

FINAL EVALUATION:

Improving the Criminal Justice Response to Violence against Women in Egypt (EGYZ33) March 2019

Countries: Egypt
Duration: March 2015 – December 2018
Budget: USD 2,466,166
Donors: United States Bureau of International Narcotics & Law Enforcement Affairs (USINL) and the Embassy of the United Kingdom in Egypt
Implementing agencies: UNODC Country Office in Egypt
Evaluation team: Ms. Eva Otero (Lead Evaluator) and Ms. Nihad ElGhamry (National Evaluator).

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

“Improving the Criminal Justice Response to Violence against Women in Egypt” (EGYZ33) was designed to assist Egypt in exercising its international obligation of due diligence to prevent, investigate and punish acts of violence against women and girls. **The project's objective** was to develop fair and effective procedures for dealing with cases of violence against women and girls throughout the criminal justice process. In this context and based on recommendations emanating from a consultative workshop with key national stakeholders and CSO representatives, the project was designed to deliver the following outcomes:

- **Outcome 1:** VAW issues discussed in national media including the new/amended legislation
- **Outcome 2:** The Egyptian government establishes a functioning integrated coordination mechanism among criminal justice actors established and functioning
- **Outcome 3:** Law enforcement authorities, in particular first responders and investigators, empowered and equipped to respond promptly and effectively to incidents of VAW
- **Outcome 4:** The MOI’s VAW unit has a clear and identified purpose and has the capacity to fulfil that role (*Cancelled in project mid-term revision*)
- **Outcome 5:** Medical practitioners’ responses to victims of VAW improved
- **Outcome 6:** Enhanced efficiency of the judiciary in dealing with crimes of VAW through targeted trainings
- **Outcome 7:** Comprehensive data is available to ensure tailored and evidence-based interventions

The project **targeted stakeholders** and worked closely with **five institutions** namely:

- The Ministry of the Interior (MOI);
- The Forensic Medical Authority (FMA);
- The Ministry of Justice (MOJ);
- The Public Prosecutor’s Office (PPO);
- The National Council for Women (NCW).

MAIN FINDINGS

The project had an **ambitious design** in line with magnitude and complexity of VAW in Egypt and built on an inclusive consultation of the main counterparts. However, at inception, **consultation was an event rather than a process**; hence lacking the length, continuity and depth of reflections on some of the project's critical underlying assumptions.

The project is **fully aligned** with Egypt’s National Strategy for Combatting Violence against Women 2015-2020. Yet, combating VAW **did not constitute a top priority** with fund allocations **for most government counterparts**. Hence, donor financing remains a critical driver for continued work on VAW.

The project went through a **major mid-term revision** and many of its outcomes and outputs had significant changes, alterations or cancellations. In general, the project management team has been **very agile in responding to the implementation challenges** that were arising, however, **reactive dynamics** permeated decision-making to constantly solve emerging problems in a complex

	PLANNED	VS	REVISED
1	VAW LEGISLATION		CANCELED OUTCOME
2	GOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION		CANCELED OUTCOME
3	CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT FOR MOI		PARTIALLY CANCELED OUTCOME
4	CAPACITY FOR VAW UNIT AT MOI		CANCELED OUTCOME
5	CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT FOR FMA		EXPANDED OUTCOME
6	CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT FOR PPO		PARTIALLY CANCELED OUTCOME
7	DATA MANAGEMENT FOR PPO & NCW		ADDED OUTCOME

environment.

The management team worked under enormous challenges both internal and external to UNODC. Most notably were the administrative and financial systems; pressure for mobilizing resources due to the **full cost recovery policy**, contextual complexities of **dealing with security and justice institutions**, the intricacies of handling multiple donors and balancing the pressure for accelerated delivery with compliance to lengthy approval processes from national counterparts.

Significant efforts were exerted to deliver **quality outputs**, with **less effort channelled to how these will contribute to broader transformations** within institutions and across the touchpoints with VAW survivors.

With a relatively low level of investment, it could be ascertained that **the training programme** (approximately 26% of total budget) was the **most cost-efficient strategy** that was most closely linked to the impacts identified in this evaluation.

Using the Gender@Work analytical framework, the evaluation team collected evidence on the **project's contribution to transformations in the four dimensions of change**. In the collective/visible dimension, the project contributed to improving policies and systems within the FMA, the PPO and to a lesser extent the NCW by improving their equipment, systems, procedures and guidelines and generally their organisational ability to deal with cases of VAW. Only in the case FMA -where the project reached a tipping point reaching the entire population of forensic medical practitioners- have these systems and equipment also translated into a tangible and generalised improvement in the justice services related to VAW delivered by the organisation .

Among the notable service improvements were the **introduction of new services** such as preventive medicine, emergency contraception, and psychological support; the extension of service hours that reduced the time lapse between crime and examination and hence lowers the risk of losing valuable evidence; increased ability to provide more conclusive evidence in cases of assault and rape using the new technologies.

In the PPO, the project financed hardware and software but, most importantly, it has been instrumental in **gender mainstreaming** of key data within the Information Centre Database improving its relevance and efficacy in addressing VAW cases.

The project contributed to **ideological transformations** about what VAW is and how to treat its victims. For example, prosecutors in the PPO reported “we have shifted our approach from focusing only on getting evidence to bring perpetrators to justice to focusing also on protecting victims”.

The evaluation found that the trainings contributed to **empowering the participants** in different ways. In the Mol, junior female officers valued the fact that they gained enough confidence to comfortably present issues related to VAW to higher ranking male officers.

UNODC's unique position and standing in the country constituted to serve as an effective entry point for building strategic collaborations on VAW with governmental partners.

At a strategic level, the **UN Joint Programme** on VAW currently under development constitutes the most relevant existing collaboration involving the UN family. The project also established significant tactical synergies with other UN agencies, most notable with UN Women.

The **sustainability of the project's impact** will ultimately depend on its capability to **institutionalise the procedures,**

systems and trainings (outputs) developed within the governmental counterpart institutions.

While the project was gender specific and intrinsically promoted the empowerment of women, its design and implementation did not fully integrate gender and human rights considerations. Despite valuable efforts like the inclusion of women trainees, trainers and experts in some workshops, there is **room for improvement** in future projects to incorporate sex-disaggregated data for reporting and to employ consistent strategies to involve women and other vulnerable groups in project activities.

MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS

- Country Office Management is recommended to **establish a middle-management position** to mobilise resources, plan new initiatives and support project teams in cross cutting functions.
- Country Office Management is recommended to **prioritize the creation of a governance body** (such as a steering committee or an information-sharing committee) for new VAW projects for improved synergies and coordination between national partners and with other bilateral or multilateral agencies
- Country Office Management is recommended to **advocate for and support the institutionalization of trainings and manuals** developed for VAW first responder to expand the reach necessary to contribute to organizational transformations.

MAIN LESSONS LEARNED AND BEST PRACTICES

The **Cooperation with Mol** constituted an important good practice. Despite the difficulties of working with the VAW Units as originally envisioned, the manual developed for Law Enforcement Officers, the basic training for Police Officers and the TOT all represent **ground-breaking initiatives**. They constitute 'firsts' for a counterpart like MOI in their work on the EAW portfolio with international organizations. Also, an important lesson is the need to allocate sufficient resources for an adequate inception phase. In the **absence of dedicated personnel for resource mobilization** and networking to secure the necessary funds for the full cost recovery, the time – and reflection space- available to project management teams to undertake core conceptual, planning and risk analysis tasks **are significantly curtailed**.

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