



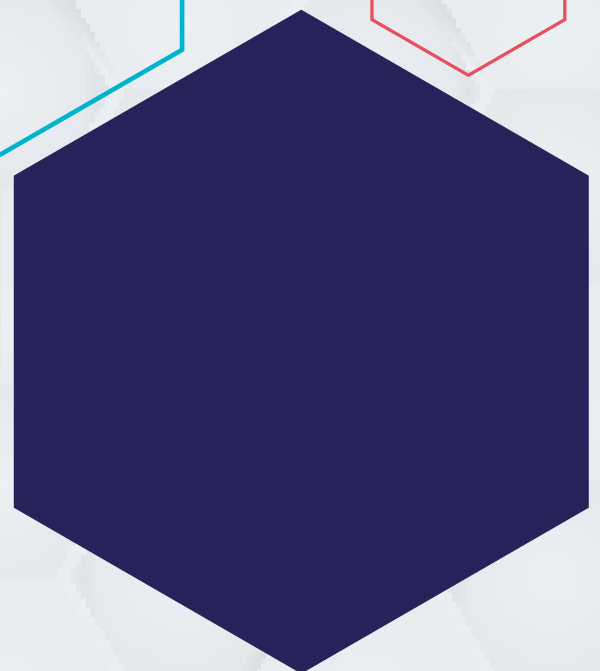
International
Labour
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ADWA'
Advancing the Decent Work
Agenda in North Africa ➡➡

► Rapid Situational Analysis of the employment -environment- **gender equality** nexus:

Identifying just transition policies with a focus on
Women's Entrepreneurship Development in Egypt



July 2024



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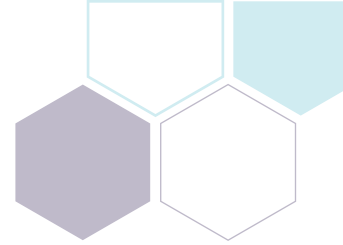
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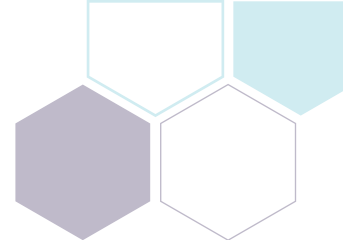
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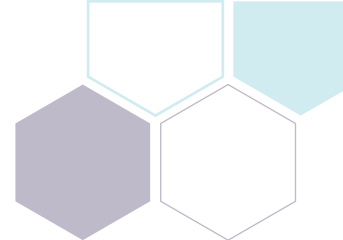
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►► Abbreviations

CAPMAS	Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics
EGP	Egyptian pounds
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FEI	Federation of Egyptian industries
FGD	Focus group discussion
GAFI	General Authority for Investment and Free Zones
GDP	Gross domestic product
GEM	Global Entrepreneurship Monitor
GHG	Greenhouse gas
GNI	Gross national income
GSIF	Government Social Insurance Fund
ICT	Information and communication technology
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
ILO	International Labour Organization
IRENA	International Renewable Energy Agency
ISES	Integrated Sustainable Energy Strategy
KII	Key informant interview
LF	Labour force

LFP	Labour force participation
MCIT	Ministry of Communications and Information Technology
MESMEDA	Micro, Small & Medium Enterprise Development Agency
MoSS	Ministry of Social Solidarity
MPED	Ministry of Planning and Economic Development
MSME	Micro, small, and medium enterprises
MW	megawatts
NCCS	National Climate Change Strategy
NDC	Nationally Determined Contribution
NREA	New and Renewable Energy Authority
PSIF	Private Social Insurance Fund
PV	Photovoltaic (solar)
RSA	Rapid situational analysis
SADS	Sustainable Agricultural Development Strategy Towards 2030
SME	Small and medium enterprise
STEM	Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
WED	Women's entrepreneurship development



▶▶ Executive Summary

Realizing a just transition to more environmentally sustainable economies may look different in different country contexts. A just transition means greening the economy in a way that is fair and inclusive for everyone, creating decent work, and leaving no one behind. However, ensuring an equitable transition requires targeted approaches for different groups. Women entrepreneurs are one such group that faces a unique set of economic, social, and environmental challenges and for whom including in a just transition requires targeted actions. For a just transition to be successful, there must be coherence among economic, employment, social, and environmental policies—goals for promoting economic growth, job creation, social equity, and environmental sustainability cannot be achieved in the long term without an integrated approach.

Egypt hosting the 27th Conference of Parties (COP27) under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) signifies a pivotal opportunity for global collaboration and action towards climate resilience, showcasing the nation's commitment to leading the charge in addressing pressing environmental challenges.

This study examines the current socio-economic and environmental realities in Egypt, how well the existing policy framework supports a just transition, and where there are opportunities to strengthen it, both generally and specifically for women entrepreneurs. The overall objective of the study is to equip the Egyptian government and its national partners with key insights for adapting and leveraging the national policy framework to realize a just transition.

Micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) in Egypt are a significant driver of economic growth, job creation, and innovation. They are also more vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, environmental degradation, and other external shocks. Women-led MSMEs are even more susceptible to changing climatic, environmental, and market conditions, as they have limited access to resources—such as land and productive assets—limited access to financial and business development services, and less mobility and decision-making power due to sociocultural norms. They also tend to be more economically marginalized and at risk of gender-based violence under social and economic stress. At the same time, women-led MSMEs create jobs, bring unique perspectives to the business environment, and inspire other women to become entrepreneurs or enter the labour market. Supporting women entrepreneurs as a part of a just transi-

tion, therefore, can help to both address systemic socio-economic challenges as well as empower women to become innovators in the green economy and agents of change in tackling climate change.

Just transition policies, therefore, must include measures to enhance the resilience of MSMEs, but also be gender-responsive and transformative by including measures to empower women and promote gender equality, while removing underlying and pre-existing barriers preventing the full participation of women in the labour market. As new market opportunities open up in the green economy, women are much less likely than men to be in a position to take advantage of them, making it all the more important to consider the needs of women entrepreneurs. This includes improving women's access to resources and decision-making processes and mainstreaming gender considerations into entrepreneurial and MSME promotion aspects of national development policies and strategies. By addressing the intersecting challenges faced by women entrepreneurs and enabling women entrepreneurs to be part of a Just Transition, Egypt can build a more inclusive and resilient society as it transitions to a greener economy.

In Egypt, the national policy framework includes a set of policies that cover a range of issues that are critical aspects of a just transition—including climate change adaptation and mitigation measures, strategies for promoting green sectors and improving environmental sustainability, creating jobs, promoting MSMEs, and addressing economic and social gender disparities. However, there is significant room to make these policies more cohesive. Egypt's Vision 2030 is the strongest policy document in terms of bringing together economic, environmental, and social goals in a structured way, but it lacks teeth in terms of how the country can promote women-led business in the future green economy. The National Employment Strategy, which is currently under revision, has potential to bring together the country's employment and environmental goals and orient job creation, MSME development, and economic growth towards Egypt's envisioned green economy, but this was not yet published at the time this report was written.

The research found the primary challenges for women entrepreneurs in Egypt to include insufficient policy coordination around MSME initiatives, a limited access to financial, business development, technological, and training services; low market access; limited access to land; insufficient networks and representation; discriminatory cultural and social norms; and



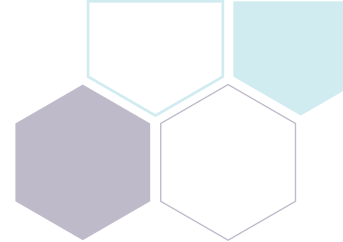


finding work-life balance.

Potential entry-points that Egypt could leverage to achieve this include integrating just transition and women's entrepreneurship development priorities into the National Employment Strategy; improving interministerial coordination on MSME promotion; updating national data collection systems and monitoring and evaluation processes; expanding financial education—especially for women entrepreneurs; rolling out ICT services and digital hubs that specifically target women in their socio-economic contexts; introducing gender-responsible procurement policies; bolstering women-led cooperatives; conducting market research into untapped high value waste products; improving waste management infrastructure; investing in network, mentoring, and school to work transition programs for women, particularly in STEM fields; and improving social dialogue mechanisms to include

and empower women entrepreneurs.

Promoting women entrepreneurs and their ecosystem is essential in ensuring a just transition which leaves no one behind. By empowering women to participate fully in the green economy, their potential as agents of change, innovators, and leaders in sustainable development can be unlocked. Moving forward, it is imperative to prioritize gender-responsive and transformative policies, programs, and investments that promote women's entrepreneurship development, enhance their resilience to climate change impacts, leverage their strengths and advance gender equality and social justice. By mainstreaming gender considerations into climate and economic policies, the transition to a sustainable future will not only be just but also inclusive and equitable for all.



►► -1 Introduction

As adopted during the 111th Session of the International Labour Conference in June 2023, “A just transition promotes environmentally sustainable economies in a way that is inclusive, by creating decent work opportunities, reducing inequality and by leaving no one behind.”¹

In the climate change framework, just transition features prominently in the Paris Agreement, which highlights “the imperative of a just transition of the workforce and the creation of decent work and quality jobs in accordance with nationally defined development priorities”. The [Guidelines for a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all](#), were endorsed by the 187 ILO Member States as the central reference for policy-making.² The guidelines outline guiding principles and potential policy entry points to formulate and implement just transition measures, in accordance to national circumstances.

The ILO developed a methodology – the Rapid Situational Analysis (RSA) – to identify high-potential entry-points for just transition policies and interventions at a national level, in line with specific country-level needs, priorities and policy processes. This methodology was further expanded to focus on how women’s entrepreneurship development could be better promoted in just transition policies and interventions. Based on the [ILO strategy on promoting women’s entrepreneurship development](#) and [ILO’s Women’s Entrepreneurship Development Assessment](#),³ methodological components and indicators were embedded into the study in order to capture an understanding of the main constraints impacting women entrepreneurs in the face of climate change, and how those constraints might be addressed through just transition policies and interventions. This report presents the results from an RSA in Egypt that pilots this new methodology.

►► -2 Methodology

The RSA was initiated through desk-based research to analyze economic, social, and environmental trends; decent work and gender equality in the labour market; the impacts of environmental and climate change impacts on economic activities, jobs, and gender equality; the impacts of economic activities and jobs on the environment; and an initial dataset on the current state of women’s entrepreneurship in Egypt.

Following the desk-based research, 8 sectors were cross-analyzed using an adapted set of indicators from the RSA toolkit. These indicators represented 5 dimensions—1) economic, 2) decent work and jobs, 3) environment, 4) relevance to women’s entrepreneurship development (WED), and 5) policy—which collectively aimed to determine the sectors most critical for a just transition in the country. A set of key guiding questions for each of the indicator groups was formulated and weighted in consultation with the ILO (see

Annex III). Ultimately, agriculture, renewable energy, and waste management were selected for close-up analysis, with information and communication technology (ICT) as a cross-cutting sector. The agriculture sector was selected because of its high relevance to the economy and employment, its vulnerability to climate change, opportunities to address decent work deficits, and the relatively high engagement of women in MSMEs. Renewable energy was selected because of its importance in reducing greenhouse gas emissions, its projected relevance to the economy and employment in the future, its high priority level in the national policy framework, and opportunities for women in leadership positions. Waste management was selected because of its relevance for preserving the environment, the opportunities for reducing decent work deficits, its potential to engage more women entrepreneurs, and its high priority level in the national policy framework. Other sectors that were considered

¹ILO, Resolution concerning a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all, ILC. 111/V, 2015.

²ILO, Outcome of the General Discussion Committee on a Just Transition, ILC. 111/Record No. 7A, 2023.

³ILO, Assessment of Women’s Entrepreneurship Development, 2020.



included chemicals, construction, textiles, tourism, and transportation.

Key informant interviews (KIIs) and focus group discussions (FGDs) were held in 4 governorates—Alexandria, Cairo, Fayoum, and Minya—which were selected based on their diverse range of economic, geographic, environmental, and cultural characteristics (see Annex II). Interviewed stakeholders include women entrepreneurs, government officials, business associations

and networks, financial institutions, training providers, international organizations, foundations and non-profits, and members of academia. The objective of the KIIs and FGDs was to determine the main constraints and opportunities for women entrepreneurs working in the short-listed sectors as well as across the economy. Policy recommendations then incorporated these insights to propose how Egypt might better promote a just transition with a focus on women's entrepreneurship.

►►► -3 Economy, decent work, and gender equality

► 3.1. Country overview

Egypt is considered a lower middle-income country that is currently working to tackle inflation and accelerate growth.

Population

Egypt's population in 2023 stood at 104,462,545 people—50,741,279 or 48.6 percent women—with approximately 43 percent residing in urban areas and 57

percent in rural areas. Population growth rate slowed over the past decade, from 2.3 percent in 2013 to 1.5 percent in 2022,⁴⁻⁵ and is expected to further decrease to between 0.5 and 1 percent over the next decade.⁵ The most populated governorates are Cairo and Giza, followed by Sharkia, Dakahlia, and Behera.

Life expectancy at birth in 2023 was 73.6 years for women and 69 years for men.⁷

► **Table 1: Population by sex and urban/rural, 2022**

	Urban		Rural		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Men	22,783,094	51.2%	30,513,707	51.6%	53,296,801	51.4%
Women	21,684,028	48.8%	28,624,210	48.4%	50,308,238	48.6%
Total	44,467,122	100%	59,137,917	100%	103,605,039	100%

⁴CAPMAS 2022.

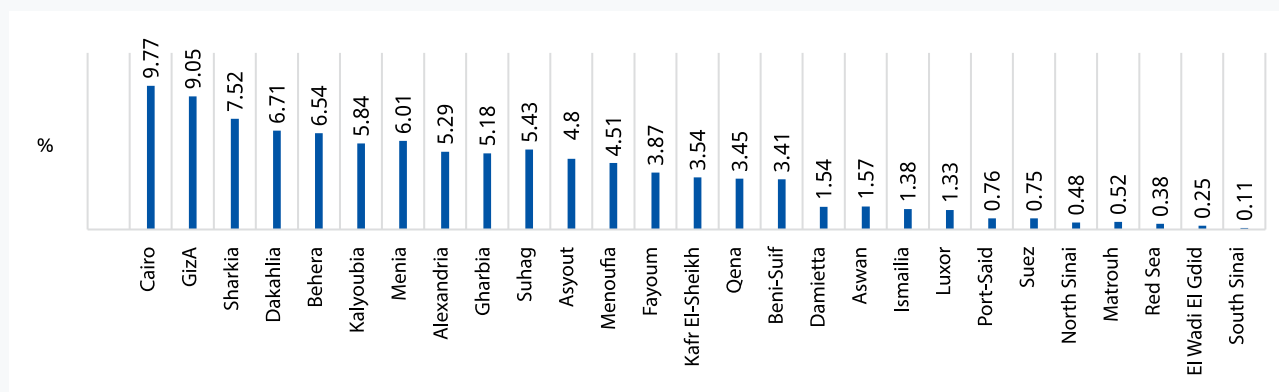
⁵World Bank, World Development Indicators database.

⁶OECD-FAO Agricultural Outlook 2023-2032.

⁷CAPMAS 2023.



► **Figure 1: Population by Governorate, 2023**



Source: population - CAPMAS, 2022

Education and literacy rates

Education levels are relatively equal between men and women: in 2021, 97 percent of both women and men completed primary school, and 87 percent of women and 86 percent of men completed lower secondary school. 87 percent of young women are literate, compared to 89 percent of young men, with a wider disparity in adults: 66 percent of adult women are literate, while 76 percent of adult men are literate.⁸ 66 percent of female entrepreneurs have post-secondary education, compared to 53.1 percent of men, and 2.1 percent of female entrepreneurs have grad school education, compared to 2.3 percent of men.⁹

GDP and Economic Structure

In 2022, gross domestic product (GDP) was approximately US \$476.7 billion, or US \$4,295 per capita, having increased from US \$262.6 billion in 2018, US \$2,531 per capita. Following the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, Egypt's economic growth slowed from 5.6 percent in 2019 to 3.3 percent in 2021 but rebounded to 6.6 percent in 2022.¹⁰ Economic growth following the pandemic was mainly attributed to capital-intensive sectors like petroleum, construction, and communication, which was realized at the same time that sectors like non-oil manufacturing and tourism were negatively impacted, explaining the only modest job creation during that period.¹⁰ Rising food prices, exacerbated by the war in Ukraine and a series of currency depreciations, resulted in inflation hitting a record high of 38 percent in September 2023.¹²⁻¹³

⁸World Bank, "World Development Indicators: Education completion and outcomes", n.d.

⁹GEM Consortium, GEM 2022/23 Women's Entrepreneurship Report: Challenging Bias and Stereotypes, 2023.

¹⁰World Bank, World Development Indicators.

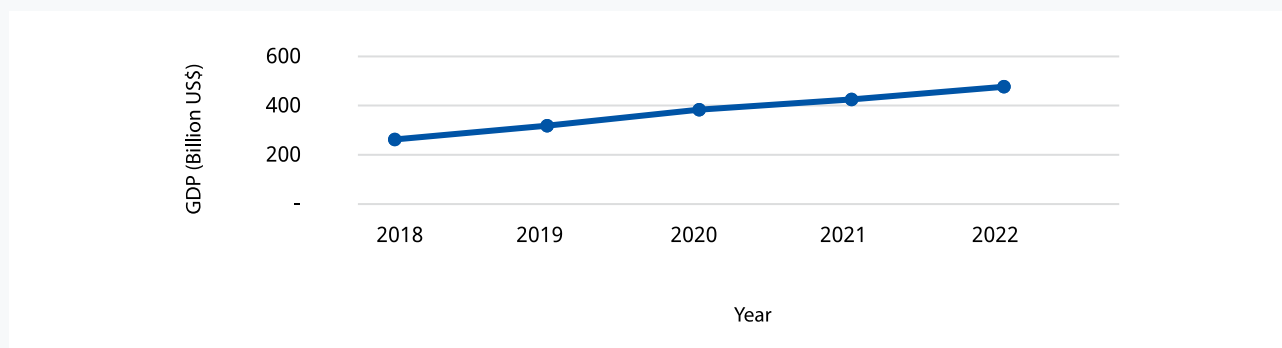
¹¹Moheb Said and Chahir Zaki, Toward More Job-Rich Growth: The Case of Egypt (ERF-ILO, 2023).

¹²<https://oecd-ilibrary.org/sites/cd6acfd8-en/index.html?itemId=/content/component/cd6acfd8-en>

¹³<https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/egypts-annual-urban-consumer-price-inflation-slows-dec-capmas-2024-01-10/>

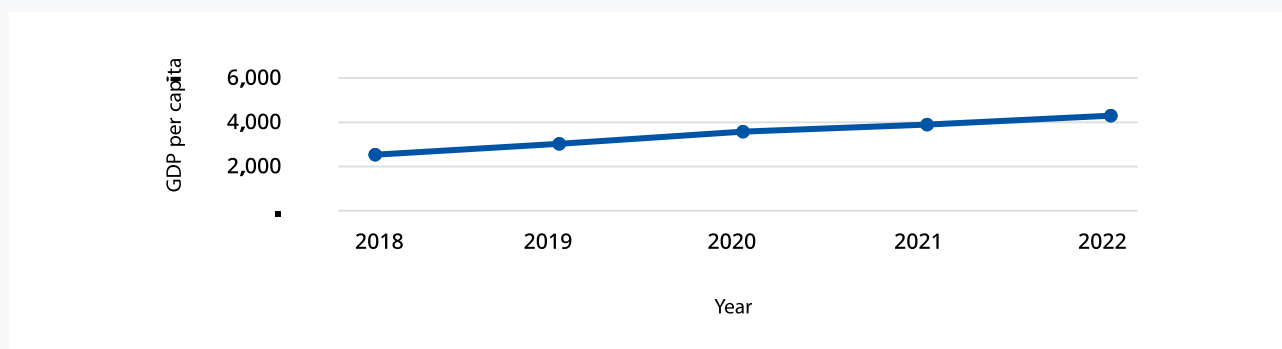


► **Figure 2: GDP**

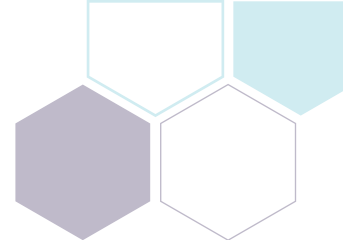


Source: World Bank World Development Indicators

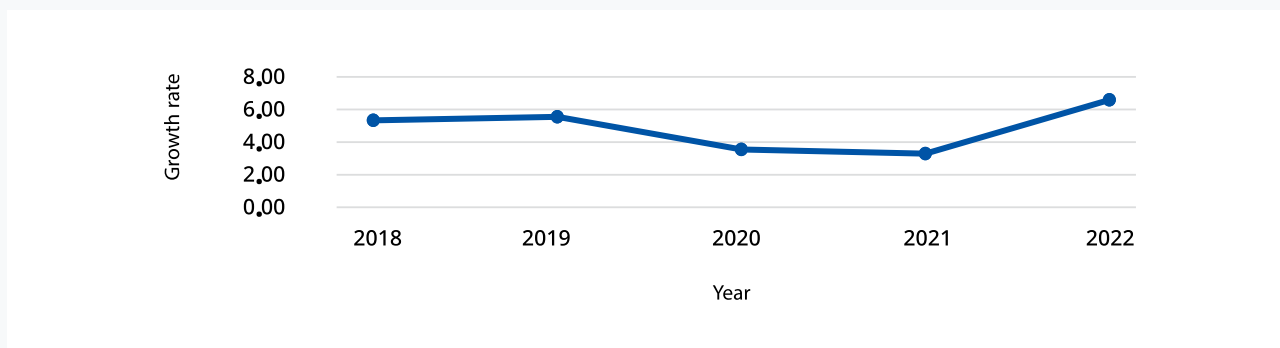
► **Figure 3: GDP per capita**



Source: own calculations based on data from World Bank World Development Indicators

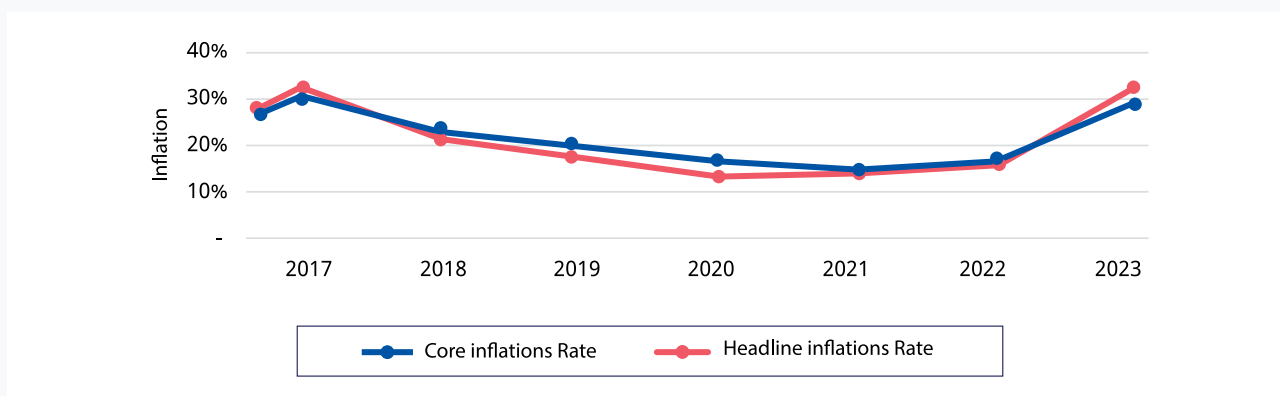


► **Figure 4: GDP Growth**



Source: World Bank World Development Indicators

► **Figure 5: Inflation**



Source: Central Bank of Egypt

Sectoral composition

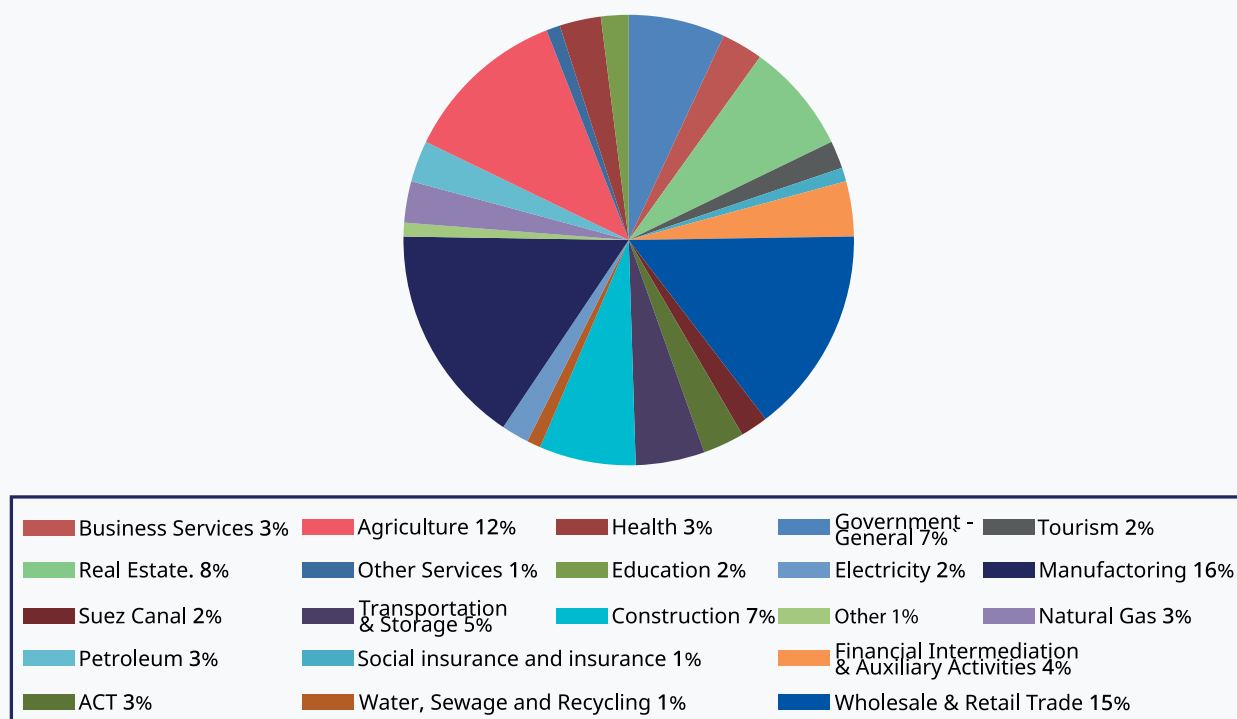
The sectors contributing the most to GDP in 2020-2021 were manufacturing (16%), wholesale and trade (15%),

and agriculture (12%).¹⁴ Within the manufacturing sector, the largest sub-sectors are food, beverages, and tobacco; chemicals; and textiles and garments.¹⁵

¹⁴MPED

¹⁵World Bank, World Development Indicators.



► **Figure 6: GDP share by sector, 2020/21**

Source: Ministry of Planning and Economic Development (MPED)

The transportation and storage sector accounted for the largest share of total investments during FY2020/21 by 15.6%, followed by real estate activities by 8%, manufacturing industries by 7.8%, and agriculture sector by 6.8%.

Stage of development

Egypt is classified as a lower-middle income country with a GNI per capita of US \$4,100.¹⁶ In 2019, the poverty headcount ratio at national poverty lines was 29.7 percent, up from 24.6 percent in 2015.¹⁷ The rise in poverty may be attributed to the rise in inflation following the 2016 currency depreciation, which led

to negative household consumption growth between 2015 and 2017, according to household surveys.¹⁸

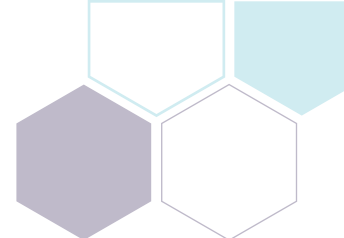
Poverty is concentrated in rural areas and in Upper Egypt. In 2017/18, the poverty rate was 37.7 percent in rural areas, 24.8 percent in urban areas, but recent trends show a rise in urban poor. Upper Egypt holds about 40 percent of the national population, but 50 percent of its poor.

According to the Gini Index, inequality gradually fell from 1999 to 2012, from a coefficient of 32.8 to 28.3, but has since risen, reaching 31.9 in 2019.

¹⁶World Bank, 2022.

¹⁷World Bank, World Development Indicators.

¹⁸Camila Cortez Rodriguez et al. Egypt CCDR (Country Climate and Development Report): Background note (World Bank, 2022).

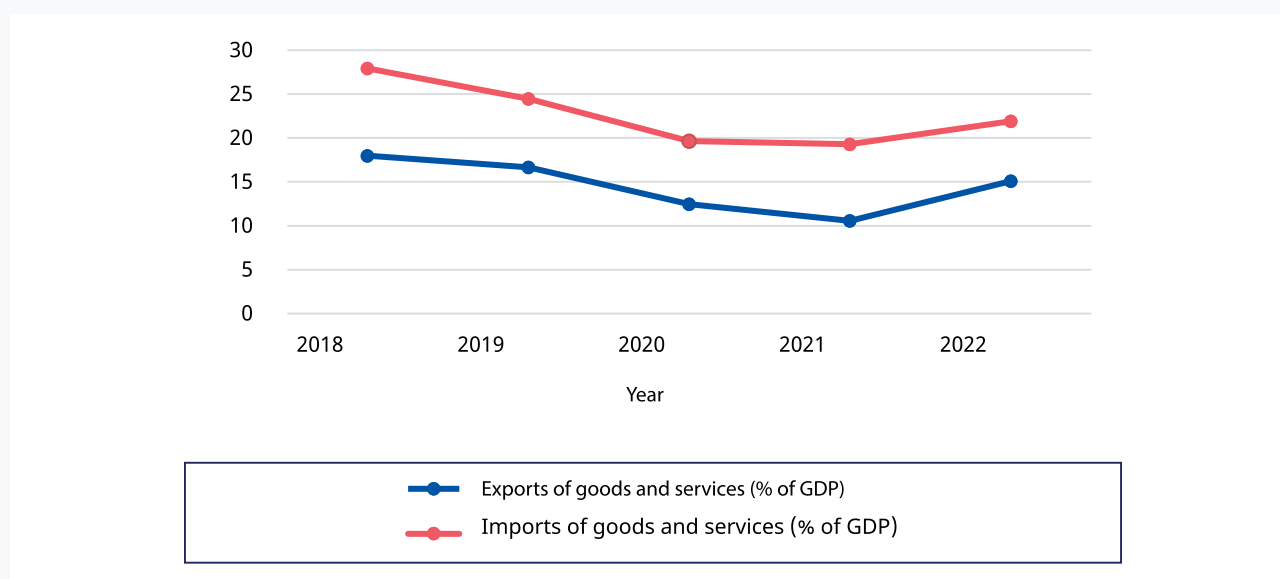


Trade

Exports in 2022 were 15 percent of GDP, while imports, 22 percent. Egypt's largest export partners are Turkey (6.5%), Italy (6.24%), India (5.72%), and US (5.3%). The largest importer of Egyptian products and services is China (13.57%), followed by Saudi Arabia (8.47%), US

(6.92%), and Germany (4.47%). Petroleum products account for roughly 27 percent of total exports, about US \$12 billion. The biggest importers of Egypt's fuel products are India, Malta, Greece, Italy, China, and Turkey. The trade balance is US\$ -37,094 million, or -8.73 percent of GDP.¹⁹⁻²⁰

► **Figure 7: Trade as percentage of GDP**



Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators

Egypt's highest grossing exports are petroleum products, food products, and iron and steel. In 2023, petroleum products accounted for US\$ 383 million in exports, down from US\$ 1.2 billion the previous year. Exports of non-petroleum products increased over

the same period, from US\$ 2.3 billion to US\$ 2.7 billion: food products accounted for \$497 million, iron and steel \$278.8 million, garments \$207.6 million, and textiles \$79.8 million.²¹

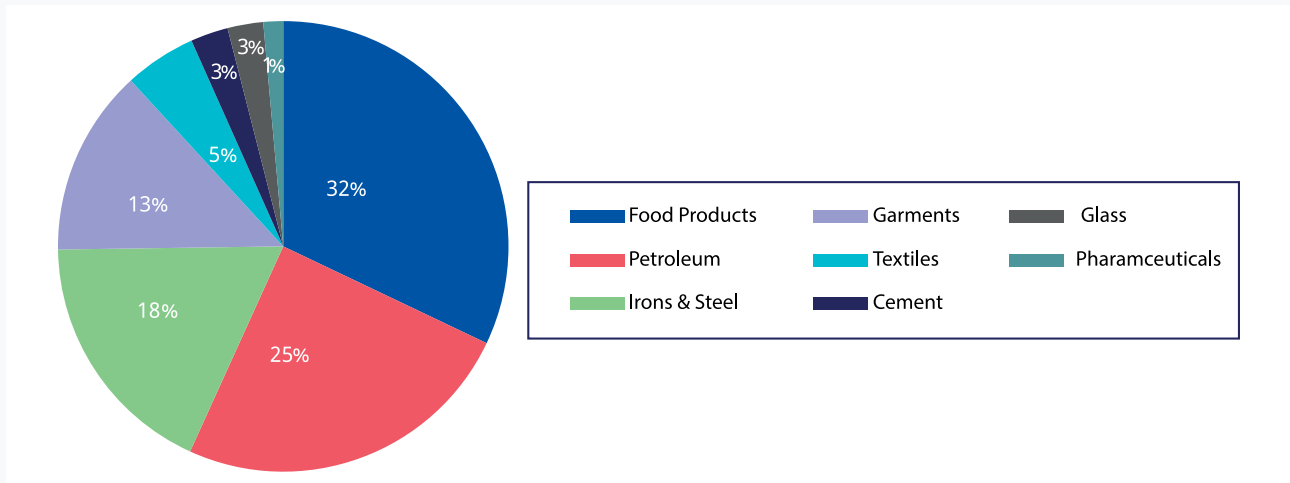
¹⁹ OEC 2021.

²⁰ WITS 2021.

²¹ Customs Authority, GOIEC



► **Figure 8: Main exports, 2023**

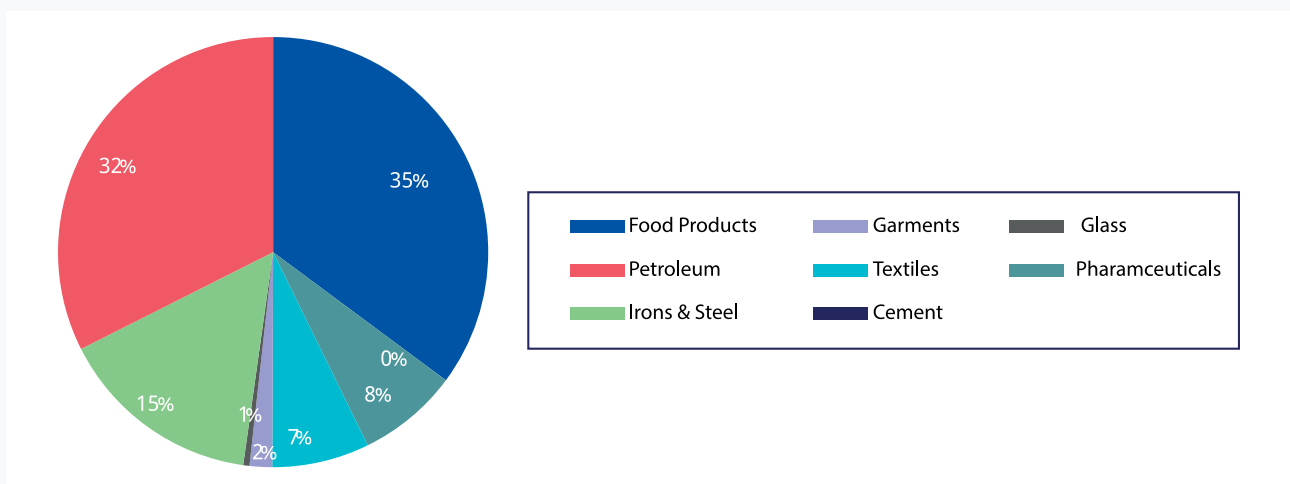


Source: CAPMAS, Monthly Statistical Bulletin, Issue 140, October 2023

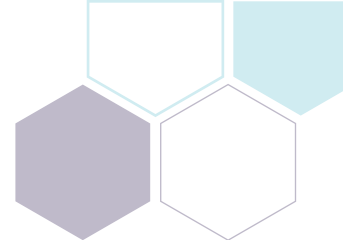
Top imports include petroleum oils at US \$896 million, food products at US \$971.3 million, iron and steel at US \$442 million, textiles at US \$202.3 million, and phar-

maceuticals at US \$209.5 million. Both petroleum and non-petroleum imports decreased from 2022 to 2023.

► **Figure 9: Main imports, 2023**



Source: CAPMAS, Monthly Statistical Bulletin, Issue 140, October 2023



► **Table 2: Labour force, employment, employment to pop. ratio, and unemployment**

Annual estimates of labour and unemployment rates (15 yrs old and over) in 2022					
	Labour Force	Employed	Employment – population ratio (%)	Unemployed	UE rate (%)
Men	5,112,000	4,172,000	8.3	940,000	18.4
Women	25,010,000	23,767,000	43.7	1,243,000	5.0
Total	30,122,000	27,939,000	26.8	2,183,000	7.2

Looking at how the labour force is distributed by type of employment, in 2021, 72.6 percent worked as employees (70 percent of women and 73.1 percent of men), 3.8 percent as employers (1.3 percent of women and 4.2 percent of men), 18.5 percent as own-account workers (9.3 percent of women and 20.2 percent of

men), and 5.2 percent as contributing family workers (19.4 percent of women and 2.6 percent of men). From 2015 to 2021, trends show that both men and women were more likely to work as employees and own-account workers and less likely to be employers and contributing family workers.

► **Table 3: Distribution of employment by type of employment and sex, 2015 and 2021**

Status	2015			2021		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Employees (paid workers)	65.3	51.6	62.5	73.1	70	72.6
Employers (engage employees)	14.5	1.9	11.9	4.2	1.3	3.8
Own-account workers (do not engage employees)	14.5	6.3	12.8	20.2	9.3	18.5
Contributing family workers (Unpaid workers)	5.7	40.0	12.7	2.6	19.4	5.2

Source: CAPMAS 2021

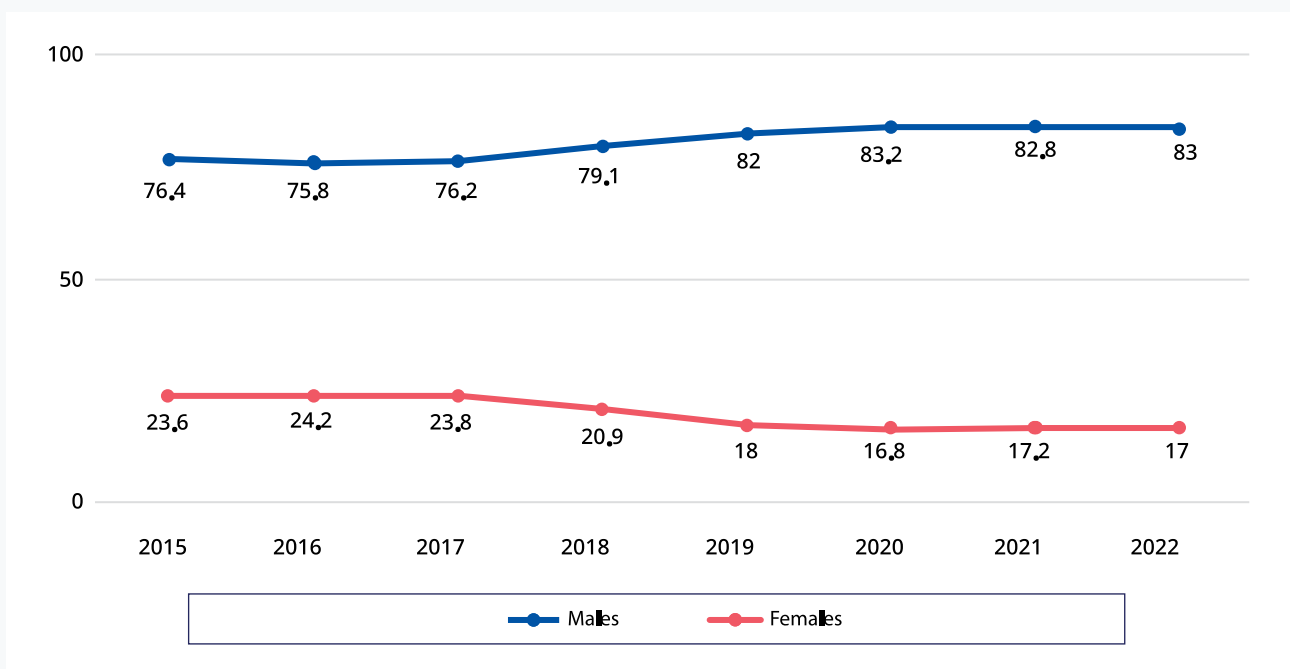
► 3.2. Decent Work and Gender Equality in the Labour Market

Labour Force composition

In 2022, the labour force (employed and unemployed) in Egypt was comprised of 30.1 million people: 25 million men and 5.1 million women. The proportion

of women making up the labour force has largely decreased in recent years. In 2016, women made up 24.2 percent of the labour force, whereas in 2022, they made up only 17 percent.

► **Figure 10: Labour force composition**



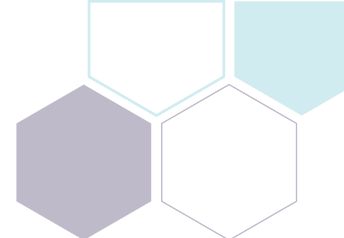
Source: CAPMAS

Employment

The employment – population ratio in 2022 was 26.8 percent: 8.3 percent of women and 43.7 percent of

men. 42.3 percent work in urban areas and 57.7 percent in rural areas. The private sector employs 79.40 percent; government, 18.26 percent; and public business, 2.34 percent.²²

²²Egypt, CAPMAS, "Estimation number of Employment," 2023b.



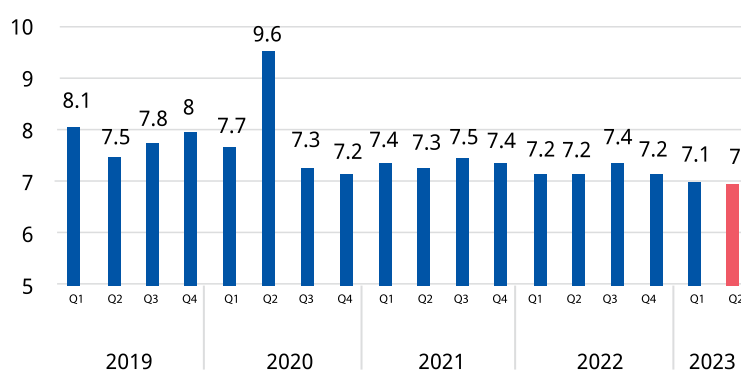
Unemployment

The unemployment rate in the second quarter of 2023 was 7 percent. However, unemployment rates are higher for women than men, especially for young women and for women living in urban areas. In 2022, the unemployment rate for women was 18.4 percent, while for men it was just 5.0 percent. For youth, 40.5 percent of young women were unemployed in 2023, while only 10.8 percent of young men were unem-

ployed in the same period. This suggests that the transition from school to work is particularly challenging for young women in Egypt.

Considering urban versus rural environments, 22 percent of women living in urban areas are unemployed, while just 7.1 percent of men, and 12.6 percent of women living in rural areas are considered unemployed, and just 3.1 percent of men.

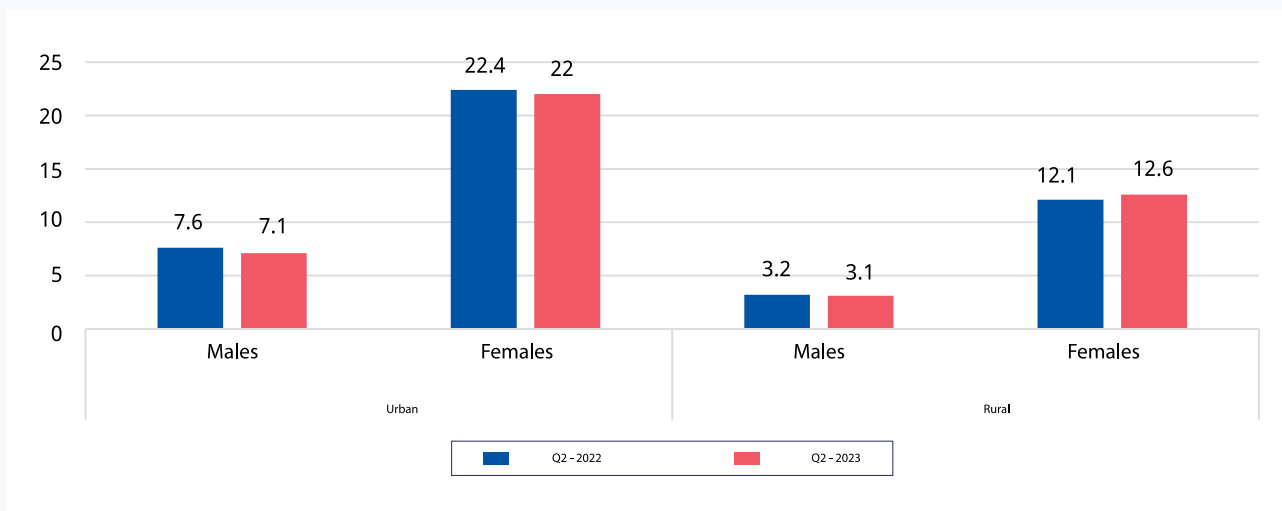
► **Figure 11: Unemployment rate**



Source: MPED and CAPMAS

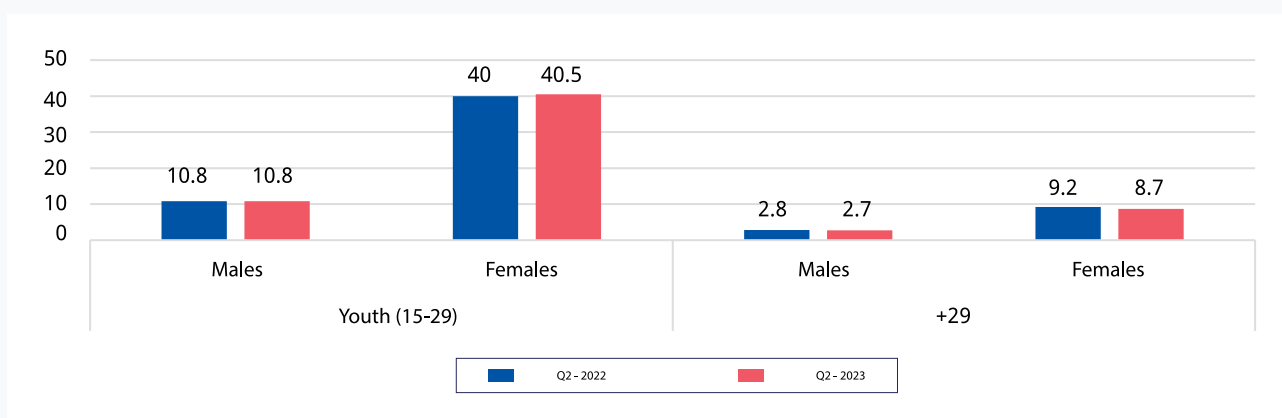


► **Figure 12: Unemployment by sex and urban/rural, 2022-2023**

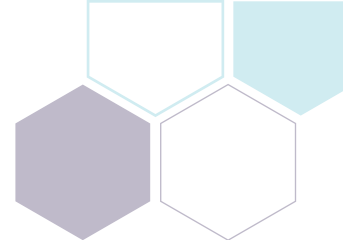


Source: CAPMAS

► **Figure 13: Youth unemployment by sex, 2022-2023**



Source: CAPMAS

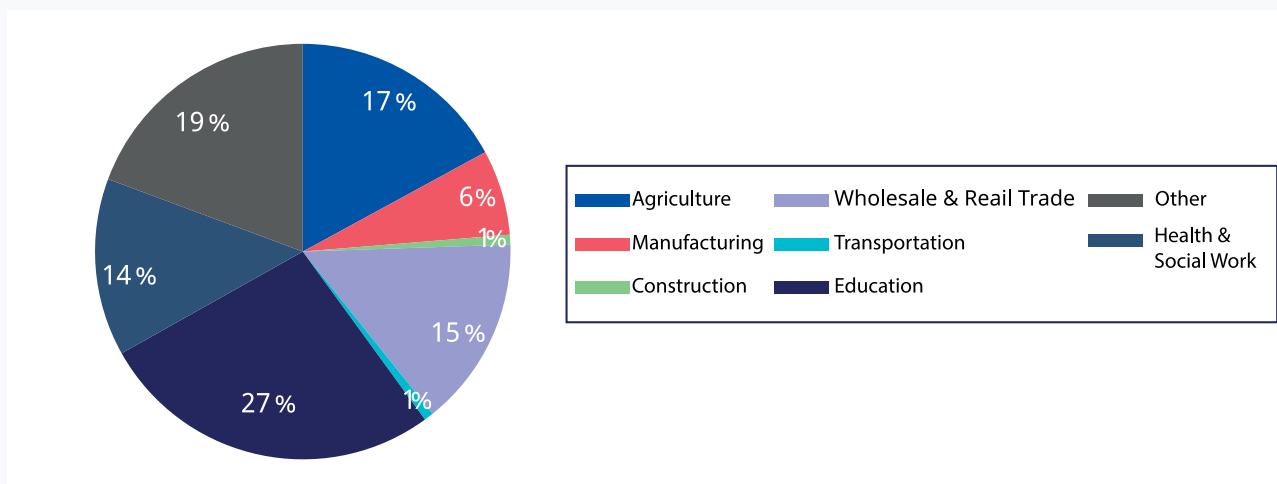


Employment by sector

In 2022, the largest employers in Egypt were agriculture (18.9 percent), wholesale and retail trade (14.9 percent), construction (13.9 percent), and manufac-

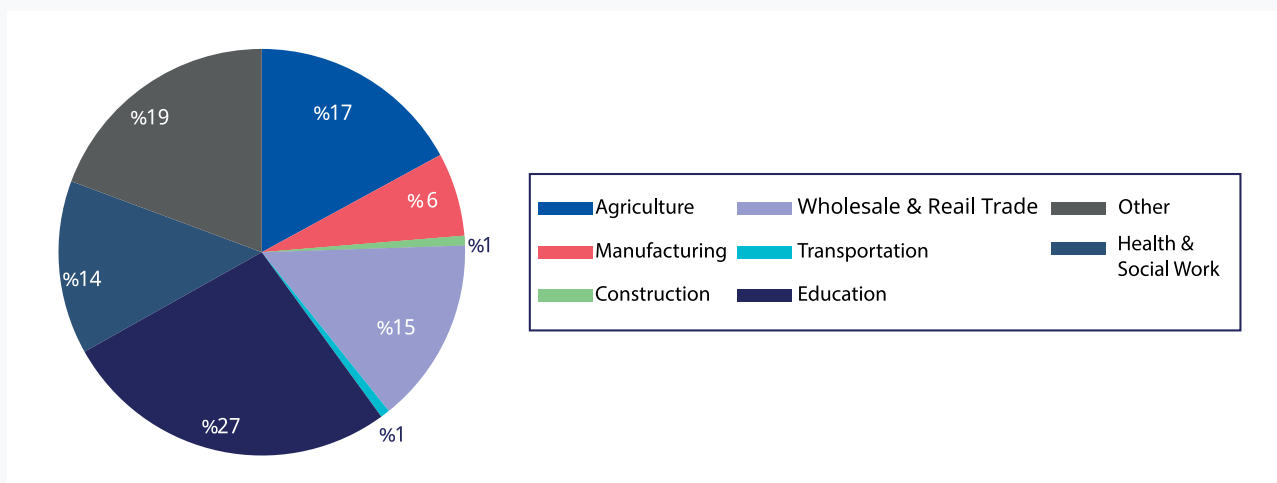
turing (12.5 percent). For women, they are education (26.9 percent), agriculture (17.1 percent), wholesale and retail trade (14.8 percent), and health and social work (13.8 percent). ²³

► **Figure 14: Employment by sector, 2022**



Source: Egypt in Figures 2023

► **Figure 15: Female employment by sector, 2022**



Source: Egypt in Figures 2023

²³CAPMAS 2023. Egypt in Figures 2023



Wages, gender wage gap, and working hours

The minimum wage was raised several times over the past year, primarily due to the currency devaluation and rising inflation. Egypt's National Wages Council set the minimum wage for private sector workers at EGP 2,700.00 per month in January 2023, then to EGP 3,000.00 per month in July 2023, and EGP 3,500.00 per month (roughly US\$113) in January 2024.²⁴ In March 2024, a new minimum wage of EGP 6,000.00 per month will go into effect.²⁵

In 2021, the average weekly wage for public/public business and private sector employees was EGP 942, or about EGP 4,082 per month. Other sources indicate that in 2023 they may have risen to EGP 9,200 per month.²⁶ Income parity is 19.7 percent.²⁷ In 2021, women earned an average weekly wage of EGP 746—EGP 1,687 in the public sector and EGP 721 in the private sector—while men earned an average weekly wage of EGP 981—EGP 1,911 in the public sector and EGP 949 in the private sector.²⁸

► **Table 4: Av. weekly wage for men and women in public and private sector in 2021 (in Egyptian pounds)**

	Public sector	Private sector
Women	1,687	721
Men	1,911	949

Source: CAPMAS Annual Bulletin of Employment, wages and working hrs. 2022

Women earn significantly less than men in some sectors like agriculture (60 percent wage gap), construction (36 percent), and waste management (37 percent), while making more than men in a few sectors such as transportation (women earn 48 percent more), electricity and gas (women earn 17 percent more), and specialized scientific and technical activities (women earn 18 percent more)—although they represent only a small proportion of workers in those sectors.²⁹ Where women are paid more are the sectors in which they tend to obtain higher skilled or managerial positions.

The weekly working hour average across the public and private sectors was 55 hours per week, with the lowest average at 48 hours in education and the highest at 62 hours in food and accommodation services.³⁰

Occupational safety and health

According to Egyptian Labor Law, the Ministry of La-

bour has instituted an official agency for inspection to enforce occupational safety and health regulations stipulated in Law No. 12 of 2003. Inspectors are assigned to conduct inspections of the workplace, review records, identify violations, engage workers on risks and hazards, and, among other duties, have the authority to recommend closure of institutions posing safety risks to workers or the environment if necessary. According to the However, the inspection process reportedly faces legal, institutional, and technical challenges, leading to slow implementation³¹

Unpaid work

Unpaid work is significantly higher for women. According to a 2015 Time-Use Survey, 91 percent of women spend time on unpaid household activities, compared to 26 percent of men, and 27 percent of women spend time on unpaid care for family members, compared to 8 percent of men. The survey estimated the value of this unpaid care work at EGP 496 billion. Further,

²⁴Reuters, "Egypt to raise minimum wage to \$113 a month from January", 11 December 2023.

²⁵Reuters, "Egypt raises minimum wage by 50% as part of 'urgent' package", 7 February 2024.

²⁶Salaryexplorer.com, "Average salary in Egypt."

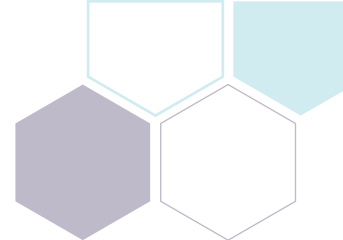
²⁷WEF 2023

²⁸CAPMAS, Annual Employment, wages and working hrs. Bulletin, 2022

²⁹CAPMAS, Annual employment, wages, and working hours bulletin. 2021

³⁰CAPMAS, Annual employment, wages, and working hours bulletin. 2021.

³¹Nihal Hatem Said, Occupational Health and Safety Implementation Issues in Egypt (American University of Cairo, 2019).



data shows that the unpaid work burden does not decrease when they enter the labor market.³² During the pandemic, trends show that a drop in female unemployment through the second quarter of 2021 was the result of women withdrawing from the labour force to address growing care burdens, which then rose again in by the end of 2021.³³

Discrimination

The opportunities for women to start businesses and participate in the labour market in Egypt are limited by widespread gender discrimination, made evident by gender stereotyping, gender wage gaps, labour force participation rates, and employment rates. While anti-discriminatory legal provisions are in place, Article 35 of the Labor Law prohibits wage discrimination, and several articles of the Constitution refer to non-discrimination, gender discrimination remains in some part of the legal system, contributing to Egypt's relatively low ranking in the 2023 World Justice Project's Rule of Law Index: 130th in civil justice, 140th in fundamental rights (both which contain gender discrimination indicators), and 136th overall (out of 142 countries).³⁴⁻³⁵

The Ministry of Manpower Decree 43 of 2021 on the determination of jobs in which women may not be employed prohibits women from working in underground mines or quarries, unless performing non-manual managerial tasks, and prohibits the employment of women during periods of pregnancy and lactation in jobs and conditions with potential risks to their reproductive health or health of their children. Decree 44 of 2021 concerning the employment and organization of women at night work shifts allows women to work after 7pm under the condition that the employer inform the labor office.

Household decision-making

Data from the Egypt Demographic and Health Survey reveal that women's participation in household decision-making generally increases with age, education, labor force participation and wealth quintile. Rural women and those without living children tend to be

less involved in household decision-making. Poorer women with less education tend to have less decision-making power, while women in paid employment tend to have more.³⁶

Informality

Informality in Egypt is high: about 67 percent of workers are engaged in the informal sector³⁷, with informal economic activity contributing to an estimated 40 percent of the country's economic output.³⁸ According to the CAPMAS 2018 Economic Census, women made up approximately 14 percent of the informal sector (and 17 percent of the formal sector).³⁹ The high prevalence of micro-enterprises, which provide 70 percent of jobs, is likely to contribute to rising informality and decent work deficits, as they are less likely to be registered and less able to offer formal contracts. At the same time, reports indicate that only half the workers at registered firms have contracts and are covered by social insurance, indicating that both formal and informal enterprises contribute to informality in Egypt.⁴⁰

Social Protection

The Social Insurance and Pensions Law (Law 148 of 2019) came into force in January of 2020, which unified multiple social insurance laws into one regulatory framework, at which time the Government Social Insurance Fund (GSIF) and the Public and Private Social Insurance Fund (PSIF) were merged. Law 148 covers the full range of pensions (old-age, disability, and survivors), work injury, unemployment, and sickness benefits.⁴¹

With the enactment of Law 135, individuals aged 65 and above who lack alternative old-age support are guaranteed a minimum pension, irrespective of their prior involvement in pension plans. However, those engaged in casual and informal labor remain the most vulnerable, receiving the least coverage from social insurance schemes.⁴²

Under Law 156 of 2002 on establishing an emergency relief fund for workers, a state-run fund provides financial aid to workers in companies that close or stop

³²World Bank, Women Economic Empowerment Study, 2018.

³³ILO, Second Regional Report on Jobs and Growth in North Africa (2018-21): Developments through the COVID-19 Era, 2022.

³⁴World Justice Project, "Rule of Law Index", 2023.

³⁵USAID, Gender Analysis and Assessment: USAID/Egypt Final Report, 2020.

³⁶Egypt, Ministry of Health and Population, Egypt Demographic and Health Survey 2014, 2015.

³⁷World Economic Forum, "Gender GAP Index", 2023.

³⁸FEI, IDSC. website

³⁹CAPMAS Economic Census 2018

⁴⁰World Bank, Egypt: Informal is the new normal, World Bank Issues Brief – No. 2, 2014; Danish Trade Union Development Agency, Egypt Labour

⁴¹Market Profile 2020/2021.

⁴²ILO. "Social Protection: Egypt."



paying wages or salaries, as well as aids companies to overcome expected decline and/or closure from economic crises.⁴³ The fund reportedly provides them workers with allowances for up to six months in establishments with 30 or more workers, covering social protection, allowances, and emergencies.

Currently people are enrolled in social protection schemes, mainly through Takaful—which provides financial assistance to the poor and low-income households—and Karama—which supports the elderly and disabled. According to the Minister of Social Solidarity, cash support programs reached 3.8 million families in 2020.⁴⁴

Social Dialogue

Egypt ratified the ILO Convention on Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize in 1957⁴⁵ and updated its Labor Unions Law in 2017 (from No. 35/1976 to No. 213/2017). Updates to the law included a number of changes to further liberalize unions, notably by allowing trade union committees to handle collective and individual disputes. Trade union density of total employment is estimated to be 11 percent, and 135 collective bargaining agreements from four governorates cover about 47,000 workers.⁴⁶

► 3.3 Profile of women entrepreneurs

This section outlines some key statistics and trends for women's entrepreneurship in Egypt. It compares data presented in an earlier Women's Entrepreneurship Development (WED) Assessment, published in 2016 by the ILO,⁴⁷ with more recent figures to show how the business landscape for women entrepreneurs has changed within the past decade.⁴⁸

Gender and Business Ownership

In 2021, there were 1,207,200 registered women-owned businesses, representing 17 percent of the total number of business owners in Egypt. In contrast, male business owners totaled 6,102,000—83 percent. According to the 2016 WED Assessment, in 2014, wom-

en-owned businesses represented only nine percent of the total number of self-employed / business owners in Egypt, indicating an upward trend in women's entrepreneurship.

Female business ownership remains concentrated in rural areas; however, the share of women entrepreneurs in urban areas is increasing. In 2014, only 18 percent of women entrepreneurs lived in urban areas, whereas in 2021, 37 percent were urban. This is much closer to the 39 percent of male entrepreneurs living in urban areas, up only slightly from 38 percent in 2014.

⁴³Egypt Today, "In Depth: The Egyptian Labor Emergency Fund", 2 May 2017.

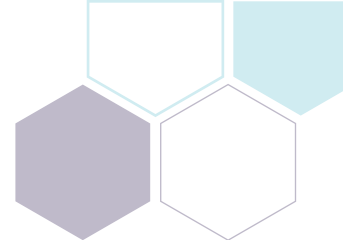
⁴⁴Ministry of Social Solidarity. Statement before the House of Representatives in February 2021

⁴⁵ILO, Information on the application of ratified Conventions supplied by governments on the preliminary list of individual, International Labour Conference, 108th Session, 2018.

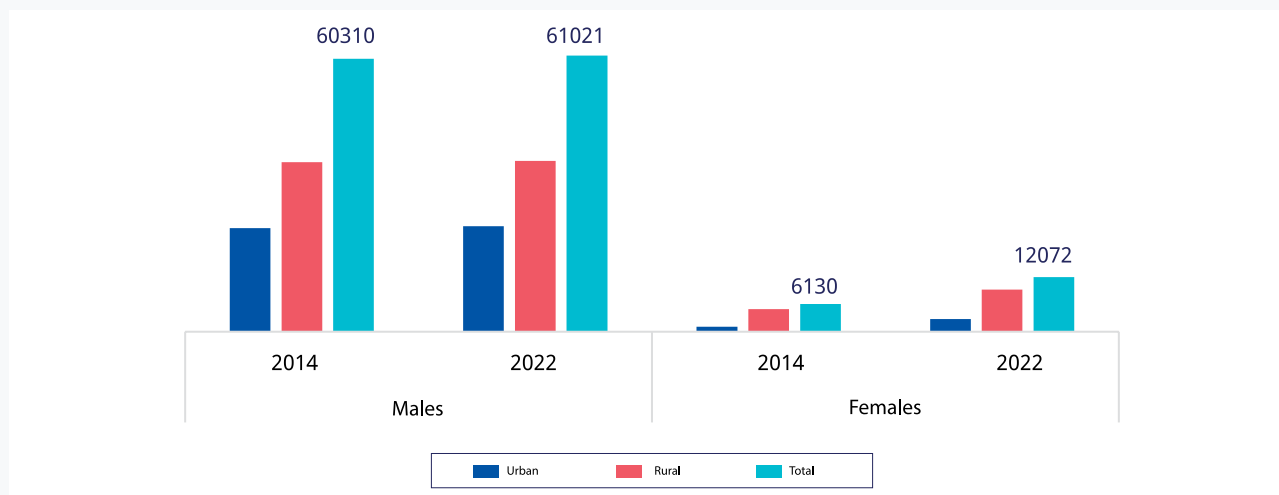
⁴⁶Labour market profile

⁴⁷ILO, Women's Entrepreneurship Development Assessment: Egypt, 2016.

⁴⁸For this analysis, 'women entrepreneurs' include women who identify as working employers and self-employed, both those working formally and informally, in all enterprise size categories. While in the 2016 WED Assessment, women who participated as "contributing family members without pay" were included in the data representing women's entrepreneurship, they are not in this report.



► **Figure 16: Business ownership by gender, by urban/rural, 2014/2022 (in hundreds)**



Source: CAPMAS Annual Bulletin of Labour Force 2022

Distribution of women entrepreneurs according to formality and informality

Since 2014/15 there has been a shift in how women participate in the formal labour force. In 2014/15, women working in the formal sector participated almost entirely as employees (98.4 percent), but in

2021 this number dropped to 70 percent. There was a small but notable increase in the percentage of women employers (0.6 to 1.3 percent) but a much larger increase in own-account workers (0.8 to 9.3 percent) and contributing family workers (0.2 to 19.4 percent). The economic slowdown brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic likely contributed to these changes.

► **Table 5: Status of female workers in 2014/15 and 2021, formal v. informal**

Status of Female Workers	Formal		Informal	
	2014/15	2021	2014/15	2020
Employees (paid workers)	98.4	70	25.6	17.9
Employers (engage employees)	0.6	1.3	6.8	3.3
Own-account workers (do not engage employees)	0.8	9.3	25.0	19.1
Contributing family workers (Unpaid workers)	0.2	19.4	40.8	59.7
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: CAPMAS 2023 (Annual bulletin for labour force survey 2022)

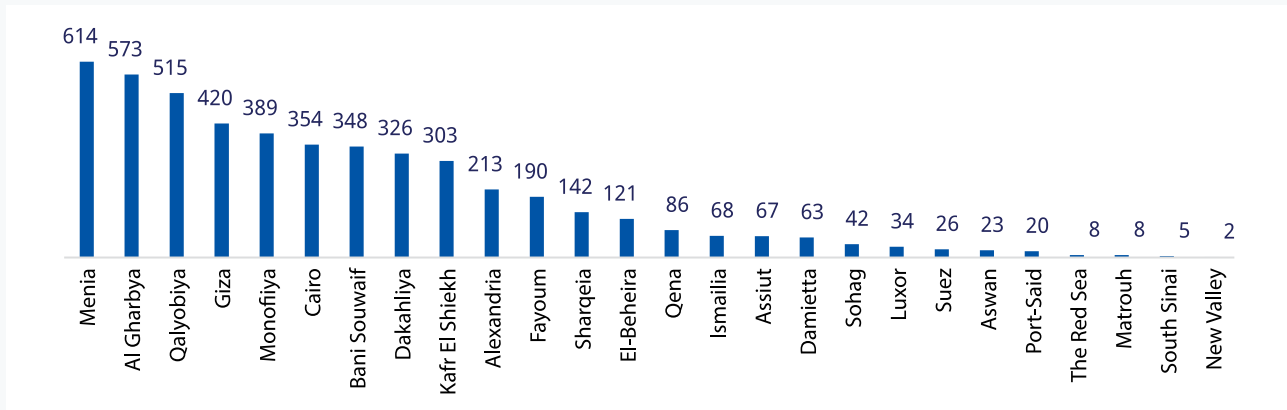
Distribution of women entrepreneurs by governorate

In terms of how women entrepreneurs are distributed

geographically, the largest share of female entrepreneurs is located in Menia, Al Gharbya, Qalyobiya, and Giza.



► **Figure 17: Females (Employer and self employed) by Governorate, 2022 (in hundreds)**



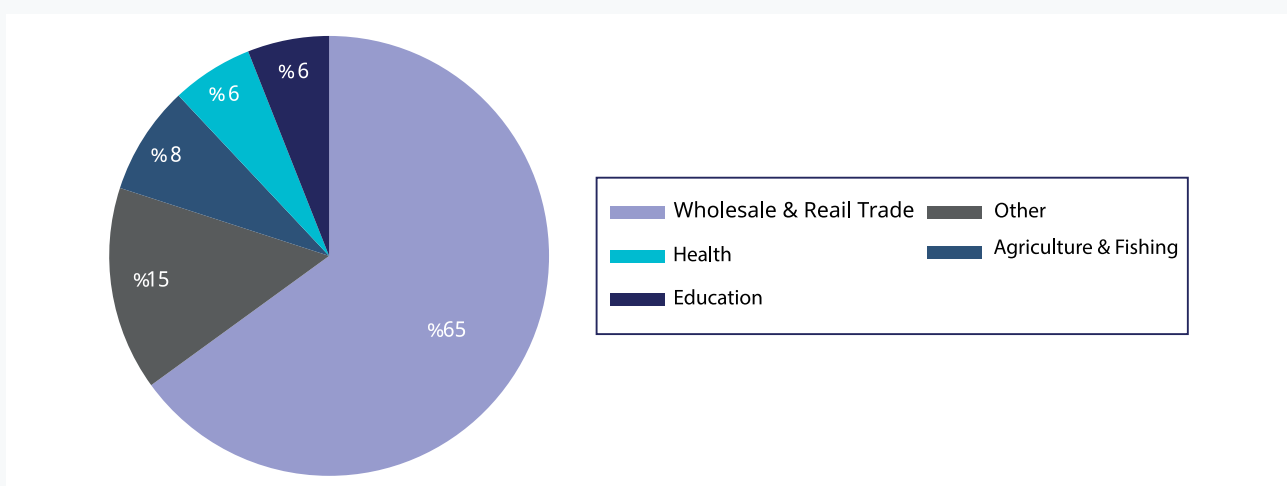
Source: CAPMAS Economic Census 2018 and own calculations

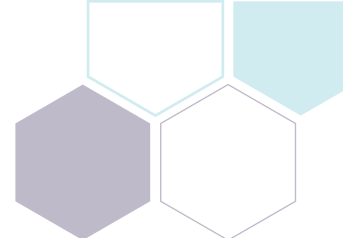
Distribution of women entrepreneurs by sector of economic activity

Figure 18 shows the distribution of women business

owners: over two-thirds of women SME entrepreneurs are engaged in wholesale and retail trade (65%), 8 percent in agriculture, forestry and fishing, 6 percent in education, and 6 percent in health.

► **Figure 18: Women business owners by sector (employer and self-employed) by sector of economic activity**





When the distribution of women-owned businesses is further broken down by enterprise size, 69 percent of microenterprises are in wholesale and retail trade, whereas 74 percent of medium-sized enterprises are in manufacturing.

Size of female-owned MSMEs in Egypt

Egypt's MSME Development Law No. 152 of 2020, which replaced the Small and Micro Enterprise Law No. 141 of 2004, considers medium enterprises as those with an annual turnover of 50-200 million EGP, small enterprises as 1-50 million EGP, and microenterprises as less than 1 million EGP. Start-ups or "newly established" enterprises are those that have been operational for up to two years and are instead clas-

sified by capital investment. Start-ups with less than 50,000 EGP in capital are considered microenterprises, up to 5 million EGP in manufacturing or 3 million EGP non-manufacturing as small enterprises, and up to 15 million EGP in manufacturing or 5 million in non-manufacturing as medium-sized enterprises.⁴⁹ While Law No. 152 does not include number of workers in its definition, the Central Bank considers microenterprises as those that employ 10 people or less and small and medium enterprises as those that employ between 10 and 200 employees.⁵⁰ The Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics considers small enterprises as those employing 5 - 50 workers and medium enterprises as 50 - 200 workers. Table 6 below shows how, using the latter definition, 97 percent of enterprises are micro- and small enterprises.

► **Table 6: Proportion of enterprise sizes in Egypt**

Size of enterprise (number of workers)	Enterprise size as proportion of total establishments in Egypt (%)
1	30
2	37
3-4	22.2
5-9	8.1
10-49	2.4
50+	0.3
Total	100

Source: CAPMAS, Economic Census 2018

⁴⁹Dcode Economic and Financial Consulting, "Egypt's MSME Development Law No. 152 of 2020".

⁵⁰ Zeinab Abbas Zaazou and Doaa Salman Abdou, "Egyptian small and medium sized enterprises' battle against COVID-19 pandemic: March-July 2020", Journal of Humanities and Applied Social Sciences Vol. 4, No. 2 (2022): 94-112.



While more recent sex-disaggregated data was not available, previous reports indicate that on average, women-owned MSMEs tend to be smaller than male-owned enterprises. In 2011, female-owned enterprises employed an average of 1.85 workers, whereas male-owned MSMEs employed an average of 2.12 workers. 38 percent of male-owned enterprises had only one worker, whereas nearly half of female-owned enterprises had the same.⁵¹

Challenges for women entrepreneurs

While there are multiple challenges related to starting and growing a business in Egypt, some are much more pronounced for women entrepreneurs than they are for men. The challenges listed below emerged as the most prominent issues faced by women entrepreneurs, according to the interviews conducted during this study and/or confirmed by secondary sources.

Policy coordination

While multiple entities offer different forms of assistance to MSMEs, there is often little to no coordination between them. This fragmented approach leads to inefficiencies, duplication of efforts, and gaps in support, ultimately hindering the growth and development of MSMEs, particularly women-led enterprises. Without cohesive policy coordination, MSMEs struggle to navigate the complex landscape of available support and may not fully benefit from the resources and initiatives intended to help promote them.

Access to financial services

Women's access to finance in Egypt remains disproportionately low. An estimated 27 percent of Egyptian women held bank accounts in 2019, compared to 39 percent of men.⁵²

Women business owners face difficulties accessing credit and financing for their businesses. This is in part due to a lack of financial literacy, which limits women's ability to navigate the financial system, understand loan terms, and access financial products and services effectively. Women in Upper Egypt even reported falling victim to fraud and scams due to their lack of knowledge about legitimate loan application procedures.⁵³ Some women reported facing having biased

lending practices, including stricter lending criteria, additional guarantees, or collateral requirements that women may not possess due to legal or cultural constraints. Such conditions are not necessarily backed by specific policies or laws, but rather stem from cultural or personal biases. Many women do not have enough collateral to satisfy risk-averse lenders, as property and other assets that can be used to meet collateral requirements are usually in a man's name. Financial institutions also often require businesses to be operational for 3 years before providing a loan, which compounds the start-up constraints that women already face.

According to interviews, the financial sector lacks categorized data for women entrepreneurs in specific sectors of work, making it difficult for financial institutions to develop suitable banking products. Geography also compounds financial inclusion difficulties for women in rural areas, making them hard to reach, particularly in the absence of advanced technology like smart phones that could help circumnavigate physical distance.⁵⁴

Although almost all microcredit projects include a capacity building component, many women consider financial training insufficient, as they are not catered to local markets and local financial traditions.⁵⁵

Business development services

According to interviews, there is a severe lack of appropriate business development services tailored to women. Business training and education programs do not adequately address the needs and challenges relevant to the specific sectors and contexts that women are working in. Women report struggling with business planning, financial management, marketing, and technology adoption, but there is also a need for training in soft skills related to self-confidence and decision-making.⁵⁶ Access to legal advice to assist in business registration, business incubators, mentorship programs, and networking opportunities are also weak or unavailable.

Technology and digitalization

In a rapidly digitizing economy, many women entrepreneurs lack access to technological tools and

⁵¹ILO 2016.

⁵²UN Women, "Expanding banking services, savings and loans for rural women", n.d.

⁵³Interviews in Upper Egypt

⁵⁴Interviews

⁵⁵Interviews

⁵⁶Interviews



digital skills needed to leverage digital platforms for business development, finance, marketing, and sales. Women reported they do not know where to access training programs for how to use digital tools for business purposes, such as for marketing and freelance contracting. Digitization can be especially challenging for small businesses with limited budgets and bandwidths. Women in some contexts face additional challenges in access to the internet via mobile phones and other infrastructure necessary to support the use of digital tools.

Access to markets

Especially for those living in more dispersed, rural areas, women entrepreneurs have challenges accessing markets, distribution channels, and supply chains for their products and services. There is a lack of supportive services such as market research, export assistance, and access to trade fairs and exhibitions, preventing women entrepreneurs from expanding their market reach and growing their businesses domestically and internationally. Gender-responsive procurement policies and practices are also uncommon.

Information

Many women entrepreneurs struggle to find sufficient market information related to their industry. This includes opportunities related to transitioning to or entering the green economy. Although some initiatives have leveraged smart phones to disseminate information, this is problematic for women in rural and/or impoverished areas who don't own smart phones.

Insufficient coordination across sectorial institutions and limited knowledge sharing lead to gaps in access to resources, information and services needed for growth. Lack of coordination may lead to inconsistencies in policies and regulations affecting women entrepreneurs and reduce the effectiveness of policies and programs intended to support them.

Land ownership and inheritance rights

While the government has taken steps to confront issues related to inheritance rights—specifically through Law 219, Article 49 which criminalizes the denial of

inheritance rights, punishable by imprisonment and fine—women still maintain restricted rights concerning access to land and non-land assets and unequal inheritance rights for widows and daughters.⁵⁷ Even with statutory rights to inherit land from their parents, women in rural areas may confront family efforts to deny their land claims, which may then result in their loss of other resources and support.⁵⁸

Networks, voice and representation

Women entrepreneurs often lack access to supportive networks and mentorship opportunities that would otherwise enable them to share knowledge, market information and resources. Women entrepreneurs, particularly in rural areas, report that their more remote locations make it challenging to build any kind of network with other women business owners. Negative stereotypes equate to women business owners being excluded from business networks and investor relations. While associations for women entrepreneurs exist, their resources are often limited. Social dialogue mechanisms that include women entrepreneurs were reportedly non-existent.⁵⁹

Cultural norms

Traditional gender roles and societal expectations in Egypt may discourage women from engaging in entrepreneurial activities or accessing financial services independently. Cultural norms dictate that women prioritize household responsibilities—childrearing, housekeeping, and care work—over business ventures or require male family members' permission to conduct financial transactions, limiting women's autonomy and agency in financial matters. Some women reported having their husbands withholding their identification cards to prevent them from going to a bank. Other women said family members would not support them in attending training programs if it did not have a direct lucrative return. In many areas, it is considered inappropriate for a woman to travel alone to seek out financial or business development services or training, which for rural women, often entail long distances.

As women gain more education and economic em-

⁵⁷WEF 2023.

⁵⁸Cheryl Doss and Ruth Meinzen-Dick. Land tenure security for women: A conceptual framework, Land Use Policy, Volume 99, 2020, 105080, ISSN 0264-8377, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.landusepol.2020.105080>.

⁵⁹Interviews



powerment, they are challenging and gradually loosening rigid gender norms. Women are often stereotyped as being less skilled, yet more patient and adept at performing repetitive tasks requiring manual dexterity compared to men.

Work-Life Balance

Balancing family responsibilities with the demands of entrepreneurship can be particularly challenging for women in Egypt, where traditional gender roles often place the burden of caregiving and household duties on women. Juggling these responsibilities can impact women's ability to dedicate time and energy to their businesses.

► 3.4. Impacts of environmental and climate change on economic activities, gender equality and jobs

Egypt's economy is closely tied to its natural resources, including fertile soils for agriculture, fresh water from the Nile, and minerals resources, as well as natural attractions for tourism.

Sea level rise and saltwater intrusion

The Nile River is the primary source of freshwater in Egypt and supports the livelihoods of millions of Egyptians working in agriculture, about 25 percent of the labour force. It is the source of farmland irrigation, both through basin irrigation, during which annual flooding deposits nutrient-rich silt, as well as perennial irrigation to water crops throughout the year. About 60 percent of the nation's food is secured through the Nile Delta, making it critical for food security in Egypt.⁶⁰

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) considers the Nile Delta to be an extremely vulnerable hotspot and among the top three most vulnerable deltas in the world due to the risks posed by sea level rise.⁶¹ Sea levels have risen by 3.2 mm annually since 2012 in Egypt, threatening to flood and erode the northern shore. Some estimates indicate that sea level rise may reach up to 1.0 meter by 2100, which would leave much of Egypt's coastal areas underwater. Coastal inundation and saltwater intrusion are compounded by accelerated evaporation brought on by rising temperatures, further concentrating salts in affected areas.⁶² Sea-level rise is projected to harm 2.4 million people by the 2080s.⁶³

Floods and droughts

The increased frequency of floods and droughts in Egypt also poses a threat to food production in the Nile Delta, which is expected to decrease by at least 30 percent by 2030. Recent heavy rain events have also caused power shortages in major cities. In 2018, Greater Cairo experienced power outages for nearly a full day, and in 2020 heavy rains and wind speeds resulted in damaged transformers, transmission lines, and towers in northeastern Egypt, leading to US \$13 million in losses for the electricity sector. In September 2023, hurricane Daniel resulted in major floods across neighboring Libya, causing over 2,500 deaths.⁶⁴ Despite an increase in heavy rain and flash flood events, the overall annual precipitation level in Egypt is expected to fall, coupled with increased average temperatures. Not only does this put further pressure on farmland, but the energy sector as well. Approximately 84 percent of electricity generation in Egypt comes from natural gas. Natural gas plants in Egypt primarily rely on freshwater for cooling, raising competition for an increasingly scarce resource and underscoring the need for water-efficient technologies to be able to adapt to climate change.⁶⁵

Rising temperatures and heat waves

Climate models predict that the annual temperature in Egypt will rise between 1.5 and 3.0 degrees Celsius by the year 2059 and between 3.4 and 6.2 degrees Celsius by 2099. Heat waves are also anticipated to

⁶⁰UNFCCC, Egypt's First Updated Nationally Determined Contributions, 8 June 2022.

⁶¹IPCC

⁶²Sarah El Safety and Farah Saafan, "Insight: Egypt's Nile Delta farmland salts up as temperatures, and seas, rise", Reuters, 17 November 2022.

⁶³World Bank. Climate Risk Country Profile.

⁶⁴Lefteris Papadimas and Nina Chestney, "Mediterranean's devastating Storm Daniel may be harbinger of storms to come", Reuters, 12 September 2023.

⁶⁵IEA 2023.



increase in severity and frequency.⁶⁶ Rising temperatures from climate change present multiple challenges. As previously mentioned, rising average temperatures increase evaporation, which decreases water availability and increases salt concentrations, leading to land degradation that most notably impacts the agricultural sector. Water-based tourism is also impacted: warmer waters result in coral bleaching and the loss of marine ecosystems, which are critical to the snorkeling and scuba diving industry.

But hotter temperatures also pose health risks to both people and animals. As temperatures rise, the risk of heat-related illnesses such as heat exhaustion and heatstroke increases significantly. Outdoor laborers, farmers and agricultural workers, and construction workers, as well as vulnerable populations, such as the elderly, children, and individuals with pre-existing health conditions, are particularly at risk. Vector-borne diseases, such as malaria, dengue fever, and West Nile, also become more problematic in hotter environments, which threaten both humans and animals.

Plastic pollution

Egypt has a growing waste management problem, particularly as it relates to plastics. High plastic consumption and insufficient waste infrastructure result in heavy plastic pollution, health hazards, and a de-

clining appeal of tourism destinations. The country produces over 3 million tons of plastic annually, much of which ends up in the Nile, the Mediterranean Sea, in illegal landfills, or burned. According to the World Bank, more than two-thirds of waste products are inadequately managed in Egypt, underscoring the need for greater waste management system investment.⁶⁷

The gender dynamics of climate change

The impacts of climate change in Egypt disproportionately impact women. 57 percent of women working in Egypt are in agriculture,⁶⁸ which is dominated by poorer households. Women are often involved in small-scale agriculture, particularly in rural areas. With degraded agricultural conditions brought on by droughts, floods, and saltwater intrusion, women are more likely to face challenges in ensuring food security for their families and communities, leading to increased workloads and potential economic hardships.⁶⁹ Data from the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) show that women are likely to be more food insecure than men, with 9.8 percent of adult women being severely food insecure and 29.9 percent moderately to severely food insecure, whereas they are 7.9 and 27 percent, respectively, for men.⁷⁰

⁶⁶World Bank. Climate Risk Country Profile.

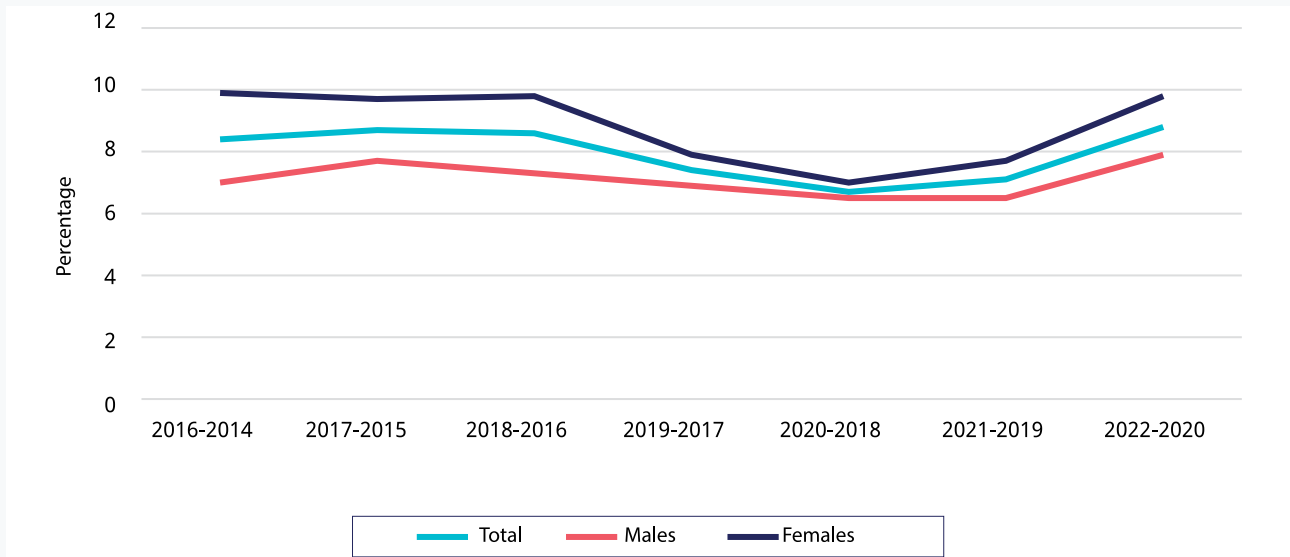
⁶⁷Elias Al Helou, "Egypt coming to grips with plastics", Economy Middle East, 23 January 2023.

⁶⁸This includes women working as entrepreneurs, workers, and contributing family members.

⁶⁹Rodriguez, 2022.

⁷⁰Food and Agriculture Organization, www.fao.org/faostat.



► **Figure 19: Percentage of men and women who are food insecure in Egypt**

Restrictive gender norms limit women's access to markets, finance, technology, and productive resources (ERF and GIZ).⁷¹ This limitation hampers women's capacity to adopt climate-resilient practices or invest in adaptive measures, as they may lack the necessary resources and decision-making power. Limited access to information about climate resilient practices and technologies, as well as established early-warning systems for extreme weather events, may also make women more vulnerable to climate change.

Ecosystem services

Ecosystem services contribute to economies through air and water purification, soil regeneration, crop pollination, agricultural pest control, temperature moderation, and protection against storms, floods, and wind. As these ecosystem services are diminished or

lost from climate change, the environmental effects have employment impacts, especially in sectors that are heavily reliant on them like agriculture, forestry, fishing, and tourism.

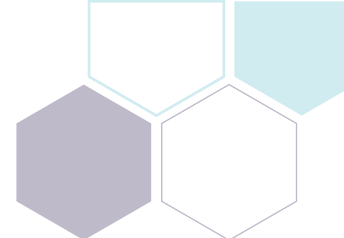
Jobs

The ILO estimates that heat stress will lead to a 2.2 percent loss in working time globally by 2030, the equivalent of 80 million full time jobs. In Egypt, heat stress is expected to reduce productivity by about 134,000 working hours per year by 2030, with agriculture and construction taking the biggest hit. Women working in subsistence farming may be particularly vulnerable.⁷² In its NDC, Egypt anticipates that the decrease in available water will have a negative impact on over 25 percent of the labour force working in agriculture.⁷³

⁷¹OECD, SIGI 2019 Global Report: Transforming Challenges into Opportunities, 2019.

⁷²ILO, Working on a warmer planet, 2019b.

⁷³UNFCCC, 2022.



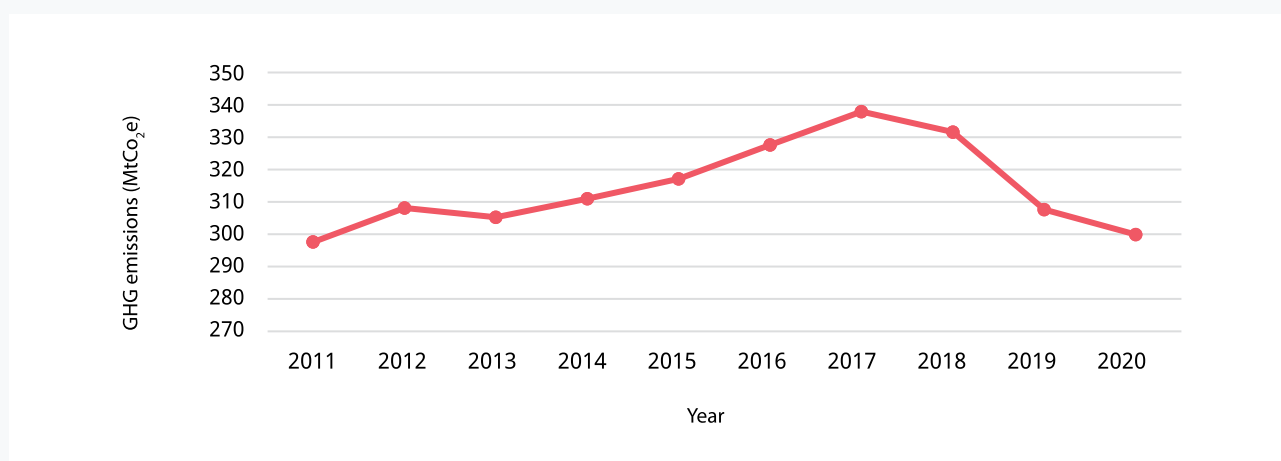
► 3.5. Impacts of economic activities and jobs on the environment and climate

According to the World Bank, approximately 40 percent of employment opportunities in Egypt are associated with high Greenhouse gas (GHG)-emitting activities—like non-renewable energy, mining, and chemicals—58 percent as linked to medium GHG-emitting activities—like construction and textile production—and only 2 percent of jobs linked to low-emitting sectors.⁷⁴ Fossil fuel combustion, industrial emissions, agricultural activities, and poor waste management all contribute to GHG-emissions but further impact the environment through land degradation, loss of natural resources and biodiversity, and pollution and contamination.

Greenhouse gas emissions

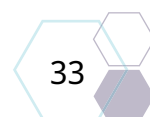
Egypt is the 29th largest greenhouse gas emitter, representing 0.63 percent of global emissions. Its emission levels generally rose up through 2017, after which they began to recede—from 338 MtCO₂e in 2017 to 300 MtCO₂e in 2020. The energy sector accounts for the majority of emissions (73 percent), followed by waste (9.7 percent), industry (9.6 percent), and agriculture (7.6 percent).

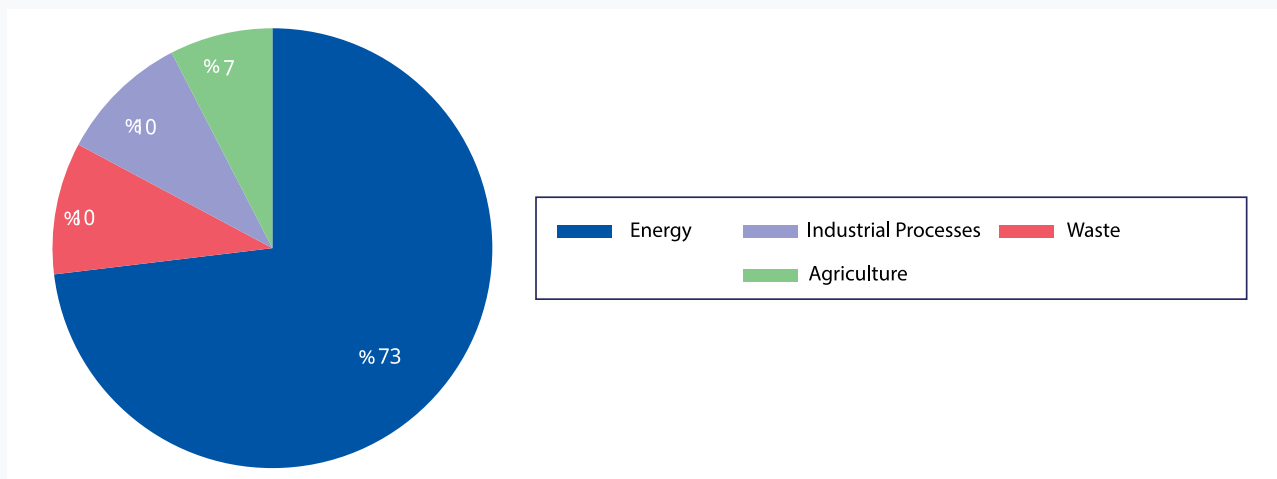
► **Figure 20: Annual Greenhouse gas emissions (MtCO₂e)**



Source: Climate Watch

⁷⁴Rodriguez, 2022.



► **Figure 21: GHG emissions by sector (MtCO₂e), 2020**

Source: Climate Watch

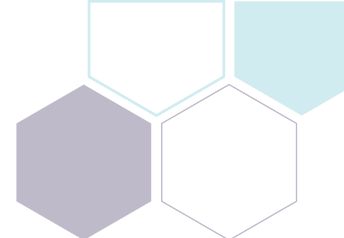
Table 7 breaks greenhouse gas emissions down by sector and gas. The energy sector is the biggest CO₂ emitter, followed by industry. The waste sector leads

in methane emissions, and agriculture leads in nitrous oxide emissions.

► **Table 7**

Sector	Carbon dioxide (CO ₂)	Methane (CH ₄)	Nitrous oxide (N ₂ O)	F-Gas
Agriculture	n/a	9.95	12.78	n/a
Energy	192.62	25.36	1.14	n/a
Industry	18.13	n/a	6.55	4.15
Waste	n/a	29.1	0.0004	n/a

Source: Climate Watch



Land degradation

While agricultural soils in Egypt remain relatively productive, a growing population puts pressure on finite resources including food and land. When combined with the increasing threats to the productivity of agricultural land brought about by climate change, land degradation remains a major concern. Tourism activities, particularly in coastal and ecologically sensitive areas, also pose risks to natural habitats, contribute to pollution, and put pressure on fragile ecosystems such as coral reefs and coastal wetlands.

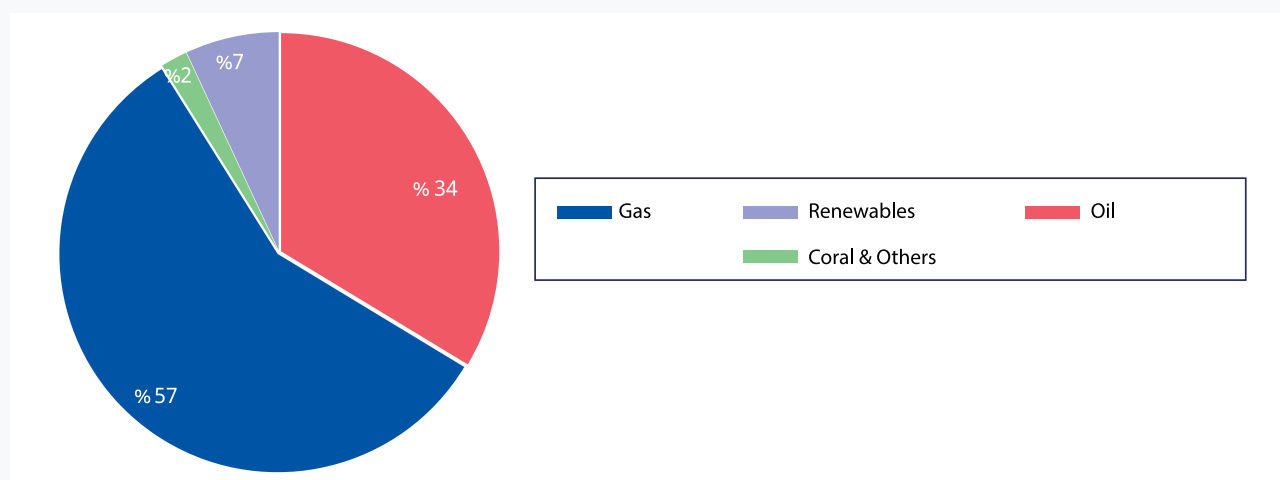
Waste management

Inadequate waste management practices, including open dumping and burning of solid waste, contribute to environmental pollution and degradation in Egypt. Improper disposal of solid waste results in littering, soil and water contamination, and harm to wildlife. The lack of proper recycling and waste treatment facilities exacerbates these problems.⁷

Energy mix

Egypt has both traditional fossil fuels and renewable energy sources, the former being pivotal for the nation's socio-economic progress. Egypt switched from being a net exporter of oil and gas to a net importer in the 2010s due to escalating energy consumption and diminishing resources. The energy sector has since faced intermittent power outages, and high subsidies on energy prices has contributed to the fiscal deficit.⁷⁶ In 2020, 92 percent of the country's energy came from fossil fuels—2 percent coal, 34 percent oil, and 58 percent gas—and 7 percent from low-carbon sources. While renewable energy currently accounts for a relatively small portion of the total energy mix, it is expected to grow. Egypt has invested in large-scale renewable energy projects that promote the installation of solar and wind energy, and, according to its updated NDC,⁷⁷ intends to reduce 65 percent of GHG emissions from oil and gas by 2030.

► **Figure 23: Total energy supply, 2020**



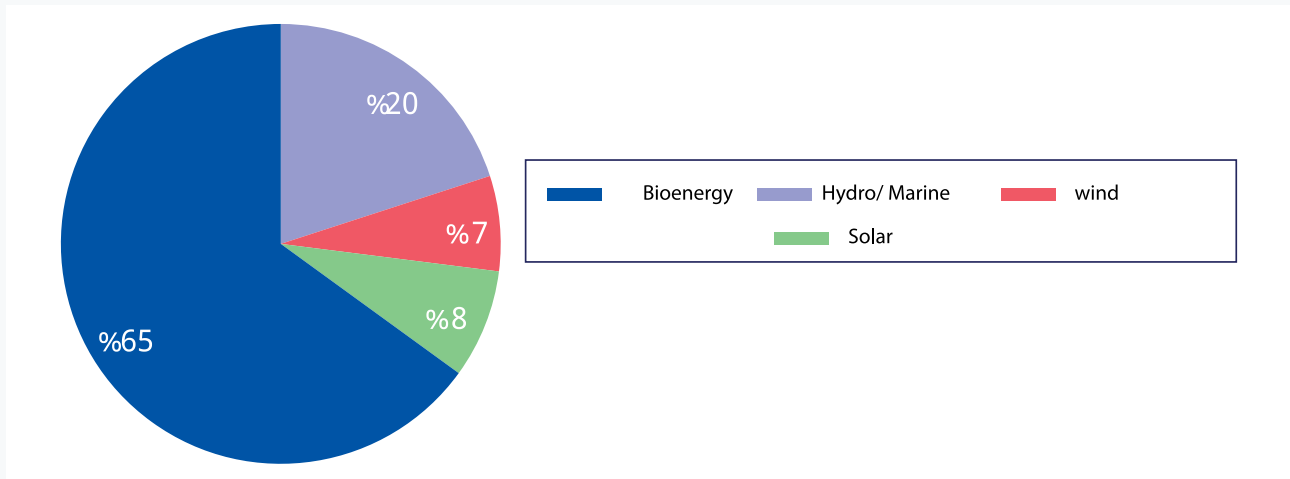
Source: IRENA, Energy Profile: Egypt, 2023.

⁷⁵https://fount.aucegypt.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3470&context=retro_etds

⁷⁶IRENA, Energy Profile: Egypt, 2023a.

⁷⁷UNFCCC, 2022.



► **Figure 24: Renewable energy supply, 2022**

Source: IRENA Energy Profile: Egypt, 2023.

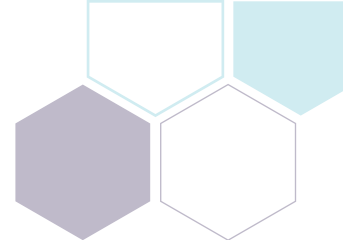
bioenergy in the form of traditional biomass (e.g. through agricultural bioproduct), making up nearly two thirds of renewable energy supply. Hydro/marine power is the next largest energy supply source (20 percent), followed by solar (8 percent), and wind (7 percent). Concerning electricity access and generation, despite 100% of the population having access to electricity, there are regular power cuts throughout the year in Cairo. In an attempt to alleviate electricity loads brought on by rising consumption and temperatures amid a shortage of natural gas and petroleum products necessary to operate some units, the Egyptian government currently implements power cuts for

1-2 hours per day, rotating between different areas in Cairo and the governorates.

The Egyptian Holding Company for Electricity clarified that the power cuts are only temporary until the network returns to normal pressures.

In 2022, Egypt generated 208.09 TWh of electricity / 1,875 kWh per capita.⁷⁸ Approximately 88 percent comes from non-renewable sources and 12 percent from renewables: 7 percent hydro/marine, 2 percent solar, and 3 percent wind.

⁷⁸Ourworldindata, World Bank



►► -4 Sectoral close-up analysis

► 4.1 Agriculture

The agriculture sector was selected for close-up analysis because of its importance to the economy and employment, its vulnerability to climate change, opportunities to address decent work deficits, and the relatively high engagement of women in MSMEs. In Egypt, where agriculture plays a crucial role in both the economy and employment, empowering women entrepreneurs to participate in the just transition could accelerate the adoption of innovative, sustainable farming practices that conserve water and ecological systems, aligning with Egypt's environmental goals. By supporting women in agriculture, Egypt can harness diverse perspectives in climate change resilience strategies and in tackling environmental degradation, ensuring a just transition that benefits all layers of society and leads to a more resilient and sustainable agricultural sector.

Agriculture contributes 12 percent of national GDP and 19 percent of total employment. It represents 8 percent of known women entrepreneurs. It is dominated by family farming. Agriculture is highly informal and has the biggest gender wage gap of all the sectors (60%).⁷⁹ It is also a sector where women tend to be more active and are prioritized in most core national policies and strategies.⁸⁰

The sector is highly vulnerable to climate change, with risks including land degradation and erosion from rising sea levels and saltwater intrusion and decreased productivity and harvest loss from increased intensity and frequency of droughts and floods. With 60 percent of the nation's food coming from the Nile Delta, these climate change risks in turn threaten national food security.⁸¹ Egypt's major crops include barley, cotton, dates, fruits (namely citrus), legumes, maize, olives, rice, sorghum, sugar beets, sugarcane, and wheat. It is the world's second largest producer of table olives and figs.⁸² The production of many of these crops yields crop residues eligible for compost and

biofuel conversion, but there is limited knowledge and technical know-how for how to implement this.⁸³ The sector emits 7 percent of total national greenhouse gas emissions, primarily through nitrous oxide emissions.⁸⁴

Agricultural jobs are predominantly seasonal, with the majority of female workers involved in sorting, packaging, and packing. Working conditions are often unsafe, particularly when dealing with machinery, and the absence of medical or risk insurance exposes many to occupational safety and health risks. The rights of most agricultural workers, especially women, are often disregarded. Larger companies are more likely to prioritize suitable working conditions and provide medical and social insurance.⁸⁵

Some of the major challenges faced by women entrepreneurs are access to quality seeds, access to technical training in using modern and more sustainable farm practices, market access, and lack of awareness with regard to climate resiliency. Government support programs rarely cater to the specific skills and investment needs of women in agriculture, but rather offer general support to women living in rural areas. Data and statistics relevant for a just transition in the sector is lacking: information on the functions that women perform in family farms is limited, as is data on what types of skillsets and training needs will be required to shift to more sustainable and climate-resilient agriculture. Standards for sustainable agriculture and agricultural waste management are also absent.⁸⁶

According to stakeholders interviewed for this report, the points listed below are considered as key constraints to MSMEs in the context of a just transition in the sector, some which apply specifically to women entrepreneurs, and others to MSMEs in general.

⁷⁹CAPMAS, 2022, Population Magazine #103.

⁸⁰CAPMAS

⁸¹UNFCCC, 2022.

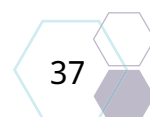
⁸²FAO, "Product highlights - Egypt".

⁸³Oxford 2023. Clean Energy.

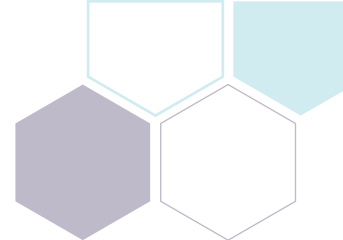
⁸⁴Climate Watch

⁸⁵Interviews.

⁸⁶Interviews.



Key constraints in agriculture	
Policy	• Limited data collection and monitoring: Data and statistics on the functions that women perform in family farms is limited
Access to services and information	• Poor access to inputs and information: Women entrepreneurs often lack access to quality inputs and knowledge on how to cope with climatic shocks and natural resource depletion. • Poor access to services: Women in agriculture experience challenges in accessing technology and extension services. This may be due to a lack of awareness and/or limited mobility, but it may also suggest that extension services may not be targeting women entrepreneurs effectively.
Access to finance	• Women have limited access to financial services due to issues related to a lack of collateral options, limited financial literacy, and informality.
Skills	• Limited training opportunities: There is a lack of training opportunities that target women in their appropriate contexts and conditions. Trainings are often geographically too far for women to be able to leave their villages and attend. • Limited skills for implementing sustainable practices: There is a lack of capacity related to sustainable farm practices, like composting and climate-resilient crop cultivation.
Access to markets	• Geographical distances: Agricultural MSMEs often lack access to markets due to geographical distances, but also to a lack of market information, gender-based discrimination, certifications, and standards.
Technology, skills, and digitalization	• Limited access to and know-how on digital tools and platforms: Women entrepreneurs often lack internet access and/or awareness of the potential business benefits of ICT services and digital tools
Working conditions	• Poor working conditions tend to be more prominent in smaller enterprises, where workers are also less likely to be covered by health insurance. Low wages are also common in agriculture, with a gender wage gap of 60 percent. • Gender-based violence and discrimination exist both within rural households and in the broader community.
Perceptions and norms	• Land access and inheritance rights: Women have limited access to land due to cultural and social norms and legal constraints. Land is often passed down through male heirs. Even with statutory rights to inherit land from their parents, women in rural areas may confront family efforts to deny their land claims, which may then result in their loss of other resources and support. • Unpaid work: Women often perform a significant amount of unpaid or underpaid work in agriculture, including household chores, caregiving, and farm labor. This unequal distribution of labor reinforces traditional gender roles and limits women's ability to engage in more profitable agricultural activities.
Networks, voice and representation	• Underrepresentation: Women are often underrepresented in decision-making bodies in agriculture at the community, regional, and national levels.



► 4.2 Renewable energy

Renewable energy was selected for close-up analysis due to its importance to a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, its projected relevance to the economy and employment in the future, its high priority level in the national policy framework, and opportunities for women in leadership positions. The government's commitment to renewable energy as a strategic priority opens up opportunities for improving on previous gender dynamics by supporting women entrepreneurs to play a critical role in the emerging sector. This approach not only accelerates Egypt's transition to a green economy but also sets a precedent for gender inclusivity in emerging sectors, paving the way for a more equitable distribution of the socio-economic benefits of Egypt's energy transformation.

Egypt possesses an abundance of renewable energy resources, which include wind, solar, hydro, and biomass. Its geographic location and climate allow for high solar irradiance and consistent wind patterns, making it suitable for solar and wind power development. Between 2010 and 2021, Egypt increased its renewable energy capacity by 82 percent (solar by 53.4 percent; wind by 10.4 percent), and between 2010 and 2022, increased production by about 84 percent. Renewable energy supply is currently dominated by bioenergy in the form of traditional biomass, making up nearly two thirds of renewable energy supply. However, government investment has mainly focused on wind and solar installation. Current capacity of renewable energy sources is about 45 percent hydro and marine, 27 percent solar, 26 percent wind, and 2 percent bioenergy.⁸⁷

Key trends in renewable energy by source

Wind: From 2010 to 2021, wind production in Egypt quadrupled, from 171.4 GWh to 5 269.4 GWh. Egypt's wind power generation accounts for over 20 percent of the total capacity in Africa.⁸⁸

Solar: Between 2018 and 2021, electricity generation from solar power increased nearly 900 percent. Solar energy capacity in Egypt is the second largest in Africa after South Africa.⁸⁹

Hydroelectric: The Nile River serves as the main source

of hydro resource in Egypt. A series of power stations located in Aswan that produce 2800 MW, generating 13,545 GWh per year. In the 1960s and 1970s, hydro-electricity produced nearly 50 percent of the country's electricity but in 2016 was only 7.2 percent.⁹⁰

Biomass: Currently, the installed capacity in biomass is only 12 MW, with 10 MW coming from Algabal Alasfar, but there are plans to develop an additional 300 MW. With over 30 million tons of solid biomass waste produced per year from agriculture and municipal waste, there is potential for biomass to further contribute to the energy mix.⁹¹

⁸⁷IRENA, 2023a; IRENA, 2023b.

⁸⁸IRENA, "Statistics Data," n.d.; cited in IRENA, Socio-economic footprint of the energy transition: Egypt. 2023b.

⁸⁹IRENA, n.d.; cited in IRENA, 2023b.

⁹⁰IRENA, Renewable Energy Outlook: Egypt, 2018.

⁹¹IRENA, 2023b.



An emerging sector, renewable energy is expected to raise GDP in Egypt by US \$6 billion in 2050.⁹² Employment in renewable energy is currently small: about 2,000 jobs in solar PV, 900 in wind, and a few hundred in hydropower.⁹³ However, models predict the energy transition will create multiple employment opportunities, with new jobs created far outweighing those displaced in fossil fuel sectors.⁹⁴ If the 1.5°C goal under the Paris Agreement is met, then energy sector employment could reach 2.4 million, contrasted with the 1.5 million if existing energy plans are followed. Under the 1.5°C scenario, renewables are projected to account for 42.2 percent of all energy sector jobs by 2050.⁹⁵

About 20 percent of workers in the renewable energy sector are women, 70 percent of which are found in managerial positions and only 30 percent in low-skilled positions.⁹⁶ There are an estimated 172 renewable energy companies in Egypt—142 in solar, 30 in bio-gas—14% of which are women-owned. According to the New and Renewable Energy Authority (NREA), of the 142 registered solar companies, 118 are SMEs, 18 of which are owned or managed by women.⁹⁷

Despite the high enrollment of women in STEM subjects, it has not yet translated to the workforce. In 2019,

47.3 percent of STEM graduates were women, but in 2020, women made up only 38 percent of the STEM workforce. Research shows that many women in STEM fields are unable to transition from school to work due to gender bias and social norms, a lack of transparency in the recruitment process, and the challenges of finding work-life balance.⁹⁸ With respect to renewable energy specifically, interviews confirmed similar trends: cultural and societal norms that discourage women from pursuing career paths in renewable energy, a lack of visible role models due to the male-dominated nature of the sector, insufficient awareness about potential career paths, inadequate support systems such as mentorship and networking opportunities that limit a larger entry and advancement of women, both as entrepreneurs and as workers, as well as insufficient childcare options. This comes in addition to the cross-cutting challenges related to their limited access to finance, land, technology, and technical training.

According to stakeholders interviewed for this report, the points listed below are considered as key constraints to MSMEs in the context of a just transition in the sector, some which apply specifically to women entrepreneurs, and others to MSMEs in general.

⁹²IRENA, 2023b.

⁹³IRENA and ILO, Renewable energy and jobs: Annual review 2023, 2023.

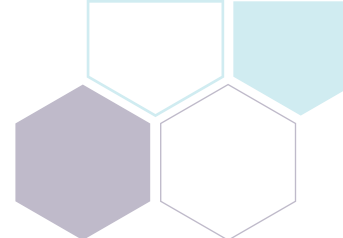
⁹⁴Rodríguez, 2022; in IRENA 2018 and CEEAT

⁹⁵IRENA, 2023b.

⁹⁶LAS (League of Arab States) and RCREE (Regional Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency), Arab Region Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Guide (Daleel), 2016; as cited in IRENA, 2023b.

⁹⁷New and Renewable Energy Authority, www.nrea.gov.eg.

⁹⁸UNESCO, "Arab Women in Science Platform".



Key constraints in renewable energy	
Policy	• Complex feed-in tariffs: The system for selling renewable energy back to the grid can be complicated, especially for smaller businesses without adequate training and/or know-how. • Limited access to grid connection: Connecting renewable energy projects to the grid can be challenging and time-consuming, especially for MSMEs facing bureaucratic hurdles. • Lack of government support: While Egypt has set ambitious renewable energy targets, specific initiatives targeting women-led businesses are limited.
Market access	• Poor procurement access: The dominance of state-owned companies in the energy sector can make it difficult for new entrants, especially women-led businesses, to compete. Public procurement projects are also not accessible for SMEs, as they tend to be for large mega-projects, which also limits the functions that SMEs are able to do (e.g. in solar, they may be confined to solar panel assembly). • Limited access to land: Securing land for renewable energy projects, especially in rural areas, can be challenging due to complex ownership structures and cultural norms.
Technology, skills, and digitalization	• Limited STEM education opportunities: Fewer girls enroll in STEM fields in Egyptian schools, leading to a smaller talent pool of women with the necessary technical background. • Cultural restrictions: Societal norms discourage women from pursuing technical training or attending workshops in male-dominated spaces.
Finance	• Limited access to finance: Many women entrepreneurs in Egypt prefer Sharia-compliant financing, but limited options specifically tailored to renewable energy projects further restrict access. High interest rates and collateral restrictions linked to land ownership were also reported as constraints.
Networks, voice and representation	• Insufficient support systems: The absence of targeted mentorship, training, and networking opportunities specifically for women hinder their entry and advancement in the sector. • Lack of information concerning viable career pathways: Young women lack adequate information about the diverse opportunities and career paths within the renewable energy field. • Reliance on informal networks: The reliance on informal networks for securing contracts and accessing information can disadvantage women who lack the same connections as men.
Perceptions and norms	• Limited opportunities, networks, and role models: Women lack confidence to enter the sector, stating that it is male-dominated and gives the impression that it is unsuitable for women. The absence of visible female leaders discourage women from entering the sector. • Gender stereotypes: Prevailing societal beliefs associating technical fields with men discourage girls from pursuing STEM education and careers. • Cultural and societal norms: Cultural expectations around family responsibilities can make it difficult for women to navigate demanding careers, especially in male-dominated environments.

⁹⁹ ERRADA (Egyptian Regulatory Reform and Development Activity), “Business Enabling Environment for SMEs Towards Green Economy Development in Egypt”, Draft Policy Paper, n.d.



► 4.3 Waste management

Waste management was selected for sector close-up analysis because of its relevance for preserving the environment, the opportunities for reducing decent work deficits, its potential to engage more women entrepreneurs, and its high priority level in the national policy framework.

Waste management has become a major issue in Egypt. Current waste management infrastructure does not keep up with the growing supply of domestic and industrial waste, which creates serious environmental, social, and economic problems.

The sector contributes 1 percent of employment, but a significant portion of waste management activities in Egypt is carried out by informal waste pickers, collectors, and recyclers—locally known as “Zabbaleen”, or “garbage people”—who operate outside the formal waste management system. These tend to be family-based economic units, with both men and women engaged. While informal workers play a crucial role in waste collection and recycling, their activities often lack regulation, leading to environmental pollution, health risks, and social challenges. Improper waste disposal practices, such as open dumping, burning, and uncontrolled landfilling, contribute to environmental pollution, air and water contamination, soil degradation, and public health risks.¹⁰⁰ These impacts disproportionately affect marginalized communities, exacerbating social inequalities and health disparities.

Egypt’s waste management sector faces governance challenges, including inadequate regulation, enforcement, and coordination among government agencies. Because of the high degree of informality, there is limited understanding of how the waste supply chains work and the job functions within them. Typical processes for waste management include waste identification; handling, separation, and storage at the source; collection; transfer and transport; processing and transformation; and disposal, but in Egypt, these activities and those who do them are not well monitored. There are also not sufficient incentives for most MSMEs currently engaged in waste management to formalize. Commonly collected recyclables include

glass, aluminum cans, paper, metals, plastic, and textiles. There are also other waste products that have high-value market potential, like oils from desalination and aromatic materials, but there is currently limited knowledge of how to handle and process them.

While data and information about the dynamics of work in the sector is lacking, some sources suggest that men tend to be more engaged in collection, which entails traveling municipalities, while women engage more in sorting and recycling. In Cairo, many women produce upcycled products that include carpets, handicrafts, bags, and paper products made out of waste materials and either sell them in shops as members of associations or are employed directly by other businesses. One notable success case is that of Up-Fuse, a fashion brand founded by two Egyptian women who now own several shops in Egypt that sell clothing and footwear made from recycled materials. Up-fuse employs mainly women and aims to enhance the livelihoods of women in disadvantaged areas—a case of women-owned enterprises empowering other women.¹⁰¹⁻¹⁰²

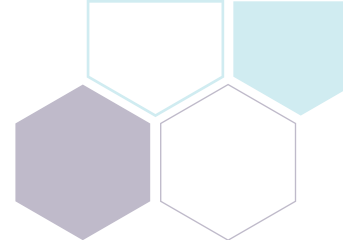
Despite high informality—and therefore low transparency—in the sector, recent developments in ICT are starting to show promise for better regulating waste management activities. Digital platforms like E-Tadweer facilitate communication between households and recycling facilities to improve the efficiency of waste collection. These platforms generate sector statistics and track the movement of waste, which can be utilized by government entities to develop policies that support the sector. While such digital tools hold promise for enhancing the sector as a whole, women entrepreneurs may particularly benefit from digital tools that increase their access to information about potential buyers as well as suppliers of raw materials (e.g. textile scraps from garment companies).

According to stakeholders interviewed for this report, the points listed below are considered as key constraints to MSMEs in the context of a just transition in the sector, some of which apply specifically to women entrepreneurs, and others to MSMEs in general.

¹⁰⁰https://fount.aucegypt.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3470&context=retro_etds

¹⁰¹Elizabeth MacBride, “In Cairo’s Garbage City, These Entrepreneurs Could Be The World’s Best Recyclers”, *Forbes*, 8 January 2017.

¹⁰²UN Women, “Egyptian Women transform upcycled waste into fashionable products”, 3 July 2022.



Key constraints in waste management	
Policy	• Monitoring gaps: There is a lack of sufficient data on the existing waste management value chains in Egypt, including informal waste collection practices, main buyers and general market demand, innovation opportunities, and the different ways that women and men engage in the sector.
Market development	• Missing infrastructure: There is limited formal infrastructure in place for the waste management sector, including collection, transportation, treatment, and disposal facilities.
Technology, skills, and digitalization	• Limited ICT and digital skills: There is a lack of skills and awareness for how to utilize ICT and digital tools • Limited access to information: People working informally in waste management have limited information about market opportunities, legal rights, and business development services
Informality	• Government mistrust: Waste collectors and recyclers, who are often from marginalized communities, are accustomed to working informally and distrust formal structures imposed by the government. • Low formalization incentives: MSMEs lack incentives to formalize
Working conditions	• Hazardous working environment: Waste collectors are exposed to hazardous materials—including chemicals, toxins, and biological waste—as well as airborne pollutants and infectious diseases. They are also prone to physical injuries working in dumps, landfills, and streets.



►► -5 Review of the national policy framework

This section describes the policy framework relevant to the promotion of a just transition and women's entrepreneurship development. The analysis of the national policy framework considered key national development strategies, followed by those focused on environment sustainability, climate change, employment, enterprise development, gender equality and women's empowerment, and specific sectors. Key objectives of each strategy or law are described and where there are gaps in terms of promoting a just transition, women's entrepreneurship, or both. Overall the national policy framework in Egypt contains laws and strategies with objectives linked to climate change action, environmental sustainability, decent work promotion, MSME development, the empowerment and resilience of women in the labour market, and gender equality. However, these goals are not well-integrated across the policy framework, and references to women's entrepreneurship development is scarce.

Sustainable Development Strategy: Egypt Vision 2030 (2016)

Egypt Vision 2030 is a long-term development plan that outlines the country's aspirations and goals for economic, social, and environmental progress by the year 2030, aligning with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Egypt Vision 2030 emphasizes the importance of creating job opportunities, enhancing employability, and improving the quality of work as key components of economic development and social progress. This includes generating new employment opportunities across various sectors, including manufacturing, services, agriculture, tourism, and information technology, to absorb a growing workforce and reduce unemployment rates.

The vision prioritizes inclusive economic growth, aiming to ensure that job opportunities are accessible to all segments of society, including women, youth, persons with disabilities, and marginalized communities. The economic and social empowerment of women and youth is also recognized across its strategic pillars. It recognizes gender gaps in the labour market—reflected through unemployment rates and pay gap, particularly in the informal sector—and in education, reflected by illiteracy and school enrollment rates.

The Strategy is broken up into three dimensions—economic, social, and environmental. It outlines the main challenges to sustainable development in terms of natural resources scarcity, human development resources, and innovation.

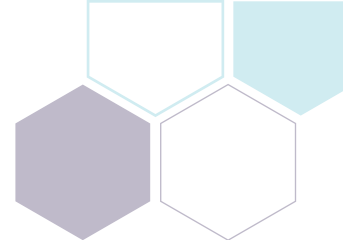
It includes a Strategic Vision for Economic Development 2030, which contains a specific objective to create decent and productive job opportunities (although the key performance indicators for this only look at unemployment rate and female labour force participation rate and not indicators related to working conditions).

Goals for employment policies include developing macroeconomic support policies that support greater job opportunities for youth; reforming education and training systems to increase labour productivity, address wage disparities, enhance labour market flexibility, and support decent work through the Decent Work Agenda; and reviewing the Labour and Social Insurance Law. There is mention of a labour market policies program for promoting entrepreneurship and SMEs in development in partnership with the ILO, but there is no specific reference or mention of measures to promote women's entrepreneurship or to address gender-specific barriers to entrepreneurship. There is recognition of the need to focus on the role of women in environmental resource rationalization and conservation.

National Climate Change Strategy (NCCS) (2022)

The National Climate Change Strategy aims to enable the country to strategically address climate change in alignment with its sustainable economic development goals. It includes a range of adaptation and mitigation measures that exceed some of the timeframes in the NDC, some reaching 2050.¹⁰³ Objectives under the NCCS include the promotion of green jobs through private sector engagement in climate finance and local green banking and credit lines to MSMEs. Sector-specific initiatives include those in agriculture, renewable energy, and waste management (among others), but do not specifically mention support towards MSMEs in those sectors. Gender-specific directives include introducing flexible finance mechanisms that respond to the specific needs of women related to climate change

¹⁰³Hala Abou-Ali, et al.



adaptation and mitigation and providing equal access to credit and training programmes related to climate adaptation and mitigation. The increased vulnerability that women face from climate change, particularly in rural areas, is highlighted.¹⁰⁴

Some notable initiatives under this strategy include collaboration between the Ministry of Environment and the Women's Council to identify training needs for young women in relation to waste-to-energy, biogas production from agricultural waste, waste management practices, and sustainable agriculture techniques, and a Waste Exchange Platform that will be launched in June 2024 to exchange research and information relevant to developing the waste sector.¹⁰⁵

Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC)

Egypt submitted its first Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) in 2017, updating it in 2022. The 2022 NDC strengthened adaptation plans and expanded mitigation targets to be in line with Egypt's developmental and climate change policies. Mitigation targets focus on three main sectors: oil and gas, electricity, and transport.¹⁰⁶ Key commitments include reducing emissions in the oil and gas sector by 65 percent, the electricity sector by 37 percent, and the transportation sector by 7 percent, and establishing renewable energy with the aim to generate 42 percent of electricity by 2035. As it relates to renewable energy, the NDC focuses on the expansion of solar and wind power. Increasing the use of biofuels is also mentioned but specifically in the extraction of algae oils and not from agricultural waste. There is an objective to increase investments in climate projects and to facilitate access to business incubators and accelerators to support green entrepreneurship. The NDC does not contain any gender-specific objectives or acknowledge gender disparities. The National Climate Change Council (NCCC) and the Ministry of Environment (MoE) are responsible for implementing the NDC.

Sustainable Agricultural Development Strategy Towards 2030 (SADS)

The Sustainable Agricultural Development Strategy Towards 2030 is the national strategy and plan for developing the agricultural sector. The strategy aims

to create 4 million new jobs by 2030 through agriculture-related or complimentary programs and to improve rural conditions and livelihoods while reducing poverty rates. The strategy recognizes the particularly vulnerability of women working in agriculture, especially in the face of climate change, and endeavors to build capacity of, and improve the investment climate for, women in agriculture. It emphasizes the need to improve interministerial coordination and financial assistance policies, as well as to expand extension services and technology transfer. SADS puts renewed emphasis on the need for agricultural cooperatives' institutional reform, highlighting their potential to serve as centers for disseminating modern technology, establishing financing mechanisms, and increasing awareness on training opportunities. However, the promotion of women or women entrepreneurs as leaders is not articulated in the strategy.

Renewable Energy Law and Electricity Law (2015)

The Renewable Energy Law and Electricity Law of 2015 in Egypt were enacted to promote the development of renewable energy sources and enhance the efficiency and sustainability of the electricity sector.

The Renewable Energy Law establishes a framework for incentivizing investment in renewable energy projects, such as solar, wind, and hydroelectric power. It outlines mechanisms for licensing, permitting, and procurement of renewable energy projects, including feed-in tariffs and competitive bidding processes. The law also aims to facilitate grid connection and integration of renewable energy into the national electricity grid.

The Electricity Law of 2015 aims to modernize and reform the electricity sector in Egypt. It introduces measures to promote competition, private sector participation, and investment in electricity generation, transmission, and distribution. The law also establishes regulatory bodies to oversee the sector and ensure compliance with environmental and safety standards. These laws are aligned with Egypt's Vision 2030 regarding their aims to promote sustainable development and modernize the energy sector. The Renewable Energy Law provides incentives for the development of renewable energy projects, which supports the aim

¹⁰⁴Hala Abou-Ali, et al.

¹⁰⁵Interviews.

¹⁰⁶Hala Abou-Ali, Amira Elayouty, and Mahmoud Mohieldin. "Climate Action in Egypt: Challenges and Opportunities", in *Keys to Climate Action: How Developing Countries Could Drive Global Success and Local Prosperity*, ed. Bhattacharya, A.; Homi Kharas, and John W. McArthur (Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, 2023).



to diversify the country's energy sources in Egypt's Vision 2030. The Electricity Law proposes reforms to the electricity sector, including measures to promote competition, private sector participation, and investment in generation, transmission, and distribution infrastructure, which supports the Vision 2030's emphasis on the need to modernize Egypt's infrastructure and improving the efficiency and reliability of electricity services.

However, employment, decent work, entrepreneurship, gender equality, or gender-specific provisions are not covered.

2035 Integrated Sustainable Energy Strategy (ISES)
The 2035 Integrated Sustainable Energy Strategy (ISES 2035), published by the Ministry for Electricity and Renewable Energy, establishes framework conditions for expanding renewable energy and reaffirms Egypt's aspiration to serve as a pivotal energy hub connecting Europe, Asia, and Africa. It aims to increase electricity supply from renewable sources from 20 percent in 2020 to 42 percent by 2035 (later changed to 2040). The strategy is well-integrated into Egypt's Vision 2030.¹⁰⁷

Waste Management Law (2020)¹⁰⁸

Egypt's Waste Management Law provides a framework for waste management to safeguard public health, protect the environment, and promote sustainable practices. It establishes regulations for the collection transportation, treatment, and disposal of waste; classifies waste into categories; and assigns responsibilities to government agencies, municipalities, and private sector stakeholders in managing different aspects of waste management and includes enforcement mechanisms. It includes an Extended Producer Responsibility, which stipulates that businesses are responsible for their own safe waste management. The Waste Management Law does not make any specific provisions related to job creation, entrepreneurship, or decent work. The Law also does not base development objectives around existing supply chains and job functions. Given the highly informal nature of the sector, vulnerable populations and entrepreneurs working in the sector could better benefit from a Just Transition if waste management policies aimed to

better monitor and potentially help formalize existing activities and market exchanges. The Extended Producer Responsibility measure offers an opportunity to establish or strengthen market relationships between waste collectors and businesses across industries who need to safely and responsibly offload waste.

MSME Development Law No. 152 (2020)

The MSME Development Law No. 152 in Egypt aims to foster the growth and sustainability of small businesses by providing various forms of support and activate the role of the Projects Development Authority as the responsible and supportive entity for this sector. This legislation includes provisions for financial assistance, such as loans and grants, as well as technical assistance and training programs to enhance the competitiveness and productivity of MSMEs. The law provides a set of incentives and benefits to support and launch these projects, enabling them to play a fundamental role in driving economic development and providing employment opportunities for youth. Additionally, the law establishes mechanisms to streamline administrative procedures and facilitate access to markets for these enterprises. Its overarching goal is to promote entrepreneurship, job creation, and economic development at the grassroots level in Egypt.

The MSME Development Law does not make references to the environment or climate change, nor does it contain provisions related to women's entrepreneurship development or gender-related considerations.

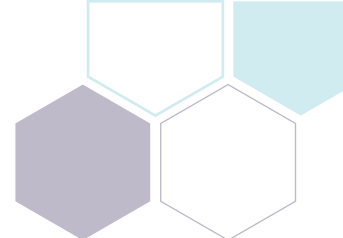
National Strategy for the Empowerment of Egyptian Women 2030 (2017)

The National Strategy for the Empowerment of Egyptian Women 2030 was issued in 2017 by the National Council for Women to support with the intention of serving as a roadmap for society to contribute to women's political, economic, and social empowerment and protection. The Strategy recognizes the challenges that women face in the workforce and emphasizes the need to change social and cultural norms that currently limit women's full participation in the labour market and limit their legal rights.

The strategy includes a set of strategic interventions

¹⁰⁷IRENA, 2018.

¹⁰⁸Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), "Egypt: Waste Management Law No. 202 of 2020", FAOLEX Database, 2020.



to promote women's empowerment in Egypt. As it relates to a just transition, there is an intervention specifically to strengthen women's ability to cope with environmental risks, climate change, and unsustainable consumption. Adaptation measures under this intervention include raising awareness among women, especially those working in agriculture, on how to cope with the impacts of climate change; facilitating access to technology and funding for women to work in green industries, like waste management, organic agriculture, and renewable energy; and providing training and funding for women to engage in economic activities based on conservation and biodiversity, like environmental tourism.¹⁰⁹

The Strategy complements the Vision 2030 and SDS and UN SDGs in its aim to address gender disparities, promote women's empowerment, and promote gender considerations in the country's development agenda. It offers potential interventions for addressing some climate change risks that are particularly relevant to women.

Social Insurance and Pensions Law, No. 148 (2019)

The Social Insurance and Pensions Law came into force in 2020, bringing together four prior social insurance laws and merging the Government Social Insurance Fund (GSIF) and the Public and Private Social Insurance Fund (PSIF). It covers old-age, disability, and survivor pensions; work injury, unemployment, and sickness benefits.¹¹⁰ The law extends social insurance to non-regular and seasonal employees.

Universal Health Insurance Law (2018)

The Universal Health Insurance Law aims to achieve universal coverage by 2032. Social assistance is facilitated through two cash transfer schemes: Takaful, which covers poor households, and Karama, which covers the elderly, disabled, and orphans. These programs are financed through World Bank loans.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁹National Council for Women, 2017.

¹¹⁰ILO, "Social Protection: Egypt"

¹¹¹ILO, "Social Protection: Egypt"

►► -6 Recommendations of potential entry points for just transition policies and interventions with a focus on women's entrepreneurship development

The following chapter presents a set of recommendations designed to tackle the critical barriers hindering the promotion of a just transition, with a particular focus on advancing women's entrepreneurship development. As outlined in previous sections, women entrepreneurs in Egypt face a range of challenges, from meso-level constraints embedded in the business environment—like access to finance, business development, technical, and training services—to macro-level conditions—including policy cohesion and coordination—and social and cultural norms that perpetuate gender disparities and limit female representation in the world of work. Following a comprehensive analysis of existing challenges and opportunities, these recommendations aim to address key constraints and foster an environment conducive to gender-inclusive economic growth.

1. Policy Coordination:

- **Integrate Just Transition priorities within the National Employment Strategy:** Given the government is in the process of drafting the National Employment Strategy, it is an opportunity to integrate and align just transition priorities with employment promotion and enterprise development goals, including those that specifically support women entrepreneurs to overcome the challenges outlined in this report. Ensuring the new National Employment Strategy recognizes the importance of preparing and supporting workers and businesses—especially women-led MSMEs—to shift to a more inclusive and green economy is critical for realizing a just transition.

Policy anchors: Egypt Vision 2030, National Employment Strategy (Forthcoming).

- **Mainstream gender in the next NDC:** Egypt's latest NDC does not contain any gender-specific objectives, nor does it acknowledge gender disparities in any context. The next update of the NDC presents an opportunity to significantly enhance the focus on women's entrepreneurship development within its national climate change strategies and promote a just transition. Furthermore, aligning and integrating specific goals and strategies on gender and women's entrepreneurship in the NDC with those in Vision 2030

and the NCCS will greatly strengthen and unify Egypt's efforts to achieve a just transition.

Policy anchors: NDC

- **Improve coordination on MSME promotion:** The government should consider consolidating efforts across government agencies dealing with MSME initiatives to improve coordination and enhance the effectiveness of MSMEs policies and programs, particularly as it relates to green entrepreneurship. This could involve establishing a centralized platform or agency tasked with coordinating efforts and providing comprehensive support tailored to the specific needs of women-owned businesses. Extended coordination with financial institutions and business associations could also strengthen the effectiveness of programming aimed at supporting both MSMEs in general and specifically women-led enterprises. MSMEs, especially women-led MSMEs, will be best positioned to take advantage of a transition to greener economies if the policies in place to support them are holistic and well-coordinated.

Policy anchors: Egypt Vision 2030, MSME Development Law

- **Update indicators and data collection systems** for tracking entrepreneurship in Egypt, especially for women. Better data collection on women's role in family businesses, like those currently classified as working as 'contributing family members' may help refine strategies that target women-owned businesses, particularly in sectors like agriculture, and to address issues like the very high wage gap.

- **Strengthen monitoring and evaluation systems** to assess the effectiveness of policies and programs aimed to support women entrepreneurs. With more comprehensive data on the trends relating to women's entrepreneurship, particularly in their ability to become more climate resilient and contribute to the advancement of a greener economy, it becomes possible to accurately assess the efficacy of these initiatives, pinpointing successful strategies and areas needing improvement.



2. Access to finance:

- **Financial education:** Develop specialized financial literacy programs designed specifically for women entrepreneurs. These programs should cover topics relevant to business finance, including budgeting, cash flow management, accessing capital, investment strategies, and risk management. Ensure that the content is accessible, practical, and applicable to the unique needs and challenges faced by women-owned businesses in Egypt.

Forge partnerships with financial institutions, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and community-based organizations to deliver financial education / financial literacy programs and workshops targeted at women entrepreneurs in green sectors. Integrate financial literacy education into formal education curricula, vocational training programs, and adult education initiatives targeting women. In parallel, establish mechanisms to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of financial education initiatives for women, including tracking participation rates, knowledge acquisition, and behavior change outcomes. Use this data to continuously refine and improve program delivery and content. By enhancing financial services available to women entrepreneurs, it would address a major obstacle preventing the growth and development of women-led MSMEs and put them in a more favorable position to leverage opportunities in the transition to greener economies.

Policy anchors: NCCS, National Strategy for the Empowerment of Egyptian Women 2030

3. Access to Technology and digitalization

- **ICT infrastructure and literacy:** Invest in robust ICT infrastructure and internet access, particularly in rural areas, to improve the connectivity of women-led MSMEs, facilitating access to markets, information, financial and non-financial business development services, resources, and training opportunities. Support women entrepreneurs through training and awareness-raising to become more adept at utilizing ICT to enhance their businesses.

The promotion of ICT services would enhance women MSMEs in the agricultural sector to access more information and services relevant to enabling them to implement sustainable agriculture and climate-smart farm practices, build new market relationships with sustainability-oriented buyers, and form networks with other women-led enterprises.

The ICT sector also holds significant potential in the development of the waste management sector. ICT services can be leveraged to digitally track the movement of waste products from collection to sale. Plat-

forms like E-Tadweer can help connect collectors with buyers, improve quality standards, and increase efficiency. Digital platforms can also help waste collectors gain access to information on resources like government incentive programs and services and facilitate information to women entrepreneurs who face greater challenges related to mobility and accessing networks than do men. Ultimately, significant advances in both climate change resilience and environmental sustainability can be realized through ICT services that target women entrepreneurs.

Policy anchors: Egypt Vision 2030, NCCS, Sustainable Agricultural Development Strategy Towards 2030, Waste Management Law, National Strategy for the Empowerment of Egyptian Women 2030

4. Access to markets

- **Procurement:** Consider revising and implementing gender-responsive procurement policies that prioritize contracting with women-owned businesses and promote gender equality in green supply chains. This may include group bidding processes for MSMEs in some sectors, like renewable energy, that enable MSMEs to compete with larger companies, while reducing transaction costs and mitigating risks for MSMEs. This can create opportunities for women entrepreneurs to access government contracts and expand their businesses.

Policy anchors: Egypt Vision 2030, NDC, MSME Development Law

- **Women-led cooperatives:** A. Promote cooperative structures that are women-led and appropriate for different governorates. Provide technical assistance through extension services on how to set up and manage farm cooperatives as collective businesses, effectively gather and disseminate market information and opportunities, acquire shared machinery and equipment, and to access resources on how to adapt agricultural practices to a changing climate, especially in Upper Egypt. As emphasized in the Sustainable Agricultural Development Strategy, agricultural cooperatives can serve as centers for disseminating modern technology, establishing financing mechanisms, and increasing awareness on training opportunities. Investing in women-led cooperative structures can help address gender disparities in decision-making and resource allocation within agriculture, including the continued challenges related to land ownership and inheritance, access to quality inputs, access to finance, and tailored training programs.

B. Support the establishment of women-led care cooperatives and association structures. Emerging Social Solidarity Economy (SSE) models can alleviate the childcare burdens faced by entrepreneurs, providing



access to better wages, working conditions, and benefits. ILO tools like Think.coop, Start.coop, and Manage.coop can facilitate the creation of these models. Investing in women-led care cooperatives offers a gender-transformative solution for decent work, unlocking the entrepreneurial potential of women in Egypt and serving as a potential model for other countries in the MENA region.

Policy anchors: Egypt Vision 2030, NCCS, Sustainable Agricultural Development Strategy Towards 2030, National Strategy for the Empowerment of Egyptian Women 2030

5. Market development

- **Market research on biomass:** Consider conducting research on the potential development of the biomass industry as an additional renewable energy source. As described earlier in the report, while capacity development for sources like wind and solar have continued to advance, biomass represents nearly two-thirds of supply. Industrializing biomass has the potential to benefit agricultural MSMEs, including women-owned and managed, who are one of the groups most vulnerable to climate change. Policies that support technical capacity and business management development for exploiting market opportunities in biomass and biofuels, catered to the needs and context of women working in rural areas, could provide an avenue for women to better benefit from the energy transition.

Policy anchors: Egypt Vision 2030, NDC, MSME Development Law

- **Market research on high-value waste products:** Invest in feasibility studies for exploiting market opportunities for specific waste products and build educational and technical training programs around them. Evidence suggests that a lack of knowledge and experience on how to utilize certain products, like oils from desalination and aromatic materials, leaves potential high-value market opportunities untapped that would otherwise also support sustainability goals.

Policy anchors: Egypt Vision 2030, Waste Management Law

- **Waste management infrastructure:** Invest in and maintain efficient waste classification and collection systems, including separate streams for recyclables, organic waste, and hazardous materials. Conduct a mapping of the sector to better understand how the value chain works, including informal and formal activities, the different waste streams (e-waste, plastics, metals, etc.), and the role of MSMEs, particularly women-led MSMEs. Better understanding the existing net-

works and norms of the sector can help shape policies that better regulate waste management, encourage formalization, and improve working conditions, while growing a sector that has the potential to better protect environmental ecosystems and restore the environmental conditions of other key economic sectors.

Policy anchors: Egypt Vision 2030, Waste Management Law

6. Network, voice and representation

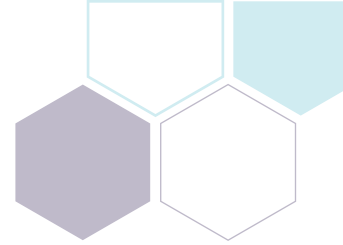
- **STEM education:** Encourage women to pursue education and careers in STEM-related career paths. Increase awareness about different job and business opportunities in the sector and what is required to achieve them. This could include education policies aimed at increasing access to quality education for girls and women in STEM fields from an early age and funding for STEM-focused programs, scholarships, and initiatives to reduce gender-based barriers to education. This will help women, both as entrepreneurs and as workers, to gain stronger footing in emerging green sectors and further contribute to advancing technical fields needed for a just transition.

Policy anchors: Egypt Vision 2030, National Strategy for the Empowerment of Egyptian Women 2030

- **Outreach and networks:** Support outreach and networking initiatives, such as workshops and mentorship opportunities to help women access the necessary resources and support networks to succeed in emerging sectors like renewable energy, as well as traditional sectors like agriculture, that play a significant role in the just transition. Empowering women entrepreneurs in key sectors undergoing transformation will help to eradicate gender inequalities in the transition process.

Policy anchors: Egypt Vision 2030, National Strategy for the Empowerment of Egyptian Women 2030

- **School to work transition:** Foster partnerships between educational institutions, government agencies, and private sector companies to create internship programs, apprenticeships, and job placement opportunities for women in STEM fields to improve the transition for women from school to work, both as employees and entrepreneurs. Addressing the issues preventing STEM-educated women from entering the workforce will help to eradicate the sectoral and occupational segregation hindering growth and development of key sectors. Consider fiscal incentives for companies in the renewable field to hire women or service providers that support women-owned start-ups.



Policy anchors: Egypt Vision 2030, National Strategy for the Empowerment of Egyptian Women 2030

7. Social dialogue

- **Improve social dialogue mechanisms** by better engaging MSMEs and workers in policy development, especially women, who are currently underrepresented in industrial leadership. This could begin to address some of the deeply embedded structural constraints that currently exacerbate gender inequalities. Currently there is very little engagement with women's organizations in the development of climate policies, resulting in a limited vision for advancing women's economic empowerment in the transition to a greener economy (the NDC has no gender-specific targets,

for instance). Ensuring women entrepreneurs and women's entrepreneurs associations are actively consulted and involved in the policy-making process at all stages, especially as it relates to overcoming climate change impacts, from agenda setting to implementation and evaluation, would enable government initiatives to better meet many of its development and climate change goals, as well as ensure greater policy coherence around women's entrepreneurship in the context of promoting a just transition.

Policy anchors: National Strategy for the Empowerment of Egyptian Women 2030



►► -7 Conclusion

A just transition is critically important in Egypt to integrate economic, environmental, and social development objectives, ensuring that progress towards sustainability is inclusive and equitable. Egypt faces significant socio-economic challenges, including high unemployment rates and income inequality, which are exacerbated by climate change. By prioritizing a just transition, Egypt can foster an inclusive and equitable pathway towards sustainability, building a more resilient economy that benefits all citizens and future generations.

MSMEs will be crucial in achieving a just transition to greener economy in Egypt. As drivers of innovation, job creation, and economic growth, MSMEs are integral to fostering inclusive development and addressing the challenges posed by climate change. However, women entrepreneurs, who constitute a significant portion of the MSME sector, are disproportionately vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and face barriers to entrepreneurship and economic empowerment.

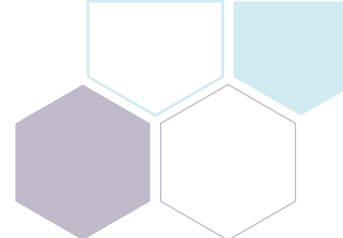
Promoting women's entrepreneurship development is therefore essential in ensuring a just transition which leaves no one behind. By empowering women entrepreneurs to participate fully in the green economy, their potential as agents of change, innovators, and leaders in sustainable development. Moving forward, it is imperative to prioritize gender-responsive and transformative policies, programs, and investments that promote women's entrepreneurship development can be unlocked, enhance their resilience to climate change impacts, and advance gender equality and social justice. By mainstreaming gender

considerations into climate and economic policies, the transition to a sustainable future will not only be just but also inclusive and equitable for all.

Next Steps

The findings of a draft version of this report were presented in a validation workshop in Cairo on 7 July 2024 (see Annex IV for agenda). Feedback from stakeholders, which included representatives from government, employers, women entrepreneurs, women's organizations, financial institutions, non-profits, academia, and others, was incorporated into a final report.

The scope of this RSA was to capture how well the national policy framework one, promotes a just transition to an environmentally sustainable economy, and two, positions women's entrepreneurship development as a pillar of that transition. The policy review, complemented by input derived from stakeholder interviews, offers an initial framework with which future strategies for strengthening economic, environmental, and social policies can be based. However, this analysis does not serve as a full market assessment of key sectors. Future research should look deeper into the specific market dynamics in priority value chains to examine the underlying causes to market constraints more systemically. Value chain or market systems analyses in the sectors mentioned in this report—agriculture, renewable energy, and waste management—would not only help pinpoint more targeted interventions for systemically promoting in women's entrepreneurship development in priority sectors but would also identify the best partnerships with national institutions and organizations to address them sustainably in the long-run.

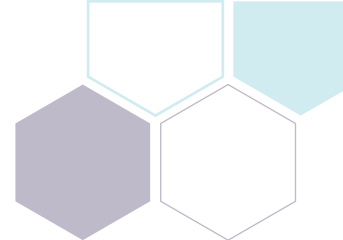


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►► Annex I: Notable initiatives related to WED and Just Transition

1. Under the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (2023-2027), the UN Women Egypt Country Office aims to boost Egypt's climate initiatives by enhancing women's access to decent jobs in agriculture, renewable energy, and STEM-related fields. This goal is pursued through reskilling and upskilling programs, bolstering the competitiveness of women entrepreneurs in value chains and markets, providing opportunities for capacity development and investment, supporting women's unpaid care work to enable their economic participation, and fostering women's leadership.

2. In February 2023, GAFI and the UN Office in Cairo organized a seminar "Investment and the Principles of Women Empowerment for a More Competitive Private Economy" with the aim of promoting women empowerment and gender equality in the business world.

3. The Technical and Vocational Education and Training Reform Programme (TVET Egypt) is an initiative co-funded by the Government of Egypt (GoE) and the European Union (EU) that aims to help TVET students and graduates to gain technical skills and improve their market-readiness through industry and private sector support networks. TVET Egypt to-date has helped 100 entrepreneurial start-ups, renovated 100 educational or training institutions, facilitated 2500 internship opportunities, and provided career guidance to 100,000 people.

4. The National Initiative for Smart Green Projects was launched as part of efforts to achieve sustainable development and in the context of implementing Egypt's Vision 2030 and implementing the National Climate Change Strategy 2050. – Ministry of Planning and Economic Development (MPED)

5. The National Project for Egyptian Family Development – Economic Empowerment Component focuses on enabling women aged 18-45 to find employment, earn an income, and achieve financial independence. – Ministry of Social Solidarity (MoSS)

6. Egypt's National Strategy for the Development of Organic Clusters aims to integrate MSMEs in the promotion of organic farming, agricultural productivity, and establishment of business clusters and institutions that support organic agriculture. – MSME-DA

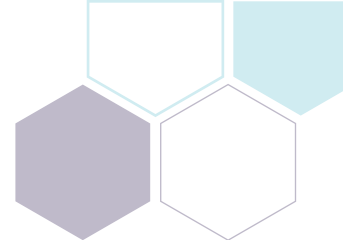
7. E-Tadweer oversees various aspects of solid waste management, including collection, transportation, treatment, and disposal, with the aim of improving waste management practices, reducing environmental pollution, and promoting sustainability. E-Tadweer collaborates with governmental bodies, local authorities, private sector entities, and other stakeholders to implement integrated waste management solutions across the country. This may involve initiatives such as establishing waste treatment facilities, implementing recycling programs, improving landfill management practices, and raising public awareness about waste reduction and proper disposal methods. (MoE)

8. Egypt's International Initiative for Just Environmental Transformation: Women and Climate Change, aims to address the specific impacts of climate change on women and promote gender equality in environmental sustainability efforts. – NCW

9. Creativa is a national initiative launched by MCIT with the aim of promoting the new technology support standard for youth in Egypt. The initiative bridges the gap between technology skills and on the ground requirements from the market. The Creativa hubs are available in Mansoura, Monufia, Menia, Sohag, Qena and Aswan, with each hub providing a unique offering for the local community based on demand. The initiative empowers youth by linking technology skills with the required demand driver ranging from the future job market, freelancing/ remote job market and the entrepreneurial activities (This initiative is a collaborative work between The Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (MCIT) and The Ministry of Higher Education & Scientific Research).

10. The National Council for Women has an entrepreneurship program within the framework of the National Project for Egyptian Family Development. The program is implemented at the level of 22 governorates under the title "Pioneer." The program targets 114,000 women, through the implementation of 4,500 training.

11. The financial and digital inclusion program "Digital Savings and Lending Projects - Tahwasha" was kicked off in 13 governorates in 2022, providing banking services in coordination with Egyptian banks



12. Start Hub Is a Pre-Incubation Program Designed for Ideas and Projects That Are On the Way Towards Developing into A Successful Business.

13. Earth Climate Foundation is a non-profit development organization that works for the safety, improvement and development of the environment.

14. Climatethon highlights local innovators who take into account climate action enabling mechanisms in order to reach a mature understanding of the prob-

lems facing their governorates locally, and thus come up with effective and innovative solutions that focus on the basic principles of environment, sustainability, social responsibility and practical application. Climatethon provides the opportunity for cooperation between innovators, creators of target groups and decision makers. also connecting promising talents and ideas to multiple investors as well as business incubators to have a greater chance of implementation on the ground.

►► Annex II: Primary data collection

1. KIIs and FGDs were conducted in four governorates: Alexandria, Cairo, Fayoum, and Minya. A range of stakeholders were interviewed, including women entrepreneurs, government officials, business associations and networks, financial institutions, training providers, international organizations, foundations and non-profits, and members of academia. Specific KIIs were held with the following: Ministry of Planning and economic development: Former Executive Director Smart green initiative

2. Ministry of Environment

- a. Agriculture Waste Department
- b. Gender Unit

3. Micro, Small & Medium Enterprise Development Agency (MESMEDA)

- a. Head of Human & Community Development Central Sector
- b. Deputy Manager, Microfinance Credit
- c. Director, Planning & International Cooperation Central Sector
- d. Deputy Manager, Gender Unit
- e. Technical Officer, General Unit
- f. Deputy Executive Director

4. Ministry of communication information technology, Technical officer, medical and waste management project- UNDP

5. Ministry of international cooperation, Economic Specialist

6. Egyptian Electricity Transmission Company, Head

7. Egyptian organization for standardization and quality, General Manger

8. Ministry of Petroleum & Mineral Resources, Energy & Environment Consultant,

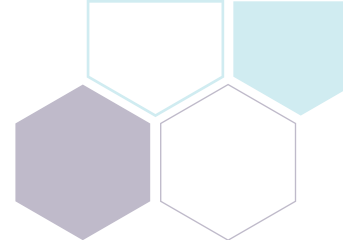
9. Ministry of Planning, Egypt Entrepreneurs initiative

10. Federation of Egyptian industries

11. Federation of Egyptian industries Chemical sector coordinator (Waste management) – sustainability Expert- ECO/FEI

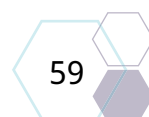
12. Women in Business Women- Director Federation of Egyptian industries

13. Ministry of Labor, Central Administration for International Relations, Member of the Gender Equality and Economic Empowerment Unit for Women, Technical Assistant to the Minister of Labor

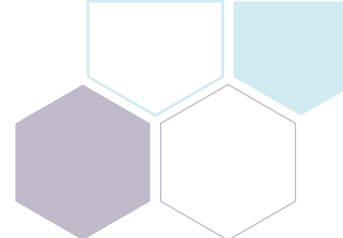


►► Annex III. Sector selection scoring matrix

	Dimension and guiding questions	You may consider the following Indicators to answer the questions	Guidance on scoring	Weight
I	Economic Dimension	What is the sector's contribution to growth, GDP, and employment?		20%
1	Is this a relevant sector of the economy?	GDP share of the sector	Score high if relevant	5.0%
2	Is this a relevant sector in terms of employment and employment share? (For women?)	Percentage of the labour force works in this sector (by sex)	Score high if relevant	10.0%
3	Is this sector on the path to growth/decline (both in terms of value added, and employment)	GDP growth	Score high for growth / growth prospects	5.0%
	Sub-total			
II	Employment, Decent Work, and Gender Equality Dimension	What are the prospects for employment, gender equality, and DW promotion?		21%
1	Is this sector paying a decent wage? (For women?)	Ratio between the average wage in the sector and the average wage of all sectors	Score high if the sector does not pay decent wages	3.5%
2	Does this sector present OSH issues? (For women?)	Percentage of total injuries that this sector is responsible for	Score high if the sector presents high risk of OSH issues	3.5%
3	Do workers benefit from social protection coverage?		Score high if sector presents low social protection coverage	3.5%
4	What are the levels of enterprises and workers' informality in this sector?	Percentage of informal enterprises and/or employment out of total businesses/employment in this sector	Score high if the sector presents high levels of informality	3.5%
5	How are vulnerable groups (indigenous peoples, migrants and persons with disabilities) represented in this sector? Are there gender equality issues?	Percentage of vulnerable groups represented in the sector	Scores positively if there exist signs of discrimination	3.5%
6	What is the gender pay gap in the sector?	Percentage of female employers and workers at different levels of authority (management, director, etc.); av. Income for women v. men	Scores positively if there is a gender pay gap*	3.5%
	Sub-total			



	Dimension and guiding questions	You may consider the following Indicators to answer the questions	Guidance on scoring	Weight
III	Environment Dimension			22%
1	Is this sector vulnerable to climate change and other environmental challenges? (Are women impacted disproportionately?)	Qualitative Assessment based on Quantitative data: Very High/High/Moderate/Low/No vulnerability	Score high if vulnerability is high	5.5%
2	Is this sector seriously and negatively contributing to climate change and environmental degradation?	Qualitative Assessment based on Quantitative data (e.g. GHG emissions, air/soil/water pollution and depletion, etc): Very High/High/Moderate/Low/No negative contribution	Score high if the sector negatively impacts the environment	5.5%
3	Is this sector expected to be transformed from conventional to green?	Qualitative Assessment	7 = Yes, 3 = No.	5.5%
4	Does this sector actively contribute to preserve or enhance ecosystems and the environment?	Qualitative Assessment	7 = Yes, 3 = No.	5.5%
	Sub-total			
IV	Environment Dimension			22%
1	What is the level of entrepreneurial activity in the sector / prevalence of MSMEs?	MSMEs as proportion of total enterprises	Score high with high prevalence	5.5%
2	What is the prevalence of women-owned enterprises / women-led organizations in the sector?	Percentage of MSMEs owned by women?	Score high with high prevalence	5.5%
3	What is the proportion of women actively working and/or leading in the sector?	Percentage of female workers and employers + qualitative assessment (10 for over 20%, 7 for over 10%, 5 for over 5%, 3 for less than 5%)	Probably score high if high prevalence, TBD	5.5%
4	What is the potential of the sector to attract more women entrepreneurs?	Qualitative Assessment	TBD if used or not	5.5%
	Sub-total			



Dimension and guiding questions		You may consider the following Indicators to answer the questions	Guidance on scoring	Weight
V	Policy Dimension			15%
1	Has this sector been selected by the government as one of the pillars of the future economic development of the country?		Score high if yes	3%
2	Has this sector been selected by the government as one of the pillars of the future economic development of the country?		Score high if yes	3%
3	Is this sector prioritised in the NDCs?		Score high if yes	3%
4	Is this sector prioritised in the National Climate Change Strategy (or similar, if any)?		Score high if yes	3%
5	Is this sector prioritised by any gender promotion / WED / WEE policies?		Score high if yes	3%
	Sub-total			
TOTAL				



Annex IV: Validation Workshop Agenda

Time	Description	
9:30 – 10:00	Arrival and Registration	
10:00 – 10:30	Welcome and Introduction	
10:00 – 10:20	Welcome Remarks	Mr. Eric Oechslin, ILO Cairo Country Office for Egypt & Eritrea ILO Decent Work Team for North Africa Eng. Ahmed Kamal Abd El Moniem Executive Director- Environmental Compliance Office and Sustainable Development (FEI-ECO), Federation of Egyptian Industries,
10:20 - 10:30	Overview of Workshop Objectives and Agenda	FEI-ECO
Session 1: Understanding the Context: Presenting the main findings and recommendations of the Rapid Situational Analysis of the employment -environment-gender equality nexus in Egypt		
10:30 – 10:45	Introduction from ILO on Gender Responsive Just Transition	Ms. Sara Andersson, Tech Officer, Women's Entrepreneurship Development, ILO Geneva Ms. Mette Grangaard Lund- Just Transitions Specialist, ILO RO-Arab States/DWT-Beirut
10:45 – 11:30	Presentation of the RSA objectives, methodology and findings and recommendations.	RSA Co-Authors: Ms. Callie Ham, International Consultant & Ms. Marwa Hussein, Social Sustainability and comm. Manager, FEI-ECO
11:30 – 12:30	Q&A, Feedback and Validation Session	
12:30 – 13:00	Coffee Break	
Session 2: Panel Discussion: Challenges and Opportunities for unlocking women’s entrepreneurship potential in advancing a just transition in Egypt		
13:00 – 14:00	Panel Discussion Facilitation: Ms Marwa Hussein, Social Sustainability and comm. Manager, FEI-ECO	Dr. Omima Mohamed Sawan, Former president of the Institute of Agricultural and Biological Research center - Advisor to the Ministry of Environment in agricultural waste management. Ms. Angy Elyamany- Family development program coordinator- Director of Financial and digital inclusion NCW. Eng. Hoda Shakra, senior consultant of industry & external relations -Digital Egypt Generations initiative- ministry of communications and information technology, and E-waste senior advisor-ministry of Environment. Ms. Nashwa Habib, Entrepreneurship and networks Senior advisor- Business Egypt- - Tiye Angels investment network
14:00 – 14:30	Q&A	
14:30 – 15:00	Closing Remarks, group picture and Thank You	Ms. Hend Mohamed Safaa Eldin, Director of Labour Market Information Unit, Ministry of Labour Ms. Valentina Verze, Enterprise Development and Job Creation Specialist ILO DWT/CO-Cairo
15:00	Lunch	