

*Permanent Mission of the Arab Republic of
Egypt to the United Nations Office, WTO
and International Organizations
in Geneva*



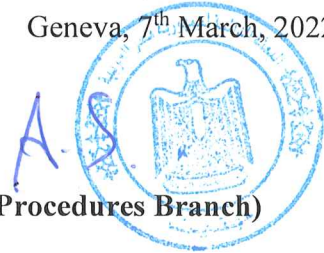
البعثة الدائمة لجمهورية مصر العربية
لدى الأمم المتحدة
ومنظمة التجارة العالمية والمنظمات الدولية
الأخرى في جنيف

CHAN.2022.025

The Permanent Mission of the Arab Republic of Egypt to the United Nations Office, the WTO and other International Organizations in Geneva presents its compliments to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (Special Procedures Branch), and with reference to the Office note verbal dated 7 February 2022 concerning the questionnaire on “Addressing the vulnerabilities of children to sale and sexual exploitation in the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals”, the Mission has the honor to attach herewith the contribution of the Government of Egypt on the aforementioned questionnaire.

The Permanent Mission of the Arab Republic of Egypt to the United Nations Office, the WTO and other International Organizations in Geneva avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (Special Procedures Branch), the assurances of its highest consideration.

Geneva, 7th March, 2022



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CC: Special Rapporteur on the sale and sexual exploitation of children, including child prostitution, child pornography and other child sexual abuse material



Addressing the vulnerabilities of children to sale and sexual exploitation in the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals

Please find below the National Council for Childhood & Motherhood's (NCCM) contributions to address the vulnerabilities of children to sale and sexual exploitation in the framework of the sustainable development goals, under the targets 5.3, 8.7, 16.2 of the SDGs.

1. Collected data, including updated data on vulnerable groups of children and information pertinent to the reporting examples of vulnerable groups of children under the framework of SDGs.

Data on child marriage was collected in:

- Egypt's census carried out by the Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS). (2017)
- Panel survey of young people in Egypt 2014: Generating evidence for policy, programs, and research". (2015)
- Egypt Demographic & Health Survey. (2014)

Data on Female Genital Mutilation was collected in:

- Egypt Health Issues Survey. (2015)
- Egypt Demographic & Health Survey. (2014)
- Survey of Young People in Egypt (SYPE). (2011)

Data on child labour was collected in:

- Egypt Demographic & Health Survey. (2014)
- Survey of Young People in Egypt (SYPE). (2011)

Data on sexual harassment and gender based violence was collected in:

- Panel survey of young people in Egypt 2014: Generating evidence for policy, programs, and research". (2015)
- Survey of Young People in Egypt (SYPE). (2011)

2. Information how vulnerable children are at exacerbated threats to sale and sexual exploitation with links to the situation of deprivation of other SDGs. (SDG 1 poverty, SDG 4 education, SDG 5 gender equality, SDG 8 decent work and economic growth, SDG 10 reduced economic inequalities and SDG 11 sustainable cities and communities, SDG 13 climate action, SDG 16 Peace, justice and strong institutions and SDG 17 partnerships for the goals).

Sale and sexual exploitation of children with links to SDG 1 "poverty":

- Poverty denies children their fundamental rights to nutrition, health, water, education, protection, shelter and more – diminishing their ability to build a better future for themselves and generations to come.

- Without global action, child poverty is likely to entrench social inequality and cut off the most vulnerable girls and boys from the services they need to survive and thrive.
- According to policymakers and practitioners, the main factors behind child marriage are poverty, social norms, and education. However, there is no evidence or data analyzing the links and level of influence of each factor on child marriage.¹
- Children at risk have lower chances to receive quality medical and educational services; therefore, they are less productive and lack access to labor market. This perpetuates the vicious cycle of **poverty** across generations. Poverty increases the likelihood that children are exposed to various forms of risk, including those associated to early marriage.²
- Poverty and social exclusion: In Egypt, poverty and lack of access to welfare support has been cited as one of the reasons children are placed in residential care. In 2018, researchers estimated that in the 10 residential care settings they studied, 13% of children were there due their family's inability to cope financially. It is likely that poverty and social exclusion are related to other factors, contributing to the risk of children being placed in care. For example, issues of working children, street associated children and early marriage.³

Sale and sexual exploitation of children with links to SDG 4 “Education”:

- Children who are exposed to risks at home or in schools (i.e. corporal punishment and bullying) are less likely to go to school and if they do so they tend to either dropout at early stages or have learning difficulties because of their developmental delays, which constrains their educational attainment. Children who are out of school are more exposed to risks than those who are in schools. In addition, illiterate and less educated families are more likely to be engaged in child-harmful practices and are less likely to be aware of the consequences of such practices than their more educated counterparts.⁴
- Child marriage is associated with lower education attainment and a lower likelihood of literacy:
 - Child marriage affects education attainment negatively, because girls often drop out of school when they marry. The causality goes the other way as well, as the ability to pursue one's education may help delay the age at marriage. This relationship between education and child marriage is apparent in the data, in that the measures of child marriage tend to be higher among women with lower levels of education. The same relationship is observed when considering literacy where three categories are considered: the woman cannot read at all, can read part of a sentence, or can read a full sentence.
 - Marrying between the ages of 15 and 17 tends to affect primarily secondary education enrollment or completion, and may not necessarily affect the completion of primary

¹<https://documents.aucegypt.edu/Docs/GAPP/Public%20Policy%20Hub%20Webpage/8-%20Curbing%20Child%20Marriage%20in%20Egypt%20Policy%20Brief%20-%20En.pdf>

² El Husseiny, I.A., Gamal El-Din, A. and Amin, K.Z. (2021), "Effectiveness of the child-at-risk protection system in Egypt: a fiscal and institutional perspective", Review of Economics and Political Science, Vol. 6 No. 3, pp. 182-205. <https://doi.org/10.1108/REPS-02-2020-0023>

³ The National Child Protection System and Alternative Child Care in Egypt. January 2021.

⁴ El Husseiny, I.A., Gamal El-Din, A. and Amin, K.Z. (2021), "Effectiveness of the child-at-risk protection system in Egypt: a fiscal and institutional perspective", Review of Economics and Political Science, Vol. 6 No. 3, pp. 182-205. <https://doi.org/10.1108/REPS-02-2020-0023>

education. But marrying even earlier can also prevent girls from completing their primary education (primary school takes in principle six years to complete, but some students start primary school late and may also repeat grades, so the actual age of completion may be delayed). The relationship between child marriage and schooling is important for policy as the causality goes both ways. Child marriage may lead to dropouts and lower education attainment. But the reverse is true as well: keeping girls in school is often one of the best ways to delay marriage.⁵

Sale and sexual exploitation of children with links to SDG 5 “Gender Equality”:

- Girls are more likely to be taken out of school to marry and/or work at home, which increases their exposure to risks of abuse, sexual violence and exploitation.
- Achieving gender equality mainly through empowering young girls; increasing their accessibility to education; and improving their awareness regarding protection measures from the harmful discriminating practices of sexual, physical or psychological violence (i.e. early marriage and trafficking), is expected to help in breaking the vicious cycle of gender-based discrimination and violence.⁶
- Gender norms can take various forms, including dropping out of school to take on family obligations, being pressured into child marriage, and enduring gender-based violence.

Sale and sexual exploitation of children with links to SDG 8 “Decent work and economic growth”:

- Child protection is a key to sustain economic growth and ensure productive employment. Violence and exploitation damage children’s mental and physical development, which negatively affects their employment prospects by limiting their capacity to contribute to the economy. Furthermore, the financial resources that governments spend to support child victims reduce the economic growth potential of the respective economies. Economic growth secures, through raised tax revenues, the financial resources needed to ensure sustainability of child-at-risk protection schemes and services. Promoting employment and ensuring decent job opportunities contribute to reducing the child risks, as involvement in activities that endanger children is associated to high unemployment and inactivity rates especially among the youth.⁷
- **Relationships between child marriage and labor force participation can be complex and depend on context:**

In some countries child marriage may reduce labor force participation through higher fertility. In others, if child marriage is associated with poverty, women may leave little choice but to work. Other effects could be at work, so that the relationship between child marriage and labor force participation is complex.

In Egypt, child marriage measures are lower for women not working, suggesting a positive association between child marriage and work. These basic statistics however do not imply causality.⁸

⁵ Knowledge Brief, Health, Nutrition and Population Global Practice, Basic Profile of Child Marriage in Egypt, March 2016.

⁶ El Husseiny, I.A., Gamal El-Din, A. and Amin, K.Z. (2021), "Effectiveness of the child-at-risk protection system in Egypt: a fiscal and institutional perspective", Review of Economics and Political Science, Vol. 6 No. 3, pp. 182-205. <https://doi.org/10.1108/REPS-02-2020-0023>

⁷ Ibid.

Sale and sexual exploitation of children with links to SDG 10 “Reduced Inequalities”:

- The negative impact that violence and exploitation have on children’s educational and health outcomes and on their employment prospects in the adulthood, perpetuates the vicious cycle of poverty and inequality.
- Children in poor, rural and disadvantaged areas have less access to social services (including child-at-risk protection schemes and justice) and hence, are more prone to risks compared to their peers in rich areas. Thus, reducing income inequality within countries and providing equitable access to justice for all contribute to protecting children from the various risks, mainly by increasing their overall wellbeing and allowing them to develop to their full potentials.⁹
- Poverty is just one of the reasons children may be cut off from essential care and services. Across the world, girls and boys are also excluded due to discrimination on the basis of gender, disability, language and ethnicity. Marginalization makes it difficult for groups to enjoy progress and escape poverty.¹⁰

Sale and sexual exploitation of children with links to SDG 11 “Sustainable cities and communities”:

- **Girls are more likely to marry early if they live in rural areas and are from poorer socio-economic groups:**
 - Child marriage is more prevalent in rural than in urban areas. There are also differences between regions, with the lowest measures observed in Urban governorates and the highest measures observed (according to the headcount index for the 18 years threshold) in Upper Egypt Rural areas, followed by the Frontier governorates and Upper Egypt Urban areas.
 - Child marriage is less prevalent in Lower Egypt Urban areas. The ranking of the regions in terms of the measures obtained with the 15 and 18 years thresholds tends to be different. Household welfare is measured through a wealth index with households categorized in five quintiles from poorest to richest.
 - For most women the level of wealth observed is that of the household in which they married, not their household or origin, but it is likely that many women marry with men who have similar socio-economic profiles, so the quintile after marriage may not be that different from the quintile before.
 - Also, for younger women, assets and wealth may be lower than for older women. In Egypt, measures of child marriage differ by quintile. It is only in the top two quintiles of wealth, and especially in the top quintile, that child marriage is much less prevalent.
 - Rural girls are three times more likely to marry early than urban girls. Girls from the bottom quintiles of wealth are much more likely to marry than girls from the top quintile.¹¹

⁸ Knowledge Brief, Health, Nutrition and Population Global Practice, Basic Profile of Child Marriage in Egypt, March 2016.

⁹ El Husseiny, I.A., Gamal El-Din, A. and Amin, K.Z. (2021), "Effectiveness of the child-at-risk protection system in Egypt: a fiscal and institutional perspective", Review of Economics and Political Science, Vol. 6 No. 3, pp. 182-205. <https://doi.org/10.1108/REPS-02-2020-0023>

¹⁰ <https://www.unicef.org/sdgs#sdg10>

Sale and sexual exploitation of children with links to SDG 13 “Climate action”:

- Climate change is a direct threat to a child’s ability to survive, grow and thrive. Close to 90% of the burden of disease attributable to climate change is borne by children under the age of 5.
- Effective responses to climate change are imperative to protect the world’s children and fulfil their rights and to ensure that children can live in a safe and clean environment.¹²

Sale and sexual exploitation of children with links to SDG 17 “Partnerships for the goals”:

- Strengthening domestic resource mobilization and improving domestic capacity for tax and other revenue collection, are essential for securing the financial resources needed to implement effective child-at-risk protection mechanisms.¹³
- Partnerships are critical to achieve results for every child. Everyone has a role to play in advancing the SDGs.
- The ability to support and empower children and their families depends on coordination and cooperation between partners - at the global, regional, country and local levels, across the public and private sectors - who provide critical resources that enable us to reach children wherever they are.¹⁴

3. The manifestations of sale and sexual exploitation in relation to targets 5.3: which provides to end all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage; 8.7: which provides to take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labour in all its forms; and 16.2: which provides to end abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children. These manifestations may include children on the move (migrants, conflict-affected, refugees, asylum-seekers, street situations, displaced including climate and disaster related), children from marginalized groups (indigenous, minorities, rural and urban settings), and children with disabilities.

I. Sale and sexual exploitation of children in relation to target “5.3” which provides to end all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage

- Child marriage is still being practiced in some regions of the country. According to Egypt Census of 2017, child marriage remains an issue. In Egypt, nearly 1 in every 20 girls (4%) between age 15 to 17 years and 1 in every 20 girls (4%) between age 15 to 17 years and 1 in every 10 (11%) adolescent girls 15-19 years are either currently married or were married before, with large differentials between the rural and urban residence.¹⁵

¹¹ Knowledge Brief, Health, Nutrition and Population Global Practice, Basic Profile of Child Marriage in Egypt, March 2016.

¹² <https://www.unicef.org/sdgs#sdg13>

¹³ El Husseiny, I.A., Gamal El-Din, A. and Amin, K.Z. (2021), "Effectiveness of the child-at-risk protection system in Egypt: a fiscal and institutional perspective", Review of Economics and Political Science, Vol. 6 No. 3, pp. 182-205. <https://doi.org/10.1108/REPS-02-2020-0023>

¹⁴ <https://www.unicef.org/sdgs#sdg11>

¹⁵ Egypt Census of Population, Housing and Establishments. CAPMAS. (2017). Egypt.

- Child marriage is a violation of human rights that has consequences for children and society. Child brides are more likely to experience gender-based violence, to drop out of school, to experience higher fertility, and to contract sexual diseases. More specifically, child marriages are often unregistered, which bears negative legal consequences for children born in these marriages as they cannot obtain birth certificates. The consequences of child marriage in Egypt include gender-based violence, dropping out of school, a high-risk of contracting diseases, higher fertility, population increase, and unregistered children.
- Egypt's Child Law 126/2008 sets the minimum marriage age at 18 years for both females and males. However, it does not criminalize perpetrators. Therefore, girls continue to get married without registering or reporting their marriages, or without registering children born out of these marriages.¹⁶

II. Sale and sexual exploitation of children in relation to target “8.7” which provides to take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labour in all its forms.

- Domestic work for girls: Although reliable data is not available on the number of child domestic workers across Egypt, qualitative studies indicate that it is widely practiced. This type of child labour, which mainly engages girls, has the potential of exposing girls to; very long hours of work, restrictions on movement, non-payment of wages, dangerous activities and physical, psychological and sexual exploitation, sometimes by the employers. This vulnerability increases with the lack of secure communication channels between the girls and their families, as well as, the absence of monitoring and surveillance systems by the government, NGOs and sending families.¹⁷

III. Sale and sexual exploitation of children in relation to target “16.2” which provides to end abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children.

- Children on the move: The majority of refugees and migrants in Egypt live in rented accommodation in informal settlements across Greater Cairo and other urban centers. This perpetuates levels of vulnerability influenced by deteriorating economic conditions in Egypt, including sharp increases in costs of essential goods and services. Children also face a range of other child protection issues, including barriers to residency and secure stay; risk of detention and deportation; discrimination and harassment in public spaces; high risks of criminality and physical and sexual violence; language barriers for non-Arabic speaking children; lack of formal alternative care arrangements for unaccompanied children; delays in access to emergency care and costly secondary and

¹⁶<https://documents.aucegypt.edu/Docs/GAPP/Public%20Policy%20Hub%20Webpage/8-%20Curbing%20Child%20Marriage%20in%20Egypt%20Policy%20Brief%20-%20En.pdf>

¹⁷ National Action Plan for Combating the Worst Forms of Child Labour in Egypt and Supporting Family (2018 – 2025), June 2018.

tertiary health care. Many of these children and their families have experienced trauma, live under extreme stress, and have a range of psychosocial needs.¹⁸

- **Street children:** The reasons children in Egypt find themselves on the streets include the need to financially contribute to their family, fleeing abuse, and being thrown out by their family. A survey conducted by the Ministry of Social Solidarity reported the figure of 16,000 street associated children in 2014. Children who live and work on the streets are particularly vulnerable to further exploitation and abuse. Furthermore, street connected children may be picked up by police and placed into care.¹⁹

4. Protection needs and contextual challenges amid the efforts to combat sale and sexual exploitation of children such as; COVID-19, climate change and disasters, safety in digital space, and increasing conflict outbreaks.

Challenges related to Covid -19 Pandemic:

Globally, COVID-19 has worsened conditions for the world's most vulnerable. In the MENA region, impoverished communities find themselves even further isolated from society, with schools shut and institutions closed. Stay at home orders and other lockdown measures have triggered increases in gender-based violence and secluded vulnerable women and girls from support mechanisms. Noting the far-reaching effects of COVID-19, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) called for more dynamic efforts to combat the child marriage in its fourth resolution on child early and forced marriage (CEFM).

Specific to the refugee populations in the region, a surge in pandemic-induced poverty and the inaccessibility of social services places migrant girls in an especially vulnerable position. Greater economic hardships appear to be pushing more migrant families to marry off their girls to escape poverty. While travel restrictions in the region are suspected to have slowed migratory flows, existing refugees have been forced to respond to rising unemployment and desperation.²⁰

The two main factors contributing to rising cases of child marriage during COVID-19 were increased poverty and school closures. In Egypt, girls not going to schools, lockdown measures, increased unemployment and poverty affecting families, and social norms were believed to be factors behind more child marriage of girls and child labour for boys. Travel restrictions meant that child marriage linked to trafficking was not expected to increase. One community leader noted: *"The poor economic situation and the lack of resources for families increased very much after the pandemic. Consequently, child marriage for girls increased in an attempt to reduce burdens and spending."*²¹

Challenges related to climate change:

A- Displacement: At the end of 2019 nearly 33 million children were forcefully displaced around the globe. It is unsurprising that so many of the extremely high risk countries also have very high levels of displacement. As hazards are becoming more severe and frequent with environmental change, climate-induced displacement is increasing rapidly. For example,

¹⁸ The National Council for Childhood & Motherhood. Children on the move in Egypt.

¹⁹ The National Child Protection System and Alternative Child Care in Egypt. January 2021.

²⁰ The impact of COVID-19 on child marriage in the Middle East and North Africa.

²¹ Ibid.

in the Caribbean islands, internal displacement related to storms and flooding rose six fold from 2014 to 2018 in comparison with 2009 to 2013. In some cases, climate change is also responsible for conflict-related displacement, in situations where conflict arises over the fight for natural resources which are becoming scarcer with climate change. In the context of displacement, children suffer a variety of increased risks, including those related to family separation, exploitation, violence and abuse, loss of education, increased vulnerability to physical and psychological trauma, amongst others. Such vulnerabilities put displaced children at an increased risk of the future impacts of climate change. How governments manage displacement is therefore critical to protect vulnerable children from climate impacts.

B- The climate crisis is a child's rights crisis: As climate change disrupts institutional and protection systems and forces migration and displacement, climate change stands to put millions of children at risk from exploitation, labour and abuse. Children travelling alone or separated from their parents can be particularly at risk of emotional, physical and sexual violence.²²

C- As for water borne and food borne diseases, *diarrheal diseases* are directly influenced by climate change due to the occurrence and the survival of bacterial agents, toxic algal blooms in water, and viral pathogens, in addition to lack of safe water that can compromise hygiene. Some predicted climate change in **Egypt** include floods, droughts, water shortage, and salinity of groundwater and estuaries in coastal areas due to sea level rising may cause contamination of public water supplies and encourage unhygienic practices. All that causes fluctuation in the percent of diarrhea in children under 5 years; according to the results of Egyptian Demographic and Health Survey during the period (1990 - 2008) in Egypt, and makes their reduction more difficult as climate change proceeds. ***Acute respiratory infection (ARI)***, particularly pneumonia, is considered as a disease vulnerable to climate change. The 2008 EDHS revealed that of the mothers surveyed mentioned that 13% of their children under the age of five had a cough during the two-week period prior to the survey, and several mothers reported that 9% of children with a cough experienced fast or difficult breathing.²³

5. Practical measures taken to address the vulnerabilities in institutional, family and online settings to ensure no child is left behind with respect to protection against sale and sexual exploitation. Examples of good practices are kindly requested to be as concrete as possible and preferably include a description of practical outcomes or results.

- NCCM's General Administration of Child Helpline, which consists of:
 - A. Child Helpline 16000: An emergency telephone service operating 24/7, a monitoring instrument to the situation of children in Egypt ,and a source for data on children advising policy development and interventions.
 - B. Legal Support Unit.
 - C. Family Counseling and Psychological Support Unit.

²² The climate crisis is a child rights crisis. Introducing the Children's Climate Risk Index. 2021. UNICEF.

²³ Egypt 3rd National Communication under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. March 2016

- Establishment of the Child Protection Office in the Public Prosecutor Office which is concerned with protecting children’s rights and supporting the child helpline (16000).
- A protocol was signed between the Ministry of Social Solidarity (MOSS), the National Council for Childhood and Motherhood (NCCM) and the Egyptian Red Crescent Society (Qalyubia branch). The protocol states the establishment of a temporary safe shelter for girls and women victims of human trafficking, providing them with all necessary health, psychological, educational and social services, and providing them with rehabilitation services to reintegrate them into their local communities and ensure their effective participation in society. They will be provided with safe housing, clothing, food, medical, psychological, educational and social assistance, as well as legal advice and assistance.
- In context of celebrating “The International Day of the Girl Child” and under the auspices of the National Council for Childhood and Motherhood (NCCM), “AmaniDotCom” campaign was launched to protect girls and children from online violence in cooperation with UNICEF, and funded by the European Union (EU).

The first phase of ‘Amani Dot com’ campaign was launched on the digital platforms of NCCM, UNICEF and the EU, providing informative content to children and caregivers promoting online protection. The campaign uses the hashtag #AmaniDotCom promoting tips to help children, youth and families have safe online surfing.

- In 2020, NCCM launched “Nabtet Misr Initiative” (means the small plant).The First phase includes Online awareness raising through social media.

Given the fact that the number of internet users has significantly increased due to lockdown, there was a need to communicate with children and parents through the internet. This includes:

- Infographics on positive parenting which target children and parents who stayed at home due to Covid-19 pandemic, disaggregated to age groups.
- Videos which contains psychological mini classes on: (Social and emotional health, Learning, fun and skills development, Messages for parents to adapt with the quarantine period and lockdown, Health and nutrition).
- Animation Videos: series of animation videos for children during lockdown focusing on different topics as: 1. Gender equality 2. Developing new skills 3. How to invest my free time. 4. How to deal with my family during lockdown.

- Instagram launched a campaign to address cyberbullying in Egypt, combining efforts with the National Council for Women (NCW), the National Council for Childhood and Motherhood (NCCM), and UNICEF - Egypt to provide local resources and support lines to help bullying victims. According to an official statement, Instagram said it named the campaign #ChooseWordsWisely with the aim of fostering a positive environment for posting content on the popular photo sharing platform. The campaign aims to renounce online bullying and shed light on the damage it can cause, especially in communities of young people. As well, the campaign aims to increase understanding of Instagram's rules regarding bullying and how to master anti-bullying tools, which can be used to help protect user accounts from bullies and unwanted contact, encourage positive interactions, and empower people to stand up for themselves.

- NCCM launched "lessa Nawara" campaign to combat child marriage. The campaign targeted 14 villages in 11 governorates within Haya Karima Initiative in October 2021. The 14 villages targeted by the campaign are a prototype, and the campaign will be generalized to 1500 villages within Haya Karima Initiative during the coming period.
- The Egyptian Knowledge Bank (EKB) was launched in January 2016 as one of the most important and largest national knowledge programs in education and scientific research in the modern history of Egypt. In addition, it is one of the world's largest digital libraries and electronic knowledge centers, providing unlimited resources to only Egyptians in various fields of basic, applied, administrative, and humanitarian sciences, which can be accessed for free by computers, smart cell phones and tablets throughout the country. This was a part of the "Towards Building an Egyptian Society that Learns, Thinks and Innovates" Initiative launched on the 2014 Science Day in support of efforts to develop education and scientific research and promote the Egyptian knowledge society. EKB provides free access to a very wide variety of knowledge, educational and research information sources in both Arabic and English (specialized books, documentary sources, scientific periodicals, theses and other various educational materials) issued by the most famous and largest regional and international publishers, such sources are accessible for all Egyptians of different age groups, regardless of their different knowledge needs, including researchers, academics, students, children and the public readership.²⁴
- The Hayah Karima project to develop Egyptian villages aims to achieve the following objectives and activities during the period 2020 to 2023:
 1. Improve living conditions and invest in people (social care and protection/decent housing/ social awareness/rehabilitation of persons with disabilities);
 2. Improve urban infrastructure and service provision (sewage/drinking water/ paving roads /gas/electricity/postal service);
 3. Enhance the quality of human development services (education/health/sports and cultural services);
 4. Promote economic development and employment (financial inclusion/loans for small projects/ vocational training and professional qualification/industrial complexes/agricultural and fishery development);

Among the most important strategic outputs expected of the project are:

- Decreased average poverty rate;
- Improvement in the quality of life index (the rate of availability of basic services);
- Improvement in coverage of health services;
- Improvement in coverage of educational services;
- Improve sustainable management, access to drinking water, and sanitation services;
- Provide loans to small and medium-sized enterprises;
- Provide thousands of job opportunities.

The United Nations has included Hayah Karima among the best international initiatives/practices for many reasons: the initiative has clear quantitative goals, is measurable and tracks achievement levels, is verifiable for its entry into force, resources are available that

²⁴ Egypt Human Development Report 2021

guarantee its implementation, it has a specific time frame, and it converges with many of the SDGs.²⁵

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- In Egypt, spending on fuel subsidies was a drain on public finances. Reducing the subsidies was proposed to balance the budget and target wasteful consumption. Prices for consumers increased, and government savings financed new cash transfer programs called Takaful and Karama for the most vulnerable. Meanwhile, a smaller carbon footprint was also expected.²⁷

²⁵ Egypt Human Development Report, 2021

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Social Protection and Climate Change. 2016. ILO.