Y-LEAD

"Creating Civic Spaces for Active Citizenship"

Final Evaluation Report

December 2020
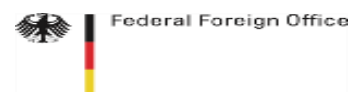
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List of Acronyms

CAPMAS   Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics

CDS   The Center for Development Services

CRISP   Crisis Simulation for Peace

CSOs   Civil Society Organizations

DAC   Development Assistance Committee

EDHS   Egypt Demographic Health Survey

EU   European Union

FGDs   Focus Group Discussions

HCV   Hepatitis C virus

MOETE   Ministry of Education and Technical Education

MoHP   Ministry of Health and Population

MoSS   Ministry of Social Solidarity

MoYS   Ministry of Youth and Sports

MSMEDA   Micro, Small & Medium Enterprise Development Authority

NCCM   National Council for Childhood and Motherhood

NCD   Non-communicable diseases

NCW   National Council for Women

NGOs   Non-Governmental Organizations

SCAF   Supreme Council of the Armed Forces

SDGs   Sustainable Development Goals

SET   Simulating the Egyptian Transition

STIs   Sexually Transmitted Infections

UNFPA   United Nations Population Fund

WP   Working Packages

WPs   Working Packages

Y-LEAD   Youth Leadership

Executive Summary

Crisis Simulation for Peace (CRISP) in cooperation with the Center for Development Services (CDS), implemented the "Y-LEAD" Program between 2019 and 2020. Y-LEAD, which was branded as "*Dorna*" that means "our role" in Arabic, is a social leadership program that promotes inclusive participation of youth and encourages their active role in the local councils and public sphere. The program aimed at empowering local youth to take leading roles in their local communities through innovative and non-formal learning methods. Additionally, it worked on creating spaces and opportunities by working with multiple key actors and stakeholders to support empowering youth and women to contribute to sustainable change in their communities; and thus, maintain the motivation for social change. This will ideally provide a solid basis for any further efforts towards a more open environment for change and cohesive society.

Throughout its implementation period, Y-Lead reached 23 governorates in Egypt and more than 5,000 beneficiaries who were direct and indirect beneficiaries in Y-Lead's five working packages (WPs). **WP1: Awareness Campaign** aimed at increasing the understanding of young people regarding the political system in Egypt, in particular the role and responsibilities of the local councils, through developing and implementing a simulation game titled "Helios" (City of the Sun), which revolves around local councils in Egypt. The simulation game was played 170 times in 23 governorates, with a total number of 3,268 beneficiaries (1,923 (59%) women and 1,345 (41%) men). **WP2: Online-Survey (nationwide) and Creation of Policy-Papers** consisted of two parts: 1) creation of a nationwide online survey, and 2) creation of policy papers. The online survey was used as a means to get a valid and representative poll on the needs and expectations of youth and women regarding values, family and professional life, social and political participation. As for the policy papers, they helped analyze pestering topics on community level and present alternative solutions; and by this way influence the political agenda. Hence, the findings of the survey and the subsequent policy-papers supported the planning of local initiatives. **WP3: Realizing (cross-sectoral) Local Initiatives** aimed at starting, facilitating and maintaining dialogue among different sectors of society. The local initiatives targeted marginalized groups such as disadvantaged children, youth lacking opportunities and women living in poverty. The beneficiaries implemented 15 initiatives; five of which were up-scaled. The initiatives were designed and successfully implemented in 13 governorates, covering issues such as Environment, Education, Health, Social Change and Economy.

WP4: Capacity Building and Empowerment for Youth and Women aimed at empowering youth and women to take leading roles in the public sphere and participate in local council elections when they resume in Egypt. 28 participants (16 womens and 14 males) from 15 governorates were selected to attend the workshops in WP4, learning about communication, negotiation, persuasion, leadership, agenda setting, campaigning and public speaking. After WP4 ended, two participants ran for parliamentary elections, ten participants decided to run for the local councils' elections when they resume and others supported candidates who were running for the parliamentary elections with their electoral campaigns. **WP5: Creating Sustainable Formats for Dialogue (Roundtables and Forums)** aimed at establishing cross-sectoral networks on the governorate level to serve as collaborative spaces for stakeholders from the private sector, the media, academia, civil society and the state to exchange ideas and support their communities in their social and economic development. In order to create a solid basis, a stakeholder analysis was conducted across 23 governorates, focusing on entities that work with youth in the different sectors. Following an evaluation of the stakeholder analysis, Y-LEAD used the innovative method of simulation gaming to facilitate the exchange among the different stakeholders and to establish mutual trust as a crucial pre-condition for the upcoming formats for dialogue. Hence, a workshop for the development of the simulation game for "Creating

Local Networks". The simulation game was named "Magadif" – meaning "Oars" in English. The simulation game "Magadif" was successfully disseminated 6 times in 6 governorates with total number of 100 diverse participants from various different sectors. At the end of each simulation game, a roundtable discussion was organized where the participants proposed action plans for implementing the selected initiatives.

As the program ended in December 2020, it has successfully managed to achieve the following:

-Build the capacities of youth and women in 23 targeted governorates on how to facilitate dialogue, include marginalized groups and reach out to local actors from different sectors to bring positive change and develop the sense of ownership, inclusion and social cohesion.

-Establish cross-sectoral networks that supported the implementation of local community initiatives in 23 governorates. The cross-sectoral networks included local authorities, civil society organizations, media, private sectors, and Nadi El Mohakah (Simulation Game Club, Egypt).

-Build strong coalitions of actors from different sectors across the Egyptian governorates, which significantly contributed to greater social cohesion through the successful implementation and sustainability of the youth's proposed initiatives.

This report will shed light on the findings of Y-LEAD program, using Development Assistance Criteria (DAC) criteria, which use relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability. It provides key recommendations for broader strategic ideas that will be shared for future phases of Y-LEAD program.

Key findings:

A) Relevance

Y-LEAD program, with its five working packages, demonstrated its relevance to the needs of Egyptian youths and women, especially amid the current political context in Egypt; which is largely characterized by high levels of bureaucracy and centralization, difficulty to reach decision-makers and the lack of or limited political expertise among young people. Through Y-LEAD program, Egyptian youths and women became aware of the Egyptian political system, local councils' structure and role, civic participation and active citizenship. Through "Helios" simulation game (WP1), the beneficiaries acquired the skills needed to run for the local council elections and become active members of society. They also established networks and partnerships with a number of entities from the governmental sector, civil society and the private sector.

The creation of policy papers (WP2) was also relevant to the needs of the participants who managed through the survey, which Baseera conducted, to gather data on topics that are important and relevant to their communities; and thus, close the gap between elected representatives and their electorates. Through the capacity-building component and the provision of know-how skills of writing policy papers, the participants were able to present policy papers that reflect the needs of their communities, including recommendations and alternative solutions, to decision-makers.

As for realizing the local initiatives (WP3), the participants managed to come up with ideas and write proposals for initiatives that respond to the needs of their communities, including disadvantaged children, youth lacking opportunities and women living in poverty. The initiatives covered several community development issues and SDGs such as: Environment, Education, Health, Social Change and Economy. Through realizing cross-sectoral local initiatives, the participants managed to start, facilitate and maintain dialogue among the different sectors of society. Additionally, they managed to build partnerships with different stakeholders such as governmental entities, media, private sector and

civil society, which are very essential to foster their political engagement and help them become active members in their communities.

Building the capacity of youths and women (WP4) was particularly relevant to the needs of youths and women as they learnt how to assess societal needs, prepare for campaigns, run for elections, which aligned perfectly with their goals; whether they want to run for parliamentary or local elections or take on leadership positions in community work. In fact, some participants recount using what they learnt in real life situations. For example, one of the participants reached out to the executives in Luxor to collaborate in finding solutions to one of the community's most urgent challenges: economic vulnerability of women. The participant in question suggested that NGOs partner and network together to provide women in Luxor with vocational trainings to start autonomously generating income.

Bridging the gap between decision-makers and youths was also addressed through the creation of sustainable Formats for Dialogue (WP5), which managed to establish formats that allow discussion on local needs and challenges of youth and women through the simulation game "Magadif". The latter helped create inter and intra sectoral cooperation with the aim of forming longstanding networks in various communities for upcoming initiatives and future projects. The roundtables that followed the simulation game also helped bring decision-makers and young people together to discuss communal and societal concerns and share the different perspectives.

B) Effectiveness

Y-LEAD program managed to achieve its overall objective, which is to increase the social and political participation among youths and women in the public and political spheres. Through "Helios" simulation game (WP1), which was played 170 times by 3,268 beneficiaries in 23 governorates, the participants became aware of the importance and functionality of the local councils. The game had a clear and lasting impact on the participants as some of the beneficiaries proceeded to run for the Parliament and others ran for youth centers' administrations/elections. Additionally, after 28 participants received capacity building trainings through WP4, two of the participants ran for the parliamentary elections, 3 supported candidates in their electoral campaigns and 10 decided to run for the upcoming local council elections.

Through building their capacities on how to write policy papers (WP2), 27 participants from 8 governorates managed to generate ideas for three policy papers on political empowerment of youth, women's empowerment in the ICT sector and volunteerism. They also received feedback from officials in governmental entities such as the Ministry of Social Solidarity (MoSS), Ministry of Youth and Sports (MoYS) and Micro, Small & Medium Enterprise Development Authority (MSMEDA) who work closely with decision-makers and have hands on experience. Additionally, the partnerships with executives from MoSS, MoYS and MSMEDA helped the participants establish strong networks that are beneficial for them if they want to engage in the political and public spheres in Egypt.

Building cross- sectoral networks with different sectors of the society, including government officials, media, private sector and civil society, was also realized through the cross-sectoral local initiatives (WP3). Moreover, through "Magadif" simulation game (WP5), the participants managed to establish networks and partnerships with various sectors in the society, which enabled the participants to plan the implementation of several local initiatives because of resource sharing and knowledge exchange. Additionally, as majority of the participants were local officials, the work package was successful in altering the perception of decision-making bodies, concerning the importance of inter and intra sectoral cooperation. In alignment with the goal of the Y-LEAD program as a whole, the youth have been

equipped with the right partnerships and the creation of community networks, which have encouraged youth to engage in political life.

C) Efficiency

Y-LEAD program managed to deliver its results in an efficient and timely manner despite the challenges imposed by the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic and the lockdown. The participants of the different work packages mentioned that the methods and strategies used to implement the different activities were efficient. In regards to WP1, the participants were satisfied with the interactive trainings offered, the follow-up and monitoring activities; as well as the established partnerships that helped this component achieve its objectives. Several resources were available for utilization such as human resources (exchange of experiences among the participants as well as the expertise of the specialists involved), financial resources and technological resources (online platforms to promote "Helios"). The effective utilization of the resources of this component resulted in unintended results. The game was played 170 times instead of 150 times, targeting larger number of participants than planned.

As for WP2, the use of the Baseera survey as a basis for the creation of policy papers was very efficient as it decreased the effort and time that participants allocated to identify potential gaps in the community. The participants, specifically, benefited from the expertise of University of Assiut professors in the Center for Political and Strategic Studies, participants with higher educational backgrounds and executives from MoSS, MoYS and MSMEDA to efficiently gather knowledge and information to create policy papers in a short period.

With regards to WP3, the participants mentioned that they utilized their resources and networks efficiently and smartly. They relied on their experiences and the skills of each other to come up with efficient and adequate plans despite the challenges that occurred throughout 2020. They also had a clear plan since the beginning and managed to deliver the exact ideas they had from the start. Hence, some of the initiatives managed to get the attention of the media (health-focused initiatives). Their preparedness, efficient use of existing resources, networking skills and having alternative plans helped many of them deal with challenges.

As for WP4, the participants mentioned that the educational approach used (participatory methodology), sequencing of the topics, exchange of expertise among participants and the careful choice of trainers were very efficient and helped achieve the goals of the WP. The efficient use of human resources was stressed upon also in WP5. The facilitators' experiences and skills played a role in the success of the simulation games. Likewise, the diverse background of the participants, some of whom are local officials, was helpful in efficiently implementing the initiatives across their communities due to their wide connections.

D) Impact

Y-LEAD program has managed to generate significant impact among youths and women in Egypt. Through "Helios" simulation game, 3,268 participants became aware of local councils, specifically their role and functionality in society. Many showed interest in running for local council elections once they are announced within the coming year. Moreover, building the capacity of 28 participants through WP4 encouraged 10 of them to run for local councils, two ran for parliamentary elections and three worked in electoral campaign teams. Hence, the program succeeded in increasing youths and women's participation in the political sphere.

Moreover, the program has also helped many of its beneficiaries acquire important skills such as creating policy papers to influence the agenda setting on a local level. The program's impact was also

evident through the cross-sectoral local initiatives, which helped address environmental, educational, health, economic and social change-related challenges. The most significant impact of WP3 is creating cross-sectoral networks and partnerships between different sectors of society. The initiatives also had indirect impact as the beneficiaries took active steps to transfer the accumulated information to their communities. Hence, a trickledown effect was observed as impact multiplied to reach individuals beyond the targeted audience. Finally, Y-LEAD program has managed through the simulation game of "Magadif" (WP5) to shift the perceptions of 100 local officials and youths regarding the importance of networking. All of the participants have been more accepting to the art of networking and realized how the implementation of successful initiatives can only be achieved by merging resources, knowledge sharing and experience exchange.

It is crucial to mention that the simulation games have been positively perceived by the majority of the participants who were very impressed by the use of simulation games to transfer messages that they have grown an interest in becoming simulation game facilitators. Also, after the termination of the simulation game implementation, several participants have become active citizens participated in meetings throughout their governorates, which are organized to serve their community and implement local initiatives.

E) Sustainability

Many of the activities conducted under Y-LEAD program have a high chance of being sustainable for the upcoming period. In regards to WP1, its sustainability is ensured as a number of educational institutions (Assiut and Helwan Universities), and youth centers have expressed their interest in "Helios" simulation game and adopted it themselves along with the presence of trained cadres in game facilitation in most governorates. Professors from Assiut and Helwan universities were quite satisfied with "Helios" because they noticed the significant impact that it had on their students.

As for WP2, its sustainability stems from the reach of the policy papers and their ability to influence decision-makers and the political agenda. CDS has distributed the policy papers to several executive authorities. As such, official leaders have received and dissected the alternative policies and recommendations that were proposed in the three policy papers. It was planned to have these policy papers turn into initiatives. But as the policy papers were not distributed to all of the Y-LEAD participants, it was difficult to carry this out. In regards to WP3, building cross-sectoral partnerships can play an important role in the sustainability of this component. Many of the participants also mentioned that , the outcomes of the initiatives and the awareness raised will still be used again in projects that serve the same purpose, ensuring that work will be built on what has already been made and will not have to start from scratch.

WP 4 was deemed sustainable by participants as long as it stays close to its participatory and discussion based learning methodology. Participants were actually in praise of field tasks that should be practically applied by the end of each phase. Moreover, complimentary capacity-building sessions, networking with the youth committees in the political parties, and more contact with parliamentarians were presented as channels through which sustainability of the package could be enforced. In WP5, to ensure the sustainability of the game implementation's goal, round table discussions were initiated. These round table discussions are meant to be a platform where members of the society from different sectors meet and discuss the viable implementation of initiatives across their communities

Key recommendations:

-Invoking partnerships with political entities (i.e. Political parties) and helping the trained participants network with youth committees in political parties and/or attend sessions in the Parliament is very important for the trained participants to gain practical experience and apply what they learnt in real life situations.

-Capacity-building trainings shall take into account practicality as well as the theoretical content. For example, the concepts of advocacy and lobbying should be taught in a practical manner and not only through indoctrination.

-Proposal-writing training sessions shall be provided to participants in simulation games as they are highly important since they develop initiatives after the simulation games.

-Ideation camps can be a good approach to the implementation of simulation games and/or development and preparation for the implementation of the participants' local initiatives. It was sometimes very difficult to bring together a group of stakeholders who have daily jobs for the implementation of the simulation games. The facilitators also faced difficulty in finding an appropriate date and time that would suit all the participants. This was problematic for the success of the simulation game "Magadif", as a minimum of 15 participants are required for its effective implementation.

-The length of the implementation phase of simulation games shall be increased to reach more beneficiaries and target more governorates.

-The use of social media platforms shall be taken into account in similar future projects with youths and women for recruitment purposes and implementation of activities.

-A follow-up on the participants' performance in the upcoming period and their plans to participate in elections (i.e. local councils' elections), join civil society initiatives and/or become community leaders is very crucial and can be considered as a good learning opportunity, especially in terms of the program's sustainability.

-It is very important to take into account the timing of the activities in relevance to the surrounding context. Particularly in WP4, participants saw that it would have been more relevant if the timing of the workshops had not coincided with the parliamentary elections as they could have had enough time to apply what they learnt to real life situations. They wanted more time to work on their electoral campaigns and run for the parliamentary elections.

-The importance of the follow-up phase and the significance of meeting up with the participants to be able to measure the impact of the activities. Some of the participants in WP2 mentioned that not all the professors were following up on the policy papers that were being created by the participants, which resulted with some topics having weaker recommendations than others.

-The importance of ensuring that a balance exists between the educational/academic and practical aspects of the activities. For instance, in WP2, the approach to the policy papers was controversial between the participants due to its purely academic nature. The content presented lacked a reflection of reality due to the professors having an academic background. Hence, it was recommended to have a balance between the academic and practical aspects as it was pivotal to incorporate real-life examples and interactive learning alongside the theoretical content of the policy papers.

Introduction and Contextual Background

During the 30 years of former President Hosni Mubarak's reign, political participation in Egypt was limited. Even though very few political parties managed to engage in the political life in Egypt, many of them believed that their political engagement was ineffective in influencing the governmental decisions. Additionally, Mubarak's regime has for so long repressed the regime's opposition, making political participation sound like a taboo. During his reign, youth political participation was minimal. Nevertheless, with the outburst of the 2011 uprising, many have acquired a great sense of political entitlement; alongside a great sense of optimism in the possibility of political change. This was reflected in the increase in the levels of political engagement that was evident in voting in elections, joining political parties, civil society initiatives and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs).

Following the ouster of Mubarak, the political scene in Egypt became quite unstable as the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF) led an interim government. During the transitional period from the SCAF rule to the government of Mohamed Morsi, Egypt witnessed a period of political and economic instability. Additionally, the role of young people started to be marginalized again even though they endeavored to influence the country's roadmap through their participation in political parties, civil society initiatives, referendums and elections (Parliamentary and Presidential elections). With the fall of Morsi's regime in 2013 and the advent of Abdel Fattah El Sisi, Egypt's former Minister of Defense and current Egyptian President, the levels of political and public participation have severely declined as the state has tightened its grip over the public and political scenes, including civil society and the media, as part of its strategy to counter terrorism. This has made many young people believe that the 2011 events have failed to reach its goals, especially that very few changes have taken place since 2011.

After nine years from the outbreak of the 2011 Egyptian uprising, the Egyptian society is still in a precarious situation, conflicts and divisions; resulting in the fact that many young people feel excluded from the political system. In addition, the link between the government and the population follows a strict top-down approach, which negatively affects the general concept of an active citizenship. Citizens also experience intense state violence and strong repression. For example, state repression is very apparent in the President's crackdown on media and civil society. Since May 2017 to date, more than 57 news and media websites have been shut down, according to Reuters, for alleged accusations of supporting terrorism. Furthermore, since October 2017 to the present, a Presidential Decree has been issued to extend the Emergency Law in the state, which results in increased censorships and arbitrary arrests. Concerning civil society, In August 2019, President Abdel Fattah El Sisi ratified Law 149 of 2019 Regulating the Exercise of Civil Work (commonly referred to as the Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) Law). The new law replaced Law 70 of 2017, which was widely criticized for being draconian. While the government claimed that the new law responded to about 80 percent of CSOs' demands, some human rights organizations have objected to the new law because it retained many of Law 70's restrictions on CSO formation, funding, and activities. This situation is creating a sense of alienation among activists in the field of development. Youth activists are affected mostly by this crackdown. To date, the executive regulations or bylaws of the law have not yet been issued. Not only is the political scene heavily controlled by the regime, but there is also lack of transparency in the existing political processes, including presidential and parliamentary elections. The latter have been held in November 2020 and the chances are high that they were not free or fair elections, as was the case with the 2018 presidential elections. This further prevents the improvement in the democratic system in Egypt.

Within this context, many young people pin their hopes on the local council elections that are one of the most progressive parts of the Egyptian Constitution as the composition of the local councils is pre-defined by 25% seats for women and 25% seats for youth under 35. Local council councils have a promised role in pushing for democratic transition in Egypt, as it will enable excluded citizens, including young people, to engage in the political scene in Egypt; and thus, they can start participating in parliamentary elections and political parties later on.

In light of the potential opportunities present in the current political context, and given CRISP's extensive experience in the field of conflict transformation and development and implementation of simulation games and CDS' nationwide network with the public sector and CSOs across Egypt, both organizations designed and implemented Y-LEAD program in 2019 and 2020. Y-LEAD is a social leadership program that promoted inclusive participation of youths in the public sphere. The program aimed at empowering local youth to take leading roles in their local communities through innovative and non-formal learning methods. As the program is based on the theory of change, it relied on simulation games and initiatives building as a tool to promote youth and women community engagement and active citizenship. Simulation games are designed to closely simulate real world activities for various purposes such as training, analysis, or prediction. Thanks to Y-LEAD, many young people, including young women, became aware of political participation in general and local councils in specific and mastered the method of simulation gaming. Additionally, the program built their capacities through a number of activities in the program's five working packages to take responsibility and engage in the political life in Egypt. Furthermore, the program managed to enable young people to create safe spaces and opportunities by working with multiple key actors and stakeholders, including CSOs, local authorities, media and private sector, especially in developing and implementing community-based initiatives to contribute to sustainable change in their communities. This has, accordingly, fostered skills such as networking, communication and building cross-sectoral partnerships. This will ideally provide a solid basis for any further efforts towards a more open environment for change and cohesive society.

It is very crucial to mention that Y-LEAD also built on CDS and CRISP's previous projects, Simulating Egyptian Transition (SET) project series, that have worked for six years (2012-2018)on supporting the Egyptian youths to lead change in the post 2011 uprising era. SET I introduced the method of simulation gaming. SET II developed and implemented the first Egyptianized simulation game. SET III created a vision for Egypt in 2025. SET IV developed and implemented more simulation games and introduced the idea of community initiatives. As for SET V, it upscaled the community initiatives to realize Egypt's vision 2025.

Y-LEAD program consisted of five working packages (WPs):

WP1: Awareness Campaign aimed at increasing the understanding of young people regarding the political system in Egypt, in particular the role and responsibilities of the local councils, which are considered as the most direct link between citizens and their government. Through developing and implementing a simulation game titled "Helios" (City of the Sun), which revolves around local councils in Egypt, WP1 aimed to highlight the importance of local councils by emphasizing their role and functionality. The simulation game enabled the participants to step into the roles of local decision-makers. The decision-making process in the simulation game fully reflected the Egyptian Constitution; and thus, enabled the participants to better understand the processes and dynamics of local councils. This game encouraged youth to become more aware about the political system in Egypt. Furthermore, it encouraged them to politically participate in the public sphere. In the fictious city of "Helios",

participants stepped into the roles of decision-makers where they had to find creative solutions for everyday challenges related to the access and availability of key public services. The fictitious events of "Helios" placed emphasis on local councils and the crucial role that they play within a community. Through this simulation game, the participants were able to meet as citizens of "Helios" and discuss the most important challenges of their everyday lives regarding health, education, and public utilities. They were also able to find possible and pragmatic solutions for the city's issues. The simulation game was played 170 times in 23 governorates, with a total number of 3,268 beneficiaries.

WP2: Online-Survey (nationwide) and Creation of Policy-Papers consisted of two parts: 1) creation of a nationwide online survey, and 2) creation of policy papers. The online survey was used as a means to get a valid and representative poll on the needs and expectations of youth and women regarding values, family and professional life, social and political participation. As for the policy papers, they helped analyze key topics on community level and present alternative solutions; and by this way influence the political agenda. Hence, the findings of the survey and the subsequent policy-papers supported the planning of local initiatives, in the sense that the initiatives were more need-driven and helped forces join together more easily. Three policy papers' workshops took place at the University of Assiut in partnership with the Center for Political and Strategic Studies. The first workshop was dedicated to understanding the details of writing a research paper. It gave participants information around the creation of a research paper, which was used as the building block for the creation of policy papers. The second workshop focused on dissecting the research papers presented by each group in order to eventually form different policy papers under the following topics: political empowerment of youth, women's empowerment in the ICT sector and volunteerism. At the end of the workshop, points of interventions for each group were outlined and acted as the basis for the policy papers that they presented at the following workshop. The third workshop was dedicated to finalizing and developing recommendations for the policy papers presented under the following three finalized topics. Guest speakers were invited to provide each group with a thorough critic of the developed papers. A dissemination event also took place in order to present the published policy papers.

WP3: Realizing (cross-sectoral) Local Initiatives aimed at starting, facilitating and maintaining dialogue among different sectors of society. The local initiatives targeted marginalized groups such as disadvantaged children, youth lacking opportunities and women living in poverty. WP3 was a gateway to establish good relations with local stakeholders (from different sectors) in general and with local authorities in particular. Throughout WP-3, youth and women learned how to facilitate dialogue, how to include marginalized groups and how to reach out to local stakeholders from different sectors. In this regards, they implemented local initiatives that aimed at opening channels of communications among the different sectors of society, which usually do not interact. Furthermore, thanks to these local initiatives, the involved youth and women addressed community issues by developing and implementing their own solutions. The program implemented 15 initiatives; five of which were up-scaled. The initiatives were designed and successfully implemented in 13 governorates at Central Egypt (Cairo, Qualiyubia and Giza), Delta (Sharkeya and Gharbeya), Upper Egypt (Luxor, Awan, Assiut, Sohag and Qena) and Lower Egypt (Minya, Beni-Suef and Fayoum). The initiatives covered several community development issues and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that pertain to issues such as environment, education, health, social change and the local economy.

WP4: Capacity Building and Empowerment for Youth and Women aimed at empowering youth and women to take leading roles in the public sphere and participate in local council elections when they resume in Egypt. As such, a series of workshops have been organized to strengthen the capacities of the selected participants, providing them with resources and exercises to further develop their skills. 28 participants (16 women and 14 men) from 15 governorates were selected to attend the workshops

in WP4. Through WP4, the participants learnt about communication, negotiation, persuasion, leadership, agenda setting, campaigning and public speaking. Additionally, they learnt about resource mobilization, networking and advocacy. These topics were delivered over the course of three workshops. After WP4 ended, two participants ran for parliamentary elections, ten participants decided to run for the local councils' elections when they resume and others supported candidates who were running for the parliamentary elections with their electoral campaigns.

WP5: Creating Sustainable Formats for Dialogue (Roundtables and Forums) aimed at establishing cross-sectoral networks on the governorate level to serve as collaborative spaces for stakeholders from the private sector, the media, academia, civil society and the state to exchange ideas and support their communities in their social and economic development. In order to create a solid basis, a stakeholder analysis was conducted across 23 governorates, focusing on entities that work with youth in the different sectors. The stakeholders from various sectors such as public entities, private businesses or ministries such as Education, Social Solidarity and Youth and Sports and NGOs were identified. Following an evaluation of the stakeholder analysis, Y-LEAD used the innovative method of simulation gaming to facilitate the exchange among the different stakeholders and to establish mutual trust as a crucial pre-condition for the upcoming formats for dialogue. Hence, a workshop for the development of the simulation game for "Creating Local Networks" took place in Ismailia before the implementation phase. The simulation game was named "Magadif" – meaning "Oars" in English. The simulation game "Magadif" was successfully disseminated 6 times in 6 governorates with total number of 100 diverse participants from various different sectors. Additionally, at the end of each simulation game, a roundtable discussion was organized where the participants developed action plans to implement the selected initiatives. In these meetings, the action plans proposed were refined to be taken to the implementation level.

As the program ended in December 2020, it has successfully managed to achieve the following:

-Build the capacities of youth and women in 23 targeted governorates on how to facilitate dialogue, include marginalized groups and reach out to local actors from different sectors to bring positive change and develop the sense of ownership, inclusion and social cohesion.

-Establish cross-sectoral networks that supported the implementation of local community initiatives in 23 governorates. The cross-sectoral networks included local authorities, civil society organizations, media, private sectors, and Nadi El Mohakah (Simulation Game Club, Egypt).

-Build strong coalitions of actors from different sectors across the Egyptian governorates, which significantly contributed to greater social cohesion through the successful implementation and sustainability of the youth's proposed initiatives.

Program Goals and Outcomes

Y-LEAD program's main goal is to increase the social and political participation among youth and women, increasing the overall accountability of the political system in Egypt.

As for the outcomes of the program, they were divided into the following:

Outcome 1: Increased participation in public sphere regarding being an active citizen among youth and women
Outcome 2: Increased agenda-setting capabilities among youth and women
Outcome 3: Youth and women acquire sufficient capacities to start, facilitate and maintain dialogue among different parts (religious, economic, cultural, ethnic, etc.) of society.
Outcome 4: Youth and women acquire the needed knowledge and skills to run for Local Council Elections
Outcome 5: Public demand for Local Council Elections increases due to the establishment of cross-sectoral networks on governorate's level

Evaluation Methodology

The principles that guide the approach to this evaluation assignment are to create a set of robust evidence on results achieved against those planned during the two years of the program implementation. Using a participatory approach, which engages the participants in the dynamics of the action and the continuous follow-up-activities and evaluation, this final evaluation incorporated diverse data collection tools and reflective activities that involved various program stakeholders including CRISP and CDS project teams, youth facilitators, and beneficiaries of the community-based initiatives and simulation games.

The main objective of this evaluation was to review the activities conducted, in order to assess the participants' understanding of the program, its goal, its effectiveness in the community, points of strength and weaknesses, learnt lessons, how relevant such workshops were to their communities' needs and their suggestions for future actions.

The evaluation used the Developing Assistance Committee (DAC) criteria as a guiding framework for evaluation. DAC examines the program's relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability. Therefore, the evaluator conducted the following activities:

- Desk review of program documents including proposal, reports and previous evaluations;
- Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), organized in December 2020 (5-7 December) during an evaluation workshop.

Limitations

Due to the limited time and short span of the evaluation exercise, the evaluation team could not visit the local communities where the program's key activities were conducted to assess the extent to which they gained knowledge and acquired skills. Nevertheless, the responses and feedback obtained should be sufficient to formulate a comprehensive overview of the program and its effectiveness and impact

at the outcome and outputs levels of the completed activities during the two years period of implementation phase.

Evaluation Findings

A. Relevance

The extent to which the intervention objectives and design respond to beneficiaries', global, country, and partner/institution needs, policies, and priorities.

WP1: Awareness Campaign

The relevance of "Helios" to the Egyptian context could be understood through political and socio-economic lenses. Political participation for youth in Egypt lacks an enabling environment due to a number of factors such as the difficulty of reaching decision-makers, being exploited and discriminated against by executives and leaders due to "lack of or limited expertise", corruption, and nepotism. Socio-economic factors also present several challenges that are related to youths' political participation in the public sphere. These challenges include a lack of societal awareness regarding the importance of political participation, limited financial resources for political engagement (i.e. running for elections), economic and financial burdens, and the prominent patriarchal and misogynistic notions around women participation in the political arena.

The game's main objective is to raise awareness towards the importance and functionality of local councils. This simulation game specifically sheds light on the role of local council members, highlighting that they have to represent all citizens regardless of their social class and their different needs during their decision and policymaking processes. Through the simulation game, participants are encouraged to be active members of society and to take over constructive roles, at the community level, by acquiring pragmatic decision-making skills.

The youths who were involved in work package one were driven towards participating in the political arena, particularly local councils. However, they lacked the awareness, knowledge, and know-how concerned with local councils and local council elections. "Helios" relevancy towards the political and socio-economic Egyptian context stems from the fact that it educates participants and raises their awareness about the structure and role of local councils. It acquaints them with a part of the Egyptian political system and encourages them to have and create political voices for themselves through a safe environment where they are able to learn about local councils, civic participation, and active citizenship. It enables them to exchange experiences and skills, leading them to become more politically engaged within their communities. For instance, some of the youth that participated in "Helios" simulation game decided to run for local council elections, once they are announced, in order to take up leadership roles and positively influence their communities. Other participants chose to contribute to their communities socially by joining CSOs and youth centers' administrative councils.

The simulation game also inspired the participants to implement the initiatives that they developed during the game to better serve and address their communities' needs.

Furthermore, "Helios" helped the participants establish networks and partnerships with a number of entities from the governmental sector, civil society, and the private sector such as the Ministry of Youth and Sports (MoYS), the Ministry of Social Solidarity (MoSS), Assiut University, the Scouts, CSOs, etc. The simulation game raised the awareness of the participants towards local councils and a number of

relevant issues occurring in their very own communities through the utilization of an interactive and productive methodology.

The participants mentioned that Y-LEAD Program team has provided financial, logistical, and legal support that were quite helpful for the success of WP1. Moreover, the trainings' material and qualifications of the participants, who were included in the game design and the facilitation teams were very integral to the packages' success.

WP2: Online-Survey (nationwide) and Creation of Policy-Papers

This work package was relevant due to several reasons. The survey conducted by Baseera enabled the participants to gather data on topics that are deemed important to their communities. As such, they were able to pinpoint relevant issues that their communities face and was thereby seen as a possible point of intervention. It attempts to close the gap between elected representatives and their electorate created by the lack of capacities of citizens to express their needs and interests in a way that they actually get attention by decision makers. Hence, it had societal and contextual relevance.

Additionally, the capacity-building component of this work package was relevant to the needs of the participants as the majority needed to understand the knowhow of policy papers. This work package was a means to enhance the skills of the participants with respect to policy papers writing as well as the skill of transforming communal issues into policy recommendations. Due to the participants' educational background, they were given a clear-cut differentiation between research papers and policy papers, which ties to their eagerness to successfully reach decision-makers. It was designed to demonstrate how to come up with a relevant research problem, conduct research, use references and write policy papers by evaluating past polices, recommending alternatives and forming an intervention plan. As such, the content and material presented was relevant to their needs, which were associated with the creation of policy papers and influencing the political agenda. Yet, it seems like some of the professors lacked field knowledge and purely focused on the academic relevance of the material and content presented to the participants.

Likewise, this work package was relevant to the entirety of the Y-LEAD program as the findings of the survey and the policy papers supported the planning of various local initiatives in the sense that they are more need-driven and contextualized. Several participants pointed out that it generated various partnerships with different academic entities and civil society members.

WP3: Realizing (cross-sectoral) Local Initiatives

The local initiatives targeted marginalized groups such as disadvantaged children, youth lacking opportunities and women living in poverty. The program implemented 15 initiatives; five of which were up-scaled. The initiatives were designed and successfully implemented in 13 governorates at Central Egypt (Cairo, Qualiyubia and Giza), Delta (Sharkeya and Gharbeya), Upper Egypt (Luxor, Awan, Assiut, Sohag and Qena) and Lower Egypt (Minya, Beni-Suef and Fayoum). The initiatives covered several community development issues and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that pertain to issues such as environment, education, health, social change and the local economy.

Example of the **environment-focused initiatives** are "Abnoub Madina Sadiqa lel Be'aa"- Abanoub an Environmental-Friendly City (Assiut), "Heya Dayra"- It is a Circle (Aswan) and "Bekya Med" Waste Remade (Recycling Waste) (Qena). **Education-focused initiatives** included "Takhta Khadra" – Green Board (Qena). Example of the **health-focused initiatives** are"Geel min al-Aseh'a"- A Generation of Heathy Children (Fayoum), "Fareeq Insaniyah"- The Humanity Team (Minya) and "Enti Te'dari"- You Can (Sharqiya). **Social change-focused initiatives** included

"Awladna"- Our Kids (Qalioubiya), "SDGs for Little Bees" (Sohag), "Kawkabna"- Our Planet (Cairo), "Games for goals" (Giza), "Etrok A'thar"- Make an Impact (Beni Suef) and   "Hakhod Haa'i"- I Will Reclaim My Right" (Gharbiya).   Finally, the **economy-focused initiatives** include "Nesa'a Ra'edat"- Women Pioneers (Luxor) and "Hirfa Fi Eidak"- A skill in your hands (Assiut).

- **Environment-focused initiatives**

Qena Egypt faces numerous threats to its environmental sustainability. The rapid population growth coupled with ambitious development policies have put a heavy pressure on Egypt's natural resources in the form of severe air, water, and soil pollution. The scope and magnitude of these environmental and social costs are likely to offset some of the economic growth gains over time.
The situation is exacerbated with lack of awareness among the population with regards to waste and waste management, which has become an insurmountable challenge that the government, particularly local councils in both urban and rural areas deal with by their own.   A combination of private, public and informal collection techniques has not been able to keep up with the growth of municipal waste; and as a result, the country is facing an environmental, health, safety, and economic crisis that cannot be resolved through this current approach.

Some attempts at recycling are present and growing in the country. However, these are largely informal or private actors, and government initiatives are necessary to properly manage these systems and provide them with appropriate resources. Nonetheless, one major challenge remains, the inability of local councils to reach out to people and to conduct needs assessments to better understand social needs when it comes to waste collection, waste management and recycling to realize the "**Green Transformation"** and reduce the carbon footprint.

In this context, the **"Abnoub: an Environmental-Friendly City"** Initiative launched in Abnoub City and District in AssiutGovernorate tried to bridge the gap between the Abnoub Local Council and the community by raising awareness about the environmental challenges that the city faces and activating the role of the local council in community participation to address the pollution challenge in the city.

Disposal of cooking oil is an even bigger challenge. The difficulty that arises with throwing it away in a regular bin encourages households to get rid of cooking oil by pouring it down the drain. When greasy oil is poured down the drain, it will solidify and eventually block pipes or cause damage to the sanitation system, particularly in areas with poor infrastructural services.   In governorates, like Aswan, this poses a bigger challenge when oil waste reaches the Nile, affecting the neighborhoods, plants, drinking water and agricultural soil. In that context, **"It is a Circle"** Initiative presented the idea of environmental protection through oil management and recycling, raising the awareness of women about environmental preservation and waste management and offering to produce new products that generate income for women living in poverty to enable them economically.

Recognizing that mainly women are among the first to suffer because of environmental pollution, Goal 5 of the SDGs focuses on gender equality; seeking to end all discrimination against women and to provide them with the necessary space, skills and opportunities to participate equally in existing markets. In that context, the idea of **"Bekya Med"** Initiative was to raise environmental awareness in Qena, while creating job opportunities that generate small income, particularly for women heads of households through local environmental resources.

- **Education-focused initiatives**

Egypt's education system needs an overhaul. School teaching, based mostly on memorization, does not give students practical skills, leaving them unprepared for college and hindering their transition to the job market. Overcrowded classrooms, poor attendance and a lack of good libraries or office space for teachers are problems that run through the system. Facilities like computers and science labs are often rundown if they exist at all in many public schools, particularly in remote and impoverished areas in rural Upper Egypt. More importantly, school textbooks are in need for updating and becoming more child-friendly.

Another major challenge in the educational system is the lack of skilled teachers. Accordingly, Egypt needs to work heavily on hiring/training skilled teachers who would be able to deliver educational content effectively and clearly in classrooms and outside of classrooms. Recently, the Egyptian government has been working towards giving greater priority to improving the education system in Egypt.

In this context, **"Takhta Khadra"** (Green Board) initiative launched in Qena Governorate aimed to introduce non-formal educational tools to the standard classroom, focusing on the science curriculum that leaves room for creativity and new ideas. The science curriculum focuses on topics related to the environment aware of the fact that Egypt faces severe environmental challenges and poor environmental awareness among the public about the idea of conservation and environmental activism, as well as the SDGs, particularly Goal 13: about Sustainable Development Knowledge, aiming to raise a generation aware and eager to be involved in climate action.

- **Health- focused initiatives**

With two thirds of child mortality attributable to malnutrition, Egypt stands as one of the 36 countries, where 90 percent of the global burden of malnutrition falls. Despite the notable decline in child mortality in Egypt, achieving the Sustainable Development Goal 2: Zero Hunger, remains challenging. Furthermore, Egypt has the highest prevalence of hepatitis C virus (HCV) in the world. In Egypt, HCV prevalence rates reach 13% of the population equating to an estimated 12 million Egyptians of whom around 8 million people are living with chronic hepatitis C without or with cirrhosis or liver cancer.

In that context and in the first phase of **"A Generation of Healthy Children"** Initiative, the initiative team aimed to raise awareness of a healthy diet for children and address malnutrition for children in schools in Fayoum Governorate. The Initiative was in line with the President's Initiative "**A Generation Growing Healthier"** launched by the **"100 Million Health Campaign"**, a nation-wide initiative implemented by the Ministry of Health and Population (MoHP) in Egypt.

During the first phase of the initiative, the team aimed at promoting children's healthy behaviors in schools to raise awareness of personal hygiene, proper nutrition and hepatitis A (C.C.) by training the facilitators of **"We are all together"** schools to transfer awareness within community schools through puppet theatre with children and awareness-raising seminars on topics with parents, provided that the puppet theatre remains permanent to convey awareness within the targeted community schools. During the second phase of the initiative, the team wanted to respond to the Corona Virus Pandemic and focused on raising awareness about it and about the preventative methods that can be used.

Further, chronic diseases represent a major problem and public health burden in developing countries such as Egypt. Non- communicable diseases (NCDs), including cardiovascular diseases, diabetes,

cancer, and chronic respiratory diseases, are currently the leading national cause of death in Egypt. In poorer governorates, chronic diseases are an even bigger problem. The Egyptian government has been focusing efforts on eradicating poverty and providing the people with adequate health services in Upper Egypt as part of its 2030 strategy, establishing a higher authority for the development of the region and launching national mega-projects to generate employment, while NGOs have been joining forces and pouring in money to projects to help improve life in rural Upper Egypt. In this context, The Humanity Team Initiative aimed at reaching out to the poorest villages in Minya to raise health awareness about combating viruses and chronic diseases and providing them with medical assistance.

Aspiring to better quality of life for all, promoting health and well-being is one of 17 Global Goals that make up the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in a world where cancer, infertility, allergies in children are on the rise, consumer health advocates and some researchers continue to warn against chemically based treatments, in an attempt to connect the dots between these intimately used products and some worrying and unexplained disease trends, particularly in women. Today, there is plenty of health awareness about the importance of using essential and vegetable oils as natural alternatives to chemicals. Egypt occupies the eleventh position in exports of aromatic plants with a contribution to the global market of up to 2-23% and is one of the most important countries exporting aromatic plants in the Middle East. Today the size of the aromatic plant market is 50 million pounds annually.

In that context, **"Enti Te'dari" (You Can)** initiative launched in Sharqiya focused on the role of women in health, with particular emphasis on the use of essential and natural oils as an alternative to chemically based treatments and products. This initiative was also concerned with providing the women beneficiaries with sufficient information regarding the side effects of purchased goods that contain harmful substances and how to acquire and sell natural based and essential oils. This had provided them with the ability to differentiate between hazardous and healthy products. The initiative aimed to raise awareness about the types of essential and vegetable oils, how to buy oils, and learn the difference between original and adulterated oils as well as raising awareness about some therapeutic and cosmetic products that are used incorrectly or contain harmful substances. The initiative also managed to enable women to acquire and sell these products on the market.

- **Social change- focused initiatives**

According to the latest global data collected by UNICEF, about 1 in every 3 schools, children aged between 13-15 around the world experience bullying. Girls are more likely to become victims of psychological forms of bullying and boys are more at risk of physical violence and threats. In 2015, the Center for Development Services (CDS) was commissioned by UNICEF to conduct a study on violence against children in three Egyptian governorates: Cairo, Alexandria and Assiut, in partnership with the National Council for Childhood and motherhood (NCCM). The study showed that the highest level of violence facing children occurs at home, followed by school. Based on the findings of this study, NCCM and UNICEF launched the first national campaign calling to end peer-to-peer violence in 2018 in partnership with the Ministry of Education and Technical Education (MOETE) with funding from the European Union (EU).

In an effort to continue on the results of this campaign, **"Our Kids"** initiative was launched in Qalioubiya governorate. The initiative aimed to spread awareness about bullying in schools as well as promote positive parenting values and principles, in an attempt to eliminate all forms of violence against children and touch upon Sustainable Development Goal 4: Ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education.

The 17 SDGs are integrated. They recognize that action in one area will affect outcomes in others, and that development must balance social, economic and environmental aspects. Countries have

committed to fast-track progress. That is why the SDGs aim to bring the world to several life-changing 'zeros', including zero poverty, hunger, AIDS and discrimination against women and girls. Everyone is needed to reach these ambitious targets. Egypt is committed to achieve the SDGs. Egypt's Sustainable Development Strategy, Egypt Vision 2030, is in line with SDGs. The national strategic plan's three dimensions (economic, social and environmental) are based on ten pillars covering broadly the SDGs. The plan provides programs, policies and measurable indicators in order to put Egypt on the right path toward sustainable development. Egypt is making huge efforts in order to build the capabilities of youth and create a conscious generation that is aware of the sustainable development goals and has the ability to spread and achieve them.

In that context, **"SDGs for Little Bees"** Initiative launched in Sohag Governorate worked towards preparing an educational training program for children aged between 7-14 years old, aiming at building these children's abilities and educate them about the SDGs, with special focus on the fourth and ninth goals about education and innovation, through a training program and innovative community projects with these children's participation. The initiative seeks to build the capabilities of children and raise their awareness and knowledge aiming at creating a generation of active citizens.

Recognizing further the importance of the SDG's and realizing that a large segment of Egyptian children and young people are unaware of the SDGs, **"Kawkabna"** (Our Planet) initiative aimed to change that notion by raising the children and young people's awareness about the SDGs. The initiative focused its efforts in the Greater Cairo Region covering the governorates of Cairo, Giza and Qalioubiya to promote safe environments through its awareness raising activities**. "Kawkabna"** initiative invested its resources to train its participants on recycling paper, wood, and rubber. Furthermore, **"Games for Goals"** (G4G) is an initiative that aimed to raise awareness about the SDGs, specifically Goal 1 (Eradication of Poverty); Goal 3 (Health), with particular focus on reproductive health and sexuality; Goal 5 (Gender Equality); and Goal 16 (Peace and social justice) through gamification tools and techniques. The initiative capitalizes on Goal 17 (Creating Networks and Partnerships) in order to accomplish sustainable development. The initiative targets 3 governorates: Giza, Beheira, and Qalioubiya.

Women and girls experience domestic violence, violence in public spaces, in streets, in schools, at work, in public transportation and in their own neighborhoods. All forms of violence limit the rights and freedoms of women and often act as a barrier to their education and participation in economic and public life. Egyptian women suffer on daily basis from different forms of violence in the private and in the public domains. This situation is further exacerbated by the low level of awareness among women of their rights and their forbearance to the violence they suffer, especially in the form of domestic violence. According to the Egypt Demographic Health Survey (EDHS) (2014), 3 out of 10 ever married women (15 to 49 years) experienced physical, psychological and sexual violence by their husbands. One third of women who experienced violence were injured. Violence against women has a host of negative reproductive health outcomes, including more sexually transmitted infections (STIs), higher rates of unintended pregnancy, limited utilization of prenatal care, and low birth weight. "Egypt Economic Cost of Gender-based Violence" Survey 2015 undertaken by CAPMAS and UNFPA showed higher figures reaching 46% of ever married women (18-64 years) because they have included emotional violence. The survey showed also that the majority of women who experienced spousal violence never sought services or contacted people in positions of authority to deal with the violence inflicted on them. There is an urgent need to raise awareness of women on the need to report any violence inflicted on them as well as the need to provide women with services accessible to them widely to resort to such as health services, psychosocial support, legal aid and other services.

Today, Article 306 of Egypt's penal code declares that those found guilty of verbal sexual harassment in a private or public place will be sentenced to a minimum of six months in prison and fined no less than EGP 3,000. **"Hakhod Haa'i" (I Will Reclaim My Right)** is an initiative that aimed to raise awareness around gender-based violence, harassment and the legal stance against the different forms of violence women experience in Egypt, particularly in Gharbiya governorate, where the initiative initiated. It empowered women survivors of violence through a number of activities: Self-defense classes, capacity-building, legal knowledge and best practices. This initiative educates women on the legal measures that they could take when subjected to gender-based violence. The initiative also empowers women economically by providing them with vocational training workshops, hoping to provide women survivors of violence with a way out from abusive households.

Today, the concept of citizenship is increasingly used to refer to volunteering. Citizenship is no longer understood as a passive legal status to more of a process, participatory and society-oriented citizenship, which places an emphasis on citizens' responsibilities and not only their rights. It is not just the participation of a citizen in the public or political sphere, rather it is about the citizen engaging in volunteering activities in civil society and community. Active citizenship and volunteering should involve learning about and learning how to influence decisions, improve communities and solve problems together as well as improve the self. Recognizing the importance of encouraging young people to volunteer and enabling them to become active citizens, **"Etrok Athar" (Make an Impact)** initiative in Beni Suef aims to raise the awareness of the young people towards volunteering and active citizenship. The idea behind **"Etrok Athar"** is to impart the beneficiaries with the knowledge and skills to enable them to identify community challenges through conducting participatory needs assessment; reaching out to partners for advocacy; building networks of key actors and stakeholders; and planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating their own initiatives. The initiative worked towards engaging these young people to become active members in their local communities through undertaking youth-led initiatives.

- **Economy- focused initiatives**

Until today, many girls still have to drop out from school since education is still considered a luxury for girls in Upper Egypt. In rural Upper Egypt, there remains a significantly high rate of out-of-school children and a large gender gap in education. For many of these girls, handicrafts making is a main source of generating income for their livelihoods. Investing in women's economic development through handicrafts production sets a direct path towards gender equality, poverty eradication and inclusive economic growth. Generally, women make enormous contributions to economies, whether in businesses, on farms, as entrepreneurs or employees, or by doing unpaid care work at home. Goal 5 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) focuses on Gender Equality affirming that ending all discrimination against women and girls is not only a basic human right, but is also crucial for sustainable future. In this context, the "**Women Pioneers**" initiative in Luxor optimized on building disadvantaged women's capacity to produce handicrafts to be sold for tourists, in an attempt to enhance their livelihoods and provide them with the necessary skills to start their own micro businesses in handicrafts making.

As COVID-19 has spread in Egypt, as in other places around the globe, many people have lost their jobs due to the confinement measures and the impact of the pandemic on the country's economy. With the pandemic spreading, many governorates were forced to go into lockdown. Assiut governorate also faced a full lockdown and the prohibition of travel. Recognizing the financial struggles of those living in Assiut in specific and in Lower and Upper Egypt in general and the huge losses in jobs, **"A Skill in your Hands"** initiative aimed at teaching men and women skills from the comfort of their own homes to help them earn a living while staying safe. Some handicraft professionals volunteered

and recorded educational videos to teach 120 young men and women skills such as plastic recycling, the making of jewelry, ceramic, sewing and rubber recycling.

WP4: Capacity Building and Empowerment for Youth and Women

The participants judged the content covered by the workshops as extremely relevant to their needs. They learnt how to assess societal needs, prepare for campaigns, run for elections, which aligned perfectly with their goals; whether the later were running for parliamentary or local elections or take on leadership positions in community work. The material used was deemed of high quality and beneficial to the partakers who saw in the design of the program an enabling aspect that allowed them later to implement some of the concepts they learned. In fact, some part participants recount using what they learnt in real life situations. For example, some of the participants reached out to the executives in Luxor to collaborate in finding solutions to one of the community's most urgent challenges: economic vulnerability of women. The participant in question suggested that NGOs partner and network together to provide women in Luxor with vocational trainings to start autonomously generating income.

On another hand, the facilitation of trainers was also judged as relevant. The capacity building training provided by the National Council for Human Rights as well as Dr.Akmal's interventions were deemed relevant to the needs of the participants. Moreover, the one-to-one coaching on personal development delivered by the CDS team was viewed as extremely helpful as the advice given was relevant to the challenges met on the ground. As for scheduling matters, participants saw that it would have been more relevant if the timing of the workshops had not coincided with the parliamentary elections as they could have prepared and utilized the inputs of WP4 in the management of their electoral campaigns. However, all the participants mentioned that the skills they acquired from this component will help them participate in the political life and run for the local council elections in February 2021 if they wanted to (5 out of the 25 participants will run for the local council elections). Moreover, some of the participants think that it would have been better if they took WP4 before WP3 (the initiatives). While the participants learnt about non-violence communication in WP3, the topics covered in WP4 were more deeply treated and could have been of great assistance during the implementation of the initiative. On another hand, there was consensus over the fact that WP4 perfectly laid the way to WP5 as participants had already grasped some of the fundamental ideas they were about to use in the simulation game.

WP5: Creating Sustainable Formats for Dialogue (Roundtables and Forums)

There exists an absence of structured policy dialogue between decision makers and youth. As such, this work package is very relevant as it aims to establish formats that allow discussion on local needs and challenges of youth and women through the simulation game "Magadif". Additionally, the lack of cross-sectoral networks makes this work package extremely relevant as it focuses on inter and intra sectoral cooperation with the hopes of forming longstanding networks in various communities. Throughout the creation of the simulation game "Magadif", participants depended on the results of

the stakeholder analysis as it provided valuable insights of the different existing networks and dynamics that are prevalent in various governorates. As such, valuable and contextualized information was used in the development process of the simulation game to further expand on these networks in addition to providing the participants with clearer strategies about establishing new stakeholders and partners for upcoming initiatives and future projects.

It is relevant to the entirety of the Y-LEAD program as work package 5 used the findings and inputs of work package 2 and the experience of work package 3 to establish sustainable exchange through the simulation game "Magadif" and roundtable discussions that followed. Hence, it is very relevant to the program as it brings everything together and ensure cooperative sustainability.

B. Effectiveness

The extent to which the intervention achieved, or is expected to achieve, its objectives, and its results, including any differential results across groups.

WP1: Awareness Campaign

A number of aspects contributed to the achievement of WP1 results such as the participants' ability to initially design "Helios" simulation game as well as the program's training material and diverse selection of a number of facilitators from different sectors of society. The work package greatly exceeded its initial goal of implementing "Helios" 150 times in 15 governorates. The game fulfilled its main objective of raising the awareness of youth towards the importance and functionality of local councils by being implemented 170 times in 23 governorates, with a total number of 3,268 beneficiaries. The game had a clear and lasting impact on the participants because some of the beneficiaries proceeded to run for the House of Senate and others ran for youth centers' administrations/elections. Moreover, participants chose to introduce "Helios" to their universities (Helwan University, Assiut University, and Assiut University) leading some of these educational institutions, specifically Assiut university, to adopt the idea of simulation games. Additionally, "Helios" enabled facilitators and partners to coordinate and collaborate with one another by providing and sharing resources, such as venues, in order to ensure that work package one achieves its intended results.

Despite the outlined accomplishments that display the effectiveness of work package one, the extent of the program team's follow-up with game implementation and the provision of technical support varied from one governorate to other. Certain governorates received more technical support as opposed to others. A lack of official partnership or protocols with the Ministry of Youth and Sports (MoYS) caused the facilitators to experience a number of challenges regarding the implementation of "Helios". The existence of such protocols would have easily guaranteed access to youth centers and their facilities. Furthermore, the quality of game implementation differed because facilitators' levels of experience fluctuated from one participant to the other. Some of the participants have more experience facilitating simulation games than others. This affected the delivery of information and the quality of implementation especially since, in some games, quality was overlooked by quantity.

WP2: Online-Survey (nationwide) and Creation of Policy-Papers

Three workshops took place at the University of Assiut in partnership with the Center for Political and Strategic Studies. 27 participants who came from 8 different governorates participated in these workshops, which focused on building their capacities with respect to the creation of policy papers.

The Baseera survey was effective in conveying the needs of the community and enabled the participants to generate ideas for three policy papers around these topics: political empowerment of youth, women's empowerment in the ICT sector and volunteerism. It was effective in shedding light on the areas that needs interventions and alternative policies.

The majority of the training techniques used were effective in demonstrating the intricate process of policy paper writing. The supervision from professors in Center for Political and Strategic Studies in the University of Assiut provided the majority of the participants with sufficient advice on their policy papers. The academic nature of the workshops was extremely beneficial for many only when it came to the pure educational process of policy paper writing. Additionally, the involvement of guest speakers from the Ministry of Social Solidarity (MoSS), Ministry of Youth and Sports (MoYS) and Micro, Small & Medium Enterprise Development Authority (MSMEDA) enabled the participants to receive feedback and guidance for their policy papers from leading officials that work closely with decision-makers and have hands on experience. Hence, the partnerships with executives from MoSS, MoYS and MSMEDA helped the participants provide practical solutions and recommendations for decision makers.

CDS' input was very effective in making the workshops as a success due to their technical, financial, logistical and academic support to the participants. More emphasis needs to be added on follow up mechanisms in order to fill some of the gaps that the professors were not able to convey.

Several challenges seemed to hinder the complete effectiveness of this work package. Not all the professors were following up on the policy papers that were being created by the participants, which resulted with some topics having weaker recommendations than others. It is important to highlight that the approach to the policy papers was controversial between the participants due to its purely academic nature. The content presented lacked a reflection of reality due to the professors having an academic background. Hence, it was recommended to have a blended learning due to the importance of the academic side but also pivotal need to incorporate real-life examples and interactive learning. Even though knowledge exchange was abundant due to the diverse academic background of the participants, it still generated communication barriers when discussing academic literature and interests. It seems that the time allocated for the workshops was not enough for the participants to convey a fully effective and successful policy paper.

WP3: Realizing (cross-sectoral) Local Initiatives

- **Environment-focused initiatives**

The Assiutinitiative team targeted 10 local Executive Council members to enable them to bridge the communication gap between the local council and the local community. The initiative worked with 10 young men and women from the same city to enable them to identify environmental challenges within their communities and to be able to communicate these challenges with the local council and the 10 local Executive Council members. In the last stage of the initiative, 500 schoolchildren were targeted to raise their awareness about the environmental challenges that their city and their country faces as well as possible solutions.

In the second phase of the initiative, the AssiutInitiative team faced the challenges of covid-19. Realizing that the pandemic has hit the people badly and has cost many of them to lose their jobs, the team decided to focus on helping those who have found themselves unemployed acquire skills that could help them secure an income. With the help of professionals, the team has created a website, on which videos were uploaded.

Recognizing that women are the ones who are capable of handling oil waste in the household and recognizing the importance of economic empowerment for women, the initiative Aswan team targeted women and girls aged 18-50 from four poor villages in Aswan.

Realizing that environmental challenges hit the marginalized and disadvantaged groups the most and seeking to economically empower women, Qena initiative team targeted women from El Hamideyat Village, a small village in Qena Governorate.

- **Education-focused initiatives**

The initiative managed to enable public primary school teachers to implement sustainable, creative and environmental practices to provide high-quality educational services and promote environmental sustainability practices with the learning process within the targeted schools, with the ultimate aim of raising the level of educational system quality and to make it more interesting for students.

- **Health- focused initiatives**

The Fayoum Initiative managed to raise awareness about personal hygiene, proper nutrition, hepatitis A and C and Covid-19 among community schoolchildren and their parents. The Minya Initiative managed to improve the health status of the poorest villages, especially community school students; and to provide health services while integrating young people to participate in raising health awareness among their local communities. The Sharkqia Initiative managed to raise awareness about the benefits of utilizing naturally based products instead of purchasing and applying chemically infused items that can cause serious health damage and enable women to acquire and sell naturally based products.

- **Social change- focused initiatives**

The Qalioubiya Initiative managed to promote a culture of tolerance and acceptance among schoolchildren within the age bracket (10-14); and to spread awareness about positive parenting among their parents and newlywed couples, with the ultimate aim of reducing bullying among schoolchildren in public schools.

The Sohag initiative managed to raise the awareness and build the capacity of 25 children from two schools: a Community School and a Public School in Sohag Governorate and introducing them to the SDGs.

In its first phase, the Cairo initiative managed to raise the awareness of children and young people about the SDGs and encouraging them to protect the environment and in its second phase it managed to develop 3 more sub initiatives. In both its phases, the Giza Initiative aimed to raise awareness about the Sustainable Development goals (SDGs) with particular focus on sexual and reproductive rights; and peace and social justice.

The Beni Suef Initiative aimed to get young women more involved in the public sphere, the initiative team targeted young women and girls aged between 14-18 from Ihnasya Commercial Secondary School.

The Gharbiya Initiative raised the awareness of 30 women about gender-based violence and the laws combatting it as well as economically enabled them and provided them with psychosocial support and self-defense classes.

- **Economy- focused initiatives**

The Luxor Initiative managed to build the capacity of a young cadre of disadvantaged women in Luxor governorate to start their own micro projects/businesses in handicrafts making. As for the Assiut initiative, it built the capacity of 120 men and women in 5 different skills; plastic recycling, the making of jewelry, ceramic, sewing and rubber recycling through recorded videos that were shared on online platforms.

WP4: Capacity Building and Empowerment for Youth and Women

Participants concluded that the emergence of community leaders was an empirical proof of the three workshops' effectiveness. In fact, two of the participants ran for the parliamentary elections, 3 supported candidates in their electoral campaigns and more broadly 10 of the 28 participants decided to run for the upcoming local council elections. Furthermore, participants admitted being able to enhance their networking abilities through the workshop, during which they succeeded in building valuable partnerships.

WP5: Creating Sustainable Formats for Dialogue (Roundtables and Forums)

A stakeholder analysis was conducted across 23 governorates participating in Y-LEAD in order to develop a comprehensive understanding of potential Y-LEAD stakeholders that work with youth in different sectors. This was very effective as it made helped the participants outline major stakeholders that are necessary for the success of local initiatives and thereby aided in the planning and creation of the simulation game "Magadif". A workshop took place in Ismailia and was dedicated to the simulation game development, following the development, a test run was conducted and the game was ready to be implemented in various communities. The simulation game "Magadif" was successfully disseminated 6 times throughout the following 6 governorates: Cairo, Giza, Luxor, Fayoum, Qena and Gharbiya. A total number of 100 diverse participants from various different sectors including the civil society, public sector, private sector, and many more, were involved in the "Magadif" simulation game. As a result of the game implementation of "Magadif", 18 initiatives have been designed and planned with 5 initiatives preparing for their implementation process.

The simulation game was effective as it enabled the participants to take on effective roles in the society and highlighted the importance of participatory approaches when discussing societal needs. As such, participants managed to establish networks and partnerships with various sectors in the society, which enabled the participants to plan the implementation of several local initiatives because of resource sharing and knowledge exchange. The effectiveness of this work package also stems from the participants abilities to build relationships, voice their concerns, identify community needs and develop local initiatives that solve apparent societal issues. Additionally, as majority of the participants were local officials, the work package was successful in altering the perception of decision-making bodies concerning the importance of inter and intra sectoral cooperation. In alignment with the goal of the Y-LEAD program as a whole, the youth have been equipped with the right partnerships and the creation of community networks has encouraged youth to engage in political life.

Several factors lead to the effectiveness of this work package:

- The use of simulation games as the methodology to portray the importance of networking.
- The diverse topics that were presented in the scenario of "Magadif" and its ability to represent pertinent societal issues.
- The diverse nature of the participants as they represented the different sectors in the community.
- CDS support for the different phases of the simulation game (idea, design, implementation and roundtable discussions) and follow up through reports.

Yet, some challenges were present. It was very difficult to bring together a group of stakeholders who have daily jobs for the implementation of the simulation game. The facilitators also faced difficulty in finding an appropriate date and time that would suit all the participants. This was problematic for the success of the simulation game "Magadif", as a minimum of 15 participants are required for its effective implementation. COVID-19 was also another apparent obstacle that needed to be taken into account when implementing the simulation game, as precautionary measures had to be put in place.

C. Efficiency

The extent to which the intervention delivers, or is likely to deliver, results in an economic and timely way.

WP1: Awareness Campaign

The methods and strategies utilized to implement work package one proved very efficient. The interactive trainings that were offered, the follow-up and monitoring strategies, as well as the established partnerships helped this component of the program achieve its objective. Several resources were available for utilization such as human resources, financial resources, technological resources, etc. The participants were able to use these resources efficiently. For example, participants were able to benefit from one another's experiences as well as the expertise of the specialists involved. As for the technological resources, the participants increased their utilization of social media platforms, such as Facebook, to promote "Helios", which determined to be quite an efficient method for the recruitment of individuals to play the game. However, there were some limitations concerning a few of the available resources. For instance, the time frame and the financial resources allocated to the implementation of "Helios" proved to be relatively constrained.

The unintended results or effects that occurred during the course of this work package's execution are manifested in the number of times and the number of governorates (including remote governorates), in which "Helios" has been implemented as well as the number of participants that plan on running for local councils in the future; along with the individuals that proceeded to run for Senate and youth centers' elections.

WP2: Online-Survey (nationwide) and Creation of Policy-Papers

The use of the Baseera survey as a basis for the creation of policy papers was very efficient as it decreased the effort and time that participants allocated to identify potential gaps in the community that needs to be addressed. This work package managed to use all the available (financial, human and technological resources) to get the best results. The participants, specifically, benefited from the expertise of University of Assiut professors in the Center for Political and Strategic Studies, participants with higher educational backgrounds and executives from MoSS, MoYS and MSMEDA to efficiently gather knowledge and information to create policy papers in a short period. Yet, it seems that the lack

of involvement and follow up from certain professors resulted with a decrease of efficiency in some of the policy papers throughout its creation process.

With respect to its coherence with the Y-LEAD program, it could have been enhanced if all Y-LEAD participants had received the three policy papers that were created as it would have been extremely beneficial and efficient when creating initiatives.

WP3: Realizing (cross-sectoral) Local Initiatives

The initiative teams managed to utilize their resources and networks efficiently and smartly. They relied on their experiences and the skills of each member on the different initiatives' teams to come up with efficient and adequate plans despite the challenges that occurred throughout 2020. Relying on their expertise, passion and the willingness to find solutions for the challenges they have been witnessing in their communities, the different initiatives' teams team did not waste time. Coming in with concrete ideas, in addition to knowing who can help them and the people they can rely on, the team had a clear plan since the beginning and managed to deliver the exact ideas they had from the start. While an environment that enables and encourages growth is important, young minds that come with experience and expertise are an asset that can always be relied on. What was very interesting was how the participants in the health-focused initiatives in Minya handled the tardiness of a permission that was going to let them enter a specific part of the university campus they were working on. They simply went on with their work in other areas and were not hindered at all. In fact, when the permission arrived, they were able to dedicate more focus and attention to that part of the initiative because they had already achieved the majority of their goals.

The experience and expertise of the participants involved facilitated the process and made it easier to overcome many challenges as well as avoid other challenges altogether. Additionally, the participants networking skills served their initiatives immensely. However, two major points need to be highlighted, having an alternative plan available and the smart spending enabled the teams to successfully get huge media attention; making their message spread faster.

The initiative team tried to be as efficient as possible, especially in the economy-based initiatives, believing that through smart planning they could reach and benefit more women. Knowing that the economic independence of women is an essential part in the empowerment of women, they tried to enable these women as much as possible.

WP4: Capacity Building and Empowerment for Youth and Women

In the participants' opinion, the educational approach was efficient in achieving its goal. The participatory methodology was in fact viewed as a prominent driver of personal and professional skills' acquisition. Moreover, the sequencing of the topics discussed and how they were built upon in the following workshop was deemed an effective way to disseminate knowledge. The exchange of experiences among participants as well as the constant feedback provided by trainers on the submitted task was also an efficient tool in contributing to the overall process. On the logistics' front, participants judged that the financial resources were efficiently used. As for the human resources, the trainers were carefully chosen. Their backgrounds were very diverse, which was very enriching for the workshops. However, there were some reservations on particular trainers whose performance was seen as less adequate than the rest.

Finally, WP4 showed great efficiency in adapting to external modifications such as the postponing of local elections in Egypt as the workshop focused even further on community leadership and was able

to encourage some to run for parliamentary election or partake in their campaigning process and to plan their participation in the upcoming 2021 local council elections.

WP5: Creating Sustainable Formats for Dialogue (Roundtables and Forums)

This work package was efficient in using all the available resources to achieve maximum productivity. The use of the stakeholder analysis was an efficient tool that helped in the creation of the simulation game without having to personally gather field data. Additionally, the methodology of using a simulation game is very interesting, creative and efficient in the sense that it easily conveys the message to the participants without making them feel bored. It enabled the participants to identify their communities' problems and to propose solutions and interventions that can help address such challenges through writing fully-fledged proposals.

The human resources were used efficiently as the facilitators' experiences and skills played a role in the success of the simulation games. Likewise, the diverse background of the participants, some of whom are local officials, was helpful in efficiently implementing the initiatives across their communities due to their wide connections. Financial resources and technical resources were also available and were efficiently used to implement the initiatives.

D. Impact

The extent to which the intervention has generated or is expected to generate significant positive or negative, intended or unintended, higher-level effects.

WP1: Awareness Campaign

"Helios" managed to raise the youths' awareness towards local councils, specifically their role and functionality in society. This is apparent from the fact that the simulation game was implemented 170 times in 23 governorates, with a total number of 3,268 participants that came from diverse backgrounds. "Helios" also empowered some of the participants to run for local council elections once they are announced within the coming year. Furthermore, this simulation game enabled participants to establish cross-sectoral partnerships and network with one another in addition to the emergence of new facilitators that have acquired skills from their more experienced counterparts.

WP2: Online-Survey (nationwide) and Creation of Policy-Papers

This work package had the direct impact of training 28 participants and giving them the knowledge and skills to create policy papers and have the capacity to influence the agenda setting on a local level. Several alternative policies and solutions have been generated on the following three topics: political empowerment of youth, women's empowerment in the ICT sector and volunteerism. The Baseera survey raised awareness on the needs and interests of over 1,000 youth. Indirectly, knowledge and experience exchange were inevitable throughout the capacity-building component of this work package. The relationships built did not stem from the content of the material but rather of the participants interaction with one another.

WP3: Realizing (cross-sectoral) Local Initiatives

- **Environment-focused initiatives**

The Assiut Initiative capacitated 10 members of the local executive council to conduct needs assessments and planning activities using participatory approaches, tools and techniques. Ten young men and women supported local council members and suggested solutions to the identified environmental challenges in their city. A participatory initiative was developed by the local council and youth to address the needs of the local community of the city of Abnoub. 500 schoolchildren actively participated in an "Environment Open Day" that involved numerous non-formal educational and recreational activities to clean and protect the environment inside their school.

The Aswan Initiative Raised the awareness of 80 women and girls in four villages about the danger of oil waste on the environment; built the capacity of 40 women and girls to recycle oil waste and make homegrown soap products in the four villages; raised the efficiency and empowered 20 women and girls to develop handmade and homegrown soap products extracted from recycling oil in the four villages; and raised the awareness of 5,000 young men and women on social media about the dangers of oil waste on the environment.

The Qena Initiative raised the awareness of 100 women regarding recycling waste and the effects of hazardous waste disposal (specifically located in the village's main street). It conducted two workshops for 50 women on methods of collection, sorting, and recycling field and household waste. The initiative team established and built the capacity of the Ambassadors for Environment Team (composed of 20 women and men) in order to ensure the sustainability of the initiative. They also equipped 50 young women and men with the knowledge regarding the importance of environmental conservation through sports activities. A total of 60 women and girls gained the knowledge and capacity to collect, sort, classify, and recycle their field and household waste as well as benefit from it. Moreover, the team implemented a "cleaning camp" for the removal of waste from the main street of the village as well as a door-to-door campaign within the village in order to raise women's awareness regarding the importance of recycling.

- **Education-focused initiatives**

In the first phase of the initiative, the initiative team trained 25 teachers and provided them with a toolkit to use with more students. The team enabled 25 teachers to design and implement educational tools and fun games in the learning process. They also implemented 12 games in 5 schools and they reached a total of 60 students per classroom. In the second phase of the workshop, 31 teachers, 17 womens and 14 menattended the initiative workshop, from governmental schools in Qous Center and its villages.

- **Health- focused initiatives**

The Fayoum initiative managed to build the capacity of 35 facilitators in community schools on hygiene, proper nutrition, and hepatitis A and C. They also raised the awareness of 950 girls and boys (500 girls and 450 boys) from 25 community schools about personal hygiene, proper nutrition and hepatitis A. 20 theatrical performances were implemented for 750 boys and girls. They also managed to raise the awareness of 900 parents (700 mothers and 200 fathers) about personal hygiene, proper nutrition and hepatitis A and C in 25 group discussions, awareness raising sessions, and panel meetings. Due to the great success of the initiative, Kolna Ma' Ba'd initiative will be implementing the initiative in all Fayoum and Beheira schools.

The Minya initiative raised awareness about disease prevention through early disease detection at 14 community schools, with 150 students taking part in the awareness raising sessions and learning

about infectious diseases, methods of preventing cancer and proper nutrition. The initiative team built the capacity of 14 young women and men on presentation skills to work as community health outreach facilitators to deliver health-related messages. The Community Health Outreach Facilitators raised the awareness of 150 community members both women and men on infectious and chronic diseases and viruses. Last but not least, an early detection of viruses and chronic diseases was provided at 3 villages through medical caravans reaching 260 beneficiaries.

The Sharqiya Initiative raised the awareness of 365 girls and women in cooperation with the Faculty of Pharmacy at Zagazig University, the National Council for Women (NCW), and other civil society partners, namely the Eastern Youth Association, Al-Wafd Party, and the Women Development Association in Deyarb Negm.

- **Social change- focused initiatives**

In the Qalioubiya Initiative, 68 school children received anti-bullying training and tips on social intelligence, and soft skills needed to interact well with their peers and to stand up to bullying. The schoolchildren who participated in the initiative also showed great interest in the activities to build their characters and teach them soft skills. 30 newly wed couples and parents received training on positive parenting and bullying, its effects and ways to deal children experiencing it. The Sohag Initiative raised the awareness and built the capacity of 25 schoolchildren from community and public schools.

The Cairo initiative raised the beneficiaries' awareness regarding SDGs, implemented 160 workshops with 1,080 beneficiaries and trained 75 participants to recycle waste (in the form of wood and rubber) and create wooden toys. Additionally, it implemented 14 recycling and handicraft workshops with 160 beneficiaries, implemented an online social media campaign titled "Green Challenge", implemented a biodiversity camp in Wadi Al Rayan and educated 50 participants on the importance of biodiversity . Finally, it qualified the beneficiaries to spread awareness in their communities, strengthened the concept of gender equality and implemented 3 more sub-initiatives.

The Giza initiative developed an awareness raising curriculum, which targets reproductive health, gender equality, and the concept of peace. It trained 23 facilitators from the 3 target governorates, trained 24 game designers for sustainable development and designed 9 creative educational and awareness raising games surrounding the mentioned goals (3, 5 and 16) and the issues related to them. Furthermore, it produced 3 educational development games, implemented 10 awareness raising campaigns for children (5 in Giza, 3 in Qalioubiya, and 2 in Beheira) and established a network of partners from 6 associations in the 3 governorates.

The Beni Suef Initiative provided young women and girls with knowledge and skills that help them actively play a positive role in their local communities. It also raised the awareness of 50 young women and girls about the importance of community participation, empowered 50 young women and men to assess needs within their local communities and enabled and supported 50 young women and men to find practical solutions in the form of local youth-led initiatives. Finally, it designed and implemented 6 small youth-led initiatives to address basic community needs.

The Gharbiya Initiative raised the awareness of 30 women about gender-based violence and the laws combatting it and their legal rights. It also provided 30 women with psycho-social support sessions, enabled 40 women to make handicrafts that would support them in generating income and enabled 30 women to be able to protect their bodies by themselves by learning Wen Do. It also

used social media to spread awareness about gender-based violence to reach a bigger audience and raised the awareness of 10 men about women's rights to support in advocacy activities.

- **Economy- focused initiatives**

The initiative team managed to train 30 young women on how to start their own projects within the "Start Your Business" Program enabling them to become small entrepreneurs. Out of the 30, 10 young women were trained in handicrafts making from natural leather, 10 young women were trained in crochet and 10 young women were trained in knitwear. Most importantly, the initiative team economically supported 30 women by giving them materials to start their projects. In Assiut, the initiative team managed to train 120 women and men on five different skills plastic recycling, the making of jewelry, ceramic, sewing and rubber recycling.

WP4: Capacity Building and Empowerment for Youth and Women

This WP had direct impact as two participants ran for parliamentary elections, 3 worked in electoral campaign teams and 10 out of 25 decided to run for local councils. As for the indirect impact, the workshops were able to perpetuate knowledge beyond the participants who took active steps to transfer the assimilated information to their communities. Hence, a trickledown effect was observed as impact multiplied to reach individuals beyond the targeted audience. However, some of the participants believe that the component's impact would have been better if they managed to establish partnerships and networks with more political entities (i.e. Political parties).

WP5: Creating Sustainable Formats for Dialogue (Roundtables and Forums)

Participants have been more open to experiential learning, such as simulation games, as it gives them the ability to encompass the roles they were given. As such, they were able to self-reflect and understand societal problems from different perspectives. Additionally, the simulation game "Magadif" shifted the perceptions of 100 local officials and youth regarding the importance of networking. All of the participants have been more accepting to the art of networking and realized how the implementation of successful initiatives can only be achieved by merging resources, knowledge sharing and experience exchange. Hence, rather than working against each other, the different stakeholders in distinct sectors are now working with each other. Therefore, directly, a pool of networks and relationships has been built in the 6 governorates that were targeted and communication channels are open.

Several indirect effects took place. For instance, some of the participants were very impressed by the use of simulation games to transfer messages that they have grown an interest in becoming simulation game facilitators. Also, after the termination of the simulation game implementation, several participants have become active citizens participated in meetings throughout their governorates, which are organized to serve their community and implement local initiatives. This is not related to the roundtable discussion meetings, as these are local meetings that were previously existent but lacked youth participation.

E. Sustainability

The extent to which the net benefits of the intervention continue, or are likely to continue.

WP1: Awareness Campaign

With educational institutions and youth centers' expressing their interest in "Helios" simulation game and adopting it themselves along with the presence of trained cadres in game facilitation in most governorates, the sustainability of work package one is ensured. Professors from Assiut and Helwan universities were quite satisfied with "Helios" because they noticed the significant impact that it had on their students. Social Service faculty members in Helwan University praised the game and wanted more of their students to participate in "Helios" in order to increase their awareness about local councils and encourage them to have a more active role in the political sphere.

To further guarantee the sustainability of work package one, more partnerships should be encouraged, a larger timeframe should be allocated towards game implementation, and continuous follow-up with all the participants should occur. Additional activities that would contribute to the sustainability of this component is a refresher training for the facilitators to recall the knowledge that they have acquired regarding simulation game facilitation; along with meetings that enable facilitators and participants to exchange experiences with one another.

WP2: Online-Survey (nationwide) and Creation of Policy-Papers

The sustainability of this work package stems from the reach of the policy papers and their ability to influence decision-makers and the political agenda. CDS has distributed the policy papers to several executive authorities. As such, official leaders have received and dissected the alternative policies and recommendations that were proposed in the three policy papers. It was planned to have these policy papers turn into initiatives. But as the policy papers were not distributed to all of the Y-LEAD participants, it was difficult to carry this out. Hence, the sustainability stems from the ability to make these policy papers widespread and execute possible intervention plans.

The participants suggested several recommendations, such as:

- Increasing the length of the workshops in order to receive more information about the process of creating policy papers.
- Including sessions that discuss what follows the creation of policy papers, in order to have a clear picture of political agenda setting.
- Having more interactive workshops without hindering the strong academic nature of the workshop material.
- Expanding the partnerships and cooperation to other academic institutions as to increase the number of beneficiaries like the American University in Cairo, Cairo University and many more.

WP3: Realizing (cross-sectoral) Local Initiatives

Building great relationships with many of the organizations working in the different governorates has been the strategy of the different initiatives' teams, hoping that their networking capabilities will ensure the sustainability of their small projects and shed the light on needs that might have not been addressed before. Furthermore, the outcomes of the initiatives and the awareness raised will still be used again in projects that serve the same purpose, ensuring that work will be built on what has already been made and will not have to start from scratch. This is the case with the environment and education-focused initiatives.

As for the health-focused initiatives, its sustainability can be determined overtime when people become more aware of chronic diseases or when the corona virus is not spreading as fast in schools. Interestingly, after the Fayoum initiative concluded its activities, some parents went to get their children tested for anemia and hepatitis C. Those with positive results received the necessary care and funding from the Kolna Ma' Ba'd initiative. However, at the moment, the reaction of the targeted group along with the networking that has been done and the coalitions that were built can indicate that these initiatives will continue to have a positive impact on the communities that they targeted. Furthermore, the Sharqia Initiative created a YouTube channel (Oil and Kemya) with 14 educational videos, with a total of up to 7,500 views, reaching geographical areas outside of Sharqiya and created a Facebook group with 300 members of the initiative. These educational videos can be accessed and used by everyone.

In regards to the social change- focused initiatives, its sustainability does not only show in the coalitions that were built or in the networking that has been done, but also in many more different ways. First, the education and knowledge that have been acquired and the will to help one's own community became better. Second, is the advocacy that will take place after the initiatives have finished and how this advocacy can encourage more people to take part in similar initiatives.

Finally, the economy- focused initiatives' sustainability is not just about all the women who have acquired skills that can secure them a stable income, but also about how in these villages there will be a precedent set regarding women's work, financial independence and the positive effects women acquiring skills and earning their money has on them and on their whole families. In Assiut, the initiative team planned on creating a website and uploading the videos they had received from the handicraft professionals and to make the website open for all youth interested in generating an income, whether during COVID-19 or after. Hence, a Facebook page and a website was created to help trainees stay in touch and access the material (educational videos and information).

WP4: Capacity Building and Empowerment for Youth and Women

Work Package 4 was deemed sustainable by participants as long as it stays close to its participatory and discussion based learning methodology. In fact, it was noted that the concepts of advocacy and lobbying should be taught in a practical manner as they were seen to be transmitted through indoctrination. Participants were actually in praise of field tasks that should be practically applied by the end of each phase. Moreover, complimentary capacity-building sessions, networking with the youth committees in the political parties, and more contact with parliamentarians were presented as channels through which sustainability of the package could be enforced.

WP5: Creating Sustainable Formats for Dialogue (Roundtables and Forums)

To ensure the sustainability of the game implementation's goal, round table discussions were initiated. These round table discussions are meant to be a platform where members of the society from different sectors meet and discuss the viable implementation of initiatives across their communities. Through these roundtable discussions that took place in the 6 following governorates: Cairo, Giza, Luxor, Fayoum, Qena and Gharbiya, one initiative per governorate was chosen to be the most significant. The finalizing the winning initiative's goal, actions, target population, expected results and its impacts took place throughout these roundtable discussions. Qena and Luxor are currently in the implementation phase of their planned local initiative.

Several recommendations were suggested by the participants to further ensure the sustainability of this WP:

- Highlighting the importance of providing simulation game participants with guidance on how to write proposal initiatives, as this game highly relied on it.
- Creating an ideation camp while the participants build their local initiatives.
- Adding a building capacity component for the participants, i.e. Local officials.
- Increasing the length of the implementation phase in order to reach more beneficiaries and target more governorates.

Best Practices, Lessons Learnt and Recommendations

During the implementation period of the program, which lasted for two years, the program team has been focused on documenting best practices, lessons learnt and recommendations through the consistent process of monitoring and evaluation applied throughout the program; and the evaluation workshop held at the end of the program in December 2020. Despite this being the final evaluation of the program, the participants were still asked about what they learned in Y-LEAD program, hoping that the lessons learnt could be used in other future projects with youth and women.

Best Practices and Lessons Learnt

- Through multi-party collaboration including CRISP, CDS, Sim Club (NMF), civil society, local authorities, private sector and the media and the many other local stakeholders, Y-LEAD has managed to achieve its goals, outcomes and outputs.

- Simulation games have proved to be an effective tool of experiential learning as they closely simulate real world activities. Participants have expressed their satisfaction with simulation games as they learnt how to self-reflect and understand societal problems from different perspectives. Additionally, through the simulation games, participants managed to learn about the importance of cross-sectoral networking between the different stakeholders and how this positively affected the implementation of the initiatives that were developed throughout the program. Simulation games have also been positively perceived by some educational institutions (Helwan University and Assiut University); leading some of these educational institutions, specifically Assiut university, to adopt the idea of simulation games.

- Investing in initiatives and giving room for the participants to choose the themes and topics that they perceive as worthy of attention and to help them come up with plans was very important because it gave the participants a sense of ownership and agency. Adding initiatives besides simulation games demonstrated its relevancy in increasing the active participation of youth and their engagement in the development of their local communities. The games enabled the participants to think critically and experience empathy, which encourages them to develop innovative solutions to address community issues/challenges, whereas the initiatives enable the participants to implement and learn from those solutions.

- In its entirety, the program has managed to create ample spaces for young people, especially through simulation games, to learn about local councils, civil participation and active citizenship. Thus, they became ready to participate in the political life.

- The extensive and increased use of social media and online platforms, as a means of adjustment to COVID-19 impact on some of the program's activities, has proved to be helpful. For example, Zoom application has allowed people to participate in trainings taking place anywhere and at any time. Additionally, the participants have become very creative in the ways of delivering the material to ensure that the beneficiaries were focused. Furthermore, the participants have used social media to recruit new participants (for the simulation games), share the program's progress (i.e. pictures) through social media; increasing the program's visibility, which made many youths interested to participate in the simulation games and other program's activities. Approximately, 5,000 youths have known Y-LEAD through its Facebook and Instagram social media accounts.

Recommendations

-Invoking partnerships with political entities (i.e. Political parties) and helping the trained participants network with youth committees in political parties and/or attend sessions in the Parliament is very important for the trained participants to gain practical experience and apply what they learnt in real life situations.

-Capacity-building trainings shall take into account practicality as well as the theoretical content. For example, the concepts of advocacy and lobbying should be taught in a practical manner and not only through indoctrination.

-Proposal-writing training sessions shall be provided to participants in simulation games as they are highly important since they develop initiatives after the simulation games.

-Ideation camps can be a good approach to the implementation of simulation games and/or development and preparation for the implementation of the participants' local initiatives. It was sometimes very difficult to bring together a group of stakeholders who have daily jobs for the implementation of the simulation games. The facilitators also faced difficulty in finding an appropriate date and time that would suit all the participants. This was problematic for the success of the simulation game "Magadif", as a minimum of 15 participants are required for its effective implementation.

-The length of the implementation phase of simulation games shall be increased to reach more beneficiaries and target more governorates.

-The use of social media platforms shall be taken into account in similar future projects with youths and women for recruitment purposes and implementation of activities.

-A follow-up on the participants' performance in the upcoming period and their plans to participate in elections (i.e. local councils' elections), join civil society initiatives and/or become community leaders is very crucial and can be considered as a good learning opportunity, especially in terms of the program's sustainability.

-It is very important to take into account the timing of the activities in relevance to the surrounding context. Particularly in WP4, participants saw that it would have been more relevant if the timing of the workshops had not coincided with the parliamentary elections as they could have had enough time to apply what they learnt to real life situations. They wanted more time to work on their electoral campaigns and run for the parliamentary elections.

-The importance of the follow-up phase and the significance of meeting up with the participants to be able to measure the impact of the activities. Some of the participants in WP2 mentioned that not all

the professors were following up on the policy papers that were being created by the participants, which resulted with some topics having weaker recommendations than others.

-The importance of ensuring that a balance exists between the educational/academic and practical aspects of the activities. For instance, in WP2, the approach to the policy papers was controversial between the participants due to its purely academic nature. The content presented lacked a reflection of reality due to the professors having an academic background. Hence, it was recommended to have a balance between the academic and practical aspects as it was pivotal to incorporate real-life examples and interactive learning alongside the theoretical content of the policy papers.