold and complex education reform process, including transformations in curricula, technical and vocational education, teacher professional development, assessment systems, and use of technologies. While such reform is very much needed, its implementation is accompanied by challenges related to scale, governance and coordination.

UNICEF's key challenge in education programming has been to position its ongoing and expanding portfolio effectively within the education reform process. This has in the light of the growing demand for technical support by the MOETE as well as the strong interest of development partners to increasingly invest in education through UNICEF. It was clear that project-based and selective approaches make it difficult to ensure meaningful engagement and measure system-level progress on such ambitious education reform.

In this context, UNICEF adapted its interventions along the following lines. Firstly, key opportunities to capitalize on and maximize for effective leveraging were identified. UNICEF's combined work at the local level through equity interventions and at the system level through policy change around quality education (especially through leading the LSCE initiative) was proving fundamental for grounding the reform process and bringing stakeholders on board. Secondly, UNICEF strategically positioned its interventions within the framework of the education reform by developing technical and governance 'frameworks' around its key pillars (curriculum, teacher training, assessments, use of ICT, and social engagement) with a view of galvanizing other interventions in a complementary manner. Thirdly, in co-leading the Development Partners Group, UNICEF was very active in engaging development partners around a more coordinated support of the education reform process, using its work on curriculum framework development to pull partners around a more strategic and coherent approach in education development cooperation.

The engagement along these three lines has proven successful in maximising the effectiveness of UNICEF's support to the national education reform. Building on the lessons learned from combining local and system level interventions, from strategic positioning and from engaging

partners around the reform process, UNICEF will continue to tighten its approach. The relationship between the MoETE and UNICEF will continue to be nurtured towards more systematic, coherent and constructive dialogue to address the challenges in planning and implementation. UNICEF will also use its communication work in Egypt and its intersectoral and multisectoral approaches to education and development to pull diverse stakeholders around the needed social behavioural changes that must accompany the education reform. Finally, UNICEF will continue its engagement with the Development Partners Group by constituting specific task forces that focus on technical aspects of the education reform.

### **Building and shaping UNICEF private sector partnerships**

The engagement with the private sector is an emerging priority for UNICEF Egypt. An assessment of the in-country fundraising portfolio potential conducted in 2017 served as basis for UNICEF PSP engagement as well as internal office restructuring. The assessment was instrumental to position UNICEF and allowed the establishment of successful fundraising and partnerships with businesses which showcased the potential of working with UNICEF and the value proposition its brand equity can offer.

In partnership with the United Nations Global Compact, UNICEF organized roundtables with the private sector focusing on ECD and adolescent empowerment. The roundtable on ECD attracted participation of over 20 companies at the level of Chief Executive Officer or head of sustainability and marketing and led to companies pledging their support to the agenda and agreeing to work closely with UNICEF.

In 2018, UNICEF established an in-country cause-related marketing partnership with Unilever. Whilst UNICEF's partnership with Unilever globally has been limited to hygiene promotion, UNICEF Egypt successfully advocated with the corporate partner to broaden the scope in-country by integrating nutrition messaging into the programme. This partnership provided a platform for different sections within UNICEF to work together to develop an integrated campaign and programme. The partnership also provided an opportunity to engage UNICEF national ambassador Donia Samir Ghanem through a public service announcement and lending her voice to a cause close to her heart - nutrition for children. The partnership US\$881,639 for UNICEF Egypt in 2018.

UNICEF Egypt engagement with the private sector in 2018 resulted in funding for the country programme of US\$1.1 million and in-kind support worth US\$370,000. UNICEF Egypt's PSP engagement, building on the 2017 market assessment, provided crucial evidence on the potential that the private sector offers and the different types of engagement that UNICEF can pursue. The Unilever experience allowed the building of skills in new areas, such as the activation of behaviour change from the ground-up: using multimedia mobile delivery to reach out to children in schools and within the community.

Egypt's growing consumer market provides an opportunity to engage in cause-related marketing which can be at the same time an effective fundraising and advocacy platform, with a reach to the farthest places in the country. Beyond the engagement in PSP, in 2019 UNICEF Egypt will look to establish customer relationship management partnerships with different industries and rally their support to achieving UNICEF's results.

### **Major constraints to programme implementation**

#### **Limited availability of up-to-date data on children's rights**

The limited availability of social sector data remained a constraint for both the analysis of the situation of children in Egypt as well as to assess the results of the UNICEF interventions on the ground.

The country faces major challenges in terms of availability of up-to-date data on the SDG indicators: data for just 21 of the 50 child-related indicators monitored by UNICEF are presently available.

With specific reference to the UNICEF Country Programme in Egypt, monitoring progress against the results requires nationwide social sector surveys. The last national social survey, the Egypt Demographic and Health Survey was undertaken in 2014 and a date for conducting a new one has not yet been agreed upon. This constrains reporting and forces UNICEF to resort to proxy indicators to assess the extent to which results have been achieved. UNICEF will continue supporting the Government in strengthening administrative information systems. In addition, UNICEF will advocate for regular national social sector household surveys, which are required to assess progress in key indicators.

### **Security and movement constraints in part of the Sinai Peninsula**

Security concerns in North Sinai greatly limit UNICEF interventions in this area. In 2018, UNICEF's initial plan to expand the civic education programme to new governorates in Sinai was halted due to a ban on interventions. In 2019 and beyond, UNICEF with support from the United Kingdom Government, is commencing implementation of an integrated multi-sectoral project, involving a combination of education and protection interventions in North Sinai. The intervention is crucial as it supports access and quality of education and life skills of vulnerable children and adolescents in isolated communities such as North Sinai, South Sinai and adjacent governorates that host Sinai students. Implementation of this large-scale intervention, as well as of other UNICEF-supported intervention in health and child protection, will face security challenges. UNICEF is working with partners to identify programme delivery and monitoring mechanisms to ensure effective implementation in this challenging environment.

### **Temporary halting in the recruitment of civil servants**

The Government implemented a freeze in recruitment of civil servants as a cost-cutting measure. While this has merit in freeing up State budget resources, it also constrains ongoing programmes and reforms. A case in point is the child protection sector where the reform aiming at building a national child protection system requires recruitment of staff to form a dedicated social services workforce. Furthermore, estimates indicate that as much as 40 per cent of the current workforce might retire from work within the next three to five years, leaving a large staff gap within the civil servants. This issue needs to be addressed for progress to be made in developing and scaling up a national child protection system.

The freeze also affects other UNICEF-supported interventions such as the establishment of new community schools as part of the EU-funded project aiming at increasing access to education and child protection for at-risk-children. The halting in the recruitment of teachers for new community schools led to UNICEF having to re-programme the EU funds with a shift towards strengthening of existing community-based education. In addition, UNICEF initiated the exploration of alternative funding options through partnerships with NGOs to cover teachers' salaries and establish community schools for out-of-school children in areas that are currently underserved.

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