



Egypt

Human Security through Inclusive Socio-Economic Development in Upper Egypt

Background information

In 2011, Egypt experienced an economic contraction due to diminished revenues from the tourism and service sector, reduced direct investment, and rising inflation. The rural inhabitants of Egypt's Minya Governorate, who already faced high unemployment and a poverty rate twice the national average, were particularly hard hit. Minya's 4.6 million people mainly rely on agriculture which has struggled with pestilence and crop failures, resulting in an increase in malnutrition. Decreasing incomes and increasing unemployment rates have led to food and health insecurity as well as rising incidents of crime, domestic violence and child labour, thus affecting both personal and community security at the local level.

While several development programmes have been completed to date, previous interventions have been uncoordinated and limited in scope. The population of Minya need a multi-sectoral and comprehensive approach to effectively address the multiple insecurities they are facing and develop sustainable community structures that both protect and empower those at risk of being left behind.

Goals and objectives

The overall goal of this programme is to sustainably improve the human security of households, youth, and women in Minya, Upper Egypt through inclusive, pro-poor socio-economic development. Specifically, the programme aims to: (i) strengthen the economic security of target communities through the creation of more and better employment opportunities and increased employability of the local labor force; and (ii) enhance community security and personal security through activities to develop the communities' social capital and enhance cohesion and inclusiveness.



DURATION
June 2013 – November 2017



UN IMPLEMENTING AGENCIES
UNIDO, UN WOMEN, UN HABITAT, ILO, IOM



OTHER KEY PARTNERS
Ministry of Local Development; Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation; Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Governorate of Minya



BENEFICIARIES
168,000



TOTAL BUDGET
US\$ 6,121,981

POOLING OF RESOURCES

Swiss Development Cooperation
Government of Japan



Beneficiaries

The programme directly benefits 18,000 men, women, and children living in the Governorate of Minya located in Upper Egypt. An additional 150,000 people indirectly benefit from the programme through the revitalized local economy, increased availability of skilled labour, the rehabilitation of infrastructure, and improved access to enhanced social services. In addition, local businesses and Government institutions also benefit from improved human capital and capacity-building measures.

Applying the Human Security approach

The human security approach serves as a participatory and evidence-based framework, allowing the programme to understand and address the multi-dimensional needs, vulnerabilities and capacities of the participating villages. The involvement of the communities in the needs assessments and Human Security Forums allows for more effective, demand-driven, and evidence-based interventions, which greatly improve efficiency in the delivery of targeted and impactful services.

Through the Human Security Forums, communities are able to identify, prioritize and establish interventions that tackle the underlying causes of economic, personal and economic insecurities. The Human Security Forums also allow communities to develop action plans that improve local capacities, strengthen state-societal networks, and ensure greater coherence in the allocation of resources and policies both at the local and national levels.

Furthermore, using the human security approach allows for understanding the specific needs and insecurities affecting the most vulnerable groups. As a consequence, the programme is able to tailor interventions responding to immediate recovery needs, while also sustainably empowering communities to become active participants in addressing the challenges they face. This transformative approach not only demonstrates the value of empowering agents of change but also contributes to the sustainability of the programme's impact. The proactive role that the youth adopted throughout the programme has notably gained the support of the Ministry of Youth, which has since then mainstreamed the initiative, thus further institutionalizing the role of youth in delivering positive change.

Achievements

- (i) The programme established Human Security Forums, participatory forums composed of community leaders, disadvantaged segments of the communities, local NGOs, farmers, youth and women aiming to promote community engagement in local decision-making, with the collaboration of relevant government entities as a focal point. This led to the design and implementation of 24 demand-driven and locally-owned community action plans, benefitting more than 64,000 people.
- (ii) The programme invested in the communities' human capital by improving the employability of the rural populations and equipping them with the necessary skills to sustainably improve their circumstances. The establishment of Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs) allowed community members to build capital and support small-scale entrepreneurial activities that not only improve the economic security of their members but also inculcate a culture of entrepreneurial, growth and self-reliance.
- (iii) The programme benefited the traditionally marginalized rural women of Minya by supporting their participation in community organizations, giving them access to participatory forums, and providing them with skills to improve their incomes and livelihoods. The VSLAs notably promote women's economic empowerment, self-dependency, communication, and leadership. Additionally, they serve as a platform for women to exchange concerns and find solutions to personal and family problems, thus giving them greater agency in identifying and addressing their needs.
- (iv) The programme institutionalized volunteering among the youth through community activities and events to promote cohesion and inclusiveness. As a result, youth were empowered to become agents of change through youth volunteering services and 10 youth-led social enterprises were supported to further address their communities' insecurities.



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