

EMPOWERING WOMEN, EMPOWERING EGYPT

ACHIEVEMENT REPORT
Egypt Country Office

2016



Achievement Report 2016

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Forward

When reflecting on 2016, the one thing that stands out again and again is the incredible amount of strengths, resilience, skills, and potential of Egyptian women. They constitute half of Egypt's society, and disproportionately assume the responsibility of raising the country's future generation. Hence, women are the backbone of society, and thus the key to Egypt's development. Only when women's constitutional rights are fully protected and promoted, and women both benefit from, and actively contribute to Egypt's development as equal citizens, then the country's vision of development, growth and well-being can become reality. With the announcement of 2017 as the 'Year of Egyptian Women', H.E. President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi underscores the highest political commitment for a cause, that is both the right and the smart thing to do.

UN Women has supported Egypt's efforts to promote and protect women's rights. Based on a strong partnership with the government – particularly the National Council for Women (NCW) - and fruitful collaboration with the Ministry of Social Solidarity, in addition to other stakeholders - including civil society, academia, development partners, and the private sector - UN Women in 2016 achieved significant results in the areas of (1) 'Women's Political Empowerment', (2) 'Women's Economic Empowerment', and (3) 'Elimination of Violence Against Women'. To name only a few highlights, UN Women supported the development of the 2030 National Women's Empowerment Strategy to be launched in early 2017. 80,000 women received a national ID card through the 'Women's Citizenship Initiative', enabling them to access public services, credit, vote, and run for elections. In addition, 1,036 Village Saving and Loans Associations (VSLAs) with over 90% female members accumulated savings of nearly five million Egyptian Pounds, and fostered women's economic independence, opportunity, self-confidence and respect in the

community. To help operationalize the National Strategy to Combat Violence against Women, UN Women continued to strengthen the national legal framework to ensure the implementation of a structured approach to both 'prevention of' and 'protection from' incidents of violence against women. We also advanced the pioneer programme "Safe Cities for Women and Girls" by empowering and raising awareness of men, women, boys and girls to prevent and respond to violence against women and girls in the communities.

Recognizing the importance of effective communication, advocacy and public awareness raising, UN Women – in partnership with Egyptian media and celebrity figures - launched the gender equality song 'Nour' during the 16 Days of Activism which received national and international praise, and over ten million views on social media. UN Women also supported the nationwide 'Ta'a Marbouta Campaign' on women's empowerment, which reached over five million views on social media and eight million views on television, with hundreds of celebrities and public figures endorsing the campaign.

Looking ahead, 2017 will be a crucial year for Egypt to multiply opportunities, and minimize remaining challenges in the protection and promotion of women's rights. For example, despite a narrowing gender gap in education, according to CAPMAS, women's labor force participation remains at a low 22 per cent, with women disproportionately engaging in non-wage (household) or temporary (agriculture) work, often not covered by social insurance. At the same time, research shows that if female employment rates were equal to those of men, then Egypt's Gross Domestic Product could increase by up to 34%. Furthermore, in times of economic reform measures, cushioning their differentiated impact on women and girls by strengthening the social safety net requires continued attention.

Building on the achievements, opportunities, partnerships and lessons from 2016, UN Women looks forward to further catalyze women's empowerment for socio-economic development of Egypt under the umbrella of the forthcoming 2030 National Women's Empowerment Strategy. Plans for 2017 include work on increasing women's access to financial services, political representation in local councils, ID cards to access essential services, socio-economic development opportunities in rural areas, and safe

transport and public spaces for women and girls. These areas will be complemented by an increased engagement on evidence-based gender-responsive planning and budgeting, and feed into the 2017 formulation of UN Women's Country Strategy 2018-2022, and the UN Partnership Development Framework for Egypt.

UN Women looks forward to a historic, exciting and successful 'Year of Women' 2017.

Jorg Schimmel
Country Director, a.i
UN Women Egypt Country Office



Impact Area 1:

Women's Political Empowerment

Egyptian women have been struggling to make their voices heard as voters and candidates for legislative and elected bodies. They have been largely invisible in leadership positions and equitable participation in decision-making bodies. In parallel, there is also a strong need to build capacity of female voters capable of making their informed decisions and to access their citizenship rights, including the issuance of national ID cards. At the same time, the 2015 parliamentary elections resulted in having 89 women parliamentarians, a record total of 15% of total seats. The next step is local council elections, which, according to the Constitution, will ensure a 25% quota for women.

In 2016, UN Women continued to provide support towards the political empowerment of Egyptian women. Implemented in partnership with the National Council for Women (NCW), the national 'Women's Citizenship Initiative', enhanced awareness of women without national ID cards through community outreach by Youth Ambassadors, and improved administrative processes, UN Women supported the issuance of **80,000** ID cards for women. The ID cards have enabled women to access public services, access credit and open bank accounts, and in addition to voting and running as candidate in the forthcoming elections. The Women's Citizenship Initiative has received highest political backing from H.E. President El-Sisi, and is supported by a growing number of national and international partners.

Building on the 2015 capacity development support to women in elected bodies, UN Women supported NCW in training and raising the awareness of potential women candidates for the local councils election, where a Constitutional quota of 25% guarantees 13,500 women a seat. The trainings and awareness raising on the Egyptian political system, electoral laws, electoral campaign management and formulation of electoral programmes, enhanced the understanding of **35,000** women in 27 governorates on the importance of voting, and the right, possibility and process to run as a candidate for the municipal elections. This included UN Women's collaboration with the Egyptian Center for Women's Rights (ECWR) and the Association for Egyptian Female Lawyers (AEFL) through its Fund for Gender Equality (FGE).

Acknowledging the importance of strengthening women's representation in trade unions, and



"I am thrilled that I now have my own national ID. No one can abuse my right anymore. I feel that I became a recognized citizen. From now on, I will choose and take decisions on my own. I will seek employment safely now", Marwa Mohamed; a beneficiary of Agribusiness Project.

building on 2015 capacity building workshops and awareness raising initiatives for female members of trade unions in several governorates, UN Women during 2016 continued to advocate for women's rights issues to be more visible on trade unions agendas, including the availability of child care in the work place, safety measures and sexual harassment at work, social security for female workers and others.

Addressing the gender bias in formal and informal rules of legal systems is a key pre-requisite for women's empowerment in Egypt. Women are less likely than men to access justice due to higher levels of illiteracy and insufficient knowledge of their rights and related institutions. Furthermore, discriminatory social norms, practices and attitudes have the potential of restricting women's access to justice. UN Women supported a research that aims to identify the gendered structures of constraint that affect women's access to justice and propose policy interventions that address these constraints. The action research presents the lived realities and experiences of women in parts of rural Egypt who

Impact Area 1: Women's Political Empowerment

have tried to make claims to legally sanctioned and mandated economic rights, focusing on claims to inheritance, work, welfare and finance as made through formal and informal channels.

Lastly UN Women supported the formulation of the 2030 National Women's Empowerment Strategy (NWES), to be endorsed by H.E. President El-Sisi in early 2017. The NWES is aligned to and complements Egypt's Sustainable Development

Strategy (SDS) – Vision 2030, which incorporates the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The NWES is structured around the pillars of (a) women's leadership and political participation, (b) women's economic empowerment, (c) women's social empowerment, and (d) protection of women, with cultural behavioral change, and legal frameworks as cross-cutting issues. UN Women will support the operationalization of this Strategy commencing in 2017.

Establishment of the first Professional Master in Gender and Development at an Egyptian public university

UN Women supported the establishment of the first Professional Master in Gender and Development at an Egyptian public university. Launched in September 2016 at the Faculty for Economic and Political Sciences (FEPS) at Cairo University, the Master in Gender and Development is a two-year multi- and inter-disciplinary applied degree that empowers students with the knowledge, critical analysis skills and practical competencies to engage with global, national and local development problems through a lens that is both gender and context sensitive. Facilitated by UN Women, the Institute of Development Studies at Sussex University provided capacity development support to FEPS to co-construct the academic technical content. A first pool of young women and men from government, civil society and the private sector, have enrolled in the Professional Masters. They will graduate with the knowledge and tools to more effectively advance gender equality and women's empowerment in their institutions. It is also worth noting that the Supreme Council for Higher Education has accredited the FEPS MA programme.



Impact Area 2:

Women's Economic Empowerment

Egypt's SDS – Vision 2030 envisions women and men as equal contributors to and beneficiaries of the dividends of sustained economic growth. Women's economic empowerment is a necessary pre-condition to enable them to exercise their socio-economic rights. At the same time, it is a smart economic choice, as research shows that gender parity in the work force could add up to 34% to Egypt's GDP by 2025.

To address the gender bias of the economy and labor market structure, UN Women in 2016 supported a wide range of initiatives aimed at promoting women's economic empowerment, including the provision of financial and non-financial services and assets, the inclusion of women into value chains, and the promotion of safe and women-friendly work conditions.

Building on the achievements of past years and in collaboration with CARE Egypt, UN Women continued the further institutionalization and scaling up of the Village Saving and Loans Associations (VSLAs). These informal credit and saving groups, composed of 15 to 25 members, meet and save weekly, and access micro loans to cover small investments as well as necessary household expenses. They have proven to be highly sustainable, self-managed and well-governed, providing women a degree of financial independence, economic space, and confidence and respect of men and the community. VSLAs also serve as a conducive space for learning, awareness raising and skill enhancement of women. In 2016, UN Women's support resulted in the establishment of **1,036** new VSLAs, reaching **18,844** beneficiaries with over **90%** of members being women. Including 2016, the total savings accumulated by all VSLAs amount to nearly five million Egyptian Pounds – a catalytic step for women's economic empowerment and inclusion.

4,880 loans were issued to the VSLA members, enabling women to start income-generating activities and home-based kiosks, from which they were able to start selling products. **975** women received assets to establish a business, resulting in **45** companies registered by women with the Ministry of Investment (MOI). A total of **290** women-led enterprises were provided with loans to establish a business. In addition, a business development services package was delivered to **396** women in Menia,

Sharkeya and Beheira; such as the “Start and Improve Your Business” (SIYB) package and the “Entrepreneurial Skills” (ES) development training. In line with the Women's Empowerment Principles for the private sector – developed globally by UN Women and the UN Global Compact - UN Women's partnership with eight agribusiness firms in Upper Egypt and their value chains improved the working conditions for women through the formulation and implementation of policy measures and practices. Gender-sensitive grievance mechanism and worker committees were established within these firms, and issues such as equal opportunity, equal pay for work of equal value, sexual harassment, as well as safety and security at the workplaces are tackled through skills development, training and awareness raising to several hundreds of individuals, including both firm management and employees. Furthermore, interactive theater plays and sports events – organized by gender advocate volunteers – enhanced the awareness of **2,350** members of surrounding communities about the importance, value and potential of women's economic



“Honestly, I did not realize how these workers' committees are empowered and well-equipped with negotiation and communication skills until I met them myself. To my surprise, they were able to negotiate an increase to their salary by 150 Egyptian Pounds and to retain their preferred supervisor. There is no doubt, in no time, these young ladies will be promoted to an advanced leadership position at Daltex”, Hend Kassab; Quality Assurance Manager, Daltex.

Impact Area 2: Women's Economic Empowerment

participation.

UN Women partnered with the Alexandria Business Association (ABA) - one of the largest microfinance institution in Egypt with a wide client base of micro entrepreneurs - to foster women's entrepreneurship. After strengthening ABA's staff capacity on gender-responsive lending policies and programmes, UN Women and ABA enhanced the skillset of 400 women - through training on financial literacy, communication and negotiation skills, management and business administration – resulting in **120** women entrepreneurs establishing their own business, and **280** women improving and expanding their existing enterprises, creating additional employment for mostly women.

Through the “One Village, One Product” (OVOP) approach, UN Women continued its collaboration with the Social Fund for Development (SFD) to the previously established women-led productive clusters in four governorates: the dairy cluster in Beni Suef, artichoke cluster in Beheira, papyrus cluster in Menofia, and handmade carpets cluster in Sharkia. In 2016, the OVOP interventions helped create

decent jobs for over **300** women entrepreneurs through providing training and production tools, and facilitating their integration in the supply chains and their marketing opportunities. As a result, their products were showcased at the “Made in Egypt” exhibition, at “La Casa” exhibition and at SFD's e-marketing portal. Through skill enhancement on business development services, another **1,669** women micro-entrepreneurs were able to start and/or scale up their businesses.

As part of a project to integrate small-scale women entrepreneurs in the value chain of The Coca Cola company, UN Women provided **1,269** women micro-entrepreneurs with business development training to sustain and expand their existing businesses, supporting approximately **8,000** extended family members. These interventions have boosted the livelihood of the targeted women producers and provided them with opportunities for economic advancement and contributed to an increase to their income which has strengthened their decision-making role within the household.

Impact Area 3: Ending Violence Against Women

A recent study on the costs of Violence Against Women (VAW)¹ estimates the annual direct and indirect costs of the reported incidences of violence at 2.17 billion Egyptian Pounds. The study notes the prevalence of particular forms of violence against women, namely domestic violence, sexual harassment and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). Moreover, 7.89 million women, within the age range of 18 to 34, have suffered from violence at the hands of their companion or spouse, individuals in close surroundings, or from strangers in public spaces during the year preceding the study.

In 2016, UN Women's interventions to eliminate VAW focused on the operationalization of the National Strategy to Combat Violence against Women, supported by UN Women and endorsed in 2015. In the context of its Safe Cities Global Initiative that aims to prevent and respond to sexual harassment and other forms of sexual violence against women and girls in public spaces, and building on lessons learned over the past years, UN Women joined forces with a broad range of partners to enhance the capacity of governmental and non-governmental institutions to prevent and respond to violence against women and girls, and to sensitize the public to the various forms of violence against women and girls, and the detriments to women and to society.



and legal aid during the period 2015-2016. These results were achieved due to continuous efforts on the awareness raising, including UN Women's nationwide 'Speak Up' campaign conducted at the end of 2015, reaching an estimated **57 million** views for billboards, **37.7 million** views for TV public service announcements, and **12.6 million** listeners of radio spots.

Furthermore, gender-sensitive infrastructural upgrading converted a shelter for women survivors of domestic violence in the city of Mansoura and the court yard of the Salah el Din school in the impoverished area of Ezbet El Haggana friendlier and safer for women and girls. Trainings delivered to representatives of relevant Government ministries, staff of shelters for women survivors of violence, and rural women leaders increased both the scope and quality of prevention of and response to incidents of VAW.

At the community level, UN Women facilitated innovative locally-led and owned approaches to eliminating violence against women and girls. Through skills development and awareness raising of 'Tok-Tok' drivers, UN Women induced a change of their perceptions and behavior regarding sexual harassment. As a result, they now proudly and publicly mark their 'Tok-Tok' as harassment free, and actively engage in interactive theatre performances, art therapy sessions and workshops on community mobilization against violence against women. **23** drivers who had received training on communication and leadership skills



The establishment of a hotline in the NCW's Complaints Office increased incident reporting by 25% from the previous year. Moreover, with UN Women's technical support, the Office amplified responsiveness to women's legal needs, with **1,000** victims of violence accessing legal advance

¹ "The Egypt Economic Cost of Gender Based Violence Survey 2015" NCW, CAPMAS, UNFPA, 2015

Impact Area 3: Ending Violence Against Women



used these skills to resolve issues related to violence against women and girls in their communities, and successfully managed to conduct their own street campaign against sexual harassment. The trained drivers reached out to another **171** drivers in their community, emphasizing the importance of maintaining safety for women, girls and the community at large. The 'Tok-Tok' driver initiative has sparked overwhelming appreciation and support from all communities, with the domino effect of attitudinal change continuing.

Building upon this success with the 'Tok-Tok' drivers, who became supporters and defenders of women's safety in public spaces, more activities were conducted with the support of UN Women's partners to change community mindsets and

attitudes towards VAW, including a two-day football tournament with students and graduates in the Safe Cities' intervention sites: Imbaba, Manshyet Nasser and Ezbet El Hagganah, which fostered attitudinal change of **214** persons on the issue of VAW, by helping them understand the daily struggle that women and girls face.

“Women have the right to walk freely on the streets and we (men) do not have the right to constrain women's freedom”, A participant of the Football Tournament

In the same vein, during the '16 Days of Activism to End Violence against Women' led by the NCW and Cairo University, UN Women supported **57** activities with **13** associations, **27** media corporations, and **12,300** students from schools and five universities, promoting a change in mindset and culture where violence is no longer accepted.



Cross Cutting Theme 1: Education | 'Educated, Empowered, Prepared'



Educating girls is a crucial entry point and smart investment for women's empowerment and development of families, communities and Egyptian society at large. The exclusion of women from access to schooling and the labor force translates into a less educated work force, lost productivity, and consequently diminished progress of socio-economic development. Evidence suggests that more educated women tend to, participate more in the formal labor market, earn more income, live healthier lives, have fewer children, and provide better health care and education to their children.

In this context, UN Women furthered its engagement towards gender equality in education and training, and in the production of new and context-specific

knowledge in this area. The newly launched project 'Prioritizing education of girls and young women as a key to empowerment, inclusive growth and social transformation in Egypt' – implemented in five communities in the governorates of Greater Cairo, Menia, Luxor, Aswan and the Red Sea - made schools safer and teachers, students and parents more aware around gender issues, and initiated learning approaches to enhance gender-responsive education.

During 2016, community assessments identified safety-oriented renovation requirements and capacity development needs for teachers for **11** formal schools in Greater Cairo and Menia, and **30** community schools in Luxor, Aswan and the Red Sea. Moreover, support to **17** Community Development Associations in Greater Cairo and Menia on youth and education resulted in enhancing the awareness of parents on the importance of girls' education and women's leading role in the community.

2016 also saw the initiation of additional knowledge products, including a gender analysis of the recently released Household Income and Expenditure Survey conducted by the (CAPMAS) and two educational toolkits on ICT and financial literacy. Finally, UN Women started developing an audio-visual knowledge product, around socially constructed roles of women and men in society, as well as the role of men as agents of change and champions for women's empowerment.



Cross Cutting Theme 2:

Engaging Youth and Men for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment



The 2010 Survey of Young People in Egypt (SYPE) and the follow-up survey in 2014 revealed a significant degree of disfranchisement among young people, both men and women. Harnessing the potential of young people for positive development is a mainstay of UN Women's approach to promoting the women's empowerment and the equality between men and women. Accordingly, in 2016 UN Women developed a cadre of qualified youth advocates by providing them with the tools, knowledge and opportunities for meaningful engagement in projects serving their communities. As a result, interventions involving or led by youth enhanced the understanding of and commitment to gender equality and civic engagement of **600** university students (**50%** women, and **50%** men) in six universities across Egypt, and resulted in five youth-led community initiatives in five disadvantaged areas.

Under the regional programme "Men and Women for Gender Equality", UN Women and Promundo together with Egyptian research institutes initiated the International Men and Gender Equality Survey

(IMAGES) in four countries (Egypt, Lebanon, Morocco and Palestine) of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, covering nearly 10,000 men and women aged 18 to 59. IMAGES MENA² is the first of its kind and size in the region to take a comparative lens to the lives of men - as sons and husbands and fathers, at home and at work, in public and private life - to better understand how they see their position as men, and their attitudes towards women's empowerment, and it also provides women's perspectives on the same issues. Initial findings show that although traditional attitudes about gender equality dominate, at least one quarter of men hold more open and equitable views, supporting women's economic, social, and political equality. The Egypt-specific IMAGES report will be finalized in 2017 after the completion of ongoing consultation process with the national stakeholders. Building on its findings and recommendations, UN Women will continue to develop and implement programmes with evidence-based advocacy and awareness raising for women's empowerment and find innovative ways of engaging men and boys as drivers and advocates of change.



² <http://imagesmena.org/en/>

Communication and Advocacy

UN Women used communication and advocacy tools to reinforce its mandate, and the efforts of government and non-governmental stakeholders, to enhance women's empowerment and gender equality in Egypt.

During 2016, UN Women successfully scaled up its efforts to raise public awareness regarding women's empowerment as a necessary precondition for inclusive and sustainable development. In this context, several communication materials and knowledge products were produced and disseminated to wide audiences through events and media campaigns.

On International Women's Day, 8 March, UN Women, the Global Compact Local Network in Egypt and the International Finance Corporation (IFC) in partnership with the Egyptian Stock Exchange, organized the "Ring the Bell for Gender Equality" event, raising awareness on gender equality and women's empowerment in the work place and highlighting the businesses case for women's economic participation.

In addition, UN Women and the NCW organized a highly attended event with the theme "Planet 50-50 by 2030: Step It Up for Gender Equality". During that event, a video entitled 'Voices of Egyptian Women', featuring inspirational stories about Egyptian women was shown, and was followed by a musical performance by artists known for their support of gender equality.



#سِر_قَوْتِك

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY 2016

PLANET 50-50 BY 2030 STEP IT UP FOR GENDER EQUALITY

8 MARCH 2016



One of the main achievements of UN Women in 2016 is the "Ta'a Marbouta" campaign³. In collaboration with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), UN Women contributed to the development of three Public Service Announcements (PSAs) under the campaign led by the NCW. The PSAs tackled the challenges that women face in the public sphere, including family and social pressure to stay at home rather than engage in public, economic and political life. Aired on television during the viewership peak month of Ramadan, and posted on the Facebook pages of UN Women, the NCW, and other partners, the campaign reached over **8 million** views on social media and eight million views on television till October 2016 with over **100** public figures and celebrities announcing their support and endorsement.

Communication and Advocacy

Under the umbrella of the 16 Days of Activism to End Violence Against Women, and in collaboration with NCW, the innovative gender equality song Nour by celebrity actress Amina Khalil and Egyptian Rapper Zap Tharwat was released with great success, surpassing one million views in less than 24 hours and reaching more than **5 million** viewers on social media networks. It remains one

of the most watched videos on YouTube Egypt. Also in the context of the 16 Days of Activism to End Violence against Women, UN Women collaborated with the Harley Davidson dealership in motorcycle ride of 90 bikes, headed by 12 female riders, through the streets of Cairo. This break with traditional perceptions of gender roles received rave reviews.



³ The campaign led by the NCW, highlights the importance of women's participation and inclusion in all economic, political and social areas while highlighting the struggles that they face in different fields just for being women. The creative idea of the campaign is based on the additional letter added to the ending of Arabic words, mainly adjectives, designating them as females. This letter is named "Ta'a Marbouta" and "Marbouta" means constrained. That's why, the slogan reads "Ta'a Marbouta is the Secret of Your Power".

Partners

UN Women envisions Egypt as a country free of gender discrimination, where women and girls are empowered to lead the change they want to see. A single organization can never make it happen alone. It is only when we bring our expertise and resources together, that we become a powerful force for progress. Therefore, working in and brokering partnerships with and between the Government, civil society groups, businesses and foundations, academic and research institutions, and committed individuals are essential for UN Women.

At one level, UN Women works with, and provides an important bridge between civil society and government institutions engaged with women's rights, gender equality and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). At another level, intensive efforts are being made to broaden the support base for action by expanding partnerships with institutions and organizations that are not necessarily advocates of, or strictly mandated to

work on women's rights per se, but with great influence on the lives of women and girls.

UN Women values working with sister agencies within the UN Country Team (UNCT) as well as other development partners. UN Women builds and facilitates these partnerships as the chair of the Gender Theme Group of the UN in Egypt, as well as the co-chair of the 'Gender and Development' (GAD) Group under the umbrella of the Development Partners Group (DPG) framework in Egypt.

UN Women highly values fruitful collaboration with all our international, governmental and non-governmental partners, who contributed greatly to the achievements outlined in this report.

All the aforementioned partnerships, actions and achievements are made possible by the generous contribution from the following donors and development partners to whom we express great appreciation:



From the People of Japan

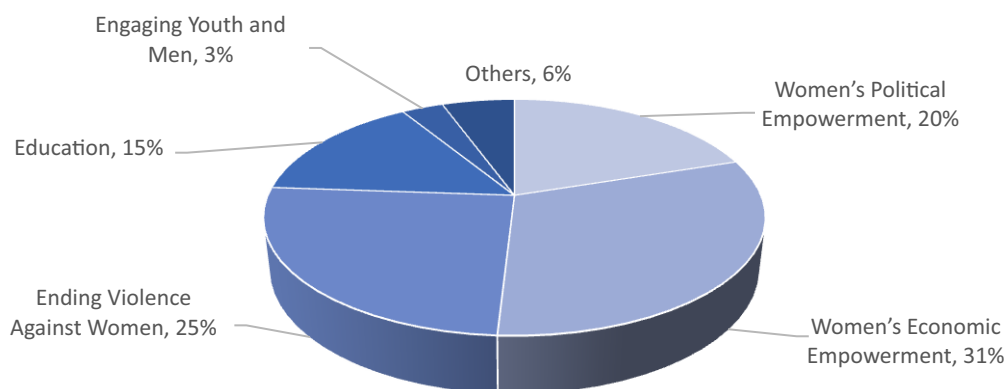


Financial Portfolio Overview

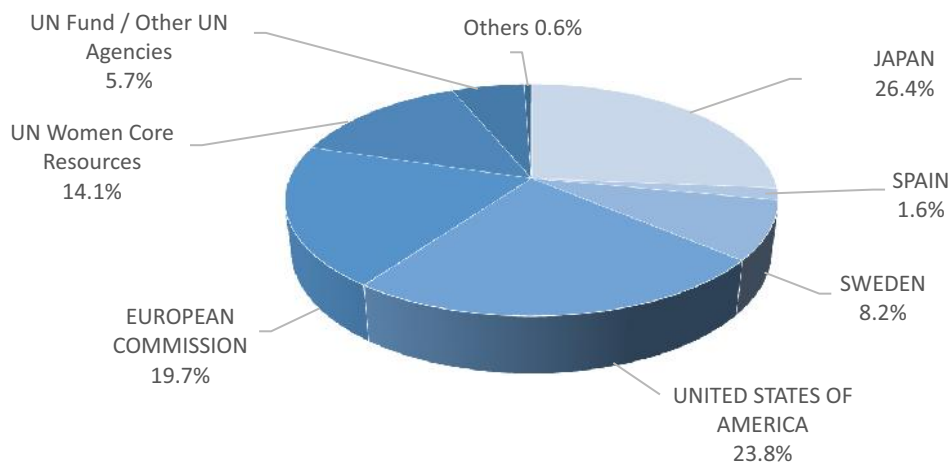
UN Women Egypt Country Office is implementing a portfolio⁴ of USD 26.3 million during the period of the current Strategic Note 2014-2017.

Of this programme portfolio, the 2016 budget was USD 9 million, with an implementation rate of 86 per cent by the closing of the year.

Egypt Country Office Budget by Thematic Area (Total: USD 9 million in 2016)



Egypt Country Office Budget by Donor (Total: USD 9 million in 2016)



⁴ Portfolio size includes only Cost Sharing Agreement and Core; excluding IB and XB funds.

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UN Women is the UN organization dedicated to gender equality and the empowerment of women. A global champion for women and girls, UN Women was established to accelerate progress on meeting their needs worldwide.

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