OECD Public Governance Reviews

EGYPT

STRENGTHENING THE FOUNDATIONS FOR MORE EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE PUBLIC GOVERNANCE REFORMS

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Foreword

Achieving sustainable, evidence-driven and citizen-centred public governance reforms requires solid foundations. By setting robust institutional and governance arrangements, these reforms can enable governments to work better, deliver results to their constituencies and enhance trust in the legitimacy of decisions across sectors and levels of government. Strengthening the foundations for public governance reforms to succeed is all the more important in a context of accelerating social, economic and political transitions at both the national and global level, such as those faced by Egypt and the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) Region more broadly.

The government of Egypt is undertaking significant reforms to modernise its public administration and meet the most pressing challenges facing the country now and in the future. These efforts build on milestones achieved to date, with the adoption of Egypt Vision 2030 (2016) and the Public Administration Reform Plan (2014). While progress has been made, the Government of Egypt stands at a critical juncture in achieving its ambitious reforms by 2030 and ensuring their continuity beyond. Overall, this Review finds that these reforms will require a long, gradual process to change how the public administration operates.

The *OECD Public Governance Review of Egypt* takes stock of institutional arrangements, policy frameworks and procedures across various policy areas to identify priorities for reform. This analysis provides policy recommendations and good practice examples for the Government of Egypt to apply to its public governance reform agenda. The Review analyses key drivers for successful implementation and provides support on issues such as whole-of-government co-ordination, public employment and management, administrative simplification, transparency and public communication, as well as gender and youth mainstreaming.

The OECD Public Governance Review was developed as part of the long-standing cooperation between the Government of Egypt, the European Union and the OECD. The Review was financed under the EU supported project "Support to Enhanced Administrative and Public Economic Governance in Egypt (2022-2026)". The EU-funded project contributes to strengthened public governance that is an important area of the EU-Egypt's Partnership Priorities.

The Review was conducted in the framework of the MENA-OECD Governance Programme. This strategic partnership between the MENA region and OECD Member countries shares knowledge, practices and expertise, disseminating standards and good governance principles to support public governance reforms. As part of its mandate, the MENA-OECD Governance Programme supports the modernisation of public institutions and effective governance systems that can develop and deliver more accessible public policies and services that meet the needs of citizens. The Review complements the work under the Egypt Country Programme to incentivise and support ongoing structural reforms. It also benefits from the work carried out within the framework of SIGMA, a joint OECD-European Union initiative that assists associated countries in modernising public administration systems. Finally, the Review contributes to the objectives of the 2023-24 Programme of Work and Budget of the OECD Public Governance Committee, in line with its strategic priorities on governing for prosperity.

The publication was approved by the OECD Public Governance Committee via written procedure on the 4 December 2024 and prepared for publication by the OECD Secretariat.

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Abbreviations and acronyms

ACA	Administrative Control Authority
ADAA	National System for Monitoring and Evaluation
AMA	Administrative Modernization Agency
ARP	Administration Reform Plan
APRM	African Peer Review Mechanism
CACC	Capability Assessment and Competition Center
CAOA	Central Agency for Organisation & Administration
CAPMAS	Central Agency for Public Mobilisation and Statistics
CoG	Centre of Government
CP	Country Programme
CSC	Civil Service Council
CSL	Civil Service Law
CSO	Civil society organisation
CTPA	Centre for Tax Policy and Administration
DAI	Development Alternatives Inc
DP	Departmental plan
DRR	Departmental results report
DTU	Digital transformation unit
EDGI	E-Government Development Index
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EOU	Equal opportunities unit
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
ERRADA	Egyptian Regulatory Reform and Development Activity
ETA	Egyptian Tax Authority
ESCWA	Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia
EU	European Union
GAFI	General Authority for Investment and Free Zones
GCS	Government Communication Service
GFP	Gender Focal Point
GEPL	OECD Recommendation on Gender Equality in Public Life
GIA	Gender impact assessment
GIAF	Governorate-level Investment Allocation Formula
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
GoE	Government of Egypt
GPRAMA	Government Performance Reporting and Modernization Act
HCAR	High Committee for Administrative Reform
HR	Human resources
HRM	Human Resources Management
IBP	International Budget Partnership
ICT	Information and communication technology
IDSC	Information and Decision Support Centre

IMF	International Monetary Fund
IR	Inception Report
ISC	Investors Service Center
ISIPPM	Integrated System for Investment Plan Preparation and Monitoring
IT	Information technology
KPIs	Key Performance Indicators
LMS	Learning management system
LSF	Living Standards Framework
MAPS	Mainstreaming, Acceleration and Policy Support
MCIT	Ministry of Communication and IT
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
MoF	Ministry of Finance
MoLD	Ministry of Local Development
MoPMAR	Ministry of Planning, Monitoring & Administrative Reform
MSMEDA	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MoYS	Ministry of Youth and Sports
MPEDIC	Ministry of Planning, Economic Development and International Cooperation
NAC	New Administrative Capital
PARP	Public Administration Reform Plan
NCW	National Council for Women
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NIGSD	National Institute for Governance and Sustainable Development
NSDS	National Sustainable Development Strategy
NPOA	National Program of Action
NTA	National Training Academy
NYS	National Youth Strategy
ODIN	Open Data Inventory
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PAE	Public Administration entity
PAR	Public administration Reform
PB	Participatory budgeting
PBB	Programme and Performance Budgeting
PGC	Public Governance Committee
PGR	Public governance review
PLP	Presidential Leadership Programme
PMDU	Prime Minister's Delivery Unit
PMO	Prime Minister's Office
RIA	Regulatory Impact Assessment
SBO	Senior Budget Officials
SCM	Standard Cost Model
SDC	Sustainable Development Centre
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SDIA	Sustainable Development Impact Assessment
SDS	Sustainable Development Strategy (Egypt Vision 2030)
SDU	Sustainable Development Unit
SIA	Sustainable Impact Assessment
SIGMA	Support for Improvement in Governance and Management
SOM	Standard Operations Manual
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
TAG	Technical Advisory Group

ToT	Training of Trainers
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
UX	User experience
VNR	Voluntary National Review

Executive summary

The Government of Egypt is reforming its public administration through the adoption of strategic commitments in the updated version of Egypt Vision 2030 (2023) and the Public Administration Reform Plan (PARP) currently under review. Despite progress, challenges persist in meeting citizens' needs and further delivering on the promise of these historic reforms whilst navigating an increasingly uncertain and complex global socio-economic context. Reform efforts to date have resulted in significant institutional changes in key public governance functions, which would benefit from a whole-of-government approach for greater co-ordination and evidence-driven decision-making. At the same time, the changes gradually introduced by these reforms are providing new opportunities to modernise the Egyptian civil service, promote citizen-centred public services, enhance transparency and mainstream a youth and gender lens in public policies. This *OECD Public Governance Review of Egypt* aims to help the Government translate its ambitious reforms into more effective, co-ordinated, evidence-based and citizen-driven policy outcomes.

Promoting a whole-of-government implementation of Egypt Vision 2030

To articulate the implementation of Egypt Vision 2030, the Ministry of Planning, Economic Development, and International Cooperation (MPEDIC) has sought to strengthen co-ordination arrangements whilst modernising its data generation and management linked to performance monitoring systems for the implementation of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. With the present transition to a new planning system, it will be necessary to enhance and formalise co-ordination arrangements with relevant sectors to strengthen the alignment of mid-term programmes and sectoral strategies with the strategic objectives outlined in Egypt Vision 2030. Undertaking a mapping of planning functions, defining clear roles and responsibilities, and developing technical assistance material for line ministries will be pivotal in this regard. Empowering MPEDIC's Sustainable Development Unit to support a co-ordinated implementation with assigned sectoral focal points to bolster institutional planning and co-ordination will also be critical.

Strengthening institutional and co-ordination arrangements to achieve the strategic commitments of the PARP

Egypt has been carrying out ambitious public administration reforms for the past decades, most notably through the implementation of the PARP adopted in 2014 and led by the Central Agency for Organisation and Administration (CAOA). Spearheaded by CAOA, Egypt has made progress towards a more modernised and fit-for-purpose public administration through various priority initiatives targeting the effectiveness of public institutions, digitalisation, civil service and public services. The ongoing revision of the PARP is an opportunity to reflect on the latest developments and issues for public administration in Egypt, the priorities highlighted in the updated Egypt Vision 2030, as well as innovations and trends in global public administrations. As the leading agency in implementing the PARP, CAOA could further translate its strategic objectives into action plans, enhance co-ordination mechanisms and bolster capabilities to steer, co-ordinate, implement and monitor reforms across sectors and levels of government.

Modernising and shaping the civil service of the future

Egypt has undertaken considerable efforts to revamp and modernise its civil service, most notably through the 2016 Civil Service Law, the rollout of new institutional structures across ministries, upskilling the civil service and the future launch of an observatory for public service delivery. Together, these efforts have sought to enhance many aspects of public employment, including a more professional recruitment process and a modern, forward-looking performance management system. Nonetheless, more efforts are needed to improve the agility and resilience of the public service to ensure that it can swiftly adapt to fast-changing circumstances and unforeseen shocks, notably by enhancing learning, development and mobility among public sector employees. The move to the New Administrative Capital provides an opportunity to upgrade the principles of human resource management and provide tools, guidance and support to leaders, managers and staff across the public service to transform long-established practices and ways of working.

Promoting the administrative simplification of public services and procedures

In recent years, the Government of Egypt has made significant strides using digital solutions to improve the efficiency, accessibility and transparency of public services and procedures. The Digital Egypt strategy has played a pivotal role in streamlining public service delivery and modernising the way the administration operates through the PARP. However, these strategic frameworks should provide details on how objectives within Digital Egypt can be operationalised. Moreover, developing a cross-cutting administrative simplification strategy will help streamline the country's complex public service infrastructure.

Communication and access to information for greater transparency and participation

Egypt has enshrined in its constitution the right of access to information and has also implemented a wide range of parallel initiatives to disclose information. However, more efforts are needed to promote transparency, notably by proactively disclosing information in a systematic manner through a more coordinated and institutionalised approach, until a law on the right of access to information is adopted. Building upon existing initiatives and opportunities, there is scope to enhance citizen and stakeholder participation by establishing more impactful councils, conferences and advisory boards at the national and local levels; and exploring innovative participatory processes, including digital participation. Additionally, Egypt could further work towards fostering an enabling environment for citizen and stakeholder participation, from the agenda-setting to the implementation phases, thereby ensuring more effective, inclusive and responsive public decision-making. The Review also finds an opportunity to make better use of public communication to boost transparency and stakeholder participation and support strategic planning and implementation of Egypt Vision 2030 and the PARP.

Enhancing gender and youth mainstreaming to foster more responsive policy outcomes

Egypt has made important strides in promoting the inclusion of women and young people in public life. Nonetheless, findings from the Review underscore the need to further strengthen the mandate and capacities of key governmental actors implementing commitments to gender equality and youth empowerment. Establishing co-ordination mechanisms and clear roles and responsibilities will be instrumental in ensuring a whole-of-government approach to increase the impact of current implementation efforts. The Government could further benefit from systematically adopting a dual approach to gender mainstreaming by targeting specific gender gaps while integrating gender equality across all policies. At

the same time, implementing a national youth strategy would enhance policy coherence and foster a common vision for young people. Finally, there is scope to further integrate gender and youth mainstreaming in sectoral policy planning and in the PARP, as well as to promote women's and youth representation in the public sector.

1 The Egyptian public administration and its reform agenda

This Chapter offers an overview of the public administration in Egypt and identifies related strengths and challenges for its reform agenda to contribute to achieving more effective, citizen-oriented and evidence-based policy outcomes. In doing so, it provides a snapshot of the effectiveness of the public administration, explores crucial building blocks of a sound public governance system and looks at the existing capabilities in Egypt to respond to contemporary cross-cutting challenges whilst progressing towards the SDGs. The chapter also explores the current economic context in Egypt and examines how public governance reforms can support more effective policy responses in an era of multiple global crisis. It concludes with an overview of the aim, methodology and main recommendations of this Review.

The public governance reform landscape in Egypt

Good governance is fundamental for a functioning, effective and transparent public administration that delivers quality goods and services to citizens and businesses. When implemented strategically, public governance reforms can be a key instrument for more efficient, effective and citizen-centred public administrations, as it forms the basis for the effective implementation of strategic frameworks and policies. Indeed, a modern and well-functioning administration is a precondition for establishing an inclusive public policy that is able to deliver national development results through improved services. In the process of rolling out public governance reforms, it is also essential to have efficient public financial management systems to equip public institutions with the right resources to deliver, ensure their transparent management and keep actors accountable for their disbursement and value for money.

In this regard, the Government of Egypt has embarked on an ambitious reform process to achieve key strategic objectives for the country's sustainable economic and social development and growth through the adoption of the updated version of Egypt Vision 2030 (See Chapter 2). This whole-of-society strategic framework led by the Ministry of Planning, Economic Development and International Cooperation (MPEDIC) is the first of its kind to place sustainable development at the front and centre of cross-sector policies to promote economic growth, social inclusion and prosperity for future generations in Egypt. The commitments therein are aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as well as the African Agenda 2063, and act as the governing framework for all development programmes and projects implemented across sectors and levels of government. Notably, the development programmes stemming from this vision aim to improve the livelihood and satisfaction of Egyptian citizens. In recent years, national flagship development programmes have been implemented across various sectors, including education, health, housing and family development. In doing so, the government has paid particular attention to empowering youth, women and other segments of the population through targeted and mainstreamed actions.

These efforts have taken place alongside a robust public administration reform process. Notably, the Central Agency for Organization and Administration (CAOA) has led the implementation of the Public Administration Reform Plan (PARP) since 2019 and has spearheaded efforts in this regard. The PARP aims to gradually transform the state administrative apparatus in efforts to modernise its operations, adopt novel technologies and upskill the public sector workforce (See Chapter 3). It seeks to do so through five pillars promoting a series of legal, institutional, human and financial reforms, focusing on improving the quality, access and relevance of public services. A key pillar of the PARP focuses on optimising public services through various methods, including digitalisation and the use of information technology to improve public service delivery. The Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (MCIT) leads the implementation of this pillar and has translated the relevant objectives and projects into a sectoral national strategy on digitalisation, Digital Egypt, covering three important areas: digital transformation, digital skills and jobs, and digital innovation (See Chapter 5). CAOA is in the process of updating the PARP and further aligning its strategic objectives therein with the updated version of Egypt Vision 2030 to ensure the effective implementation of the necessary public administration reforms and achieve the government's goals by 2030.

These reforms together underpin Egypt's commitment to promoting good governance enshrined in the 2014 constitution. The provisions therein stress the reduction of income disparities, balanced growth, inclusion and human rights, including gender equality. In doing so, the constitution refers to the importance of maximising investment in human capital within the framework of sustainable development. It also recognises the importance of guaranteeing access to information (Article 68) and enabling young people to engage in public decision-making (Article 82).

The path towards reforming the public administration, however, is not always linear. As in many OECD countries, reforming the public administration is a gradual process that introduces profound

transformations to the very structures, working methods and processes of public institutions. Governments must balance short- and long-term priorities whilst contending with uncertainty, resistance to change and pressures to continuously deliver results. The following sections of this Chapter offer an overview of the public administration in Egypt, identifying its strengths, challenges and how its reform agenda can contribute to achieving more effective, citizen-oriented and evidence-based policy outcomes. In doing so, the following sections will provide a snapshot of the effectiveness of public administration, explore crucial building blocks of a sound public governance system and look at its capabilities to respond to contemporary cross-cutting challenges, including the digital and green transitions, whilst progressing towards the SDGs. The chapter will also seek to highlight the current economic context in Egypt and examine how public governance reforms can support more effective policy responses in an era of multiple global crisis.

The road ahead in fulfilling Egypt's ambitious reform agenda

While the government of Egypt has embraced an ambitious reform agenda, it faces some challenges ahead in the delivery of these commitments. Indeed, these transformations must take place alongside a rapidly changing socio-political context in the country, with a poverty rate of approximately 29.7% of the Egyptian population as of 2019/20 (OECD, 2024[1]; APRM, 2021[2]). The latest OECD Economic Outlook (2023[3]) also underlines that multiple ongoing global crises could lead to renewed supply chain disruptions, which may continue to impact food security in Egypt and other economies in the region, given the relative dependence on exports. At the same time, the administration must contend with overcoming rapid technological, demographic and socio-political changes. The following section, therefore, takes stock of the present context underpinning and driving reforms to modernise the civil service as well as promote more inclusive growth in Egypt.

The effective implementation of Egypt Vision 2030 and the PARP will be paramount to enhance the effectiveness of the public sector

Mounting pressures to deliver results whilst navigating an uncertain and changing global landscape have been driving forces behind efforts to strengthen existing governance arrangements in Egypt. In this context, the Government of Egypt is revamping its strategic reforms to build a modernised administration that can meet the challenges of the 21st century, particularly by updating Egypt Vision 2030 and the PARP. As a result, strengthening existing policy frameworks and an enabling environment for their implementation has been high on the government's agenda and is considered of utmost priority in the coming years to ensure the delivery of these historic reforms by 2030 and beyond.

In this regard, MPEDIC led a process for the updating of Egypt Vision 2030, culminating in 2023, to strengthen the link between investments and socio-economic programmes for sustainable development, address pressing challenges hindering socio-economic growth (i.e. water scarcity, climate change, high population growth) as well as respond to the unprecedented effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Seen as a "live" working document, this whole-of-society policy framework acts as an umbrella under which all government strategies are aligned (MPED, 2023[4]) (see Chapter 2). Egypt Vision 2030 is organised along six national strategic goals together with seven enablers to operationalise these across sectors and levels of government.

Following suit, CAOA is currently reviewing and updating the PARP to scale the rollout of new institutional structures across ministries, upskill the civil service and launch an observatory for public service delivery (see Chapters 3 and 4). Plans for revamping the public administration reform process aim to build on key achievements to date, including the issuance of the civil service law, the move to the New Administrative Capital, the launch of the *national capability assessment and competitions centre for civil service exams*, the civil service job portal, the new job performance appraisal system for the civil service and the job classification and degrees system for the public sector amongst others. The reform has also advanced

efforts in regards to institutional development by restructuring ministries and establishing new divisions such as digital transformation units, internal auditing and governance units, strategic divisions and human resource units.

Modernising the public administration, however, is not a goal in itself. Rather, it is a gradual and ongoing process to build robust institutions and ensure coherence across policy sectors and levels of government. Indeed, this cross-cutting agenda requires maintaining strong high-level political support and mechanisms for continued inter-ministerial co-ordination. Setting and prioritising objectives and themes in public administration reform plans is essential to ensure that this strategic framework answers to citizens' growing and changing expectations. Aligning high-level priorities on public administration reform will be all the more important, as the PARP covers a wide breadth of sectors and policies that require a whole-of-government co-ordination for its success, including key government strategic frameworks such as Egypt Vision 2030 and the Government Programme titled "*Together We Build a Sustainable Future" for 2024/2025– 2026/2027*"[1]. Indeed, further embedding a whole-of-government approach will be crucial for the success of reforms in Egypt, particularly to transform objectives and goals into measurable, actionable, time-bound programmes, procedures, commitments and tasks across units and line ministries for its successful rollout.

Increasing the effectiveness of the public administration has been a key objective of the Government of Egypt, enshrined in its strategic frameworks and endorsed at the highest political levels. Under its sixth strategic objective on enhancing governance and partnerships, Egypt Vision 2030 underlines how the governance of state institutions serves as an essential prerequisite for achieving all of the goals and objectives outlined in Egypt Vision 2030 (MPED, 2023[4]). This strategic objective has been broken down into seven general goals, including: implementing administrative reform, promoting transparency and combating corruption, enhancing accountability and responsibility, empowering local administration, fostering partnerships, promoting regional and international co-operation and preserving stability and security. At the same time, the 2014 PARP recognises that enhancing public governance constitutes the basis for a successful design and implementation of strategic frameworks, regulations, policies and public services that meet the needs of citizens in pursuit of the SDGs. Efforts to implement the PARP and modernise the civil service will be further explored in Chapters 3 and 4 respectively.

While progress has been achieved with the adoption of a number of reforms and measures in recent years, further efforts will be needed to continue to translate these ambitious commitments into outcomes. Referring to the World Bank Government Effectiveness Index, Egypt stood in 2021 at the 120th position out of 191 countries. Following a number of key reforms and measures, the country has recorded progress in recent years, with Egypt's score increasing from 20 in 2016 to 35.6 in 2021 on the World Bank Government Effectiveness in the Worldwide Governance Indicators (World Bank, 2021[5]). While absolute scores on this index showcase the perceptions of the quality of public services, policy implementation and civil service commitment, the historical trends reveal that progress towards delivering results is not always linear. As Figure 1.1 illustrates, Egypt still fares lower than the MENA regional average but has seen significant progress since 2012 alongside a recent decline following 2019.

Nevertheless, taking stock of the public administration's overall effectiveness in Egypt requires further reflection on five core dimensions of the OECD Public Governance Monitor Framework (Figure 1.2). Indeed, understanding the underlying trends that underpin the success and pain points of reforms can provide a solid foundation for the government to revamp existing policies and services. These dimensions will be analysed in the following section to provide an overview of the public administration, including its policy, legal and institutional setting, as well as potential areas for future reform in Egypt.

Figure 1.1. Egypt's standing in the Government Effectiveness Index
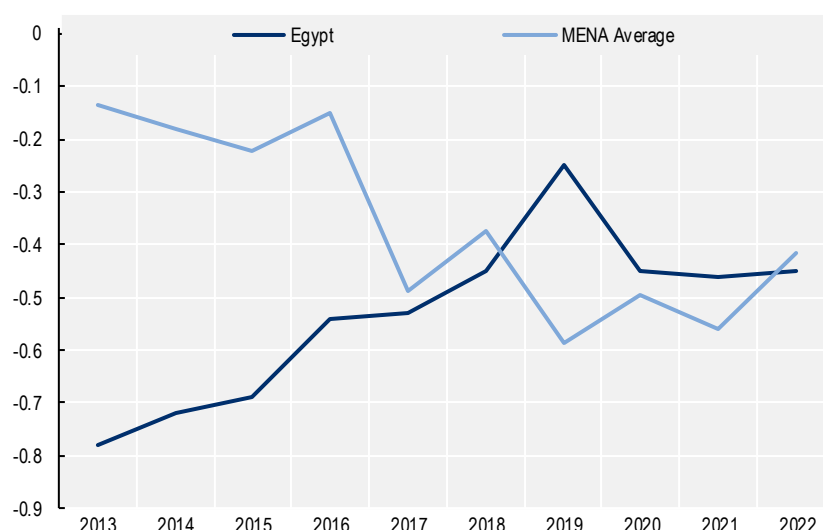
Note: Score: -2.5 weak; 2.5 strong.
Source: World Bank Group Governance Indicators (2023[6]).

Figure 1.2. The OECD Public Governance Monitor Framework on Public Sector Effectiveness

Productivity: As measured by the level of general government expenditure and employment and the capacity for government to use public resources efficiently to deliver value-for-money and relevant policy outcomes to citizens.

Responsiveness: understood as the core objective of the public administration - to serve citizens and deliver the services that are needed and expected.

Agility: government is able to proactively identify and tackles issues, emerging challenges and trends, makes appropriate decisions and coordinates their implementation, and carries out relevant organizational changes and resource reallocations to respond to evolving needs and to adapt to new strategic priorities and contexts.

Inclusiveness: the capacity of public administrations to design and implement policies to reduce inequalities and fight poverty by tailoring government systems and programs to the diversity of citizen's needs.

Resilience: the ability to absorb, recover, and prepare for future shocks (economic, environmental, social or institutional).

Source: Based on OECD (2023[7]), *Public Governance Monitor of Sweden*.

The Egyptian administration is one of the largest in the MENA region, introducing both opportunities and challenges to enhance its productivity

Public administration reform does not happen in a vacuum. Indeed, Egypt's public sector is composed of a complex landscape of multiple actors, processes and laws against which existing policy frameworks must operate and ensure their productivity.

The size of the Egyptian public sector remains large, making the improvement of public sector effectiveness an imperative to deliver quality and cost-effective public services and policies and increase fiscal sustainability. The Public administration is organised on the basis of a strong hierarchical and vertical structure that consists of three levels as per the law of civil service no. 81/2016 and the law of local administration no. 43/1979. It is structured around i) Ministries and affiliated departments\bodies, ii) Public institutions managing facilities and utilities as well as iii) local administrations. This makes the structure of the public administration in Egypt complex, by being comprised of approximately 707 ministries, government departments and administrative units, employing approximately 5 million workers(see Chapter 4). As in various economies in MENA, the public sector is one of the largest employers with public jobs representing an estimated 22% to 26% of total employment in Egypt on average. A large public sector apparatus is a factor that can contribute to complex and overregulated bureaucratic processes, creating burdens and inefficiencies for both the public and private sectors as well as citizens (OECD, 2023[8]). Together, these specific characteristics of the Egyptian public administration underline the need for systematic, whole-of-government and evidence-driven policy responses to deliver on the PARP and achieve key results for citizens (see Chapter 3).

The Government of Egypt has also placed a renewed emphasis on pursuing regulatory reform to reduce administrative burdens, improve the business climate, promote citizens' rights, and enhance public service delivery. Notably, Egypt adopted its first legislative drafting guide to enhance legislative and regulatory quality (OECD, 2019[9]). It is also undertaking efforts to enhance the accessibility of the justice system to disadvantaged groups, in particular children, by strengthening the capacity of the Egyptian justice system to better protect children in contact with the law (OECD, 2023[10]). While progress has been achieved, further efforts will be needed to improve the quality of regulatory outcomes, reduce existing regulatory burdens and enhance implementation efforts, through an enabling legal, institutional and administrative setting and the implementation of the legislative drafting guide (OECD, 2019[9]). This will be all the more important as regulatory enforcement in Egypt remains below the regional average (0.36 in comparison to 0.5 in 2022) and as the country ranks among the lowest performers (149 out of 150 in 2022) regarding its ability to conduct administrative proceedings without unreasonable delay (see Figure 1.3). Chapter 5 will further expand on the importance of and avenues for addressing the complex regulatory landscape through a cross-cutting strategy for administrative simplification, which should form an integral part of the country's information and communication technology (ICT) strategy for public service delivery.

Figure 1.3. The Regulatory Enforcement Index in Egypt
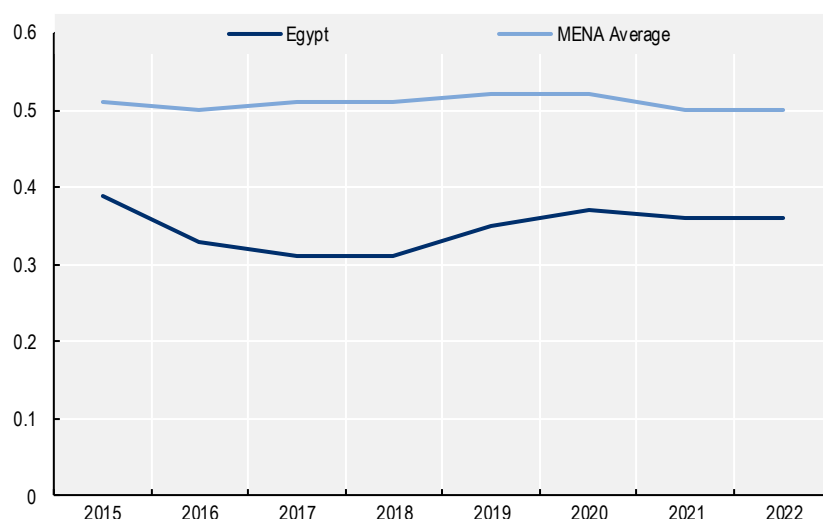
Note: Score from 0 to 1, where 1 represents the greatest level of openness or regulatory enforcement.
Source: World Justice Project (2022[11]), *WJP Rule of Law Index*, https://worldjusticeproject.org/rule-of-law-index/factors/2022/Regulatory%20Enforcement/.

In line with Egypt's commitment to the United Nations 2030 Agenda, the government has recognised the development of performance management systems as an important pillar of the governing framework for the implementation of the SDGs and good governance more broadly. MPEDIC recently developed the *Procedural Guide for Monitoring and Evaluation*, through which its strategic management unit provides technical support to the various ministries in the state's administrative apparatus by establishing their units and building capabilities for performance measurement. While this represents an important step ahead, efforts will require scaling and disseminating newly established procedures within ministries to build their capabilities. Other efforts spearheaded in this regard include the creation of online monitoring and evaluation systems, **the Integrated System for Investment Plan Preparation and Monitoring (ISIPPM)** and the government's performance follow-up system, ADAA, to embed an evidence-driven approach into Egypt Vision 2030 led by MPEDIC (see Chapter 2). At the same time, CAOA, under one of the PARP's main pillars seeking to promote a data-driven civil service, has undertaken efforts to consolidate databases and move towards the establishment of digital systems (see Chapter 5 on administrative simplification). CAOA has also signalled as a priority the establishment of an *Observatory for public services* with a view to develop a framework to measure the performance and quality of citizen-centred public services.

Despite key milestones achieved to date, various challenges persist in terms of data gathering, data disaggregation and use, which are hindering overall analytical capacities for evidence-based policy and regulation making in the administration. First, developing data governance protocols for the systemic and coherent collection, use and storage of public information by government institutions will be vital for the implementation of the new procedural guidelines for monitoring and evaluation as well as to enhance the vertical and horizontal co-ordination on the collection and use of data (Igrioglu, Ostry and Allam, 2020[12]). Second, insights from OECD data collection workshops revealed difficulties within line ministries in terms of distinguishing between monitoring and evaluation practices. This has contributed to the ad hoc use of quantitative and qualitative data and evidence for the purposes of strategic management, performance measurement, change management processes and knowledge management across the civil service. Third, stakeholders underlined challenges during OECD interviews in terms of quantifying and reporting on governance indicators, as performance management of progress towards achieving the SDGs has been done through a comparison of international indicators.

Efforts to build a modern, efficient and data-driven public administration remain vital in driving Egypt's efforts towards achieving the SDGs by 2030. In fact, the OECD (2021[13]) found that over 165 countries are lagging in the achievement of the SDGs, partly due to recent crises but, more importantly, operational challenges within public administrations and a lack of a results-oriented approach within implementing institutions. While there is consensus on the importance of the SDGs, meaningful transformations within public administrations have yet to follow suit. It has been projected that 85% of the SDGs will not meet their targets by 2030 and progress has regressed on 8 of the 17 goals (UN, 2022[14]). While challenges remain for all SDGs to be met, Egypt has made continuous progress in many development areas (Figure 1.4). The country ranks in the middle field of all assessed countries under the SDG Index for 2024 (83 out of 166 countries). Egypt has notably made progress in achieving SDG 4 "Quality education", SDG 6 "Clean water and sanitation" and SDG 12 "Responsible consumption and production", for example. Nevertheless, evidence reveals the need to further deploy efforts to enhance and strengthen governance arrangements in Egypt, given its current "stagnating" standing regarding SDG 16 on peace, justice and strong institutions (UN, 2024[15]).

Figure 1.4. Despite progress, challenges remain to achieve the SDGs in Egypt, as in most countries around the world

Source: UN (2024[15]), 2024 *Sustainable Development Index: Egypt*, https://dashboards.sdgindex.org/profiles/egypt-arab-rep.

Resilience and agility as core principles for the modernisation of the Egyptian public apparatus

In the face of multiple crises and heightened uncertainty, governments are increasingly called upon to enhance their capabilities to navigate and effectively respond to external shocks in a co-ordinated and efficient manner. In addition to the effects of climate change as well as the current global challenges, the COVID-19 pandemic has particularly laid bare the necessity for public administrations to become more agile and resilient. Resilience is characterised by the capacity to absorb, adapt and learn from disturbances while essentially retaining the same function as prior to the disruptive shock (OECD, 2021[16]). Agility pertains to the capacity of governments and administrations to proactively identify and respond adequately to public policy challenges with a view to preventing bottlenecks and crises (OECD, 2023[17]; 2023[18]).

Faced with pressing global challenges, including those on water scarcity and food insecurity, Egypt has taken important steps towards strengthening the resiliency and agility of its public administration, notably through the implementation of Egypt Vision 2030 and the PARP. In particular, the government has identified a series of enablers for a highly functioning public administration whilst reforming the needed institutional arrangements (i.e. new organisation charts, creation of Digital Transformation Units, etc.) in

line ministries and governorates for the delivery of vital policies and services. In this regard, a robust strategic planning process is crucial, as it facilitates the translation of high-level objectives into long- and medium-term strategies, along with clear operational action plans, and plays a key role in aligning and ensuring the consistency of plans and priorities to guarantee coherence and efficiency (OECD, 2023[19]). While considerable efforts have been undertaken to strengthen co-ordination arrangements and modernise performance management, adopting a whole-of-government approach remains vital to ensure an agile and robust strategic planning process with clear procedures and institutional responsibilities. In addition, expanding the horizon of strategic objectives beyond the present 2030 milestone will be key to ensuring the longevity and continuity of reforms.

The Government of Egypt, as a result, has established various committees as co-ordination mechanisms to address horizontal priorities. Some of these bodies include the National Committee for Monitoring the Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and the Higher Committee for Administrative Reform (see Chapters 2 and 3 for further details). While these have been gradually consolidated, evidence from OECD interviews reveals that their structure, composition, frequency of meetings and functioning could be further improved to achieve a whole-of-government approach to reforms. According to CAOA, Egypt has established a coordination mechanism within the recent cabinet reshuffle by forming three ministerial groups, the human development group, industrial development group and the economic group. Each ministerial group consists of several ministers that meet weekly to guarantee the effectiveness of the government's performance. While these committees convene high-level government officials, their mandate, functioning and frequency of meetings vary depending on the needs identified in the implementation of the vision and PARP. Complementing these mechanisms with technical working groups could be an avenue to support the operationalisation of strategic objectives and integrate outcomes into decision-making processes for a mainstream approach to policies and services across sectors and levels of government.

In an effort to enhance the efficiency of its public administration, the Government of Egypt has also made strides in modernising the civil service; however, certain rigidity persists. To be more agile and resilient, public services must learn to swiftly adapt to fast-changing circumstances and build skills in foresight and innovative problem solving (OECD, 2023[19]). The Civil Service Law (No. 81) of 2016 has been a key milestone in this regard, setting the foundation and structure of employment by designating job categories as well as the overall governance of civil service issues, and establishing a civil service council made up of elected official, senior civil servants and external experts (see Chapter 4 for further information). One of the key questions for the Egyptian administration is whether the principles enshrined in the Civil Service Law and the priorities foreseen for the updated version of the PARP (regarding recruitment and learning and development) take into consideration measures to address current and future trends. The public service of the future will need to attract, retain and develop talent that can respond quickly to fast-changing circumstances, in line with the disruptions introduced by ongoing global crises, changing demographics in the country, environmental risks and the effects of digitalisation. As will be further discussed in Chapter 4, prioritising learning, development and mobility among public sector employees is therefore crucial in cultivating an agile workforce capable of addressing complex problems and fostering innovation in the face of unpredictable future shocks and crises (OECD, 2023[8]).

Egypt is reforming service delivery as part of the PARP, where efforts would benefit from promoting a more responsive, evidence-based and citizen-centred approach

The delivery of policies and services plays a vital role in shaping the overall interface between the State and its citizens. According to the OECD Serving Citizens' Framework (2022[20]), key factors of high-performing public services include their diversity of geographic location, proactive access to information, timeliness and relevance to the needs of different population groups. Indeed, effective public service delivery goes beyond ensuring compliance and involves engaging citizens in the design of its procedures.

Designing and delivering services that are evidence-based, responsive and accessible for all is fundamental to building more inclusive, resilient and fair 21st century societies.

In Egypt, the Government continues to adopt and deepen relevant measures to enhance public service quality, access and relevance. Citizens can access a wide range of public services through online and offline delivery channels delivered by national public entities and authorities at the governorate level. Under the PARP, the mandate to ensure the effectiveness of public services lies with CAOA – in coordination with other relevant entities- and MCIT, leading efforts to enhance the provision of digital public services. While this system is thorough, the institutional framework for public service delivery in Egypt appears complex and fragmented (due to the existing division of labour), with responsibilities delegated to ministries and governorates according to specific sector needs and available resources and capacities. With pronounced income disparities at the local level, access to public services has also been reported to be uneven across governorates (UNDP, 2023[21]).

Public service delivery thus remains a priority area for reform. Building on progress to date, Egypt has achieved high scores in terms of the technical foundations (88.16%) for the delivery of vital services, in line with efforts undertaken through the PARP and the Digital Egypt strategy (Figure 1.5). Nevertheless, evidence also reveals that accessibility and inclusion (66.7%), public engagement (53%) and service experience (55.4%) could be areas for future reform to place citizens at the front and centre of the design and delivery of services in Egypt (Oxford Insights, 2022[22]). For instance, satisfaction with public services in Egypt showed mixed results in 2023, with low levels of satisfaction in health services (39%) and the education system (40%), whilst exhibiting a fluctuating performance in 2013 (both 30%), 2015 (43%; 52%), 2017 (36%; 34%) and 2020 (41%; 31%) (Gallup, 2023[23]). Nevertheless, Egypt remains a high performer in the region, with a share above the average satisfaction with health services (with an average in MENA of 36% in 2023) and equal to those of the education system (with an average in MENA of 40%) (Gallup, 2023[23]). These trends are consistent with findings from Chapter 5, regarding the complex multilevel delivery infrastructure in Egypt, which was found to introduce burdens for citizens in identifying the responsible entity, requested documents, requirements, cost and length of procedures.

Figure 1.5. Human-Centred Public Services Index in Egypt
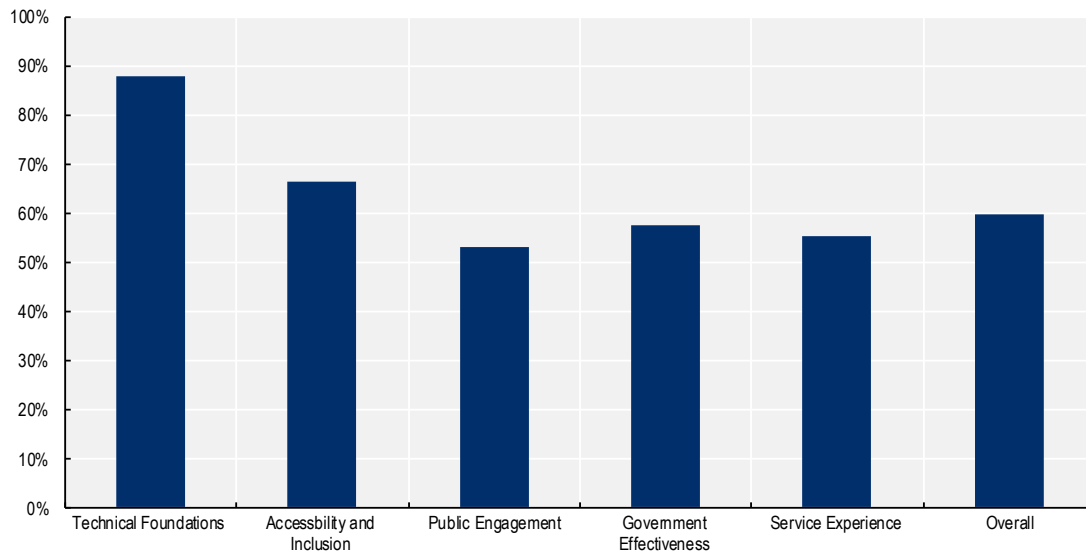
Note: Scores for each area are provided from 0% to 100%.
Source: Oxford Insights (2022[22]), *Human-Centred Public Services Index (2022)*.

The Government of Egypt is taking steps to modernise and streamline the existing public service delivery infrastructure to enhance the quality, access and relevance of public services. As part of the PARP, CAOA has dedicated a specific pillar to enhancing public service delivery in Egypt. To advance the implementation of this pillar, CAOA is undertaking efforts to establish an observatory for public services. Egypt's strategic priorities, in particular those enshrined in the PARP, also underline the need for improvements in the quality of public services and the tracking of progress made over recent years. Egypt needs to have a comprehensive, available and systematically collected government data on public service satisfaction, it is developing surveys and other means to collect data and information on public services that could better inform service design and delivery and assess the levels of satisfaction on a regular basis (see Chapter 3).

The digital transformation of the Egyptian public sector has also ushered in a series of reforms to digitalise public services. Since 2012, efforts to build a robust digital infrastructure have paved the way for the digital transformation of the public sector and enhancements to public service delivery (see Chapter 5). Presently, Egypt stands in a promising position to become a digital forerunner in the MENA region (World Bank, 2020[24]). At the regional level, Egypt is also at the forefront of MENA economies on digital transformation and financial inclusion (UNDP, 2021[25]). Under the PARP umbrella, Digital Egypt is well positioned and de facto plays an important role in streamlining public service delivery through its digital transformation pillar, with a view to digitalising, simplifying and expediting. At the time of writing, the MCIT had digitalised over 168 public services from 9 ministries on 5 main outlets\channels: the Digital Egypt e-platform, mobile applications, call centres, post offices and citizen service centres. The digital transformation objective is also identified in Egypt Vision 2030 as a means to improve the functioning of the government, the delivery and inclusiveness of public services and the transparency of the public administration, ultimately aiming to increase citizens' trust in the government (MPED, 2023[4]). In today's fast-paced digital era, leveraging the digital transformation of the public sector in Egypt, however, should not be seen as a goal in itself but as a tool to enhance the interface between the state and the citizen.

Efforts in this regard have, at the same time, supported a gradual transformation of the Egyptian administration into a data-driven public sector. In line with 15 economies in the MENA region (OECD/UN ESCWA, 2021[26]), Egypt has a portal in place (https://egypt.opendataforafrica.org) that has contributed to improving its Open Data Inventory scores since 2015 (Figure 1.6). While progress has been achieved, there is room to further equip line ministries and governorates with the capabilities to collect, manage and share data, as well as ensure the interoperability of databases, as underlined in the pillars of action of the PARP. Efforts in this regard will benefit from enhanced co-ordination to ensure the effective management and availability of data across sectors and levels of government.

Figure 1.6. Evolution of ODIN scores for Arab Economies, %
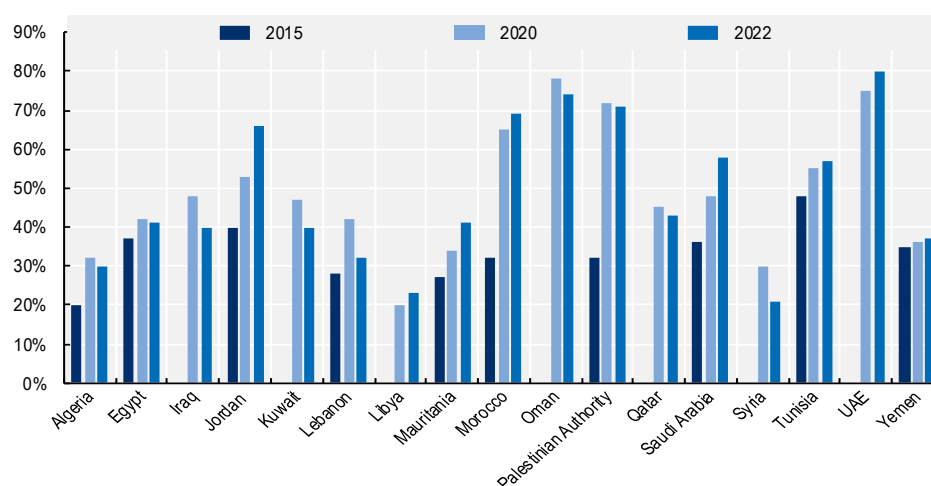
Egypt Vision 2030 places a renewed emphasis on ensuring policy outcomes are fair, inclusive and responsive to the needs of different segments of the population

Egypt Vision 2030, as a whole-of-government umbrella framework for reforms in the country, acknowledges openness, inclusiveness and stakeholder participation as key drivers towards promoting sustainable development. Notably, it acknowledges how "by involving all stakeholders in the decision-making process at the national and local levels, within a legislative and institutional framework, transparency and accountability are enhanced, and rights and duties are defined, thereby reducing corruption and improving the services provided to citizens" (MPED, 2023[4]).

Nevertheless, various societal challenges complicate the outlook of reforms in Egypt. Demographic changes in recent years have introduced far-reaching economic, financial and social impacts in the country. The ongoing second demographic wave being experienced in Egypt and across the MENA region is exacerbating pre-existing pressures on education systems and labour markets (ME Council, 2022[28]). The number of young people is expected to increase to 5.5 million by 2030. Leveraging the demographic dividend in the country will be vital for the success of reforms, considering that Egypt has a relatively young population (representing 60% of the total population) and a large share is also female (UNICEF, 2020[29]).

In line with these trends, Egypt has an opportunity to further enhance its inclusiveness within the public sector regarding the representation of women in senior positions and youth in public administration and public life. As of 2020, Egyptian women held 45% of all government jobs (MPED, 2021[30]). While observations also point to an overall balanced representation of women and men, without detailed data, it is difficult to assess to which extent women and men are equally represented horizontally in all sectors and fields in public administration and vertically at the highest levels. Notwithstanding the recent efforts undertaken by the Government of Egypt to engage young people in the public sector, young people remain under-represented in Egyptian public institutions despite their demographic weight. For instance, in parliament, according to OECD interviews, only 60 elected members are under the age of 35 (10.6%), a percentage lower than the MENA average (OECD, 2022[31]). Chapter 7 will examine the opportunities to further empower women and young people to shape the civil service of the future and conceive more inclusive, relevant and effective policies, services and programmes.

With a growing and diverse population, Egypt must grapple with existing inequalities, introducing barriers for certain groups to take part in public life. Notably, the country has made great strides in reducing poverty,

with an overall poverty rate of 29.7% as of 2019/20 (OECD, 2024[1]; APRM, 2021[2]). Nevertheless, as in many OECD countries, Egypt exhibits uneven levels of income inequality across municipalities and between rural and urban communities. The Human Development Index shows that Egypt's Human Inequality Coefficient (22.1%), while below the average in the Arab region (23.7%), remains an important factor to be addressed (UNDP, 2024[32]). Such inequalities have particularly introduced risks for the socio-economic integration of refugees and other underrepresented groups. As of October 2024, the country hosted approximately 794,600 registered refugees and asylum-seekers from more than 59 countries, most of which live in urban areas of Cairo and the North Coast and amount to the largest number registered in its history (i.e. with 420,000 individuals in Egypt registered in 2023) (UNHCR, 2024[33]).

Addressing existing climate vulnerabilities in Egypt and their potential distributional effects will also be central to promoting sustainable and inclusive growth for all groups in society. A growing urban population (estimated to be 41.4 million by 2050) will put additional strain on urban-area service provision and deepen the exposure to climate risks, with effects disproportionately borne by the most vulnerable population (World Bank, 2022[34]). In fact, 14 major cities in Egypt, with over 80% of the total population, were found to be exposed to at least 1 major climate risk (World Bank, 2022[34]). Ensuring adequate governance mechanisms and policies to address climate change will be critical, considering the potential uncertainty regarding the availability of water resources in the country, increasing heatwaves and desertification affecting biodiversity, and threats to food security (OECD, 2024[35]).

Amongst other inequalities exposed by the COVID-19 pandemic, bridging the digital divide in Egypt has also been a priority high on the reform agenda through the Digital Egypt strategy. As the pandemic has accelerated online activity, the scope and speed of the ongoing digital transformation in Egypt has varied greatly across governorates and segments of the population, some of whom have yet to fully profit from it. Indeed, the digital divide is prevalent in Egypt, as acknowledged by Egypt Vision 2030. Figure 1.7 illustrates that while Egypt (57 out of 100) ranks above the MENA regional average (61 out of 100) in the Inclusive Internet Index, 28% of the total population is still not able to access the Internet (EIU, 2022[36]; ITU, 2023[37]). Evidence also reveals that Egypt has seen a significant improvement over the last decade in terms of building digital infrastructure in the country and raising digital access and literacy levels. The digital divide that persists across governorates in Egypt, however, not only constrains the ability of citizens to access online public services but also reinforces divisions by age, income and geographic location.

Figure 1.7. Access to the Internet in Egypt has seen a steady increase over the last decade but the digital divide persists
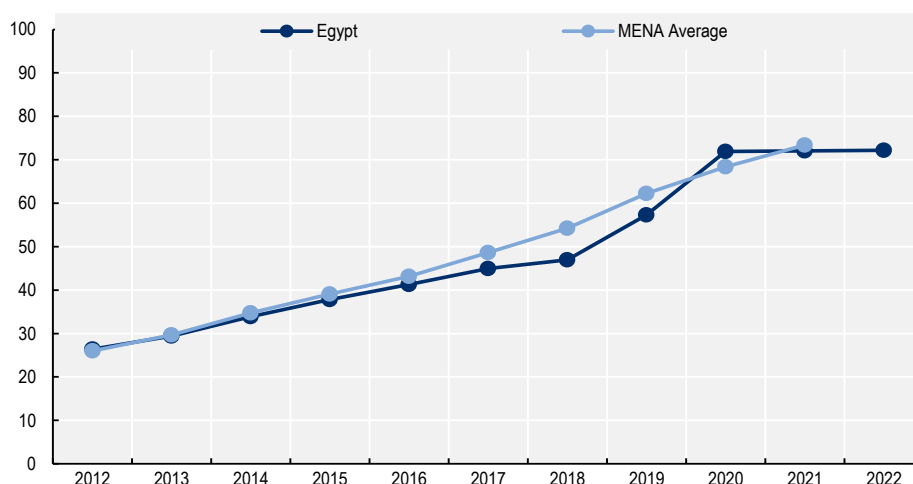
Source: ITU (2023[37]), *Individuals Using the Internet (% of Population) - Egypt, Arab Rep.*, https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/IT.NET.USER.ZS?locations=EG.

These challenges together underline the importance of placing citizens at the front and centre of public policies and services for the success of reforms in Egypt. Embedding the principles of transparency, integrity, accountability and stakeholder participation in the work of government can enable public institutions to work better, deliver better services, demonstrate the legitimacy of government decisions and ultimately increase citizens' trust (OECD, 2024[38]). Egypt faces challenges in this regard, as reflected in the worldwide governance Voice and Accountability Index[2] where the country has lost ground over the last years (with a score of 0.15 in 2013 and -1.51 in 2021) (World Bank, 2021[5]). In line with existing trends in MENA economies, evidence also illustrates the difficulties in Egypt in engaging citizens in public and political life, with only 3% of the population (in comparison to an average of 9% in the MENA region) having voiced their opinion to a public official to enact change in existing policies (Gallup, 2023[23]). Egypt could, therefore, build on important steps taken to consult academics, experts and certain groups in the process of updating Egypt Vision 2030 and the PARP to move towards more meaningful opportunities for the participation of a wider variety of stakeholders in policymaking, as will be discussed in Chapter 6.

Egypt must navigate a complex macro-economic and fiscal environment to support stronger, inclusive and sustainable economic growth in the short, medium and long terms

The Egyptian economy has faced various external shocks in recent years, exacerbating macro-economic imbalances marked by a substantial current account deficit and mounting public debt (OECD, 2022[39]). Despite weathering the COVID-19 crisis well initially, ongoing global crisis have strained Egypt's balance of payments, leading to record-high inflation exacerbated by currency depreciation. In response, Egypt embarked on macro-economic policy reforms under the International Monetary Fund (IMF) Extended Fund Facility, securing a USD 8 billion IMF agreement in March 2024. These reforms aim to make the exchange rate flexible, conduct prudent monetary policy, improve the budget balance and undertake structural reforms to boost foreign investor confidence. Restoring public finance sustainability remains a challenge, with public debt reaching 95.7% of gross domestic product in financial year 2022/23 (OECD, 2024[1]).The government is also extending its efforts to reduce administration costs. Amid rising spending pressures, there is a call for the government to rationalise expenditures, especially in large-scale infrastructure projects. The government is committed to conducting a comprehensive review of the effectiveness of public spending in areas such as social protection, health and education, as highlighted by the IMF in 2023.

At the same time, the Government of Egypt has undertaken measures to enhance its public financial management (PFM) systems to strengthen governance, improve resource utilisation and increase transparency. Led by the Ministry of Finance (MoF), the government has adopted the Public Financial Management Law (Law No. 6/2022) to achieve this objective, which outlines key aspects of the budget calendar, as well as procedures for developing and updating the medium-term budget framework. In February 2024, the executive regulations of the law were issued, providing the details for the implementation of key reforms, defining responsibilities inside and outside the MoF and setting controls for the governance of extra-budgetary funds. Initiatives to boost transparency include plans to publish budget outturns and annual audit reports, along with compiling and publishing an annual report on payment arrears between the MoF and public entities. Additionally, efforts are underway to build capacity for managing fiscal risks. Notwithstanding the government's commitment to meet fiscal objectives to maintain the sustainability of public finances, there is currently no legislated fiscal rule in Egypt which can provide clear guidance about the medium-term trajectory of public finances (OECD, 2024[1]).

The government is also actively working towards a more robust, inclusive and sustainable recovery by focusing on enhancing productivity and employment. The initiatives mentioned above are gradually being aligned with broader policy goals, notably reducing informality, creating higher-quality jobs and increasing employment rates for young people and women, in line with Egypt Vision 2030 (MPED, 2023[4]). Against this backdrop, consolidating existing public governance reforms will be essential to support these growth-

enhancing priorities relating to the economy, with a view to promoting more inclusive growth and relevant policy outcomes for citizens.

Aim of the Review: Support Egypt in translating its ambitious public governance reforms into more effective, co-ordinated, evidence-based and citizen-oriented policy outcomes for the whole of society

The Government of Egypt has identified the aforementioned areas as priorities to drive future reforms and promote more inclusive growth and good governance. This Review therefore takes stock of progress achieved to date, explores the above areas in detail and provides policy advice and tailored recommendations to support the effective implementation of key public governance reforms in Egypt, including Egypt Vision 2030 and the PARP. In doing so, it analyses key drivers for their successful implementation and provides support in current challenge areas, including issues such as enhancing whole-of-government co-ordination, strategic human resource management, access to information and public communication, administrative simplification, as well as gender and youth mainstreaming. Overall, the review process aims to support the government of Egypt in bringing reforms closer to OECD standards and benefit from good practices from OECD member and partner countries.

The structure of the review reflects the main pathways for reform, jointly identified with the Government of Egypt, to leverage their full potential in the short, mid and long terms. In doing so, Chapter 2 provides an overview of and recommendations for the current functional and institutional arrangements underpinning existing governance frameworks for the implementation of Egypt Vision 2030, spearheaded by MPEDIC. Chapter 3 explores recent developments regarding the public administration reform process in Egypt and identifies avenues to build on the key achievements led by CAOA through the PARP. Chapter 4 focuses on the state of civil service reform in Egypt and examines potential avenues to build a high-performing civil service through aligning recruitment, learning and development, human resource planning and performance management frameworks. Chapter 5 provides an overview of the administrative simplification landscape in Egypt and the important role of the MCIT and DTUs in streamlining public procedures prior to their digitalisation to reduce burdens and costs for government entities, businesses and citizens. Chapter 6 looks at existing transparency, communication and citizen participation mechanisms in Egypt as fundamental avenues to engage the public and deliver more relevant policies and services. Chapter 7 provides an overview of Egypt's institutional and policy frameworks to mainstream a gender and youth lens across public governance reforms.

The Review comes at a timely moment for the Government of Egypt, as it stands at a critical juncture to deliver on its ambitious reforms by 2030 and beyond. The policy recommendations and analysis herein build on recent stocktaking exercises by the United Nations voluntary national review and the African Peer Review Mechanism, shedding light on key progress to date and areas for improvement. Overall, the review identifies that while this transformation will require a long, gradual process to change the way the public administration operates, key achievements to date provide a foundation for Egypt to unlock its potential in modernising its public sector to meet the needs and expectations of citizens.

Methodology

The Review is based on questionnaires developed by the OECD to understand the extent to which policies and reforms in Egypt have been implemented and backed by robust institutional, policy and regulatory frameworks. The questionnaires were shared with MPEDIC, CAOA, MCIT, the National Institute for Governance and Sustainable Development (NIGSD), Ministry of Youth and Sports (MoYS) and NCW respectively. Following the reception of questionnaire responses, the OECD conducted data collection workshops with relevant government partners to inform the review's main findings and recommendations.

The data collected underwent an extensive review, data cleaning and validation process, where the OECD engaged actively with government partners to clarify responses and facilitate the sharing of additional needed information. Meetings were also organised with main government partners to validate this report's data, main findings and key policy recommendations. The publication is also based on extensive desk research complemented by interviews conducted with over 28 Egyptian stakeholders during multiple data collection activities (see Box 1.1 for a comprehensive list).

At the same time, the Review is informed by instruments and good practices from OECD member and partner countries and benefits from the experience of peers along the review process. The findings therein also reflect on exchanges with relevant government interlocutors to ensure the feasibility of recommendations in line with key reform priorities as part of Egypt Vision 2030 and the PARP. The report was discussed and reviewed by the OECD Public Governance Committee.

Box 1.1. Data collection for the *OECD Public Governance Review of Egypt*

Throughout the course of this process, a wide variety of stakeholders were also engaged and consulted to ensure the relevance of policy recommendations for the whole of government in Egypt:

- Central Agency for Organization and Administration (CAOA)
- Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (MCIT)
- Ministry of Planning, Economic Development and International Cooperation (MPEDIC)
- Ministry of Finance (MoF)
- Ministry of Youth and Sports (MoYS)
- Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs
- Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation
- Ministry of Civil Aviation
- Ministry of Transportation
- Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities
- Ministry of Education and Technical Education
- Ministry of Trade and Industry
- Ministry of Endowments
- Ministry of Housing, Utilities and Urban Communities
- Ministry of Electricity and Renewable Energy
- Ministry of International Cooperation
- Ministry of Labour
- Ministry of State for Emigration and Egyptian Expatriates Affairs
- Ministry of Local Development
- Ministry of Environment
- Ministry of Health and Population
- National Institute for Governance and Sustainable Development (NIGSD)
- National Training Academy (NTA)
- National Council for Childhood and Motherhood (NCCM)
- Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS)
- National Food Safety Authority (NFSA)

- Egyptian Regulatory Reform and Development Activity (ERRADA)
- American University in Cairo.

The review aims to support the identification, analysis and implementation of priority governance reforms in Egypt, under Egypt Vision 2030 and the PARP

The table below provides an overview of high-level policy recommendations, which will be further developed and detailed throughout each chapter.

Table 1.1. High Level Policy Recommendations of the OECD Public Governance Review of Egypt

Chapter	Snapshot of policy recommendations
Chapter 2. Towards a more effective implementation of Egypt Vision 2030	• Promote a co-ordinated effort to align and integrate Egypt Vision 2030 with the General Framework for Comprehensive Development, in line with the New Planning Law and its Executive Regulation (forthcoming). This process, led by MPEDIC's SDU and strategic management unit (SMU), should involve key government partners and leverage the General Framework for Comprehensive Development to plan actions and measures and deliver on the strategic objectives of Egypt Vision 2030. • Bolster institutional planning and co-ordination for Egypt Vision 2030 by strengthening MPEDIC's SDU and SMU by allocating sufficient resources to empower their work and build co-ordination networks with line ministries. • Conduct a functional review to identify and formalise ministerial focal points for sustainable development and strategic planning. Ensure focal points receive adequate resources to engage in cross-government co-ordination for effective strategic planning and implementation of the sustainable development agenda. • Enhance government-wide horizontal co-ordination by establishing a governance structure for the national planning framework through ministerial or prime-ministerial decrees, including reinforcing the National Committee for Monitoring the Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and creating additional operational working groups. This would also benefit from formalising mandates, roles and responsibilities of inter-ministerial committees and creating a central repository of templates and guidelines to provide assistance and streamline collaboration.
Chapter 3. Modernising the public administration to deliver better services and achieve Egypt Vision 2030 and long-term development goals	• Finalise the PARP updating process, reflecting on the latest public administration developments and issues and aligning objectives with the priorities highlighted in Egypt Vision 2030 to ensure a coherent and articulated whole-of-government implementation. • Develop an action plan for each of the five pillars of the PARP to ensure the translation of strategic objectives into concrete programmes and initiatives, with allocated actions, roles, responsibilities, timeframes and targets. This process should benefit from regular consultation mechanisms, such as interactive workshops and online consultations, to involve experts, civil society and citizens in revising and implementing the PARP. • Enhance the institutional framework and inter-ministerial co-ordination mechanisms surrounding the PARP to further implement public administration reform plans, building on and strengthening the work of the High Committee for Administrative Reform. • Establish a review framework and instruments by mandating the existing or new CAOA PARP unit to monitor the PARP and its implementation plans. In this respect, efforts would benefit from the development of a yearly progress report on the implementation of the PARP that can be shared and discussed with the HCAR and published.
Chapter 4. Public employment and management: Key issues for the Egyptian civil service	• Consider producing an annual report setting out a vision for workforce development, analysing trends in the civil service and defining goals and measurement frameworks. • Enhance learning and development by implementing a more substantive competency framework into learning and development strategies as well as performance management processes, thereby fostering a culture of continuous improvement. • Continue to transform performance management by implementing a fair, transparent, merit-based evaluation system and ensure widespread engagement in learning and development opportunities.
Chapter 5. Streamlining public service delivery in Egypt: Harnessing administrative simplification and digital solutions	• Develop a cross-cutting administrative simplification strategy, embed administrative simplification in the information and communication technology strategy and work closely with internal and external stakeholders to identify the sectors of the economy

Chapter	Snapshot of policy recommendations
	and society with the most burdensome administrative procedures and regulations.
	• Strengthen co-ordination of digital government projects with efforts in administrative simplification, ensuring they are interconnected within a comprehensive strategy and guided by strong cross-government leadership.
	• Empower digital transformation units to undertake administrative simplification by providing guidance and updating the operational manual.
Chapter 6. Promoting transparency and participation through access to information and public communication in Egypt	• Promote transparency by disclosing information proactively in a systematic way and prioritising information system management across public administration in the implementation of the PARP.
	• Prioritise citizen and stakeholder participation in national and local initiatives relevant to Egypt Vision 2030 and the PARP through transparent processes, diverse engagement methods and innovative digital tools for more impactful reforms.
	• Leverage public communication strategically by adopting dedicated strategies and action plans and establishing a communication network with representatives from across the government, with a view to enhance transparency and support for Egypt Vision 2030 and the PARP.
Chapter 7. Gender and youth mainstreaming in Egypt	• Promote the adoption of a dual approach to gender mainstreaming across the whole of government and accompany targeted policy measures with the integration of gender equality considerations in all public policies and budgets.
	• Reinforce the mandate and capacities of key government actors involved in the promotion of the gender equality agenda while formalising co-ordination mechanisms and further integrating gender mainstreaming in the PARP.
	• Strengthen the administrative and institutional framework to mainstream the perspectives of young people in policymaking, finalise the national youth strategy to strengthen efforts towards a whole-of-government implementation of youth programmes and consider setting up strong co-ordination mechanisms to co-ordinate youth-related policies across the administration.
	• Build public service capacities for young people, further integrate youth mainstreaming in the PARP and promote youth employment in the public sector.

Source: Based on the key findings and recommendations of the Review.

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Notes

[1] Available online at https://www.cabinet.gov.eg/StaticContent/GovernmentProgram.

[2] The Voice and Accountability Index captures the ability of a country's citizens to elect their government, as well as freedom of expression, freedom of association and presence of independent media.

2 Towards a more effective implementation of Egypt Vision 2030

Egypt drives its planning efforts through Egypt Vision 2030, a strategic framework that acts as the government's compass to modernise the administration and implement priority public policies in key sectors such as health, the environment, local development and more. This chapter explores the Ministry of Planning, Economic Development and International Cooperation's (MPEDIC) structures and mandates and the sustainable development units (SDUs) within line ministries responsible for strategic planning and policy co-ordination for Egypt Vision 2030. Additionally, it reviews the governance framework for delivering and measuring the impact of planned results of Egypt Vision 2030, focusing on performance indicators and institutional collaboration to monitor policy outcomes. By strengthening a number of governance practices and tools, and adopting or modernising others, Egypt could boost its planning efforts to improve inclusive and sustainable governance outcomes over time.

Introduction

The Government of Egypt continues to demonstrate a strong commitment at the highest political level to pursue the United Nations' 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by translating its whole-of-society commitment into a strategic framework entitled *Sustainable Development Agenda: Egypt Vision 2030* (hereafter Egypt Vision 2030). This framework is the country's first strategy of its kind. Egypt Vision 2030 is also aligned with African Agenda 2063 priorities. It not only acts as the governing framework for all development programmes and projects, but it also serves as the government's compass to modernise the administration and implement priority policies in key sectors such as health, environment, local development and more. Its practical potential in contributing to the pursuit of the SDGs includes steering whole-of-government efforts to improve the delivery of better policies and services to citizens.

The Government started updating Egypt Vision 2030 in 2018. This resulted in a comprehensive reform of the framework in 2021-22, using a multi-stakeholder process, to ensure that Egypt Vision 2030 reflected the significant impact of the COVID crisis on Egypt's economic, social, environmental and public governance circumstances as well as of rapidly evolving world events that are affecting the country and the region, such as climate change (including growing water scarcity), high population growth (Government of Egypt, 2021[1]) and unexpected events leading to global shocks that impacted the price of commodities.

The rationale driving this update process includes the desire to ensure a more rigorous alignment of national goals with the SDGs, emphasise the complementarity and interdependence of the three pillars of economic, social and environmental sustainability across sectors and take into account such whole-of-government strategic initiatives as the GoE's economic reform programme, initiated in 2016, to ensure that Egypt Vision 2030 reflects the government-wide structural changes resulting from these reforms. Indeed, the Sustainable Development Agenda update has been pursued as one of several institutional and technical measures the country is taking to accelerate the achievement of sustainable development and the adoption of good governance instruments, mechanisms and reforms.

This review's first chapter focuses on strategic planning, whole-of-government co-ordination of Egypt Vision 2030 and ongoing and needed efforts to ensure the implementation of this ambitious strategic framework. In so doing, this chapter examines two areas. First, it looks into the: structures and mandates of the Ministry of Planning, Economic Development and International Cooperation (MPEDIC)1 and sustainable development units (SDUs) for monitoring the implementation of Egypt Vision 2030. The chapter also provides an overview of the governance framework relating to the delivery and measurement of the impact of Egypt Vision 2030's planned results.

Despite significant progress, evidence suggests that strengthening a number of governance practices and tools, and adopting or modernising others could boost Egypt's efforts in pursuing the SDGs and unlock its untapped potential to improve inclusive and sustainable governance outcomes over time. This chapter concludes with a set of tailored, evidence-based and OECD good-practice-based, actionable recommendations relevant to the Egyptian context.

Governance of Egypt Vision 2030

Leveraging strategic planning for the effective implementation of Egypt Vision 2030

Strategic planning enables the pursuit by all levels of government of the policy goals of strategic importance, to sustain growth and development and enhance people's well-being. One key factor underpinning effective strategic planning is the ability to build and mobilise around a common vision of the future; consensus on this vision can facilitate co-ordination across administrative silos and policy areas to pursue the commonly-desired outcomes that give effect to that vision (OECD, 2020[2]). A common vision thus fosters a whole-of-government view, allowing for the identification and steering of integrated,

multidimensional strategic priorities. This approach ensures that public institutions work together towards common goals, resulting in coherent policy responses that reflect the multidimensionality of the policy challenges facing governments and people. Moreover, strategic planning helps address horizontal, multidimensional priorities in a consistent, efficient and organised manner. This becomes particularly relevant in an environment characterised by policy volatility and unpredictability, where events, demands and support interact and change in highly variable, inconsistent and unexpected ways. Hence, strategic planning provides a structured approach to tackling complex challenges, ensuring a proactive and adaptive governance response.

Strategic planning is crucial to design, steer and implement a nation's trajectory towards sustainable development. The GoE, recognising this significance, has embarked on an ambitious reform agenda aimed at driving the country's growth and development by 2030 in a sustainable manner. A commendable example of this commitment lies in the adoption of the national sustainable development agenda, Egypt Vision 2030, which serves as the main overarching governance framework for Egypt's development. This framework translates into the Egyptian context and presents a roadmap to implement the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda), and the African Agenda 2063 in Egypt. What sets this framework apart is its holistic approach, which emphasises the cross-sector complementarity and interdependence of the three traditional dimensions of sustainable development (economy, environment, and social development) and showcases a promising approach for incorporating sustainable development as part of the public administration's fabric.

The country's strategic planning efforts for Egypt Vision 2030 demonstrate a commitment to long-term development and fostering good governance by aligning various government strategies under this overarching vision. Efforts have been made to foster alignment between medium-term sector-based strategies and Egypt Vision 2030 through workshops and direct exchanges. However, findings from OECD interviews reveal that ensuring compliance and coherence across these strategies remains a challenge, as there is no clear hierarchy among these frameworks, nor does there appear to exist an institutional mandate to enforce alignment at the level of other ministries.

As the central planning hub within the Egyptian administration, MPEDIC is charged with co-ordinating the strategic planning process to translate the countries' vision for sustainable development into annual actionable plans, as per Decree-Law No. 18 of 2022, also known as the New Planning Law. The New Planning Law explicitly outlines the different national, central, regional and local planning tiers. It emphasises the coherence between all levels of national plans (central, regional and local) while designating the *Supreme Council for Planning and Sustainable Development* to steer these planning efforts among the Egyptian government. The council shall have a technical secretariat headed by MPEDIC.

- At the national level, the General Framework for Comprehensive Development stands as the highest overarching planning framework. The national plan for long-term sustainable development and its mid-term plan play a pivotal role as instrumental planning based on a programmatic approach. At the central level, sectoral long- and mid-term plans operate as detailed breakdowns of the national plan for sustainable development, segmented by sectors. All these components collectively fall under the umbrella of the "national planning documents".

- At the regional and local levels, and in alignment with the long-term national sustainable development plan and the national urban development strategy, several plans are slated for development. These include regional strategic plans (both long- and mid-term), governorate strategic plans (both long- and mid-term) and strategic plans for local units encompassing districts, cities and villages.

- At the micro level, the Annual General Plan for Economic and Social Development functions as the national short-term plan. It encompasses annual plans in all public administration entities, as per the New Planning Law No. 18 of 2022, and aligns seamlessly with the other top tiers, the national

plan for sustainable development and sectoral strategic plans. Executive regulation will further illustrate the procedures of developing these plans and define the role of the different actors.

The New Planning Law gives MPEDIC the mandate to co-ordinate, guide, follow up and evaluate all long- and mid-term sustainable development plans and annual socio-economic development plans at the central and local levels. The law stipulates that MPEDIC ought to provide guidance by developing and making use of a guide that defines the desired goals of preparing a plan at the national, regional, local and sectoral levels and the determinants for choosing policies, programmes, projects and activities. MPEDIC is also made responsible for studying plan proposals and analysing the effectiveness of each of the programmes, projects and activities contained therein, as well as ensuring the consistency and integration with national, regional, local and sectoral plans. Line ministries, governorates and local units at the central and local levels will be required to submit periodic follow-up reports on the progress of socio-economic development projects. For example, MPEDIC conducts formal meetings and discussions and sends formal letters following official communication with line ministries and governorates to emphasise the significance of each project and programme concerning the national vision.

Through the annual strategic planning process, MPEDIC undertakes various steps to ensure a co-ordinated approach for identifying priorities and allocating investments for sustainable development projects. Notably, the planning cycle is initiated during the first quarter of July of the preceding fiscal year. The ministry identifies priority policy areas under the umbrella of Egypt Vision 2030. MPEDIC's minister subsequently issues a letter at the beginning of the second quarter (October) to all involved ministries requesting the following information to build the plan: annual objectives of the ministry, proposed policies and activities to achieve said objectives, a timetable for implementation of investment projects and the roles of implementing partners. At the start of the third quarter (January), MPEDIC co-ordinates with the Ministry of Finance (MoF) on the amount of funding made available through the public treasury to finance sustainable development investments. This is followed by a MPEDIC review process to study project proposals and subsequently discuss the plans with relevant line ministries and governorates. In March, the plan is presented to the Council of Ministers and is subsequently reviewed and approved by the House of Representatives before July. Alongside this process, MPEDIC moves towards linking sustainable development projects and investments with the SDGs.

The Sustainable Development Unit in MPEDIC is responsible for co-ordinating with sustainable development focal points of line ministries and national entities covered by Prime Minister's Decree No. 1146/2018, which supports establishing new functional units within the public administration. Finally, the unit is also mandated to prepare plans and scenarios to confront crises and disasters.

The Strategic Management Unit in MPEDIC, supports MPEDIC's strategic planning efforts. It developed a manual on how to build effective planning processes, highlighting the importance of strategic planning to reach long-term goals such as the SDGs and Egypt Vision 2030 (Box 2.1). This manual was published on MPEDIC portal to assist and guide public administration entities through the strategic planning process. While this framework exists, it needs updating to include the latest Egypt Vision 2030 goals. Furthermore, findings from OECD interviews revealed that this instrument is mostly used internally and could be further leveraged among sustainable development focal points and public administration entities' strategic management units to improve strategic planning capacities. Decree No. 1146/2018 was followed by the Central Agency for Organization and Administration's (CAOA) Decree No. 86 of 2019 regarding the creation of organisational units for strategic management in the state's administrative bodies. In addition, the New Planning Law No. 18 of 2022 stipulates the general framework for the Public Administration Entities, strategic plans in light of Egypt Vision 2030. It also ensured consistency between the strategic plan, operational plan and the relevant budget, and negotiations with MPEDIC regarding the unit's investment plan funding.

Box 2.1. The Strategic Planning Manual developed by MPEDIC

The Strategic Management Unit in MPEDIC developed a Strategic Planning Manual to: i) introduce the importance of strategic planning in policymaking and its overall implementation in Egypt; ii) explicitly state the link between strategic planning and reaching long-term goals such as the SDGs and those of Egypt Vision 2030; iii) provide a guide to build successful strategic planning processes across government, explaining the different stages of the strategic planning process, indicating how to implement each step as well as use tools and models; and iv) provide a guide to the governance of the planning process, roles and responsibilities for developing and approving the strategic plan, with a time frame to ensure integration between the different respective actors. The manual also contains several good practices and examples of successful strategic planning procedures in sectors such as education, the environment and the economy (including MPEDIC and MoF strategies).

It starts by describing the relevance of strategic planning to policymaking. According to the manual, strategic planning helps to set clear, specific and measurable goals, which are central for preparing the budget and allowing the state to achieve its desired goals. These goals are translated into integrated and interrelated action plans that seek to reconcile the pursuit of long-term goals with the need to respond to short-term imperatives, helping to pursue strategic priorities while responding to short-term shocks.

In Egypt, several bodies such as ministries, governorates or local units, are in charge of developing strategic plans. Strategic plans flow from three main policy pillars: the government action programme, the SDGs and Egypt Vision 2030. These units from across the public administration are in charge of preparing their own strategic plans based on their ministerial or sectoral goals to reflect consistency of the pillars with the Vision. These plans are prepared for three years; each unit then reviews them and further develops them to reflect changes and integrate monitoring results. As such, ministry-based or single-sector strategic planning consists of developing a vision and mission, setting strategic goals and objectives, identifying performance indicators, allocating quantitative targets and enacting relevant programmes/policies to achieve the stated goals, all aligned with the country's general strategic policy framework.

Sector-based strategic plans must be linked to the country's objectives as identified in the government action programme, the SDGs and Egypt Vision 2030. Action plans must refer to these guiding pillars and integrate strategic objectives and key performance indicators (KPIs) to align with these country priorities. In this framework, units are responsible for reviewing the government programme in detail during the preparation of the strategic plans and ensuring that they are linked to the long-term goals.

The manual outlines seven key stages for building successful strategic plans: i) preparing to build the action plan; ii) reviewing/defining the vision, mission and institutional values; iii) analysing the current situation and identifying points of strategic focus; iv) building strategic objectives and measurement indicators; v) defining and detailing policies/programmes; vi) creating links and interdependence between strategic objectives; and vii) preparing the Programme Performance Budget. The manual also presents guidance on the number of days needed to complete each stage in the design of a strategic plan, the kinds of stakeholders that should be involved at each stage and a checklist to ensure that all relevant elements have been implemented at each stage of the planning design process.

Source: MPED (2019[3]), *Strategic Planning Manual*, Ministry of Planning and Economic Development.

MPEDIC has also implemented an electronic planning system, the Integrated System for Investment Plan Preparation and Monitoring (ISIPPM), which links ongoing and proposed public projects to the SDGs. This

integration of the SDGs into the planning process ensures that projects and programmes align with the broader vision of sustainable development.

Ministries contacted by the OECD seem to demonstrate consideration of Egypt Vision 2030 in their strategic plans:

- The **Ministry of Communications and Information Technology**, for example, incorporates Egypt Vision 2030, 2030 Agenda, the Egyptian constitution and Africa Agenda 2063 objectives into its sector-based strategic plans, including their latest artificial intelligence plan. Additionally, an annual circular is issued to guide the implementation of general ministerial strategies, ensuring coherence and consistency across the Egypt Vison 2030 strategic framework.

- The recent development of the strategy for food and nutrition also serves as a commendable example. The **Ministry of Health and Population** engaged all relevant ministries working on food and nutrition to connect Egypt Vision 2030 with this strategy, in so doing fostering integration and synergies.

- As another example, the **Ministry of Housing, Utilities and Urban Communities** has integrated the objectives of Egypt Vision 2030 into its strategies and incorporated dedicated indicators, ensuring clarity and measurability relating to how its strategies are contributing to achieving the relevant Egypt Vision 2030 SDGs.

- The **Ministry of Finance** (MoF) adopts a distinct approach by issuing an annual statement on the budget and economic objectives, using a participatory process. This statement is distributed to budget agencies across ministries and informs the strategic planning process, thereby connecting it with Egypt Vision 2030. As is the case in several OECD countries, the MoF's strong impact on strategic planning for sustainable development is evident, as the availability of financing influences decision-making on the allocation of funds to optimise the pursuit of the SDGs through ministerial plans and programming.

To effectively pursue Egypt Vision 2030, it is essential to establish a robust system that ensures alignment between ministerial strategies and the sustainable development framework. Currently, MPEDIC lacks influence to ensure compliance with alignment requirements despite having this as part of its mandate. It cannot reject strategic documents for inconsistencies, impose sanctions for non-compliance or offer incentives to promote alignment. Rather, MPEDIC relies on its position as a central government agency and its persuasive powers to co-ordinate efforts. While some sectoral plans demonstrate linkages with Egypt Vision 2030, a lack of a formal governance framework, particularly in terms of mandates and incentives, compels all ministries to actively collaborate and identify potential synergies to pursue Egypt Vision 2030 more deliberately. Collaboration among ministries remains largely discretionary. Addressing this gap requires a robust system with clear processes to ensure alignment between strategic documents across all levels. The New Planning Law can play a crucial role in establishing this system that would allow. MPEDIC's involvement from the outset of the planning process, reducing reliance on authority to achieve compliance.

Furthermore, while MPEDIC localisation efforts (see next sections) underscore the recognition that "place" is a specific feature that shapes the implementation of any national vision, the absence of robust regional sustainable development strategies that reflect the specifics of different places and the existence of pronounced disparities across Egypt's regions poses challenges to the coherent and equitable implementation of the national Sustainable Development Agenda in Egypt. This advice is reflected in the detailed recommendations presented at the end of this chapter.

Strengthening policy coherence

As the OECD assessment "Integrated Governance for Coherent Implementation of the SDGs in Egypt" (Igrioglu, Ostry and Allam, 2020[4]) first underlined, the current institutional setting, while demonstrating

important potential in sustaining cross-silo co-ordination, poses several challenges to the effective delivery of sustainable development in Egypt:

- A key challenge relates to the practical difficulties in pursuing a meaningful whole-of-government approach and ensuring policy coherence in practice. The evidence gathered from the review, including a fact-finding mission and questionnaire responses, indicates that challenges remain in aligning the sector-specific strategies and priorities of various institutions and stakeholders within the comprehensive framework of Egypt Vision 2030. These challenges persist due to the absence of a multi-year, integrated implementation plan for Egypt's sustainable development agenda. Such a plan should encompass both the macro perspective by providing a multidimensional strategic view and the micro level by addressing technical, sector-specific and project-based elements. Indeed, ministry examples listed above notwithstanding, and despite the multidimensionality of Egypt Vision 2030, sector-based strategies and plans still tend to be developed within institutional silos. Notably, these tend to be pursued in isolation by their respective line ministry and have yet to be fully aligned and integrated into the vision. This slows the exploration of SDG linkages across policy areas to capitalise on potential synergies while pursuing the SDGs more coherently. However, greater efforts at alignment and integration is currently being pursued, and could be enhanced, as Egypt transitions to the new planning Law, led by MPED, as well as the mid-term government plan 2024-2027.This is addressed in the next sections.

- This silo-based planning extends to the design and use of composite Egypt Vision 2030 indicators that combine two or more data sources into a single measure, therefore providing a simple representation of complex and multidimensional concepts: despite the efforts of MPEDIC, CAPMAS and the National Institute for Governance and Sustainable Development (NIGSD) to translate 2030 Agenda indicators into the national Egyptian context, these indicators are still only applied against the vision. High-level indicators for line ministry sector strategies have been developed in isolation of Egypt Vision 2030 indicators and are not necessarily aligned with their relevant counterparts within the vision (that said, the review notes significant advances in this area at the project level – see the relevant section below). Ideally, these high-level indicators should be aligned (if not identical) and track performance in a common manner across the vision, the government programme, all single-sector strategies and, eventually, the national performance-based budget (see relevant section below).

- The need for enhanced institutionalisation of co-ordination mechanisms will be necessary for the adoption of a unified approach to communications and co-operation between government entities. The absence of decrees in this area demonstrates the discretionary character of co-ordination mechanisms, notably the National Committee for Monitoring the Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (see below). For instance, MPEDIC's responsibilities as rapporteur of the national committee are not clearly expressed within the existing mandate of the committee. Likewise, SDUs in line ministries (when these exist) are ad hoc and tend to be under-resourced. There is no adequate inter-ministerial task force or working group that brings together at the working level the different strategic units to carry out and follow-up on the operational work required to give effect to the strategic guidance of the National Committee.

- In addition, vertical co-ordination could also be further strengthened with specific action plans and SDUs at the governorate level, tailored to the needs and priorities of each governorate (or cluster of governorates – see recommendations below) and, where feasible and appropriate, with municipal/local authorities. As mentioned, the localisation of the SDGs at the governorate level has already been initiated by MPEDIC, yet with more resources; it could be broadened and deepened through both top-down and bottom-up processes: top-down leadership and steering, alongside bottom-up action, engagement and ownership. MPEDIC is already aware of these challenges and is working on these matters with several governorates but more could be done with more resources. The existing missing linkage between the national vision and strategies with local

actions and priorities limits the successful implementation of the vision in the governorates and nationally.

- In this connection, the OECD Recommendation on Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development (2019[5]) underlines that integrating SDGs into the mandate of existing institutions is essential to deliver effectively on the SDGs and, in Egypt, on the vision. Public institutions have acknowledged their important role in contributing to the attainment of the SGDs. Nevertheless, limited institutional clarity, roles and responsibilities among governmental stakeholders at the national and governorate levels, as well as mandate overlap/duplication, can affect ongoing efforts to pursue sustainable development effectively. For instance, when working on localising initiatives in Egypt, assigning specific responsibilities to the Ministry of Local Development, the Ministry of Housing, Utilities and Urban Communities and MPEDIC would be beneficial. This allocation should prioritise integrating the SDGs into the aspects of their mandates related to local development. While public entities undertake efforts to contribute to the SDGs, programmes and initiatives would benefit from scaling and enhancing coordination to achieve impactful results for the SDGs. Such an approach can foster a more cohesive and unified strategy for municipal and urban development initiatives. Ultimately, it empowers governorates to contribute to achieving the SDGs more effectively.

Evidence from the review fact-finding mission suggests that MPEDIC is aware of these challenges and is working to address some of them. For example, the more deliberate harnessing of the government programme for this purpose could contribute to improved co-ordination and integration. In addition, by leveraging the ISIPPM system that links projects to the SDGs, Egypt can demonstrate (and quantify) the progress it is making in integrating sustainability into its planning processes. Egypt can also strengthen its strategic planning framework by harmonising timelines, objectives, indicators and reporting activities. By doing so, it could be in a position to implement Egypt Vision 2030 more effectively, thereby fostering sustainable development and inclusive growth in a way that *leaves no one behind*. These issues are discussed in the next sections. This advice is reflected in the detailed recommendations presented at the end of this chapter.

2023 update of Egypt Vision 2030

In 2016, Egypt launched the first version of Egypt Vision 2030 to enact a specific set of public policies to reach concrete climate, social and economic goals by 2030. It was developed through a participatory approach with the involvement of several actors (i.e. experts, academics, private sector representatives, civil society, government officials and international development institutions) and several stages (i.e. preparatory stage, identification of the main directions, selection of the most important policies, development of the strategy's document and launch of the community dialogue). As a result, Egypt Vision 2030 was composed of three main pillars reflecting a classic approach towards sustainable development with a social, environmental and economic dimension. For each pillar, several workshops were organised for key stakeholders to identify the main objective, sub-objectives, KPIs, quantitative targets, challenges that prevent achieving quantitative targets, new suggested indicators and policies, programmes and projects to reach the stated goals/sub-goals.

MPEDIC has just finished updating of the vision to consider the latest international, regional and local changes and challenges that have emerged since its inception in 2016. This process was conducted to ensure that the vision addresses the additional critical challenges currently facing the nation, including water scarcity and high population growth (Government of Egypt, 2021[1]), the effects of the COVID crisis on the country and its public services. The Egypt Vision 2030 update is a key initiative among a multitude of institutional and technical measures that the country is taking to accelerate its pursuit of sustainable development and good governance. The updating process was based on a participatory approach led by a task force that brought together relevant stakeholders and actors led by government entities,

representatives from the private sector and civil society, and a group of experts and academics from various disciplines.

As a result, the updated version of Egypt Vision 2030 presents:

- Four **guiding principles**: putting the citizen at the core and centre of development; guaranteeing equity and accessibility for all; improving resilience and adaptation; and strengthening sustainability.
- Seven **enablers** for attaining sustainable development and achieving the goals by 2030: financing; technology and innovation; digital transformation; data generation and availability; supportive legislative and institutional environment; supportive cultural values system; and population growth control.
- Six **strategic goals**: improving Egyptians' quality of life and raising their living standards; social justice and equality; integrated and sustainable environmental system; diversified, knowledge-based and competitive economy; well-developed infrastructure; and governance and partnerships.
- Thirty-two complementary and interdependent **general goals** to achieve the six strategic goals in Egypt.

Despite achieving these key milestones, the timeline for fully adopting the updated Egypt Vision 2030 remains uncertain. The delays over the past four years stem from the challenges of co-ordinating multiple agendas, managing disparities in capacities and resources across ministries, adapting to various ongoing crises and engaging in consultations with internal and external stakeholders. The complexities involved in these aspects have contributed to the prolonged nature of the adoption process. Nevertheless, the adoption of the New Planning Law over the coming years will aid to expedite this process and provide an opportunity to enhance the alignment of sector strategies. Accordingly, the New Government Programme (2024 – 2027) draws heavily on Egypt Vision 2030 by operationalising it through actionable steps with specific time horizons.

The update of the country's vision was pursued as part of a multitude of institutional and technical measures and actions that the country is taking to accelerate the achievement of sustainable development. A number of these key developments and challenges to overcome are discussed below.

Steering and enabling from the centre of government a whole-of-government approach towards sustainable development in Egypt

The existing institutional framework governing the implementation of Egypt Vision 2030 emphasises the importance of MPEDIC as a key centre of government (CoG) body, serving the highest level of the executive branch. CoGs are the support structure serving the highest level of the executive branch of government (including, for example, presidents, prime ministers and their equivalents) (OECD, 2020[2]). These structures help the head of government and ministers to make decisions by ensuring they receive evidence-informed, co-ordinated and coherent advice. They also co-ordinate the various players in the policy process to help ensure the quality and capability of the policy system and play an important role in strategic planning (see Figures 2.1 and 2.2).

CoGs contribute towards co-ordinating long-term policies and priority setting in various ways:

- They are technically policy-neutral, which means they can help reach consensus without resorting to lowest-common-denominator negotiations.
- They have convening power borrowed from the head of government and can pressure departments to adjust policies and commit resources.
- They are mandated to ensure the consistency and prudency of government decisions and to promote evidence-based, strategic and consistent policies.

- They are increasingly playing a leadership role with respect to strategic priorities, including on sensitive policy issues, designing action plans in co-operation with relevant departments and leading in project management.
- One test of their effectiveness is their ability to play a mediator role when ministries disagree.
- Several provide technical and advisory support to line ministries to help them adjust and meet the extra demands of horizontal projects.

Figure 2.1. Identification and setting policy priorities for government in OECD member states
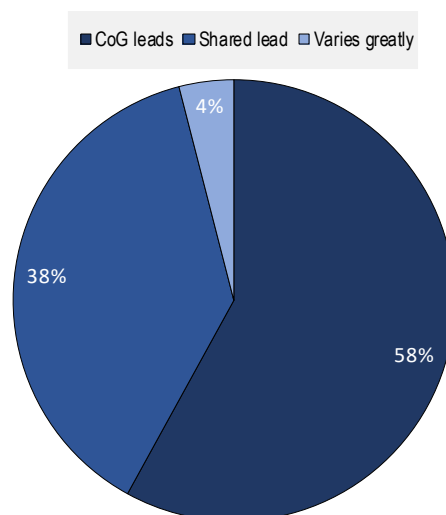
Source: OECD (2024[6]), Steering from the Centre of Government in times of complexity: Compendium of Practices.

Figure 2.2. The role of the CoG in strategic planning in OECD member states

Legend: CoG leads | Shared lead | Varies greatly | Line Ministry leads

Activity	CoG leads	Shared lead	Varies greatly	Line Ministry leads
Development of strategic documents, plans and instruments	8%	38%	15%	38%
Implementation of selected strategic documents plans and instruments (e.g. cross-cutting priorities)	12%	19%	12%	54%
Undertaking futures thinking, foresight or modelling	19%	35%	27%	12%
Promoting accountability for the delivery of strategic priorities for government (e.g. through a mandate letter)	31%	23%	12%	8%
Coordination of the development of strategic documents, plans and instruments	35%	31%	19%	15%
Ensuring alignment of strategic priorities for government and/or documents with the public administration's performance framework	35%	31%	12%	15%
Mandating line departments to develop strategic plans in different cross-cutting areas	38%	12%	19%	12%
Setting standards, requirements, or guidance for line ministries or agencies	42%	31%	15%	12%
Identification and setting policy priorities for government	58%	38%		4%
Formulating long-term vision for government	69%	12%	12%	8%

Source: OECD (2024[6]), Steering from the Centre of Government in times of complexity: Compendium of Practices.

MPEDIC is the driving force behind the vision update and is responsible for co-ordinating and monitoring the vision and nationwide implementation of the SDGs. MPEDIC's mandate is drawn from Prime Minister's Decree No. 139 from 2020; however, according to institutional interlocutors, it appears too soon to identify specific gaps or lacunae in the mandate itself. Egypt also has a comprehensive General Planning Law but MPEDIC interlocutors consulted by the OECD are not currently applying it as executive regulations have not yet been issued. This extensive planning framework, ranging from strategic levels to local units, was officially enacted in 2022 but does not seem to be directly integrated into Egypt Vision 2030. However, MPEDIC must consider leveraging this planning legislation to prevent the development of silos and ensure effective strategic planning.

In order to ensure that institutional and decision-making arrangements governing sustainable development and the SDGs enable institutions to work together collectively, several co-ordination mechanisms have been created to foster institutional collaboration and mainstream sustainable development successfully into national and subnational policies across sectors. That said, these arrangements notwithstanding, the next section suggests that co-ordination tools and mechanisms could be further formalised and resourced to integrate sector-based strategies and priorities of different institutions and stakeholders more effectively into Egypt's framework for sustainable development and good governance.

As is the case in Egypt, several OECD countries such as Belgium and Germany (Box 2.2 and Figure 2.3) steer sustainable development policies from their CoG. This provides significant added value, including but not limited to:

- Driving the alignment and mainstreaming of sustainable development strategies with the government's general programme and sector-specific strategies that are being pursued to implement it, by integrating sustainable development into general government policymaking and leading the design of dedicated action plans for sustainable development that bring together

institutional mechanisms, evaluation frameworks and coherence tools to integrate and mainstream sustainable development into government policymaking.

- Engaging political leaders at the CoG to ensure high-level support for sustainable development policies systemwide.
- Improving policy coherence across ministries and levels of government.
- Ensuring closer involvement of civil society in policy formulation.
- Strengthening the capacity of governments to design, implement and monitor coherent and integrated policies for sustainable development.
- Leveraging the convening power of the CoG to co-ordinate government policies for sustainable development more efficiently.

Figure 2.3. Top three strategic priorities that the CoG is mandated to lead in OECD member states
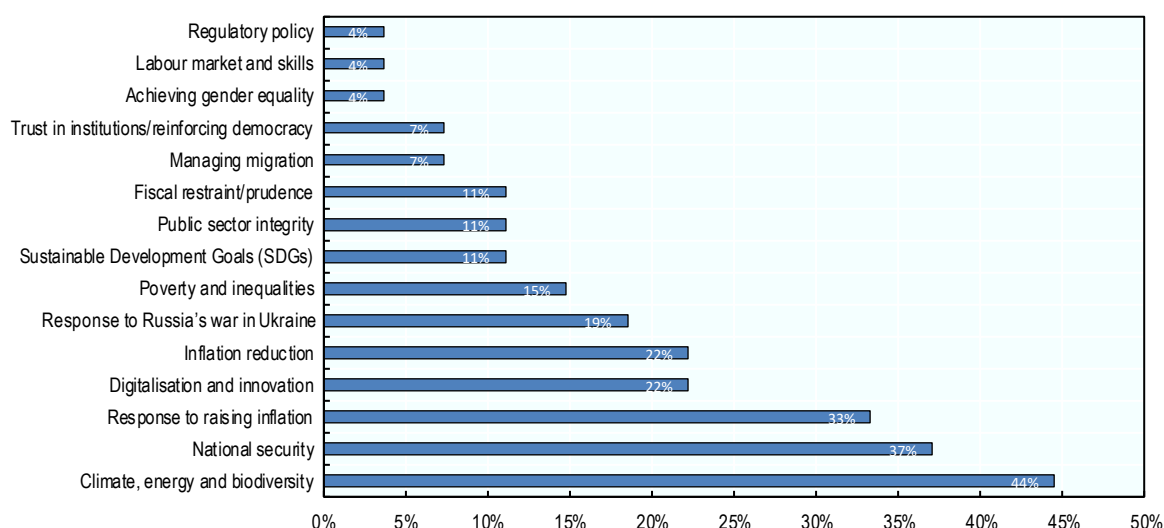
Source: OECD (2024[6]), Steering from the Centre of Government in times of complexity: Compendium of Practices.

Box 2.2. Co-ordinating and steering sustainable development policies from the centre

Belgium

Belgium was one of the first countries to create a sustainable development strategy based on the commitments from the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio (known as the Earth Summit). Its federal sustainable development strategy is defined by the Act of May 1997 and was revised in 2010. It outlines a "report-plan-do-check-act" cycle and the mutually supporting roles of three institutions to prepare, adopt, implement and improve sustainable development policies:

- The Inter-departmental Commission for Sustainable Development (ICSD) brings together focal points from each federal public service and oversees the planning and monitoring processes. Since 2002, it is supported by a dedicated administration: the Federal Public Planning Service for Sustainable Development. This institution was transformed in 2013 into the Federal Institute for Sustainable Development. It was subsequently moved to the CoG by making it a part of the

Chancellery of the Prime Minister. This stresses the strategic importance of sustainable development and gives the topic more political clout and convening power.

- The Task Force on Sustainable Development (TFSD) of the Federal Planning Bureau (FPB) is in charge of reporting, policy evaluations and forecasting.
- The Federal Council for Sustainable Development (FCSD), as the stakeholders' advisory council, organises the participation of major groups in sustainable development policymaking. Major groups refer to distinct sectors of society that play pivotal roles in shaping and implementing sustainable policies and practices, including businesses, civil society organisations, academia, indigenous communities and more.

The 2010 revision of the Act of May 1997 defines a federal long-term vision for sustainable development. This long-term vision was adopted by Royal Decree in 2013. It contains 55 long-term objectives with a 2050-time horizon and proposes a set of indicators to report on the progress towards reaching these objectives. The vision is the reference framework for the federal strategy on sustainable development and the activities of the institutions defined in the act. The act also calls for the preparation of Federal Plans for Sustainable Development and federal reports on sustainable development.

Germany

The first German Sustainable Development Strategy (GSDS) was adopted by the German government in 2002. Since 2004, the strategy has been updated every four years. The German government overhauled the strategy in the light of the 2030 Agenda, adopting a new edition on 11 January 2017. The latest update began in October 2019 and was approved by the Cabinet on 11 March 2021. The strategy has been maintained over five changes of government, documenting the broad, constant political consensus in Germany regarding the importance of sustainable development.

Due to its overarching, cross-cutting relevance and special significance, the responsibility for the GSDS lies within the CoG at the Federal Chancellery. This approach stresses that sustainable development is a top-level priority for Germany.

Headed by the Federal Chancellery and comprising all of the federal ministries, the State Secretaries' Committee for Sustainable Development is the German government's key steering committee regarding the GSDS. Since 2018, it has been advised by a dialogue group made up of various societal stakeholders. The State Secretaries' Committee is of primary importance when it comes to enhancing the consistency of policy measures. The decisions made at its meetings provide a yardstick and touchstone for those shaping policy at the ministerial level.

Sources: Government of Belgium (n.d.[7]), *Federal Strategy for Sustainable Development*, https://www.developpementdurable.be/fr/politique-federale/strategie-federale; Government of Germany (n.d.[8]), *State Secretaries' Committee for Sustainable Development in the UN Languages*, https://www.bundesregierung.de/breg-en/issues/sustainability/state-secretaries-committee-for-sustainable-development-in-the-un-languages-447864.

Leveraging co-ordination for effective implementation of Egypt Vision 2030

Inter-ministerial committees (at the political and strategic policy levels) and inter-departmental committees (at the technical level) each play important roles in the work of CoGs by bringing together policymakers from different ministries to discuss policy coherence and implementation. In Egypt, effective horizontal (between ministries) and vertical (across levels of government) co-ordination is essential to successfully implement Egypt Vision 2030. By fostering intra- and inter-ministerial discussions, establishing inter-departmental committees, strengthening existing co-ordination mechanisms, ensuring intra- and inter-ministerial communications and transparency, and providing technical support to sustain effective co-ordination, Egypt can enhance policy coherence, alignment and collaboration across ministries.

To foster greater co-ordination, it is crucial to facilitate regular and structured inter-ministerial discussions at the strategic policy level, including at the level of ministers and the political leadership, at the technical levels and with local administrations. Efforts in this regard have initiated with the formation of three ministerial groups following the recent government reshuffle in 2024, notably the human development group, industrial development group and the economic group. Each ministerial group consists of several ministers that meet weekly to guarantee the effectiveness of the government's performance. Regular inter-ministerial discussions at the strategic policy level can ensure high-level ownership while encouraging in-depth exchanges that can enable ministries to align their policies and actions with the broader objectives of Egypt Vision 2030 and the Government Programme. By promoting horizontal cross-ministerial and vertical collaboration with all levels of government, the implementation process can benefit from diverse perspectives, expertise and experience, including the sharing of good practices across ministries and institutions, whether in policy design or project delivery, that is proving to work in the pursuit of the SDGs.

Horizontal whole-of-government oversight and steering

In some OECD countries, high-level committees mandated to steer strategy formulation and oversee implementation while ensuring its coherence are organised by thematic clusters (e.g. addressing economic and trade, social and cultural, and foreign and defence policies). At the "top" of a committee hierarchy, some countries have established a whole-of-government steering committee at the ministerial level, in some cases chaired by the head of state or government, to provide overarching integrated guidance in the pursuit of the Government Programme and SDGs. In Canada, this committee is called the Cabinet Committee on Agenda, Results and Communications and is supported by a Sub-committee on Intergovernmental Coordination. Chaired by the Prime Minister, it reports directly to the full cabinet (the Council of Ministers) (Box 2.3).

Box 2.3. The Government of Canada's cabinet committee structure

Cabinet committees carry out most of the day-to-day work of the Council of Ministers.

Committees are composed of ministers; they each have a specific membership and areas of responsibility, which are set by the Prime Minister (except for the Treasury Board, whose mandate and membership are established in law). Key Cabinet committees include:

- The Cabinet Committee on Agenda, Results and Communications is chaired by the Prime Minister and supported by its Sub-Committee on Intergovernmental Coordination. This is the main strategic committee, hierarchically situated just below full Cabinet. It "manages the government's overall strategic agenda and priority setting and tracks strategy implementation. It also undertakes focused and deep analyses of key priority issues and themes, and their strategic implications".

- The Treasury Board "acts as the government's management board and provides oversight of the government's financial management and spending, as well as oversight on human resources (HR) and digital transformation initiatives. This committee is the employer for the public service and establishes policies and common standards for administrative, personnel, financial and organisational practices across government."

- Two Cabinet Committees on Economy, Inclusion and Climate (Committees "A" and "B"). There two committees facilitate workload management and include issues such "as sustainable and inclusive social and economic development, post-pandemic recovery, decarbonisation, the environment, as well as improving Canadians' health and quality of life."

- The Cabinet Committee on Global Affairs and Public Security "considers issues concerning Canada's engagement with and participation in the international community, including trade

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promotion and national defence." It also considers threats and risks to the safety and security of Canada and Canadians, manages ongoing emergencies caused, *inter alia*, by climate change and natural disasters, and ensures strategic, integrated and forward-looking leadership for emergency management (mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery).

- The Cabinet also includes a standing Task Force on Services to Canadians, which is mandated to examine ways to provide more effective and efficient government services to urgently address service delays and enhance citizen experience for Canadians.

The prime minister and the deputy prime minister (who is also the Minister of Finance) are ex officio members of all committees.

All federal ministers and departments/agencies are responsible for integrating the 2030 Agenda into their work and advancing the SDGs that fall within their respective areas of responsibility. Federal departments and agencies consider the goals and principles of the 2030 Agenda when developing and implementing federal programmes and initiatives. They are also responsible for reporting to Canadians on how their programmes and initiatives contribute to advancing the SDGs that fall within their mandate. Hence, all Cabinet committees examine SDG/Agenda 2030-related issues as an integral part of their responsibility areas.

Source: Government of Canada (n.d.[9]), *Taking Action Together – Canada's 2021 Annual Report on the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals*, https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/agenda-2030/taking-action-together.html.

The National Committee for Monitoring the Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals

The National Committee for Monitoring the Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, falling under the purview of the Prime Minister, was reconstituted by Prime Minister's Decree No. 1125 of 2017 (amended by Prime Minister's Decree No. 1410 of 2017) to stipulate the members of the seven ministers, in addition to the heads of the National Council for Women and the National Council for Motherhood and Childhood, and representatives of ministries and other entities, including the CAPMAS. The decree stipulates that MPEDIC acts as rapporteur of the committee. According to information gathered during the OECD's fact-finding missions and questionnaire, the Committee is responsible for the co-ordination between the ministries and governorates regarding the implementation of the SDGs and vision, defining and solving the challenges and obstacles that face implementation, adopting capacity-building plans that support the implementation of the vision, reviewing and approving performance reports and presenting them to the president of the state and the House of Representatives. However, despite this information, there is no clear official document clearly outlining the Committee's mandate. Based on the information provided in the OECD survey and during the OECD's fact-finding missions, it appears that the committee faces several challenges:

- So far, the committee has met twice at the technical level, once in 2021 and once in 2023.
- The mandate of the committee is deemed incomplete by institutional stakeholders, lacking specific roles and responsibilities that should be fulfilled.
- The scope of the committee's authority is also unclear as a formal mandate seems to be lacking.

The GoE could, therefore, establish mechanisms to facilitate the committee's work and enable periodic monitoring. This could be done through the creation of dedicated technical/working-level working groups that specialise in related SDGs such as health and well-being, economic growth and employment, etc. Furthermore, data dashboards and analytical software could be used to analyse and visualise progress. Another element could be creating formal channels for stakeholder engagement between the members and collectively agreeing on working methods to enhance the results of the committee. It is worth noting

that the composition of the National Committee has evolved since its creation in December 2015 to include stakeholders from different institutions; however, representatives from the governorates are not included. While the committee was initially comprised of 8 institutions based on the original decree, it is currently composed of representatives of 17 ministries and state entities, ensuring a more inclusive approach and including:

- The Information and Decision Support Centre (IDSC) affiliated with the Egyptian Cabinet, is a governmental, non-profit think-tank offering professional and specialised services to decision-makers. Under its sustainable development research programme, the IDSC aims to study and analyse development policies to achieve SDGs, measure indicators of progress in implementing government plans in the field of sustainable development, strengthen government efforts with strategic partners and civil society organisations to advance the development path, providing recommendations on the policies and procedures that can be followed to achieve the SDGs and on how to follow up and evaluate them.
- As the official statistical agency of Egypt, CAPMAS collects, processes, analyses and disseminates statistical data and conducts the census, including the SDGs. A specialised unit for sustainable development in CAPMAS focuses on the development of indicators related to the SDGs and is responsible for the classification, identification and measurement of indicators used in the SDGs.

Egypt could benefit from further clarification, broadening, deepening and formalisation of the National Committee's mandate, responsibilities and mechanisms to strengthen the effective monitoring and evaluation of SDG implementation in Egypt. More generally, although stakeholders reported during the review's fact-finding missions that it sustains good partnership relations with key counterparts in government, notably MPEDIC, it underscored the fact that this inter-institutional dialogue on sustainable development matters of common interest, while productive, is not adequately formalised to generate a common work plan or agenda to address Egypt Vision 2030 issues systematically.

It is also important to note that OECD countries are increasingly integrating SDG responsibilities into existing committee structures and mandates rather than creating new ones: while SDG-related committees were initially created in parallel to and/or separate from existing structures, as the governance of the pursuit of sustainable development and 2030 Agenda "matured" since 2016, pursuing the SDGs is being progressively mainstreamed across all government structures and mandates. Existing committee structures have seen their mandates and responsibilities explicitly broadened, updated and strengthened (with the parallel SDG committees being folded into these existing structures) to address strategies relating to the pursuit of the SDGs as part of their regular oversight and steering responsibilities for government programming and strategic planning in general.

- The Canadian case (Box 2.3) demonstrates how Canada has integrated SDG and 2030 Agenda planning and implementation into its government operations. This is achieved by having the existing Cabinet committee structure oversee SDG implementation as a crucial aspect of strategic decision-making on all government priorities. No parallel or separate committee structure focuses solely on overseeing the pursuit of Canada's 2030 Agenda strategy.
- The Canadian example also shows that the lead institution managing the co-ordination of a country's pursuit of its 2030 Agenda strategy is no longer necessarily a CoG institution. In Canada, due in no small part to the evolution and current maturity of its mainstreaming efforts, this leadership role has migrated from the CoG to the Department of Employment and Social Development, the federal government's main social policy ministry. That said, as Box 2.7 in the next section below points out, all three federal CoG institutions (the Privy Council Office, the MoF and the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, the government's management board ministry) are intimately involved in the day-to-day and strategic decision-making on 2030 Agenda implementation (as are all other ministries through the Cabinet committee process).

Some OECD countries only have a single minister-level steering committee at the summit of a committee hierarchy; the thematic committees are composed of senior officials (either existing or, in their absence, new ones) and have been mandated to steer thematic sustainable development strategy setting and advise the inter-ministerial steering committee in their thematic areas of responsibility.

This high-level, whole-of-government committee structure is supported by mirror inter-departmental committees of officials at the technical level; these are responsible for providing data, evidence and advice to their respective high-level committees. In addition, the main inter-ministerial oversight/steering committee is usually chaired by the head of government or a CoG minister and is supported by a CoG institution that works closely with relevant line ministry strategy units and/or SDUs to feed the strategic policy decision-making process at the steering committee level.

Indeed, inter-departmental co-ordination arrangements serve different purposes and have different benefits, for instance:

- They provide a forum for high-level political monitoring, decision-making and co-ordination across different ministries.
- They can help to ensure that policies are aligned with/integrated into the government programme's strategic priorities and objectives.
- They can facilitate the development of cross-cutting policies that address complex, multidimensional issues that require input from multiple ministries.

Drawing from such successful examples as Belgium (Box 2.4), inter-departmental committees can bring together relevant ministries working on thematic issues and ensure coherence in the implementation of multidimensional Egypt Vision 2030 goals. These committees can provide a platform for resolving inter-ministerial challenges; their technical expertise and authority can effectively bridge different policy domains and promote integrated approaches to design and implement strategies in pursuit of the SDGs.

Box 2.4. The Belgian Interdepartmental Committee for Sustainable Development

The Interdepartmental Committee for Sustainable Development (ICSD) is responsible for preparing and co-ordinating actions by federal ministries and public services in the field of sustainable development.

The committee is mandated by law to:

- Propose areas of work for the Federal Institute for Sustainable Development (FISD) and the Federal Planning Bureau as part of their designated tasks outlined in the Sustainable Development Act of May 1997.
- Co-ordinate the summary report of its members that they must compile 18 months before the end of the ongoing Federal Plan for Sustainable Development (FPSD).
- Prepare the FPSD draft when a new government takes office.
- Formulate a proposal regarding the modalities of the public consultation concerning the Federal Plan for Sustainable Development (FPDO) draft.

It is composed of representatives from all federal government services and the Ministry of Defence. The Belgian Regions and Communities are also invited to appoint an observing member. The FISD, as the dedicated federal administration for sustainable development located within the CoG, assumes the secretariat and chairmanship of the committee.

Source: Government of Belgium (n.d.[7]), *Federal Strategy for Sustainable Development*, https://www.developpementdurable.be/fr/politique-federale/strategie-federale.

In addition to establishing inter-departmental committees (or mandating existing ones), it is essential to strengthen and leverage existing co-ordination mechanisms. This can be achieved by identifying and enhancing formal and informal co-ordination committees and groupings, establishing temporary or ad hoc committees as needed and promoting the formation of "communities of practice" within relevant sectors, potentially at any and all levels of the administration. These mechanisms can facilitate communication, information sharing and collaborative decision-making, ensuring alignment with the goals and targets of Egypt Vision 2030. Box 2.5 provides examples of this type of ad hoc community of practice in Finland and the United Kingdom.

Box 2.5. Examples of informal communities of practice in Finland and the United Kingdom

United Kingdom: Cross-government horizon-scanning delivery

An assessment of horizon scanning across the UK Government revealed that while efforts were being made in government departments, these could be better co-ordinated. To this end, a cross-government Horizon Scanning Programme headed by the Cabinet Secretary and its advisory group was created to funnel information from an existing network of officials in various government departments, identify emerging trends and risks, and co-ordinate work on cross-cutting themes that affect multiple parts of government.

The programme aimed to ensure greater co-ordination of existing resources and benefitted from ministerial oversight by the Minister for the Cabinet Office, the Minister for Government Policy and the Minister of State for the Cabinet Office. During 2013, cross-departmental work took place in informal "communities of interest" to identify horizon-scanning results relating to a series of work streams, notably changing young people's social attitudes, the future of demographic change in the country and changing the supply and demand of resources.

The Government of Finland's Change Agent Network

Upon the release in 2013 of a report on the "government of the future", the government of Finland's Change Agent Network of young civil servants, an ad hoc group of like-minded professionals from across the central government, published a kind of policy "manifesto" on "how to build a government that facilitates sustainable growth". In quoting the report, "the public sector – central government, regional government and local authorities – plays a key role as an enabler of sustainable growth, proactively adopting and testing new ideas and operations and scaling up good practices for wider use", the network declared that "it's time for the public sector to step up and seize the moment".

The informal network declared *inter alia*:

> *"Ministries remain too detached and isolated from one another, without sufficient co-ordination and co-operation. The challenges and problems faced by our society cut across all boundaries, including attitudinal, professional and especially administrative. Time pressure, dwindling resources and the sheer scale of problems mean we have to change course quickly. Have ministries set aside enough time for innovation and the development of new directions and approaches, have they invested enough in creating the conditions and the kind of management culture where people are inspired to exchange ideas and to work together? … A stronger emphasis on multi-sector co-operation and collaboration, both across government and with civil society, will also add significant flexibility to ministries and improve their ability to sense and predict change… It is crucial that political leaders and senior civil servants support new practices and send out the message that even less formal and more experimental approaches are permitted and even encouraged…".*

This network had no formal status; its membership was entirely voluntary. Its plea for greater horizontal collaboration illustrated perhaps the beginning of a fundamental shift in values away from tradition-bound vertical management in the Government of Finland.

Sources: OECD (2015[10]), *OECD Public Governance Reviews: Estonia and Finland: Fostering Strategic Capacity across Governments and Digital Services across Borders*, https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264229334-en; Government of Finland (2013), *Government Report on the Future - well-being through sustainable growth*, http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-287-070-4; Kasemets, L. (2014), "Background report for the Integrated Public Governance Review of Estonia and Finland", unpublished.

Effective communications sustain transparency, which can play a crucial role in enhancing more effective co-ordination. Sharing annual reports or meeting notes, agendas, decisions and actions taken with all members is recommended to increase transparency. It is also recommended to ensure that stakeholders participate in co-ordination bodies for sustainable development as identified in the Earth Summit outcome document *The Future We Want* (UN, 2012[11]).

Technical support for co-ordination mechanisms is vital to their success. This support is multifaceted and ranges from providing thematic data and evidence on the strategic policy issues being discussed at inter-departmental committees to providing training opportunities for relevant officials. It is usually provided by the CoG unit(s) reporting to the head of state/government, in close co-ordination with strategic management units (SMUs) in the relevant line ministries, as mentioned above. This type of technical support is crucial when policy issues of strategic importance are being debated at the ministerial-level whole-of-government inter-departmental steering committee on the SDGs, for example. Offering training workshops on effective co-ordination practices can also enhance the capacity of officials involved in co-ordination roles. These workshops can provide guidance on co-ordinating multi-sectoral initiatives, facilitating collaboration, managing conflicts and leveraging available resources efficiently. By equipping participants with the necessary skills and knowledge, the implementation of Egypt Vision 2030 can be significantly strengthened.

The sustainable development units

At the operational level, both SDUs and sustainable development focal points have been established in different ministries to enhance inter-institutional co-ordination. These units and focal points are designed to serve as key contacts for raising awareness on SDGs, to ensure that, within their own entities, sustainable development strategies are aligned with the vision and facilitate the co-ordination and monitoring process led by MPEDIC's SDU.

Dedicated SDUs throughout a public administration (i.e. in line ministries) are a good way to implement sustainable development policies in a coherent and whole-of-government manner (OECD, 2021[12]). They can ensure:

- **Political commitment and leadership**: SDUs can help mobilise whole-of-government action and orient policy development towards sustainable development.
- **A strategic long-term vision**: These units can help develop a strategic long-term vision for sustainable development that is integrated across all policy areas.
- **Policy coherence**: SDUs can help ensure policy coherence across different sectors and levels of government.
- **Monitoring and evaluation**: These units are well placed to monitor the pursuit of their ministry's sustainable development strategies on a regular basis and lead evaluation exercises periodically to measure the performance of strategy against outcomes. This presupposes that these units can effectively lead co-ordination efforts for this purpose across policy and operational units within their ministry. This is usually accomplished through standing intra-ministerial committees mandated for

this purpose, as well as through cross-government "community of practice" arrangements (see below).

- **Strategic communications**: These units are well placed to contribute to whole-of-ministry and whole-of-government communications efforts, both internally within the public administration at the national and local levels and externally with civil society stakeholders and citizens.

- The provision of **advice on training needs** both in their units and their ministries relating to strategic planning, project management, effective communications and other enablers underpinning the good governance of 2030 Agenda implementation.

- **Participation and engagement/outreach**: These units can help involve civil society and other stakeholders in developing and implementing sustainable development policies.

The OECD Recommendation of the Council on Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development (2019[5]) and the OECD Policy Framework on Sound Public Governance (2020[2]) provide a comprehensive standard to help countries equip policymakers and key stakeholders with the necessary institutional mechanisms and policy tools to enhance policy coherence, address integrated economic, social and environmental challenges and accelerate progress towards sustainable development. Based on this guidance, several key considerations and challenges need to be addressed to empower the SDUs, including the status of SDUs in Egypt, the need to clarify, codify and institutionalise their mandates through functional reviews, mapping exercises, resource allocation and capacity-building efforts.

A significant observation during the OECD's fact-finding missions is that SDUs are not uniformly integrated into the structures of all ministries. Only five ministries have explicitly established a dedicated unit (MPEDIC, as well as the Ministries of Tourism, of Agriculture, of Education and of Environment). To address this issue, a functional review and mapping exercise could be conducted by MPEDIC's SDU to determine whether SDUs exist under different names or if institutional overburden is an obstacle to their establishment since several other ministries make use of sustainable development focal points or of their existing strategic management units (SMUs), instead of SDUs.

This differentiation in the level of institutionalisation highlights the need for greater consistency across ministries. Furthermore, as mandated by the Prime Minister in 2018, SMUs are present in most government entities. Streamlining existing units and their expertise could be a cost-effective approach to supporting sustainable development initiatives rather than establishing new structures with incremental institutional and financial costs. Another department that was established in MPEDIC by decree of CAOA No. 86 of 2023 called "follow-up long, medium, and annual sustainable development plans and programs"[2], is responsible for monitoring the implementation of the sustainable development plans across each entity.

In this connection and in the context of constraints on public resources, Egypt could consider mandating ministry sustainable development focal points or SMUs in those ministries that have yet to create SMUs to carry out the ministry's Egypt Vision 2030 responsibilities. Indeed, as functional and institutional arrangements mature in the GoE, consideration could be given to blending together ministry SMUs and SMUs so that, over time, a single planning unit becomes responsible for advancing both the ministry's Egypt Vision 2030 and general ministry-wide strategic goals. This could serve to hasten the mainstreaming of Egypt Vision 2030 implementation efforts as part of the pursuit of the government's general development goals for the country; it could also, over time, lead to greater optimisation of limited human and financial resources.

A first objective, though, ought to be the formalisation and institutionalisation of the sustainable development planning and co-ordination function in all key ministries and agencies across the GoE, as well as in key governorates (see next section).

In any event, a mapping exercise could facilitate the establishment of a community of practice comprising ministry SDUs/SMUs/SDG focal points for Egypt Vision 2030 as a valuable step toward enhancing co-ordination and collaboration across ministries. This community could serve as a platform for sharing

best practices, exchanging knowledge and promoting integrated approaches to sustainable development. It can help foster a coherent, cohesive and synchronised implementation of the national sustainable development agenda.

Respondents to the OECD's survey shared that they were unaware of a strategic document outlining the mandate of the SDU regarding the implementation of Egypt Vision 2030. To address this gap, it is crucial to formulate a formal document that clearly outlines the roles and responsibilities of the SDU, building on existing information in Decrees No. 86 of 2019, establishing the Strategic Management Units (SMUs), and No.86 of 2023 establishing the SDU in MPEDIC. This formal document needs to be disseminated and circulated among PAEs, in a way that guarantees that the mandate of the SDU is put into practice among those entities. It would also serve as a guiding framework to empower the SDU to carry out its responsibilities effectively. In this context, the establishment of SMUs by the legal decree 86/2019 within all PAEs, can support the operationalization of some of MPEDIC's SDU functions within line ministries and entities. As one of the mandates of the SMUs is preparing the framework for the entity's strategic plan and ensuring its alignment with Egypt Vision 2030. In capacity building, MPEDIC's SDU primarily focuses on training and providing direct support to government entities in aligning their sectoral strategies with the vision. For example, it has recently supported the Ministry of Health in aligning its Food and Nutrition Strategy with Egypt Vision 2030. However, there is a need to establish a specific mechanism for identifying capacity-building needs. Currently, capacity-building activities are mostly demand-driven, based on specific challenges observed by MPEDIC. Co-ordinating with Egypt's NIGSD could provide valuable insights and expertise in this area (OECD, 2024[6]).

In conclusion, institutionalising and formally empowering SDUs/SMUs in every ministry and entity is crucial for advancing sustainable development in Egypt. To further institutionalise and empower these units, clarifying and formalising their roles and responsibilities through a legal decree, conducting functional reviews and mapping exercises, allocating adequate resources, creating communities of practice, developing an implementation plan and identifying capacity-building needs are essential. By addressing these considerations in line with good practices such as in Romania (Box 2.6) or Canada (Box 2.7), which harnesses SDUs/SMUs, focal points/policy leads and policy integration and coherence initiatives to mainstream Canada's Federal Implementation Plan for the 2030 Agenda (analogous to Egypt Vision 2030) as an integral component of general government decision-making, Egypt can enhance the effectiveness and integration of SDUs/SMUs, leading to more co-ordinated and impactful implementation of its Egypt Vision 2030.

Box 2.6. Effective SDUs in Romania

Recent efforts in Romania have enhanced the strategic planning framework by focusing on bolstering line ministry capacity and reforming the budgetary process. Institutional innovations, such as establishing sustainable development hubs within each ministry, are of particular significance. These hubs aim to promote coherence and co-ordination by ensuring that all institutions are actively involved in implementing Romania's Sustainable Development Strategy 2030 (ROSDS), a strategic framework with the longest timeframe.

The hubs are mandated to align a whole-of-government implementation of the SDGs and play a central role in promoting and supporting sustainable development policies and expertise beyond the central authorities and the Department of Sustainable Development located within the Prime Minister's Chancellery. Furthermore, they ensure that other policies do not work at cross-purposes with the ROSDS. Concretely, each hub pursues the implementation of the SDGs related to the field of activity of each institution while acting as the liaison between its institution, the Department of Sustainable Development and the National Institute of Statistics. The hubs also contribute to the ROSDS' monitoring

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framework by reporting on the progress of dedicated sustainable development indicators and monitoring the overall implementation of the National Sustainable Development Strategy.

A hub is formed by existing staff with competency in the field of sustainable development. As of 2020 each line ministry has appointed one or two persons to their respective hub. Dedicated training programmes have been developed to counter the issue of staff's insufficient expertise.

The Sustainable Development Hubs across the government in Romania constitute a successful deployment of a new co-ordination mechanism that strengthens coherence, co-ordination and strategic planning. Strong leadership can replicate these efforts in other cross-cutting policy areas. The Department of Sustainable Development receives extra political leverage from the leadership of a state counsellor. This innovative governance framework for sustainable development has also been recognised by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs as Romania received the 2021 United Nations "prize for innovation and excellence in public service".

Source: OECD (2023[13]), "Coherence and co-ordination at the Centre of Government in Romania", OECD Publishing, Paris.

Box 2.7. Canada's 2021 Federal Implementation Plan for the 2030 Agenda: Fostering leadership and policy coherence

The government of Canada is fostering policy coherence by helping departments (ministries) co-ordinate their efforts on the SDGs. Canada's 2021 Federal Implementation Plan for the 2030 Agenda (FIP) enhances federal co-ordination and leadership to advance the SDGs. It provides a governance structure to advance the SDGs more effectively, notably through departmental leads:

- At the federal level, **Employment and Social Development Canada leads the co-ordination of Canada's implementation of the 2030 Agenda**. A **Sustainable Development Goals Unit** was established in 2018 within the department, leading efforts in the implementation of the FIP. Please note that the Privy Council Office exercised the original institutional lead for the 2030 Agenda, the federal CoG unit directly serving the prime minister and Cabinet.

- **Leads and co-leads for each of the 17 SDGs have been appointed in each contributing federal department and agency**.

- **Horizontal leads have been appointed to help advance the cross-cutting, whole-of-government objectives of leaving no one behind, advancing reconciliation with Indigenous peoples and making a positive impact through Canada's international implementation of the 2030 Agenda**. Horizontal leads help all departments and agencies ensure that cross-cutting objectives are being considered in their work to advance the SDGs.

- **Horizontal leads have also been appointed to facilitate the adoption of enabling functions to implement the 2030 Agenda successfully**. These include the federal government's three CoG institutions, the Privy Council Office, the Department of Finance and the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, which are collectively responsible for advancing policy coherence and ensuring that the SDGs are considered, accounted for and reflected in the government of Canada's priorities. It also includes Statistics Canada, the national statistical office, for its enabling functions with respect to data and reporting.

Other mandatory federal processes support policy coherence. For example, the government has been integrating the 2030 Agenda into major policies, such as the Quality of Life Framework, introduced in 2021, which sets out the government's approach to taking into consideration quality-of-life impacts in

policy and budgetary decision-making. Another example is the [Federal Sustainable Development Strategy](), which addresses federal sustainable development from an environmental perspective.

Efforts have also been made to strengthen institutional mechanisms to support policy coherence across each federal department. For instance, the SDGs have been integrated into all annual departmental plans (DPs) and Departmental Results Reports (DRRs).

- These two documents are key components of the government's annual planning and resource management cycle. Tabled in Parliament and made available to all Canadians, they describe departmental priorities, strategic outcomes, programmes, expected results and the resources used to achieve those results.

- For the latest DPs and DRRs, departments and agencies are reporting on their contributions towards advancing the SDGs, thus ensuring consistent and transparent reporting on the SDGs across the entire system.

Source: Government of Canada (n.d.[9]), Taking Action Together – Canada's 2021 Annual Report on the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals, www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/agenda-2030/taking-action-together.html.

Using additional government co-ordination mechanisms in Egypt

The recent deployment of SMUs across the government, serving as experts in the specific activities relevant to their respective institutions, could support the development of a new co-ordination mechanism as a network of SDUs co-ordinated by MPEDIC. However, several challenges to their deployment have been identified above. MPEDIC is thus invited to explore additional mechanisms for co-ordination. In Egypt, bilateral co-ordination is commonly used but limited to informal contacts or formal letters. Inter-ministerial agreements or memoranda of understanding (MoUs), for example, in Costa Rica or the United States, could merit further thought (Box 2.8):

- **Inter-ministerial agreements** serve as instruments for co-operation between national institutions and can potentially involve non-governmental stakeholders undertaking activities defined by law or policy. In contrast to existing informal contacts, inter-ministerial agreements provide a structured framework for collaboration. These agreements can take various forms, such as legally binding contracts, strategic documents, action plans or executive orders. They help establish a clear framework for horizontal co-operation when this is not explicitly defined in existing law or through existing administrative systems. By promoting formalised co-operation, inter-ministerial agreements can enhance co-ordination and facilitate the implementation of sustainable development policies and projects.

- An alternative is making use of **MoUs**, which are typically less formal than inter-ministerial agreements and provide a basis for general principles of co-operation. They describe broad concepts of mutual understanding, shared goals and plans between parties. While MoUs may not have the same level of binding force as formal inter-ministerial agreements, they offer flexibility and enable collaborative efforts among multiple stakeholders. MoUs can serve as a framework for co-operation in specific areas of sustainable development, allowing for greater alignment and co-ordination among involved entities.

Egyptian interlocutors also identified dedicated co-ordination efforts between MPEDIC and strategic sectors, such as energy, in the form of regular meetings held since the preparation and launch of Egypt Vision 2030. These special arrangements exist for critical priorities, recognising their indispensable role in industrial development and overall progress.

Box 2.8. Inter-ministerial agreements in Costa Rica and the United States

United States

MoUs are commonly used as a co-ordination mechanism in the United States, especially in the environmental sector. The United States Environmental Protection Agency notably has MoUs with key relevant central government bodies, including the Department of Agriculture and the now Office of Marine Safety, the U.S. Fire Administration the Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, the National Park Service and the Central Statistics Office.

Costa Rica

Costa Rica is a prime example of the way in which inter-ministerial agreements can enhance the coherence of government action on environmental and climate commitments. Costa Rica's sectoral agreements for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions are sectors' response to meet national and international commitments, such as the Nationally Determined Contribution under the Paris Agreement.

Source: OECD (2019[14]), *OECD Accession Review of Costa Rica in the Fields of Environment and Waste*, OECD, Paris; EPA (n.d.[15]), *US EPA Search - Memorandum of Understanding*, https://search.epa.gov/epasearch/?querytext=memorandum+of+understanding&areaname=&#/.

Vertical co-ordination across levels of the administration

The 2030 Agenda explicitly calls for governments to collaborate with local and regional governments in the implementation of the SDGs. As such, vertical co-ordination can play a crucial role in the successful implementation of Egypt Vision 2030. The involvement of governorates is essential to achieving a participatory approach in the strategic planning process and driving bottom-up development. MPEDIC has made efforts to reinforce the role of governorates in achieving inclusive and sustainable growth as well as balanced regional development. These initiatives include localising the SDGs at the governorate level, establishing a competitiveness index for governorates, measuring the Human Development Index on a governorate level and others. To support these initiatives, a Governors' Council, led by the prime minister, also conducts periodic meetings to discuss topics such as localisation.

To bridge the divide between the national and local levels, MPEDIC SDU has also developed a series of localisation reports measuring progress in each of the 27 governorates towards attaining the SDGs (MPED, 2020[16]). Since 2019/20, it has also published its annual "citizen plan" on line, which provides information on public investments directed by the government for each governorate and how it is distributed across different sectors (MPED, 2022[17]). The ministry has also spearheaded important efforts on rural development through the Haya Karima (Decent Life) initiative launched in early 2019. This initiative seeks to bring about a profound urban development transformation in over 4 500 villages across 20 governorates through 175 administrative centres. Through Prime Minister's Decree No. 2700 of 2020, an implementation committee involving all line ministries and relevant authorities was created to oversee the implementation of Haya Karima. This oversight body is informed by the work of four subcommittees on utilities and infrastructure services (led by the Ministry of Local Development), economic development and job creation (led by the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency), social interventions (Ministry of Social Solidarity) and performance monitoring (led by MPEDIC). Stakeholders during OECD interviews shared that key progress has been achieved by reaching over 58% of Egypt's total population and through the progressive establishment of citizen committees in certain villages to support local needs assessment processes.

However, various challenges have been identified within the governorates:

- Very few of them have SDUs and not all governorates have dedicated focal points for sustainable development.

- They have limited capacity to generate local data that can be used for the implementation of Egypt Vision 2030. This hampers their ability to bring the vision into local communities and effectively align their planning with the vision.

- As a result, consulted interlocutors have flagged a lack of understanding of the strategic framework for sustainable development and the SDGs. Consequently, the governorates often prioritise the localisation agenda less than other issues.

- Furthermore, the absence of formal co-ordination mechanisms with MPEDIC, insufficient HR and competencies in the area of sustainable development, limited budget allocations and a lack of tools and methodologies to pursue the SDGs at the local level have been identified as hampering the implementation of Egypt Vision 2030.

To address these challenges and ensure successful implementation of Egypt Vision 2030, building capacities in key governorates and enhancing vertical co-ordination between the governorates and MPEDIC is crucial. Recently, the SDU in MPEDIC launched 27 reports to localise the SDGs in different governorates. These reports are to be updated annually to document the progress of each governorate in its efforts towards achieving the SDGs. Furthermore, the localisation of SDGs and Egypt Vision 2030 is being promoted by adopting the Governorate-level Investment Allocation Formula (GIAF), a formula-based process introduced in 2018 for allocating local investment funds efficiently across the 27 governorates. An inter-ministerial committee chaired by MPEDIC is administrating this process.

MPEDIC can contribute by providing support to establish SDUs and build capacity to gather relevant local data, fostering a better understanding of sustainable development and SDG localisation and creating formal co-ordination mechanisms. Additionally, allocating sufficient budget, developing HR and competencies, and providing appropriate tools and methodologies to key governorates will enable all governorates to contribute to the realisation of Egypt Vision 2030 more effectively. MPEDIC can also make use of existing governance mechanisms, including the GIAF Committee and the National Committee for Monitoring the Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (in which governorates are currently not included) (Box 2.9) to harness effective vertical co-ordination as a tool to pursue Egypt Vision 2030 effectively across the country.

At the end of this chapter, the OECD offers detailed recommendations on how Egypt could harness the governorates to contribute effectively to advancing Egypt Vision 2030 in a way that reflects Egypt's regional disparities and harnesses the country's specific regional strengths and attributes to optimise Egypt's national sustainable development potential.

> **Box 2.9. vertical co-ordination for sustainable development**
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> **Japan's** expanded SDGs Action Plan 2018 is another example of national commitment to support local efforts. The second pillar of the action plan on "regional revitalisation" focuses mainly on the localisation of the SDGs through its Future Cities initiative comprising 29 local governments, 10 of which were selected as SDGs Model Cities and receiving financial support from the government to implement their SDG strategies. The initiative also promotes the establishment of SDG governance structures by local governments following the national SDGs Promotion Headquarters headed by the Prime Minister within the Cabinet Office. Considered a "model city" within the selection process, Kitakyushu was one of the first cities in Japan to put in place an SDGs Future City Promotion Headquarters, headed by the mayor. The SDGs Headquarters guides the rest of the city administration in the implementation of the SDGs. Other institutional structures put in place are the SDGs Council and SDGs Club, promoting multi-stakeholder engagement on the SDGs (see below) and the Public-Private SDGs Platform (chaired by the mayor of Kitakyushu)
>
> In **Argentina**, the National Council for the Coordination of Social Policies (*Consejo Nacional de Coordinación de Políticas Sociales*, CNCPS), responsible for co-ordinating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, is promoting co-operation agreements with the provinces to promote vertical co-ordination of the SDGs. Together with the Cooperation Agreement, the CNCPS provides provinces with an adaptation guide, including methodological suggestions on the utilisation of the SDGs as a management and planning tool at the subnational level. The CNCPS also invites provinces to participate in the voluntary Provinces Report (*Informe Provincias*), which seeks to highlight annual progress on the adaptation of the SDGs in each territory in relation to the SDGs under review by the high-level political forum every year. At the time of signature, the province had already adopted the goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda, set up focal points responsible for the local implementation of the SDGs and provided adequate resources. However, the signature was a trigger for using the adaptation guide as a key tool to ensure consistency between the provincial and national SDG indicator frameworks. The province also committed to reporting the localisation process to the CNCPS.
>
> In **Brazil**, the Social and Economic Development Council (CEDES) is promoting a state-wide agreement to support the implementation of the SDGs with regional associations and municipalities. In August 2019, 16 out of 19 regional associations and 248 out of 399 local governments had already formalised their commitment to the 2030 Agenda through this mechanism. The council also works to strengthen communication between governments and civil society to better engage citizens in the implementation process of the SDGs.
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> Source: OECD (2020[18]), *A Territorial Approach to the Sustainable Development Goals: Synthesis report*, https://doi.org/10.1787/e86fa715-en.

Leveraging the PARP to strengthen the implementation of Egypt Vision 2030

Egypt has a long history of attempting PAR to improve policy and service design and delivery and to ultimately support the development of Egypt and the well-being of its citizens. The latest effort is enshrined in the PARP that was launched after a brainstorming exercise involving experts within the Higher Committee for Administrative Reform chaired by the Prime Minister (APRM, 2020[19]). The co-ordination and implementation of the PARP is led by the CAOA (see Chapter 3 for further information).

The complexity of Egypt's organisational structures was identified as one of the leading causes of inadequate service delivery and administrative issues, and the need to enhance capacity to deliver on

priorities and long-term objectives (Gobba, 2020[20]). To address these issues, the PARP focuses on five pillars:

1. **Institutional reforms** to enhance the efficiency of the state administration.
2. **Capacity building and development** to improve civil service performance.
3. **Legislative reforms** to create a legal framework that ensures a disciplined public administration and enables leadership to carry out its responsibilities in a flexible matter.
4. **Improved government services** to serve citizens better.
5. **Information/information technology systems** to establish, complete and integrate databases.

The PARP is the main focus of this review's Chapter 3 on PAR. However, the GoE's PAR agenda is highlighted as a priority within Egypt Vision 2030. This strategic document offers the following vision for Egypt's public sector:

> *"An efficient and effective government administrative body that is characterised by professionalism, transparency, justice, and responsiveness. That offers quality services and that can be held accountable. The administration is able to increase citizen satisfaction, and strongly contributes to the achievement of Egypt's development goals and in improving the status of the Egyptian people (MPED, 2023[21])."*

Egypt Vision 2030 also identifies six guiding principles on PAR that track the five pillars of the 2014 Administrative Reform Plan, the main ones of which relate to legal, institutional, human and financial reforms as well as service delivery. These principles include the need to: adopt a comprehensive approach to PAR as well as gradual and sustainable reform processes; adopt elements of proficiency and competency in employment, promotion and wages, along with standards of quality and excellence in the provision of public services; expand the usage of technology in public administration; and establish partnerships with civil society and the private sector.

Evidence from this review's questionnaire responses and fact-finding mission suggests that there is an opportunity to enhance co-ordination between the entities on the PARP, in particular, and on how the PARP can be harnessed to support the pursuit of Egypt Vision 2030, both through policy integration and indicator alignment. Strengthening institutional co-ordination between CAOA and MPEDIC could also positively impact the PARP by combining MPEDIC's substantive expertise on co-ordination and on translating the SDG indicators into the national context with CAOA's technical expertise on administrative reform. This would also contribute to strengthening organisational awareness across the government of the importance of the PARP in the pursuit of Egypt Vision 2030's SDGs. Since both functions and institutional arrangements were part of the same ministry prior to the Ministry of Planning, Monitoring and Administrative Reform's disbanding in 2018, institutional memory and relations could be used to strengthen this co-ordination.

To increase co-ordination, integration and coherence and advance Egypt Vision 2030, CAOA could further focus on the following elements of the framework for administrative reform and the Egypt Vision 2030:

- Creating the basis of a **monitoring and evaluation framework** by linking KPIs to Egypt Vision 2030 to measure progress in the pursuit of relevant SDGs. This should lead to designing and rolling out **a multi-year, actionable PARP implementation plan** to ensure the satisfactory delivery of the six pillars of the PARP. This plan should present a concrete timeline for delivering clear objectives, identifying intermediate goals and confirming the allocation of the human and financial resources required to achieve them.
- **Leading co-ordination with MPEDIC on integrating the PARP within the Egypt Vision 2030**. CAOA should continue to work with its counterpart units in MPEDIC, starting with the SDU, to mainstream the PARP within the Sustainable Development Agenda. This should include aligning strategic goals, targets and KPIs across the PARP and Egypt Vision 2030 and aligning the PARP monitoring and evaluation framework with that of this strategic framework.

Strengthening strategic planning: Key enablers beyond co-ordination for more effective implementation of Egypt Vision 2030

Beyond co-ordination, a series of enablers can serve to support effective strategic planning efforts. Both the OECD Policy Framework on Sound Public Governance (2020[2]) and the 2019 OECD Recommendation of the Council on Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development (2019[5]) identify a series of key strategic enablers of effective and efficient public governance. These can be used to support sound strategic planning and include:

- Generating and managing robust data and evidence, needed to sustain effective strategic planning and evidence-based decision-making, including using effective performance information through CoG-led work routines.
- Results-based budgeting methods that enable policymakers to determine whether public spending is achieving the results anticipated in the strategic plan.
- Strategic HR planning, management and capacity building.

This section discusses each of these in turn.

Leveraging evidence for effective strategic planning

Robust data are crucial for effective strategic planning (OECD, 2020[2]). Performance information, especially when collected systematically, can be used to measure the progress of policies and priorities against set targets and whether policies and projects are moving the country along the path to achieving the results and outcomes they were adopted to pursue. Robust performance information can thus enable the government to identify and address any issues that arise and, using effective feedback loops that integrate performance information into the policymaking process, help the government adjust course if policy and spending efforts are not achieving projected results or when results are sub-optimal. Ultimately, monitoring and evaluation are essential tools for ensuring that strategic plans can effectively achieve their intended outcomes, including, of course, sustainability outcomes (OECD, 2020[22]).

In line with Egypt's commitment to the 2030 Agenda, the government has recognised monitoring, evaluation and feedback systems as an important pillar within the governance framework for sustainable development. This commitment has been illustrated in Egypt's voluntary national reviews (VNRs) undertaken by the United Nations. Egypt demonstrated international leadership by having volunteered to conduct three VNRs on SDGs in 2016, 2018 and 2021.

Egypt's efforts to strengthen performance frameworks have also resulted in the establishment of specialised monitoring and evaluation units in certain ministries and government bodies, including MPEDIC and the Ministry of Investment (previously known as the General Authority for Investment and Free Zones). In addition, MPEDIC has created two electronic systems linking SDGs with investment planning and performance management. The first is the *ISIPPM*, which aims to establish an integrated electronic system that enables public entities to formulate development plans, request appropriate funding through simplified electronic forms and facilitate the monitoring of projects. It serves as the main information structure for proposed projects, supporting the achievement of the SDGs, Egypt Vision 2030 objectives and the Government Programme.

The ISIPPM system standardises assessments and trade-offs in project selection, facilitating the preparation of economic plans for the seven regions of Egypt. It tracks various economic, social, and development data, including demographic data, economic and financial information, natural and technological resources, infrastructure and existing and planned projects. It provides analytical tools, mathematical models and accounting programmes to assist in data analysis and strategic decision-making.

This wealth of data allows MPEDIC and its officials to monitor development progress, identify investment needs in different sectors, analyse future challenges and opportunities, and take necessary measures to achieve the goals set in development and investment plans. However, an SDG lens seems to be missing, as it is impossible to see the progress made on SDGs or dedicated sustainable development indicators through the implementation of investment projects. The Information Centre at MPEDIC, under the purview of the Office of the Deputy Minister, is responsible for managing the ISIPPM, while line ministries, government entities and governorates contribute to the system with their data and information.

The second system, Egypt's *National System for Monitoring and Evaluation* – known as ADAA – is a government-based network that facilitates the monitoring and evaluation of all state entities. Through quarterly reports sent to the Council of Ministers, parliament and the Administrative Control Authority, ADAA enables the government to assess the performance of the state administrative apparatus in accordance with international standards. This system is intricately linked to the state budget.

The objectives of ADAA include implementing government-approved development targets, fostering co-ordination between ministries and agencies, highlighting national achievements, aligning government objectives with the performance of agencies and employees, improving service quality for citizens, ensuring effective public spending and measuring the impact of development programmes on SDGs. Notably, all indicators within ADAA are connected to the 17 SDGs of the 2030 Agenda, illustrating the system's alignment with the United Nations' development objectives.

Moreover, ADAA focuses on monitoring the performance of each government entity through entity-specific performance indicators. These indicators are updated on a quarterly basis and cover the entire process of plan preparation, follow-up and assessment of development impact. The system incorporates over 3 000 performance measurement indicators, including 380 indicators specifically designed to measure the strategic impact of various government programmes. ADAA is an electronic system with an informative graphical interface that visually represents each government entity and its affiliated bodies.

However, the implementation of ADAA is currently facing certain challenges; these include linking the monitoring of investment projects and activities funded out of the current national budget to high-level, outcomes-based performance indicators, ensuring full verification of implementation rates that may require increased staffing due to the extensive number of projects involved (over 10 000 projects) and obtaining data from line ministries, which necessitates co-ordination and collaboration between the various entities responsible for investment planning, budgeting, strategic planning and sustainable development within each ministry, across the entire government and in the governorates.

Despite these implementation challenges, Egypt's National System for Monitoring and Evaluation through ADAA constitutes a significant effort in effectively assessing performance, tracking progress and aligning government activities with the government's strategic objectives and SDGs. In the 2022/23 fiscal plan, the performance indicators included within ADAA were integrated within the ISIPPM. In this respect, over 800 performance indicators were merged to reflect 230 programmes being delivered by 212 public entities.

It is important to note here that the NIGSD, through its Governance Centre, pursues several pathways to enhance good governance in Egypt's public administration from the sustainable development perspective. It monitors and assesses efforts employed across different dimensions related to governance in Egypt and publishes a yearly report about Egypt's performance in international, national and regional indicators that *inter alia* evaluate the government's efforts in the area of sustainable public governance. It also offers training and capacity-building programmes to promote, enhance and raise awareness of governance from the sustainable development perspective. In this regard, the NIGSD houses a Sustainable Development Centre (SDC), which tracks Egypt's different sustainable development indicators by mandate. According to its responses to this review's questionnaire, the NIGSD SDC sends regular reports and recommendations to MPEDIC about Egypt's performance as well as the challenges it identifies in this area as a means to help policymakers adjust their policies and actions. MPEDIC SDU also consults the NIGSD SDC on multiple issues related to sustainable development. Hence, the NIGSD SDC and MPEDIC SDU

work in collaboration. This relationship should be formally institutionalised so that the NIGSD can contribute meaningfully to the work of MPEDIC in general and more specifically towards the ongoing work of the National SDG Monitoring Committee.

Overall, despite these improvements in terms of data management, several challenges persist in terms of data gathering, data sharing, data disaggregation (by different classifications, such as geographic location, gender, income and disabilities) and the alignment of indicators using common definitions and methodologies to strengthen policy alignment and coherence. The example of Italy's Coherence Matrix could be instructive in this regard (Box 2.10).

Challenges also remain in ensuring vertical and horizontal co-ordination in collecting and using data, to determine the kind of data that need to be collected across levels of government, and in building lasting capacity at the governorate level to generate and share relevant regional data on a national level.

Box 2.10. Innovative tools help strengthen policy coherence in Italy

The Coherence Matrix is a living document compiling the linkages across existing policies' objectives, targets and indicators relevant to Italy's long-term sustainability objectives, as outlined in its National Sustainable Development Strategy (NSDS). The matrix is intended to analyse different sectoral policies that contribute to Italy's strategic choices for sustainable development and highlight common key policy indicators for each strategic choice. The matrix is applied during policy formulation, whereby each ministry, region or local authority will use it as a basis of information for filling in the Coherence Fiche (below) for new investments and policies and during *ex ante* and *ex post* assessments.

The Coherence Fiche is a qualitative evaluation tool that shows the contribution of a specific policy proposal in relation to indicators of NSDS objectives and targets. It is used to identify potential trade-offs, synergies and transboundary impacts of the proposed policy compared to other policies identified in the Coherence Matrix. The estimated costs associated with implementing the policy proposal are tagged against their positive or negative contributions to the NSDS. This initiates a process to sketch potential mitigation strategies or cross-sectoral actions to balance interactions with existing policies.

The foreseen Sustainability Dashboard will generate and constantly update an integrated picture of how Italy is progressing towards the implementation of the NSDS. Sustainability Dashboard indicators will derive from the Coherence Matrices and will improve the government's capacity to look across indicator frameworks and assess positive and negative interactions of sectoral policies.

Source: OECD (2022[23]), *Italy's National Action Plan for Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development*, https://doi.org/10.1787/54226722-en.

Creating work routines at the CoG for effective monitoring

Work routines, through which data are collected and disseminated according to a set rhythm that generates a recognisable pattern, are widely recognised as a crucial success factor in promoting the use and value of performance information in the policymaking process. These routines add stability and predictability in an environment that is often characterised by rapid change and pressure to deliver. Concretely, they give decision-makers a good overview of the state of play so that they can easily identify policy areas in need of intervention to safeguard progress (OECD, 2024[6]).

Building a regular dialogue between the highest-level decision-makers and experts will also increase the likelihood of sustaining trust between those demanding and those supplying evidence for strategic planning and the realisation of long-term visions. In addition, finding the right information can be a challenge. The

expertise at the CoG is therefore sought after as its helicopter view and its ability to play the "challenge function" by asking key questions of sector ministries and presenting data and evidence as a way to ensure their validity and utility allows the CoG to identify the most valuable pieces of information that will create the picture of the highest strategic use and benefit for the highest-level decision-makers.

Egypt presents examples of useful work routines at the CoG: MPEDIC regularly engages with line ministries on how to feed project-based performance information into the ISIPPM and ADAA databases (see previous section). The Ministry of Environment, for its part, reports working with line ministries to mainstream sustainable development governance arrangements that provide sector-based sustainable development performance data to CAPMAS, while the Ministry of Local Development reports networking regularly with line ministries to streamline co-ordination capacity (both between departments within a single ministry and vertically between a ministry and its counterparts in the governorates) on local project delivery.

These practices remain ad hoc and atomised. Hence, MPEDIC, either alone or in partnership with others (with CAOA and/or NIGSD), could conduct a functional review/mapping exercise to identify and codify key useful work routines that already exist within the public administration and use existing inter-institutional co-ordination mechanisms to raise awareness of these good practices generally and encourage their uptake and mainstreaming across the system. This can serve to hasten the uptake of good governance practices across the public administration in Egypt in the pursuit of Egypt Vision 2030-related policy and service design and delivery. This advice is reflected in the relevant sub-sections at the end of this chapter.

The following practice could inspire Egypt to embed a routine that offers high-level updates on the progress of Egypt Vision 2030: in the United Kingdom (Box 2.11), a fixed work routine enables the Prime Minister to receive regular updates on the implementation of policy priorities. This debrief was agreed upon by both the Prime Minister's top political advisors and experts within the civil service, generating the perception that this analysis is legitimate.

Box 2.11. Work routines for monitoring government priorities in the United Kingdom

Monthly and six-monthly state of affairs presented to the Prime Minister

The United Kingdom introduced reporting routines at the heart of the Prime Minister's Delivery Unit (PMDU), which sets the rhythm for the unit's work. There are two reporting routines to the prime minister: monthly delivery notes and six-monthly delivery reports.

The **monthly delivery notes** summarise the progress of each of the Prime Minister's priorities. They highlight the main issues encountered in a short and data-driven fashion and describe what is planned. Where necessary, some notes can be even more frequent.

Six-monthly delivery reports are designed to comprehensively assess the state of play for all the Prime Minister's priority areas in a given department. They are written by the head of the PMDU for the Prime Minister and copied to the secretary of state and lead officials. Usually, drafts are first discussed with lead officials. Each priority's delivery report is just one page and is intended to:

- Report progress against trajectories for the priority.
- Outline what success looks like for the priority over the next six months.
- Determine the best path forward and identify key actions that need to be taken.
- Reveal areas of disagreement between the delivery unit and lead department.
- Act as a reference document against which to chart progress.

Source: Institute for Governance (2015[24]), *Adapting the PMDU Model*, https://www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/sites/default/files/publications/inside-out%20adapting%20the%20pmdu%20model.pdf.

An innovative way to create work routines is hosting data-driven review meetings, as in the United States (Box 2.12), which are being progressively deployed by the CoG to support decision-making on policy priorities. They represent a strategic tool to monitor and improve the performance of policies and institutions and are characterised by their structured format that focuses on frequency and regularity. Whereas data are the main topic of discussion, dialogue should consider context and broader information that cannot be easily quantified. Data-driven review meetings highlight the need for continuous improvement, effectiveness and efficiency. The engagement of high-level leadership in these meetings is shown to increase effectiveness, as exemplified in the United States, where securing the engagement of the deputy secretary has shown to have a strong positive impact on the overall process.

Box 2.12. Data-driven review meetings in the United States

The 2010 Government Performance Reporting and Modernization Act introduced the need for quarterly review meetings on each long-term federal government priority goal to discuss the progress achieved during the most recent quarter, overall trend data, the likelihood of meeting and the planned level of performance against quarterly targets and milestones.

The federal government's priority goals are categorised according to their risk of not achieving their planned level of performance. For those federal government priority goals that have the greatest risk of not meeting their planned level of performance, review meetings allow for the identification of prospects and strategies for performance improvement, including any needed changes to agencies, organisations, programmes activities, regulations, tax expenditures, policies or other activities. The accuracy and reliability of the data used to measure progress towards the priority goal is also discussed.

These meetings are organised by the director of the Office of Management and Budget with the support of the Performance Improvement Council. Meetings include officials from the agencies, organisations and programme activities that contribute to the accomplishment of each Federal Government priority goal.

Since then, agencies have started to organise regularly scheduled, structured and rigorously prepared data-driven meetings to review performance indicators with department or programme personnel. According to the United States Government Accountability Office, to engage in data-driven reviews, programmes need to have identified their strategic priorities, leadership support must be authentic to engage in the process and programmes must have the capacity to gather and synthesise data related to those priorities. On the latter, though, several agencies are able to produce data-rich analyses that identify trends and potential performance issues. Performance Improvement Officers reported that having accurate, timely and useful data available remains a major challenge.

Source: The White House (2019[25]), *Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act of 2018*, https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/house-bill/4174; The White House (2010[26]), *The 2010 Government Performance Reporting and Modernization Act (GPRAMA)*, https://www.congress.gov/111/plaws/publ352/PLAW-111publ352.pdf.

Measuring the impacts of policy measures in society has also become increasingly important for governments' credibility, accountability and functioning. Traditional metrics such as macro-economic statistics or line-item budgetary indicators are no longer sufficient to provide a comprehensive understanding of citizens' living conditions and the impact of public policies and spending on improving citizens' outcomes. To address this, some countries have embraced a citizen-centred well-being approach driven by their CoG institutions. In New Zealand, for example (Box 2.13), this approach involves regularly evaluating key aspects of citizens' lives on both qualitative and qualitative metrics such as inclusiveness, quality of workplaces and jobs, environmental standards, subjective well-being, trust and safety. By adopting this approach, governments ensure that ministries and agencies maintain a focus on the societal

benefits that single-sector and whole-of-government policies are expected to deliver. This well-being approach closely aligns with the principles of sustainable development in that it promotes social, economic and environmental factors that contribute to long-term prosperity and quality of life. This recognises that sustainable development requires a coherent balance between economic growth, social equity and environmental stewardship to support the well-being of current and future generations. This approach encourages transparency, accountability and responsiveness to citizen concerns. By adopting a well-being approach driven by the CoG, governments can foster a more holistic understanding of societal progress and prioritise policies that promote sustainable development and enhance the well-being of their citizens.

Box 2.13. The New Zealand Living Standards Framework (LSF) as a performance routine that contributes to well-being

In 2021, the Treasury developed the **New Zealand LSF**, a flexible framework that prompts thinking about policy impacts across the different dimensions of well-being as well as the long-term and distributional issues and implications of policies.

The LSF supports Treasury analysts by providing a framework to understand the drivers of well-being and to consider the broader impacts of our policy advice systematically and consistently. It allows the Treasury to draw on a range of data and evidence to understand the dependencies and trade-offs across the different elements of well-being.

Associated with the LSF, the CoG also developed the LSF Dashboard, which is a measurement tool that provides a range of indicators for well-being outcomes that the Treasury believes are most important to inform New Zealand well-being reporting and Treasury policy advice on cross-government well-being priorities. The LSF Dashboard includes trends over time, distributional differences across the population and population groups (for example, by gender, ethnicity, region) and international comparisons where possible. The Treasury updates data in the LSF Dashboard every six months (around April and October) to support ongoing well-being reporting. A new version of the LSF Dashboard was released on 12 April 2022 to keep up alignment with the LSF.

The Treasury is now required by the Public Finance Act to prepare a report every four years on the state of well-being in New Zealand. Its primary purpose is to inform the Treasury's advice to the government on policy priorities for improving well-being, such as advice on budget priorities and well-being and stewardship reporting. Using indicators, the report describes:

- The state of well-being in New Zealand.
- How the state of well-being has changed over time.
- The sustainability of and any risk to the state of well-being in New Zealand.

Source: Government of New Zealand (n.d.[27]), *Our Living Standards Framework*, https://www.treasury.govt.nz/information-and-services/nz-economy/higher-living-standards/our-living-standards-framework.

Leveraging budgeting as a strategic planning tool

Budgeting is one of the key strategic instruments of government policymaking and planning, as the budget reflects and projects a government's spending priorities. The 2015 OECD Recommendation of the Council on Budgetary Governance (2015[28]) underlines the significance of aligning budgets with the medium-term strategic priorities of the government and structuring budget allocations in a way that corresponds with national objectives. The Recommendation also calls upon governments to ensure that performance, evaluation and value for money are integral to the budget process. No development plan can be successful

without securing adequate resources. Integrating the SDGs into the budget process helps ensure that the collection and allocation of public resources are carried out in ways that contribute to both the SDGs and national development goals. In addition, as more countries move from line item to performance-based budgeting, the results achieved in performance budgets must also mirror the country's sustainable development objectives/SDGs and their indicators.

As underscored in the 2020 OECD working paper "Integrated Governance for the Coherent Implementation of the SDGs in Egypt" (Igrioglu, Ostry and Allam, 2020[4]), countries that do not adopt a results-based fiscal framework may face challenges in measuring the impact of spending on the pursuit of the SDGs, as line-item budgeting does not allow for the measurement of fiscal performance as a function of the pursuit of strategic goals and outcomes. Being able to measure whether public funds earmarked for the construction of a school actually led to the building of the school does not enable a government to measure whether that school has led to better educational outcomes, better jobs and less poverty.

Several OECD countries, including Mexico and Norway, have been using performance-based budgeting to align all of their projects and programmes with the SDGs (Box 2.14). Hence, ensuring that performance evaluation and value for money are integral to the budget process and are clearly linked to the SDGs is critical.

Box 2.14. Aligning the national budget with the SDGs

Norway

Following the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, the Government of Norway incorporated the national reporting mechanisms on the SDGs into the budget process. The Ministry of Finance is responsible for ensuring a co-ordinated budget to foster SDG implementation and allocates each of the 17 SDGs to a specific co-ordinating ministry. These ministries collaborate with other ministries involved in following up on the relevant targets. Ministries prepare annual progress reports submitted to the Ministry of Finance. The Ministry of Finance incorporates the progress report on the implementation of the SDGs as a white paper in the national budget, which is presented annually to the Norwegian parliament along with the state budget. This engages the parliament in a constructive dialogue on the 2030 Agenda and ensures annual reporting on the follow-up of the SDGs to Parliament through a formalised process.

At the subnational level, the government uses existing mechanisms for co-operation with local and regional authorities, such as regular consultations between the central government and local authorities. Consultative meetings take place as plenary and bilateral meetings between the Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities and the ministries. These meetings serve as a platform for dialogue in discussing the distribution of revenues in relation to the tasks carried out by the local authorities, the financial situation of the local authorities and efficiency measures. The consultations also include arrangements for involving the Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities in the ministries' studies on the cost of reforms and impact assessments on how legislative proposals affect municipalities.

Mexico

The experience of Mexico highlights that national planning and budgetary processes provide vital tools to advance the SDGs. In Mexico, the National Planning Law was updated in 2017 to mandate all federal institutions to contribute to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. A Specialized Technical Committee on the Sustainable Development Goals (CTEODS) was formed with the leadership of the Office of the President and the National Institute of Statistics and Geography. The technical committee developed a framework with the Ministry of Finance to integrate planning, public finance management, policymaking and oversight to support the pursuit of the SDGs.

Within this framework, the Ministry of Finance has identified mechanisms to link budget allocations with the SDGs with a view to strengthening strategic planning, monitoring and evaluation. In particular, the Ministry of Finance identified specific budget items and estimated the allocation sufficient to contribute to SDG progress by using a results-based management perspective. The application of a results-based budgeting framework has enabled Mexico to acquire the necessary information to:

- Identify links between current national planning and the SDGs.
- Assess the percentage of SDGs linked to government programmes and, conversely, the number of programmes linked to each SDG.
- Communicate the country's starting point and what has been achieved.
- Make public policy decisions and budget allocations based on an initial analysis of how much is currently invested to pursue each SDG.

Sources: Igrioglu, G., A. Ostry and M. Allam (2020[4]), "Integrated Governance for Coherent Implementation of the SDGs in Egypt", https://doi.org/10.1787/524b2c85-en; Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2016[29]), *Norway's Follow-up of Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals*, https://www.regjeringen.no/globalassets/departementene/ud/vedlegg/utvikling/sdg_rapport_full_en.pdf; OECD (2018[30]) *Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development 2018: Towards Sustainable and Resilient Societies*, https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264301061-en.

In Egypt, the MoF determines the overall budget that can be spent on an annual basis on public investment projects (see Chapter 6 of the budget law). Within this budgetary framework, MPEDIC can identify and prioritise public investment project proposals with line ministries, which happens through a negotiation process and results in a programme of public investment projects approved by the Cabinet and validated by the Parliament.

Project proposals are tagged in line with the SDGs. That said, guidance from MPEDIC on developing project proposals is currently at a minimal level and there are no formal requirements in terms of impact assessments or stakeholder consultations. However, MPEDIC sets certain quality requirements for projects over a specific threshold and aims to produce manuals and handbooks on these matters for ministry use.

In this context, Egypt is gradually undertaking a process of managing the move from line-item budgeting to programme and performance-based budgeting. The implementation of the latter aims to overcome challenges in linking the national budget to the SDGs. In order to facilitate the implementation of programme and performance-based budgeting, the MoF has developed a unified template to frame each project proposal. This reform will enable a sounder monitoring and evaluation process on pursuing the SDGs. In particular, it will help match public expenses and investments to goals and KPIs related to the SDGs.

In order to strengthen capacities and skills across the government to implement performance-based budgeting, MoF in collaboration with MPEDIC, organised a series of technical training activities and workshops with the ministries piloting programmes and performance-based budgeting. These activities focused on how to apply this type of budgeting in Egypt's state budget. Despite these efforts, evidence from the project survey responses and discussion with interlocutors during the OECD fact-finding mission suggests that the capacity for costing proposed projects remains uneven at the line ministry level. Accordingly, the MoF is continuing its efforts to build capacities for programme and performance-based budgeting, both in the ministry itself and in line ministries. This is being carried out with the support of the OECD.

A related challenge is linking investments to the SDGs and identifying their socio-economic and environmental impacts as a function of their contribution to advancing the SDGs. The application of governance tools such as sustainable impact assessments (SIAs), environmental impact assessments (EIAs) and regulatory impact analysis (RIA) is not mandatory and appears to be patchy across different

policy areas. Evidence across the OECD (Igrioglu, Ostry and Allam, 2020[4]) demonstrates that the systematic application of RIA, SIAs and EIAs, both *ex post* and *ex ante*, helps deliver more effectively on the SDGs by requiring economic, social and environmental impacts to be taken into account in all strategic planning documents.

As it pursues its enhanced implementation of results-based budgeting, Egypt could *inter alia* focus on strengthening standard-setting and guidance capacity within MPEDIC for linking the SDGs and public investment projects (Chapter 6). Working with the MoF and other key players, including CAPMAS and the line ministries responsible for managing infrastructure projects, MPEDIC should partner with CAOA and the NIGSD to provide formal and continuous training on the definition of minimum requirements for project proposals from line ministries regarding project development methodologies (problem definition, socio-economic and environmental impact assessments, cost-benefit analysis, RIA, stakeholder consultation, project costing and budgeting, risk assessments, linking with SDGs, and monitoring and evaluation).

At the strategic policy level, ensuring that Egypt Vision 2030 gets mainstreamed within the government's general strategic planning, monitoring and evaluation framework can also be supported by the application of such tools as public consultation mechanisms, impact assessments and results-based budgeting, including an effective and systemic application of RIA, SIAs and EIAs. The Belgian and German examples of assessing any government initiative as a function of its impact on sustainability using the impact assessment framework could be instructive in this regard (Box 2.15).

Box 2.15. SDG mainstreaming: Assessing the performance of any government initiative as a function of sustainable development impact

Germany

It is mandatory in Germany to assess the impact of all proposed laws and regulations on the principle of sustainable development. Within the SIA framework, Germany has also introduced an online tool to assess proposed laws and regulations with regard to the GSDS as well as SDGs. The SIA serves as an instrument to check whether and how intended legislation contributes to implementing Germany's National Sustainability Strategy. All draft bills are evaluated by the Parliamentary Advisory Council on Sustainable Development to conduct quality assurance for the SIA.

Belgium

Belgium introduced an *ex-ante* impact assessment tool, the Sustainable Development Impact Assessment (SDIA), which is integrated into the RIA. The SDIA was made a mandatory requirement in 2007 and screens the impact of draft regulations in terms of sustainable development. Therefore, the RIA assesses the impact of preliminary draft regulations against the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development.

The RIA (including the SDIA) is one of the documents that must be presented to the Council of Ministers along with the draft regulation for approval. Officials in charge of drafting regulations, such as members of ministerial cabinets and/or members of administrations, are responsible for filling in the impact assessment form in a web-based platform where they can also find guidance.

Sources: Igrioglu, G., A. Ostry and M. Allam (2020[4]), *Integrated Governance for Coherent Implementation of the SDGs in Egypt*, https://doi.org/10.1787/524b2c85-en; OECD (2018[30]), *Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development 2018: Towards Sustainable and Resilient Societies*, https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264301061-en; Government of Germany (2016[31]), *German Sustainable Development Strategy*, https://www.bundesregierung.de/Content/DE/_Anlagen/Nachhaltigkeitwiederhergestellt/2017-06-20-nachhaltigkeit-neuauflage-engl.pdf?__blob=publicationFile&v=2; Government of Belgium (n.d.[7]), *Federal Strategy for Sustainable Development*, https://www.developpementdurable.be/fr/politique-federale/strategie-federale.

More broadly, MPEDIC could harness and, where necessary, formalise existing co-ordination tools (committees, etc.) to strengthen the alignment of key performance targets and indicators across the government's key strategic planning instruments, including Egypt Vision 2030 and whatever annual/pluriannual action plans are developed to implement it, the national budget as it evolves into a results-based budget, the government programme, the PARP and the government's key sector-based strategies. Over time, Egypt's capacity to measure the impact of its spending, whether related to infrastructure projects, policy modernisation or the modernisation of its public service, on the pursuit of the SDGs identified in its framework planning instruments should become seamless.

Strengthening capacities for sustainable development and SDG implementation

The effective planning and management of HR – from merit-based recruitment and hiring practices through transparent promotion and mobility rules, training capacity, rewards and recognition, and the treatment of the senior civil service as a specific framework that is vital to managing the political-administrative interface successfully – constitute key tools to pursue sustainable development effectively. These will be discussed in Chapter 4.

Thanks to the work of the NIGSD, the training arm of MPEDIC, significant efforts have been made to strengthen capacities for sustainable development in the Egyptian public sector. However, targeted efforts to empower MPEDIC's SDU seem to be lacking. As an independent, self-sufficient institution, the NIGSD is renowned both at home and abroad for its excellence in providing governance, digitalisation and sustainable development training programmes for domestic and international clients. As a governmental organisation, it fosters partnerships with public and private sector partners to deliver its training programmes. As a service provider, beyond providing advice and consulting services, training is a main pillar of its activities aimed at both private and public institutions across all sectors. Training provision is paid for upon request and can be provided directly if authorised by the NIGSD Board of Trustees or MPEDIC. In fact, according to evidence garnered during the review's fact-finding missions and from the NIGSD questionnaire responses, depending on its agenda and priorities, MPEDIC assigns and funds specific training programmes and initiatives to be delivered by the NIGSD as its main training service provider. For instance, following an MPEDIC request, the NIGSD has recently delivered two batches from the "*Be an Ambassador*" initiative and four editions of the African Women Leadership Program (See Chapter 7 for further details on these programmes).

Furthermore, MPEDIC faces several challenges in fulfilling its role in planning and implementing Egypt Vision 2030 government-wide, including barriers in identifying specific HR capacity-building needs, hindering the enhancement of technical expertise within its units and across national administration. Limited financial resources and the absence of formal agreements with crucial training service providers pose constraints on training initiatives. Additionally, a need for greater awareness among relevant parties hinders the optimal utilisation of available HR.

MPEDIC can consider several strategies to address these challenges and enhance capacity building. First, establishing continuous channels of communication between MPEDIC and other ministries and entities, such as CAOA, which would facilitate the identification of gaps and enable the specification of HR capacity-building needs in such key disciplines as policy development, strategic planning, data management and indicators work, communications, etc. This could be achieved through the SDUs and community of practice (see recommendations in the previous section). Such a platform could promote knowledge sharing, facilitate discussions on capacity-building needs and foster collaboration among stakeholders.

Furthermore, increasing the number of training courses provided by MPEDIC through the NIGSD could help build the skills and expertise of personnel within line ministries and other entities. Key potential training, HR management and planning partners in this area could be CAOA and the NIGSD. This would

ensure a comprehensive understanding of Egypt Vision 2030 and strengthen implementation efforts. Authorities sending more than one person for training and promoting knowledge dissemination and collaboration within the entities as a means to build institutional capacity over time would also be beneficial. Additionally, MPEDIC could seek technical support from relevant ministries, such as CAOA, NIGSD and MCIT, to enhance their capacity-building initiatives and provide specialised expertise in sustainable development (Box 2.16).

Strengthening HR capacities for sustainable development, which includes empowering MPEDIC 's SDU and building its needed capabilities alongside the governance of training service provision, is crucial for the effective implementation of Egypt Vision 2030. To address the HR capacity challenges in the civil service faced by MPEDIC, it is important to identify specific needs, enhance training and capacity-building capacities, allocate adequate financial resources and improve awareness among entities of available support. In particular, this support includes clarifying, strengthening and formalising training partnerships between MPEDIC, NIGSD, CAOA and the National Training Academy (NTA) also mandated to train civil servants, notably by enhancing inter-institutional co-ordination with formal MoUs and other tools to ensure that the civil service at all levels (including within the governorates) receives robust, multidimensional sustainable development training. This step can empower the SDU and build its needed capabilities.

Moreover, aligning skill levels across ministries and sustainable development focal points, which are at the moment uneven and hinder implementation, can enhance MPEDIC's effectiveness in providing capacity building and support to line ministries and other entities, fostering a co-ordinated and impactful approach towards overall sustainable development in Egypt. In so doing, these partnerships can ensure complementarity in training-services design and delivery while eliminating any overlap and duplication and address whatever gaps exist in the training curricula on offer to all levels of the public administration across all components of sustainable development policy. Recommendations to this effect are presented at the end of this chapter.

Box 2.16. Building dedicated capacities for sustainable development

The Romanian Department for Sustainable Development created a dedicated programme on sustainable development together with the Bucharest University of Economic Studies. This course aims to create sustainable development experts in order to fill a current gap in the Romanian labour force. These experts are necessary to implement the Romanian Sustainable Development Strategy but are also highly sought after by the private sector.

The programme's core value lies in fostering qualified HR capable of driving sustainable change. This innovative educational approach focuses on merging theoretical knowledge with practical application. By developing a balance between tradition and innovation, the programme prepares experts to address real-world sustainability issues in an effective manner.

The Romanian focal points for sustainable development in the public sector will also complete this training programme to ensure they build dedicated capacities for sustainable development.

Source: Government of Romania (n.d.[32]), *Become an Expert in Sustainable Development*, http://romania-durabila.gov.ro/2022/09/15/resurse-educationale-expert-in-dezvoltare-durabila/.

The way forward: overview of recommendations

This chapter underscores the imperative for the GoE to adopt a comprehensive, whole-of-government approach to pursue the SDGs and the ambitious Egypt Vision 2030 framework effectively. Building upon

recent advancements, the GoE must address critical governance challenges. These challenges encompass the enhancement of inter-institutional co-ordination, which currently remains informal, under resourced- and ad hoc. Additionally, there is a pressing need to achieve functional policy coherence, especially in the context of a multi-year, multidimensional sustainable development agenda. Furthermore, it is vital to overcome data collection and processing bottlenecks and translate outcome-based performance information into actionable policy insights. The current siloed approach to training and the absence of formal communication and outreach frameworks for effective information sharing across the entire government system must also be addressed. Lastly, formal mechanisms for communication and outreach should be established to bolster accountability and foster more robust engagement with civil society and citizens. MPEDIC, as a crucial agency within the CoG, is well positioned to spearhead this paradigm shift across the administration, ultimately enabling the GoE to make (and measure) tangible progress towards both the SDGs and the successful implementation of its ambitious reform agenda.

Actionable recommendations to enhance the effectiveness of implementing Egypt Vision 2030

The OECD offers the following actionable and tailored recommendations for consideration by the GoE, notably the Ministry of Planning, Economic Development and International Cooperation. These recommendations are clustered under the thematic sections addressed in this chapter and carry equal priority and importance. Their order tracks their corresponding sections in the chapter.

Implementing these recommendations in full will require the dedication of human and financial resources over time; the GoE, and MPEDIC in particular, notably its SDU and SMU, could craft an implementation plan in full consultation with key institutional partners, notably the CAOA, establishing priorities, time frames and sequencing for the adoption of the recommendations across the PGR as a function of the government's general strategic political and policy priorities and of the availability of the human and financial resources that will be required to carry out the plan. This will require the government to make specific decisions to allocate existing and incremental resources to implement the PGR recommendations properly.

In order to kickstart Egypt's enhanced strategic planning efforts, the initial focus could prioritise the following actions:

- Initiate a co-ordinated effort to align and integrate Egypt Vision 2030 with the General Framework for Comprehensive Development, the overarching framework for national planning. Utilise the updated Egypt Vision 2030, complemented by long- and medium-term programmes, to constitute the national plan for sustainable development as the highest tier of the planning document. This process, led by MPEDIC's SDU and SMU, should involve key government partners, use the New Planning Law and help leverage the General Framework for Comprehensive Development to plan actions and measures and deliver on the strategic objectives towards achieving Egypt Vision 2030.

- Simultaneously, bolster institutional planning and co-ordination for Egypt Vision 2030 implementation by strengthening MPEDIC's SDU and SMU, allocating sufficient resources to empower these units and building co-ordination networks with SDUs/SMUs in line ministries.

- Conduct a functional review to identify and formalise ministerial focal points for sustainable development and strategic planning. Then, ensure that these ministerial focal points receive adequate resources to engage in cross-government co-ordination for effective strategic planning and implementation of the sustainable development agenda.

- Additionally, enhance government-wide horizontal co-ordination by establishing a governance framework of the national planning framework through ministerial or prime-ministerial decrees, including reinforcing the National Committee for Monitoring the Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and creating additional operational working groups along the strategic priorities of Egypt Vision 2030 led by MPEDIC. This entails formalising mandates, roles and responsibilities of inter-ministerial committees and incentivising collaboration through carrot-and-stick mechanisms. MPEDIC's SDU should create a central repository of templates and guidelines to strengthen and streamline collaboration and support the development of an online platform focusing on tracking the strategic goals of Egypt Vision 2030 and the SDGs.

Overview of complete actionable and tailored recommendations

1. Pursue the implementation of the updated Egypt Vision 2030 by using a plan that drives co-ordination, integration and coherence across Egypt's strategic planning frameworks

Led by MPEDIC's SDU and SMU, working closely with key partners across the government, this approach focuses on:

- **Harmonising frameworks**, establishing a consistent planning horizon (three-year increments with 2030 as the endpoint) across all key government strategies and Egypt Vision 2030 itself. Leveraging the national plan for mid-term sustainable development and the annual general plan for economic and social development as the primary instrument for implementing Egypt Vision 2030. Finally, clearly defining roles and responsibilities across all ministries to avoid duplication of efforts. The tools offered by Decree-Law No. 18 of 2022 (New Planning Law) should be used as a basis to start this work.

- **Measuring implementation performance**, developing a comprehensive and robust monitoring framework for Egypt Vision 2030 aligned with the national plan for mid-term sustainable development. Regular reporting on progress towards Egypt Vision 2030 goals and dissemination of these reports widely to stakeholders, including government officials, civil society organisations and the general public. Encouraging public participation in discussions about the implementation and potential revisions of Egypt Vision 2030.

2. Strengthen and consolidate institutional planning and co-ordination arrangements

*2.1. Strengthen whole-of-government **institutional capacity** for sustainable development and Egypt Vision 2030 planning:*

- **Empower and equip MPEDIC's SDU and SMU** by allocating sufficient financial resources, human capital and technology infrastructure to enable them to co-ordinate and execute whole-of-government responsibilities effectively in all relevant matters related to sustainable development and Egypt Vision 2030 planning and implementation.

- **Conduct an operational, functional review** to identify existing SDUs/SMUs and optimise resource allocation. Consider consolidating existing units where possible to optimise resource allocation. Pilot these reviews in a few ministries to identify under-utilised resources that can be redeployed to strengthen SDUs/SMUs and minimise the need for additional funding.

- **Formalise ministerial focal points** in close co-ordination with CAOA, these units will act as the central point of contact for all Egypt Vision 2030-related matters within their respective ministries. Notably by participating in the inter-ministerial committees chaired by MPEDIC and others for the purpose of steering and monitoring the implementation of Egypt Vision 2030 (including the committees on data and indicators).

- **Ensure adequate resource allocation** for the ministerial SDUs/SMUs within each line ministry. This will empower them to effectively engage in cross-government co-ordination to pursue Egypt Vision 2030 planning and implementation by fully participating in the established inter-ministerial arrangements.

*2.2 Strengthen whole-of-government sustainable development and Egypt Vision 2030 **planning capacity***

a) Ensure that dedicated units in all relevant line ministries can engage in **effective planning**:

- Ensure that ministerial focal points for sustainable development and strategic planning act as the **primary access point for ministry staff** on all matters related to sustainable development and Egypt Vision 2030 to co-ordinate intra-ministry implementation planning.
- Mandate these units to:
  - Interface with MPEDIC's SDU and SMU on strategic policy planning matters, including participation in inter-ministerial committees.
  - Ensure sectoral strategies and projects align with Egypt Vision 2030 goals.
  - Interface with MPEDIC, CAPMAS and NIGSD on all matters relating to performance information and KPIs, ensuring over time that indicators and targets are progressively more aligned across all government strategies.
  - Collaborate with MoF and MPEDIC on adoption of performance-based budgeting.
  - Co-ordinating with MPEDIC and the Ministry of Local Development on the localisation strategy.
- **Facilitate communities of practice** among ministerial focal points, sectoral analysts, planners, project managers and data officers for Egypt Vision 2030. Encourage collaboration, knowledge exchange and best practice sharing to enhance implementation and performance assessment.

b) Strengthen the **use of evidence**:

- Institutionalise co-ordination among MPEDIC's SDU and SMU, CAPMAS and NIGSD for **effective data generation, sharing and utilisation** in planning and implementing Egypt Vision 2030.
- Utilise existing co-ordination mechanisms, such as the **National Committee for Monitoring the Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals**, **to monitor the implementation of the SDGs** and existing and future committees of ministerial focal points (SDUs/SMUs).
- Enhance the **overall use of evidence for strategic planning**:
  - Develop a user-friendly online platform for collaborative data sharing among ministries, CAPMAS, the NIGSD and governorates. Include features like data upload, analysis tools and secure access controls.
  - Provide standardised data templates and guidelines within the platform for consistency and compatibility across ministries and government levels.
  - Conduct training sessions and offer ongoing support for platform usage through webinars, tutorials and a helpdesk.
  - Integrate the platform seamlessly with existing co-ordination mechanisms to enable automatic data sharing and updates, reducing administrative burdens.

c) Leverage **budgeting processes**:

- **Continue and accelerate the fully-fledged implementation of results-based budgeting**. MoF and MPEDIC sustainable development and strategic management units should broaden and deepen their co-ordination with each other and the NIGSD to support line ministries in this regard on an ongoing basis.
- **Strengthen capacity in line ministries and in the CoG to conduct** sustainable impact assessments and feed the resulting evidence into the budget-setting process.
- Working together, MPEDIC, MoF and CAPMAS should **ensure that all KPIs and targets are aligned across the National Budget, the Government Programme, the PARP and SDA/Egypt Vision 2030, etc.** (making use of existing co-ordination mechanisms, formalising and resourcing them where necessary).

d) Deliver **robust and multidimensional training**:

- Enhance and formalise inter-institutional co-ordination between MPEDIC, CAOA, NIGSD and NTA, expanding to include non-governmental and private training providers. Develop and sustain a **comprehensive capacity development programme** for civil servants within sustainable development and strategic management units. This programme should encompass training modules and curricula focusing on:
  o Multi-year/medium-term policy development and strategic planning.
  o Cross-silo co-ordination tools and methods.
  o Indicator development.
  o Performance Management frameworks.
  o Communications and outreach mechanisms/tools.
- **Leverage the network of ministerial focal points for sustainable development and strategic planning**, especially with the establishment of more SDUs/SMUs. Empower these focal points to identify training needs and relay this information to MPEDIC, CAOA and NTA, led by MPEDIC's sustainable development and strategic management units.
- Collaborate with CAOA to establish **a community of practice** comprising HR officers from line ministries and agencies. This community will facilitate the sharing of successful sustainable development training initiatives and good practices.

2.3. Strengthen government-wide horizontal co-ordination

- MPEDIC should establish **a governance framework** through ministerial or prime-ministerial decrees with mandates and incentives for inter-ministerial committees overseeing Egypt Vision 2030. This framework should clearly articulate **roles, responsibilities and reporting lines** for each committee and involved institution. Regularly assess the effectiveness of these committees and adjust as needed.
- This governance framework should **strengthen the National Committee for Monitoring the Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals**:
  o Clarify and document the committee's structure and mandate, aligning it with the anticipated Supreme Council for Planning and Sustainable Development.
  o Regularise committee meetings, convening them at fixed intervals (e.g. quarterly) for consistent progress reviews and issue discussions.
  o Establish specialised working groups with technical representatives from relevant ministries, focusing on specific SDG clusters like health, economy and employment.
  o Ensure active participation from a diverse range of institutions, including non-governmental stakeholders, in committee activities.

- Conduct **a comprehensive review of existing good practices** in inter-institutional co-ordination for Egypt Vision 2030. Identify and codify these best practices for broader dissemination and application across all government ministries.
- MPEDIC's SDU should **establish a central repository** of templates, guidelines and an online library accessible through collaborative platforms to streamline collaboration with ministries, facilitate their contributions and ensure alignment with their specific needs and objectives.

*2.4. Strengthen **vertical co-ordination** to improve Egypt's localisation efforts*

- MPEDIC, working with the Ministry of Local Development, should **formalise a localisation strategy** for Egypt Vision 2030 by defining clear objectives, deliverables and timelines for implementing and monitoring the strategy at the governorate and possibly municipal levels.
- Enhance the role and mandate of the **GIAF Committee** by transforming it into a national-level "Localisation Committee" of officials led by MPEDIC and comprised of key institutions, including the Ministry of Local Development, MoF, CAPMAS and representatives of the governorates and municipalities, specifically focused on overseeing the implementation of the national localisation strategy for Egypt Vision 2030.
- Identify **pilot governorates** from each economic region of Egypt to implement the localisation strategy. Establish and resource focal points (SDUs/SMUs) for sustainable development and Egypt Vision 2030 within these pilot governorates.
- Establish a **community of practice** among these governorate-level SDUs/SMUs. This community will facilitate knowledge sharing, collaboration and mutual learning in implementing the localisation strategy for Egypt Vision 2030.

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Notes

[1] At the time of writing, the Ministry of Planning and Economic Development (MPED) and the Ministry of International Cooperation (MOIC) were merged into the Ministry of Planning, Economic Development and International Cooperation (now MPEDIC) in 2024.

[2] The formal name in Arabic as per the decree الإدارة العامة لمتابعة آداء خطط وبرامج التنمية المستدامة طويلة ومتوسطة المدى والسنوية

3 Modernising the public administration to deliver better services and achieve Egypt's Vision 2030 and long-term development goals

Egypt has progressively strengthened its strategic, legal and institutional framework for public administration reform through its Public Administration Reform Plan (PARP) and the central role played by the Central Agency for Organization and Administration (CAOA). It has made strides in modernising its public administration, particularly in terms of public sector effectiveness, competencies and digitalisation. This chapter explores the evolutions and progress made in modernising the public administration in Egypt, looking at the achievements and remaining challenges when it comes to co-ordinating and implementing public sector reform. It explores practices that could help Egypt further achieve its objectives in reforming public governance in support of Egypt Vision 2030 through a revised PARP and new co-ordination and implementation mechanisms.

Introduction

Modernising the public administration to support Egypt's long-term development

As highlighted in the United Nations' 2030 Agenda, notably Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 16 on peace, justice and strong public institutions, a well-functioning public administration is central to pursuing a country's national development through improved public policy and service design and delivery to all, especially in priority sectors as health, education, mobility and security (UN, 2015[1]). Public administration reform (PAR) is an important reform area in public governance as it constitutes the basis for a successful design and implementation of strategic frameworks, regulations, policies and public services that meet the needs of people in pursuit of the SDGs (OECD/SIGMA, 2017[2]).

Modernising the public administration can help adapt public services, policies and capacities to constantly changing societies as well as to the latest social, economic and technological developments (OECD, 2005[3]). Public administrations need to transform and innovate to embrace change while responding to citizens' growing demands to enhance their well-being. Efficient, inclusive, open and citizen-oriented public administrations can best respond to citizens' needs, expectations and concerns, including in addressing global challenges, ultimately increasing trust in public institutions (OECD, 2022[4]). It also requires fostering public participation in the design, implementation and monitoring of public services, policies and regulations for the benefit of citizens and society.

A modernised, fit-for-purpose public administration, including a well-trained and corruption-free civil service, can foster the development and pursuit of inclusive public policies and services.

More than half of OECD countries are currently pursuing ambitious PAR plans to modernise their public administration, most often aimed at making public policies and service delivery more efficient, transparent and citizen-oriented. Modernising public administration is also a key lever identified in long-term strategies to achieve development objectives in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, for instance, in Morocco's New Development Model (OECD, 2023[5]). The modernisation of public administration is intrinsically linked to the broad global context and the specific challenges and strategic reform objectives that this environment generates in each country.

Like most OECD member countries, Egypt has put in place an institutional and strategic framework to support PAR. It has established a governance structure supervised by the Higher Committee for Administrative Reform (HCAR), developed a strategic document to guide public administration reform efforts, namely the Public Administration Reform Plan (PARP) and tasked a dedicated institution – the Central Agency for Organization and Administration (CAOA) – to steer and implement the PARP. Public administration and the civil service are also governed by a fast-evolving legal framework composed of a large body of laws, decrees and regulations, including, for instance, the 2016 Civil Service Law and recent decrees in areas such as ministries' organisational structures, digitalisation, performance budgeting or performance evaluation. Several initiatives to improve and digitalise public services and processes are being implemented, such as Digital Egypt and the creation of a digital service platform. Enhancing public governance and administration around the principles of the rule of law, justice, participation, accountability, transparency and anti-corruption is one of the key objectives to achieve Egypt Vision 2030 (MPED, 2023[6]).

These reform efforts led by CAOA have translated into achievements and new developments in the public administration system in Egypt over the past years. Further modernisation efforts of the public administration are in line with the government policy to adapt to new global trends and context and aim to contribute to achieving the country's ambitious goals enshrined in Egypt Vision 2030. These efforts include updating the public administration framework, increasing the effectiveness, integrity and citizen-centricity of public administration and enhancing the quality, reach and accessibility of public services to respond more effectively to the expectations of citizens and improve their well-being.

Overview of the achievements and challenges of the public administration in Egypt

Egypt has made progress in reforming and modernising its public administration under CAOA's impulse and through different priority initiatives regarding the effectiveness of public institutions, digitalisation, civil service and public services, which are all key themes for public sector transformation. This progress has been measured through improvements in international indices and indicators of public governance. More reform efforts are intended to fulfil Egypt's ambitious PAR agenda to achieve the country's long-term goals highlighted in Egypt Vision 2030.

The effectiveness of the public administration has recorded progress over recent years, but there is scope to scale the impact of ongoing reforms

Enhancing the effectiveness of the public administration is a key objective in Egypt, considering the size and importance of the public sector in the economy and employment. Thanks to a number of key reforms and measures, the country has recorded progress in recent years, with Egypt's government effectiveness score increasing from 20 in 2016 to 33.96 in 2022 in the latest edition of the World Bank Worldwide Governance Indicators (World Bank, 2023[7]). Egypt has, in particular, improved on five dimensions out of six in the index: voice and accountability; political stability and absence of violence; regulatory quality; rule of law; and control of corruption (NIGSD, 2023[8]). Egypt still fares lower than the MENA average, which stands at 42.35 (World Bank, 2021[9]), underlining the need to modify some public administration features to further deliver progress as regards its effectiveness and delivery and in order to reach the objective of 45 outlined in the revised Egypt Vision 2030.

As a core element of public sector effectiveness, the relatively large size of the public sector in Egypt renders imperative its improvement to deliver quality and cost-effective public policies and services and enhance fiscal sustainability. As in a number of MENA countries, the public sector in Egypt is one of the largest employers in the nation, with public jobs representing an estimated 22% of total employment in 2019, compared to 18.6% on average in OECD countries in 2021 (World Bank, 2016[10]; OECD, 2023[11]). Streamlining the civil service has been recognised as a key reform priority by successive governments (see further details in Chapter 4). Efforts to limit and cap the number of employees in the public sector led to a significant decline in the share of compensation of employees as a proportion of total government spending from 27.1% in 2015 to 19.8% in 2022, slightly below the OECD average (20.1%) (OECD, 2024[12]). While the government raised the minimum wage and created additional bonuses for the civil service through several packages in 2022 and 2023 to mitigate these effects, financial conditions have tightened in Egypt and increased the need to improve the effectiveness and streamline the public administration (OECD, 2024[12]).

Egypt has engaged in efforts to enhance citizen-oriented public service delivery

Enhancing public service delivery remains a key area for future reform, as acknowledged in the PARP. This is particularly important as satisfaction with key public services remains below that of OECD member countries and some MENA countries. While Egypt has no comprehensive government data on public service satisfaction, independent local sources point out satisfaction rates of 61% in education and 57% in health in 2019 (Baseera, 2019[13]). These results remain below OECD member countries in the same years, with 71% of citizens satisfied with health services and 67% with the education sector (OECD, 2021[14]).

Egypt's strategic priorities, in particular those enshrined in the PARP, also underline the need for improvements in the quality of public services and to track progress made over recent years. The GovTech Maturity Index also shows that Egypt's performance on the Public Service Delivery Index has significantly progressed over recent years, which can be linked to the implementation and development of the Digital Egypt portal (NIGSD, 2023[8]). While the Egyptian public administration has developed some feedback

mechanisms for administrative and public services, it is developing surveys and other means to collect data and information on public services that could better inform service design and delivery and assess the levels of satisfaction on a regular basis. These data should constitute a baseline, allowing for comparisons and measuring progress over time.

Egypt has digitalised a number of public services and has launched government portal Digital Egypt for online procedures and services (Government of Egypt, n.d.[15]). Egypt recorded significant improvements in the United Nations E-Government Development Index (EDGI) in 2022 compared to the previous 2020 edition. The country ranks high in the Online Service Index, the Human Capital Index and the Telecommunications Infrastructure Index but lags in the E-Participation Index and its different components (e-information, e-consultation, e-decision-making) (UN, 2022[16]). Egypt ranks 103rd in EDGI in 2022 and could further embrace the digital transformation of the public sector (UN, 2022[16]). The digital transformation objective is also identified in Egypt Vision 2030 as a means to improve the functioning of the government, the delivery and inclusiveness of public services and the transparency of public administration, ultimately aiming to increase citizens' trust in the government (MPED, 2023[6]). The digital divide is still prevalent in Egypt, as acknowledged by Egypt Vision 2030 (MPED, 2023[6]). Egypt has been recognised as a top improver in Roland Berger's Digital Inclusion Index but is ranked 50th out of 82 countries assessed in 2020 (Roland Berger, 2021[17]).

Public participation and the involvement of citizens in the design and implementation of public policies and services are key drivers to enhance trust in the performance of government. The further strengthening of the engagement of citizens with the public administration has been recognised as a pillar of the PARP. The public administration has been making efforts to engage citizens further and collect their feedback, for instance on public services. More progress can be made as Egypt still scores lower (8.21) than the MENA average (23.74) and the OECD average on voice and accountability (86.21) in the Worldwide Governance Indicators (World Bank, 2021[9]).

In light of the above, significant efforts, including the development of the PARP, the implementation of the new Civil Service Law and the move to the New Capital, are being undertaken to modernise and enhance the effectiveness of the public administration, streamline hiring processes and combat nepotism, including by introducing a fair, merit-based and standardised competition process for candidates. Training programmes, including those in the context of the move to the New Capital, have also been delivered by CAOA over the past years to increase the competencies of the public sector.

The institutional framework and administrative reforms in Egypt

The updated Egypt Vision 2030 highlights the need to enhance governance and modernise the public administration as a priority to support the country's long-term development. In fact, "Enhanced governance and partnerships" stands as the sixth objective of Egypt Vision 2030, framed by principles of a citizen-centred, transparent, accountable and corruption-free public administration (MPED, 2023[6]). This reinforces and updates the priorities identified in the PARP. Modernising and improving the effectiveness of the public administration and adopting more comprehensive whole-of-government approaches and co-ordination are key aims of the Egyptian PAR efforts, which CAOA leads.

CAOA, the key institution in charge of PAR

CAOA is the leading agency in charge of PAR and human resources management

Created in 1964, replacing the Bureau of Personnel, CAOA is the custodian of the public administration reform agenda in Egypt. While CAOA is an institution with a long-standing mandate for civil service management, its portfolio expanded when assigned PAR in 2018 following the restructuring of the

MoPMAR (the former Ministry of Planning and Administrative Reform, now the Ministry of Planning, Economic Development and International Cooperation, MPEDIC). In line with Law No. 6 of 2021, CAOA is mandated to "enhance the efficiency of the state's administrative body and promoting its human resources (HR) to enable the governmental sector to provide high quality public services". In particular, the law emphasises the agency's role in the administrative reform process by proposing draft laws for administrative reform, approval of regulations, reforming the job grade system and employment in the country, providing a degree of flexibility for employment in the administrative body of the state and regulating the administrative body in charge of training plans, inspection and judicial control. CAOA is also tasked with preparing the PAR plans and co-ordinating and establishing mechanisms to implement them, increasing the capabilities and efficiency of the public administration, including through training, and improving the quality of public services.

The 2016 Civil Service Law (No. 81) underpins Egypt's institutional framework for public administration reform. It regulates appointments and promotions within the civil service, establishes wage scales and provides means for capacity building and the development of higher public service standards. The law requires governmental entities to create a HR plan to govern the hiring of new employees. It also establishes a Civil Service Council to manage Egypt's public workforce. Besides representatives of the government, the head of the Egyptian Trade Union Federation and four independent non-governmental experts are members of the Council. The Civil Service Law is a key tool underpinning the government's efforts to make public service merit-based, cost-effective and responsive. In short, it modernises the methods and techniques of the civil service.

To deliver on its ambitious agenda, CAOA's current work plan identifies three work areas:

- Updating the PARP and other key organisational and legal documents.
- Public employment and civil service reform.
- The move to the New Capital as one of the means to upgrade and modernise the civil service performance.

Indeed, CAOA has been at the forefront of ambitious PAR efforts in Egypt. In doing so, it has spearheaded reforms in this regard under the PARP by leading its implementation across sectors and levels of government. Following the adoption of the 2014 PARP, regulatory and institutional reforms have been the focus of PAR efforts to set the basic structures and mechanisms to ensure the success of subsequent implementation efforts. Indeed, the Government of Egypt has achieved key progress to date with the adoption of the Civil Service Law.

CAOA has achieved key progress in operationalising the Civil Service Law and gradually consolidating formal organisational structures across public entities in Egypt to ensure a fit-for-purpose civil service. It is the leading entity responsible for public employment by issuing job classifications, supporting the amendment of the organisational charts of new institutions, supervising HR management policies and supporting HR planning and execution (see Chapter 4 for further information). The agency also manages the overall recruitment process of civil servants through a job portal administered by CAOA, which then manages the selection process. It has developed a competency framework to further professionalise these efforts to assess employee capacities through the Capability Assessment and Competition Centre. This has been recognised as a best practice of meritocratic civil service in the 2020 African Peer Review Mechanism report on Egypt (APRM, 2020[18]).

CAOA also plays a key role in capacity building and training, which is widely and positively recognised by line ministries (see Chapter 4 for further information). It assesses, identifies and monitors training needs and refers staff to various training programmes both inhouse and externally. It offers inhouse training in its Leadership Training Centre and its Centre for Capability Assessment and Competition. CAOA is the leading agency mandated to train civil service employees. It also approves the civil servant training programmes of other institutions providing training in specific areas.

In view of its role, CAOA collects and disseminates data and information about civil service employees, ministerial assistants and senior assistants, and the implementation of prime minister's decrees related to the civil service, such as the establishment of specific units planned by the PARP in each government entity. CAOA prepares, delivers and publishes reports and data for the Prime Minister's Office, government, parliament and general public. To support its activities, the agency has launched a number of applications for a more accessible and faster delivery of its services. This includes a national database of civil servants that has been recently updated, which resulted in the collection of more than 3.5 million records and profiles. CAOA is aiming to establish an integrated digital system to collect, analyse and disseminate data related to public employment, particularly considering that HR databases are not connected across government entities.

While CAOA has undertaken regulatory and organisational reforms to advance PAR efforts, current internal arrangements governing the implementation of the PARP could benefit from being further institutionalised. CAOA is headed by a President and organised into 2 sectors, 21 central departments and 90 general departments respectively (Figure 3.1). It reports regularly to the Prime Minister, and co-ordinates and supports decision-making on key aspects of the public administration.

CAOA has consolidated a robust structure to deliver on this mandate, as the relevant departments are in charge of advancing the PAR agenda in their areas of expertise. Findings from OECD interviews revealed that a dedicated unit or team following the implementation of the PARP is needed. Therefore, CAOA could leverage its positioning within the administration to establish a unit or dedicated task force for leading, co-ordinating and ensuring the implementation of the PARP within CAOA and with relevant line ministries. This structure would enable CAOA to further consolidate several implementation mechanisms of the NAR, such as the implementation plan, monitoring and evaluation tools, awareness raising, heightened capacity building and feeding the HCAR with data such as audits and client satisfaction reports to ensure evidence-based decision-making.

Figure 3.1. CAOA's organisation chart, 2023
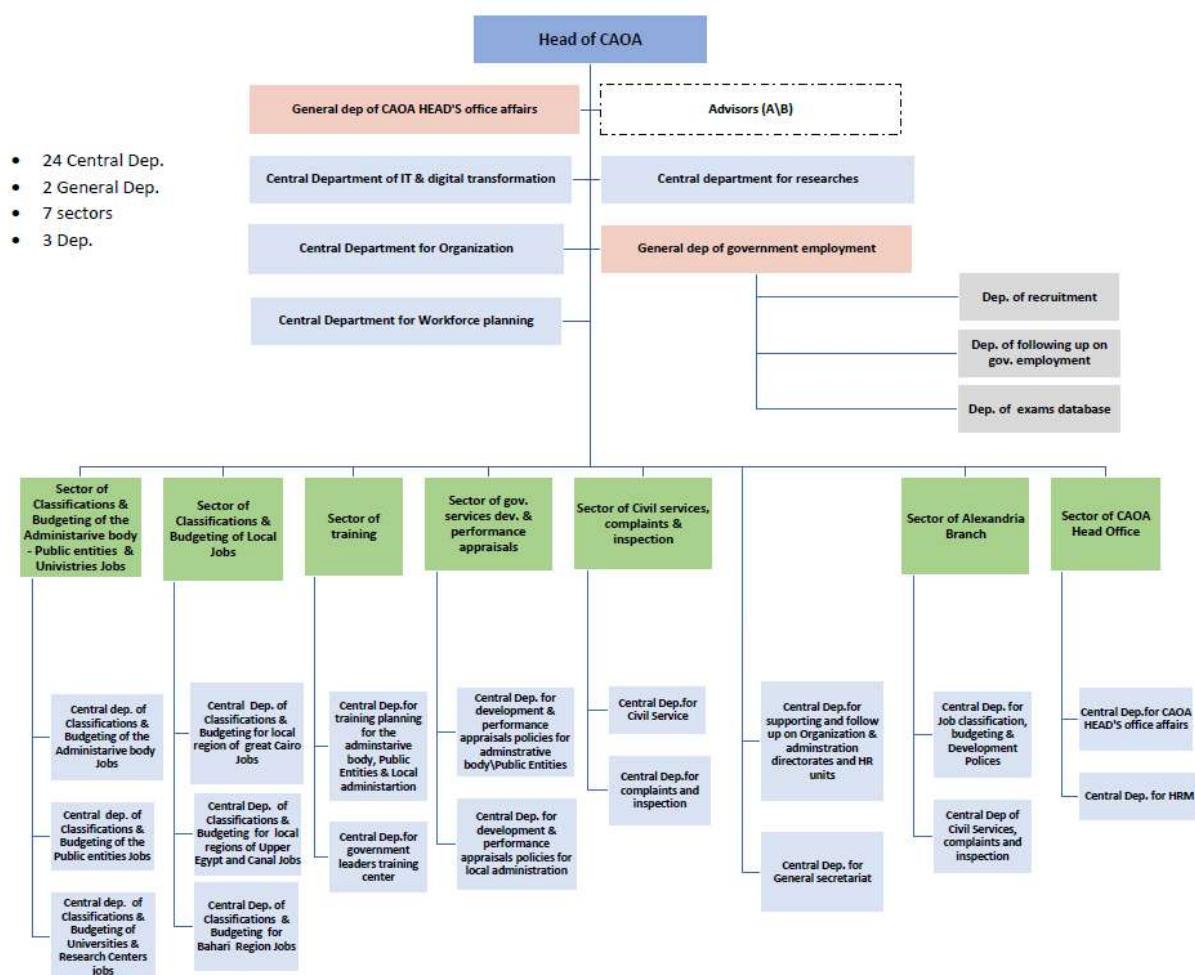
Source: Organisational chart provided by CAOA as part of the project.

A number of OECD member countries have dedicated departments or units in charge of those tasks to clarify roles and responsibilities and ensure a whole-of-government implementation of priority reforms. For instance, the Government of France established the Inter-ministerial Directorate for Public Transformation (DITP) for such a purpose (Box 3.1).

Box 3.1. France's Inter-ministerial Directorate for Public Transformation (DITP)

France's DITP is responsible for accelerating public transformation and reform in the country, including co-ordinating and implementing the public transformation programme defined by the Inter-ministerial Committee for Public Transformation. The DITP acts as the committee's secretariat and is located under the Ministry of Public Transformation and Service.

The DITP also monitors the implementation of the French government's priority reforms in liaison with line ministries and departmental prefectures. In particular, the DITP is leading the implementation of the Public Services+ programme that aims to improve and modernise public service delivery in France. In addition to its steering and monitoring roles, the DITP also supports the implementation of key administrative reforms by line ministries and agencies through consulting, training and innovation support.

Source: French Ministry of Transformation and Public Service (n.d.[19]), *Direction interministérielle de la transformation publique (DITP)*, https://www.modernisation.gouv.fr/.

A Higher Committee for Administrative Reform is charged with steering and advancing PAR

Egypt established the HCAR to steer and co-ordinate the PAR agenda under the PARP across sectors and levels of government. The Committee was set up at the highest level by Prime Minister's Decree No. 1321 of 2017 and is led by the Prime Minister (MoPMAR, 2017[20]). The HCAR is considered a decision-making body, as all of its recommendations are presented in the form of PM decrees.

The mandate of the HCAR includes four main activities:

- Approving the governmental programme in the field of administrative reform, developing public state institutions and raising the efficiency of the administrative system.
- Establishing mechanisms for implementing the PARP, determining timelines, following up and supporting the stages of implementation.
- Setting up a programme for improving public services on the central and local levels.
- Endorsing training programmes for the state's administrative leaders and other high-level executives, and developing HR.

The HCAR holds regular meetings and includes relevant actors involved in PAR efforts. It includes the MPEDIC, the Ministry of Finance (MoF), the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (MCIT), the Ministry of Local Development and CAOA represented by its president. Additional members are four non-governmental experts in the area of work. Recent meetings of the Committee have focused on the move to new capital and support to civil servants and social distancing in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In light of the objective of updating the PARP, the HCAR could be a valuable platform through which CAOA engages with relevant government interlocutors to identify and align high-level priorities for the updating of the PAR. This would be all the more important, as the PARP covers a wide range of sectors and policies that require whole-of-government co-ordination to succeed, including key government strategic frameworks such as Egypt Vision 2030 and the annual Government Programme. Enhancing the flow of information towards the technical subsidiary committee would also contribute towards more action and better knowledge sharing and would diminish isolated interventions while ensuring the necessary organisational attention for the PARP. Indeed, it would enhance CAOA's leadership role in the implementation of the PARP and ensure greater co-ordination with other key institutions.

Indeed, there is room to strengthen the role of the HCAR and its subsidiary committee to develop a more systematic framework for horizontal co-ordination in the updating and implementation of the PARP. The subsidiary committee is comprised of experts at the technical level representing different policy sectors within the administration. This committee is more technical and follows efforts more closely under the different pillars and measures of the PARP. A number of informal working groups also meet to discuss and address different themes related to PAR under the leadership of CAOA or other line ministries (i.e. the MCIT with digital transformation efforts). CAOA also has direct interactions with government entities on public administration matters and can report issues and items to the HCAR. While this system is thorough, since discussions involve subject matter experts in specific policy issues, this could be further organised to report on and link sector-specific efforts with overall PARP implementation.

A number of other public institutions are involved in PAR initiatives with different roles and responsibilities

As in many OECD member countries, the implementation of the PAR agenda involves a large number of ministries and public entities, as well as other external stakeholders. This is no different in Egypt, where the public administration is one of the largest in the world, with several ministries involved in efforts to further professionalise the civil service, strengthen existing regulatory and institutional frameworks, provide better quality services and usher in the digital transformation of the public sector. While this system is thorough, findings from OECD interviews reveal that the present complex interplay of actors, processes and reporting lines can result in large amounts of information that are difficult to centralise, leading to unclear roles/responsibilities and potential duplication. Therefore, strengthening co-ordination mechanisms among relevant actors involved in PAR efforts will be of utmost importance for CAOA to ensure their success.

Through its role in steering Egypt Vision 2030, the MPEDIC has an important role, as the vision represents an umbrella framework that sets common objectives as well as measures to modernise the public administration for the attainment of greater socio-economic development. Notably, it identifies relevant commitments under SDG 16 on peace, justice and strong public institutions relevant to the work led by CAOA under the PARP. This underlines the importance of aligning commitments between Egypt Vision 2030 and the PARP. At present, OECD evidence revealed that interactions between both institutions could be further strengthened, as these take place during bilateral ad hoc meetings and as part of different high-level committees, including the HCAR and the Committee for the Move to the New Capital.

The MCIT is another relevant entity involved in PAR efforts, given its mandate to lead the digital transformation of Egypt under the Digital Egypt Strategy (MCIT, n.d.[21]). The ministry has been a key partner of CAOA in digitalising key public services, consolidating digital infrastructure in the public sector and developing the Digital Egypt platform. The digitalisation of public services is an important aspect of the PARP that will require close co-ordination with CAOA moving forward to advance the implementation of the PARP and consolidate the entity's efforts to establish a Public Service Observatory.

While CAOA is leading training activities for civil servants, a number of other public institutions are also developing and supporting training activities on specific matters, including but not limited to the National Training Academy, the National Anti-Corruption Academy, the National Institute for Governance and Sustainable Development (NIGSD) and public universities. Together, these actors contribute to CAOA's efforts to professionalise the civil service to meet the most pressing challenges currently facing the administration (see Chapter 4 for further details).

Egypt has defined and is implementing a PARP to modernise the public administration

The plan was defined in 2014 around a number of crucial strategic objectives and further revised

Egypt has a long history of implementing PARs to improve policy and service design and delivery, and address long-standing public administration issues. The latest effort is the 2014 PARP, developed and launched after a consultative exercise led by the then-Ministry of Administration Development. In 2014, a committee of experts identified the challenges facing the Egyptian public administration and drafted the vision of the plan and its pillars. To do so, several sub-committees were formed to discuss each pillar with representatives of ministries, the private sector, trade unions, university students and the media. This process led to the articulation of the first version of the PARP. The PARP has been progressively updated to record progress made since 2014 and the HCAR was formed to supervise and support the implementation of the PARP (see Chapter 2 for further information). These efforts align with good practices across OECD member and partner countries, with the regular revision and update of strategic reform plans – for example, against changes in the country and the broader global landscape - to ensure its relevance.

The PARP takes the form of a short, high-level strategic document underlining a vision and identifying objectives, guiding principles and high-level actions for modernising the public administration. The PARP articulates a vision of "an efficient, effective, competent, transparent, fair and responsive governmental administrative body that provides high-quality services, maintains accountability, increases citizens' satisfaction, and contributes significantly to the realization of the national development goals and improvement of the country status" (MoPMAR, 2017[20]). The reform plan was explicitly developed to increase the effectiveness of the public administration in Egypt and address a number of challenges listed in the document, including the complex organisational structure of the public administration, inflated employment and high wage costs, the large number of regulations and their contradictions/overlaps, the need to improve the state asset management system, enhancing transparency and accountability, the high level of centralisation and the high cost of corruption.

To address these challenges, the PARP was built around five pillars, each containing a number of desired results, objectives and actions (Table 3.1):

1. Increasing the **effectiveness of the public administration** through institutional reforms, including restructuring and reorganising government agencies and ministries through the creation of new units.

2. **Developing public administration and civil servant's capabilities** to increase civil service performance and develop their competencies.

3. **Strengthening the legal framework for civil service reform and management** through legislative reforms to develop a conducive and well-defined legal framework for the public administration that would increase its agility and support the leadership's capacity to manage and deliver.

4. **Improving and digitalising government services** to serve citizens better, enhance the interactions between citizens and public administration, and enhance the digitalisation and functioning of public administration.

5. **Improving the governance and legal framework for information and information technology (IT) systems** in order to better develop, manage and connect databases across the public administration.

Table 3.1. Pillars, results and objectives of the PARP

	Pillar	Results	Objectives
1	Institutional reform	Result 1: The efficiency of public administrative bodies is enhanced	Objective 1.1: Raise the efficiency of the administrative organisation of the state Objective 1.2: Restructure ministries Objective 1.3: Establish new organisational units Objective 1.4: Provide supportive reform activities
2	Capacity building and development	Result 2: The competencies of civil servants are improved	Objective 2.1: Develop and implement a newcomer training plan (Bedaiah) Objective 2.2: Develop and implement a leader training plan Objective 2.3: Develop and implement a career path training plan Objective 2.4: Develop and implement a local executive training plan Objective 2.5: Develop and implement a permanent undersecretary training plan Objective 2.6: Develop and implement a second-line (future leaders) training plan Objective 2.7: Develop and implement a training plan for retiring civil servants
3	Legislative reform	Result 3: The legal framework ensures well-regulated/disciplined public administration, enabling leaders to carry out their responsibilities flexibly	Objective 3: Develop a legal framework ensuring disciplined public administration, enabling leaders to carry out entrusted responsibilities flexibly
4	Public services	Result 4: The public services provided to citizens are improved	Objective 4: Improve public services provided for citizens Governmental services: Law enforcement services Preparing the databases of voters Developing the information systems of the Central Administration for Pharmaceutical Affairs (CAPA) System for listing state assets Database of General Authority for Literacy and Adult Education Central laboratory services for the Ministry of Health Automation of hospitals Governmental Procurement Portal Customer Service Center in the Ministry of Civil Aviation Completing and linking databases. People services: Mechanisation of birth and death registration in Health Offices Central system for vaccinations Local administration services in general bureaus of governorates Local administration services in districts and cities Developing systems of traffic units and prosecutions Developing services of the Department of Real Estate Publicity and Registration Egyptian government portal and usage of alternative channels Services of governmental portals Electronic tasks Services of Civil Status Organization.
5	Databases and information system	Result 5: The institutional and legislative frameworks governing the data exchange process are developed	Objective 5.1: Create databases Objective 5.2: Complete databases Objective 5.3: Integrate databases

Source: MoPMAR (2017[20]), National Public Administration Reform Plan (PARP), Revised Version, Ministry of Planning, Monitoring and Administrative Reform.

The structure of the PARP has evolved since 2014. The latest revision takes stock of progress made since 2014, identifies challenges to overcome and sets priorities moving forward in terms of activities and actions expected under each pillar. It also provides quantitative evidence on certain public services and issues, such as death and birth certificates. While the PARP underwent a thorough review process, this strategic framework remains high-level in nature and there is a need to ensure its operationalisation with concrete targets, performance indicators, actions and expected impact.

While the development of this strategic framework to spearhead the reform of the public administration represents a key milestone, opportunities remain to translate its commitments into further action. Indeed, PAR is not always a linear journey, as it is a gradual process that introduces profound transformations to public institutions' structures, working methods and processes. CAOA has made important progress in setting the main strategic directive of the reform through the PARP and would further benefit from ensuring the operationalisation of these strategic goals towards an evidence-based transformation strategy of the public administration. First, the PARP lists a series of issues that the strategy aims to address that could benefit from a full diagnosis and analysis based on data and evidence. The PARP identifies a series of results to be achieved and include concrete quantitative or qualitative targets to measure progress and success, such as the number of units to be created in line ministries and their expected outcomes, the number of employees to be trained and the expected level of competencies for them to acquire, or the expected progress in the delivery of public services and in citizen satisfaction. The link between the results and actions to attain them would benefit from further clarification on how one would lead to the other, who should undertake such efforts and in what time frame.

The need for a comprehensive approach to several themes included in the strategy is one key issue of the document. Some pillars include a series of detailed, technical actions but need to provide a clear path on how these actions can contribute to the greater objective of each pillar. Pillar 1 envisages a restructuring of the public administration but the goals and content of each objective and action could be further clarified and specify how they will contribute to reaching the overall result of enhancing the efficiency of the administration. This includes bringing indicators linked to public sector effectiveness. Other examples include Pillar 5, which focuses on databases rather than setting goals and targets for digital government transformation, including governance, resources, processes and platforms, user experience and key issues such as the digital divide. These challenges underline the importance of aligning the strategic objectives of the PARP with the relevant frameworks across ministries (Egypt Vision 2030, Digital Egypt, etc) and with the government programme.

The PARP focuses on providing the main thematic directives (the "what") but, to a lesser extent, information on how to operationalise these commitments (the "how"). PAR strategies across OECD countries are often presented in the form of a comprehensive strategic document that, in addition to the "why" and the "what" of the reform, include relatively detailed annual and medium-term action plans on the "how" of implementing the strategy. These plans often include elements such as planning horizons, annual and multi-year planning with performance goals, targets and indicators and resource allocations. While the PARP establishes a clear vision through its pillars, CAOA could leverage the forthcoming PARP updating process to further align its approach with similar plans developed in OECD member countries to provide more robust, evidence-based analysis, detailed objectives and measurable targets. As an additional good practice in OECD countries, the PARP could be made available online to enhance communication and information sharing with other public entities and citizens.

For example, the Italian government's digitally interactive *Riforma della Pubblica Amministrazione* is available on a webpage (Italiadomani, 2021[22]). The Czech *Citizen-Oriented Public Administration Reform strategy 2030* establishes a vision and key strategic objectives but also includes analyses supporting those elements, as well as detailed actions, timelines and measures of success (Czech Ministry of the Interior, 2020[23]) (Box 3.2).

Box 3.2. The Czech Republic's *Client-oriented Public Administration 2030*

The Czech Republic has a well-established tradition and methods for designing whole-of-government PAR plans. The PAR strategy *Client-oriented Public Administration 2030* (KOVES) is managed by the Ministry of the Interior and follows the Strategic Framework for the Development of Public Administration 2014-2020.

The overarching vision of the strategy is to support a citizen-oriented public administration to increase its citizens' quality of life. Achieving the vision is conditional on the fulfilment of five strategic objectives:

1. Focusing on increasing the quality and availability of services.
2. Establishing an efficient public administration.
3. Improving the functioning of the public administration system and individual institutions.
4. Increasing the competency of HR.
5. Improving information and facilitating citizen participation.

Action plans determine the specific implementation method, the first two of which will be for three years. The first action plan covers the period 2021-23 and includes goals that reflect the strategic objectives of the strategy and specific activities to reach them with indicators and leading agencies. The document has not been revised in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Source: Czech Ministry of the Interior (2020[23]), *Client-oriented Public Administration 2030*, https://www.mvcr.cz/soubor/client-oriented-public-administration-2030.aspx.

In this regard, OECD/SIGMA provides a toolkit that offers concrete guidance and steps for countries to design their national PAR. This toolkit could support CAOA as it undertakes its most recent update of the PARP (Box 3.3). The preparations of the new PARP will be supported by the United States Agency for International Development moving forward.

Alongside this update process, CAOA could consider preparing an action plan to formalise and set up the required co-ordination mechanisms within the institution and across the administration. In this regard, CAOA could establish an internal task force composed of representatives from the main thematic areas of the PARP's pillars. This task force could draft the main elements for the updated PARP (vision, objectives, priorities, roles, timeline, key performance indicators), co-ordinate the update process of each of the five pillars in the PARP – internally within CAOA and externally with other government actors –, compile the necessary data, documents and information, and implement and ensure the delivery of commitment results in each of the thematic pillars of the PARP.

Importantly, this task force would need to be supported by an inter-ministerial working group that would co-ordinate, share and revise the elements and the overall vision and objectives with other line ministries and provide input to be involved in the implementation. Inter-ministerial sub-working groups on the new pillars envisaged in the PARP could also ensure better assessment and preparation of new activities and alignment with existing strategies, such as the Digital Egypt Strategy. The preparation of a new PARP should include an evaluation of the implementation of the existing one in terms of activities and results, identifying gaps and achievements. This would help prioritise future objectives and activities as part of the PAR and build key performance indicators to track their progress. The draft revised plan should then be officially submitted for consultation with line ministries and presented for discussion and approval to the political level committee (the HCAR in the case of Egypt). Once the strategy is approved, an action plan to implement the revised PARP could be designed to reach the objectives and targets set in the new PARP and be shared and agreed upon with relevant ministries and agencies.

Box 3.3. Toolkit for the preparation, implementation, monitoring, reporting and evaluation of PAR

The toolkit developed as part of the OECD/SIGMA programme provides concrete guidance and steps for countries to design their national PAR. It goes through the entire cycle of the preparations of a reform, from problem analysis and identification of priorities to objectives setting, indicator development, action plan preparation, and the costing, monitoring and evaluation of the plan.

The toolkit provides guidance on key steps in the preparations and revisions of reform strategies, which are estimated to take a minimum of 12 months. This includes the analysis and prioritisations of issues using a prioritisation tool developed by SIGMA that encompasses the steps set out in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2. Stages for plan preparation of public administration reforms

No.	Step	Institution	Suggestions for Egypt
1.	Review (design) of the questionnaire to adjust it to country-specific conditions; decision on participating institutions.	PAR/thematic lead institution	CAOA with validation from the HCAR
2.	Launch of the self-assessment process. This step may involve organising a joint workshop to explain the purpose of the assessment and how to answer the questions, or alternatively, this can be done via circular letter.	PAR/thematic lead institution	CAOA with the appointment of an inter-ministerial task force
3.	Carry out self-assessment.	Participating institutions	Led by CAOA and involving: MPEDIC, MCIT, MoF, other line ministries
3.1.	Assess the current state of play.		
3.2.	Provide a quantitative evaluation of the current state of play.		
3.3.	Identify main actions.		
4.	Analyse and summarise self-assessment results.	PAR/thematic lead institution (with external assistance if required)	CAOA, results to be presented to the task force and to the HCAR
5.	Organise a workshop(s) to discuss and agree on the "skeleton" PAR or sector strategy:		Led by CAOA and involving: MPEDIC, MCIT, MoF, other line ministries
5.1.	Facilitate a high-level workshop to discuss and agree on the core problems and the relative urgency of the PAR or sector interventions and actions.	Organiser – PAR/thematic lead institution Participants – ministers, other senior-level management	
5.2.	Facilitate an additional operational-level workshop to agree on further details of the agreed actions.	Organiser – PAR/thematic lead institution Participants – participating institutions	

Source: Adapted from Vági, P. and E. Rimkute (2018[24]), "Toolkit for the preparation, implementation, monitoring, reporting and evaluation of public administration reform and sector strategies: Guidance for SIGMA partners", https://doi.org/10.1787/37e212e6-en.

The link with Egypt Vision 2030 could be further enhanced and built on in the upcoming updating process of the PARP

Both the original and revised versions of Egypt Vision 2030 (see Chapter 2) place public governance high on Egypt's reform agenda. Through its sixth objective, together with its principles and enablers, Egypt Vision 2030 highlights the importance of grounding PAR efforts to promote a more citizen-centred

administration, public participation, better public services, transparency and civil service, as well as digitalisation built on strong regulatory and institutional frameworks (MPED, 2023[6]).

> *"The objective "enhanced governance and partnerships" embodies the comprehensive plan for institutional development under the rule of law. It ensures the participation of all parties in the decision-making process at both the national and local levels, within a legislative and institutional framework that fosters transparency and accountability, thereby combating corruption and improving citizen services. This entails enhancing human capabilities and promoting a shift in societal culture and administrative behaviour. Furthermore, these objective endeavours to uphold overall security and stability while strengthening partnerships between Egypt and various countries, as well as relevant international and regional organisations, donors, and development partners."*

The 2016 version of Egypt Vision 2030 also identified six guiding principles for PAR alongside the pillars of the PARP:

1. Apply the concept of inviolability.
2. Follow a comprehensive approach as well as gradual and sustainable reform processes.
3. Adopt elements of proficiency and competency in employment, promotion and wages.
4. Adopt standards of quality and excellence in the provision of public services.
5. Expand the usage of technology in public administration.
6. Hold partnerships with civil and private sectors.

Together, these principles aim to underpin a coherent approach under which PAR must be undertaken to achieve policy results for SDG 16. These directives also underline the need to adopt a comprehensive and whole-of-government approach that can introduce gradual and sustainable PAR in Egypt. In particular, it highlights areas of priority that could benefit ongoing efforts on proficiency and competency in employment (i.e. promotion and wages, standards of quality of public services), expanding the usage of technology in government and establishing partnerships with civil society and the private sector.

The PARP establishes a link with the original version of the Egypt Vision 2030 document referring to its vision of an efficient and effective government administrative body, particularly connecting PAR and the country's long-term development. While Egypt Vision 2030 is referenced under the PARP, further efforts are needed to align and operationalise commitments between both strategic frameworks. In fact, findings from OECD interviews revealed that the link between both frameworks' objectives and activities needs to be clearer, particularly in public administrative reform (see Chapter 2). Strengthening this link would call for reflecting the key actions included in Egypt Vision 2030 in the PARP and adapting the strategic objectives of the PARP to the vision of public administration set out in Egypt Vision 2030. It would also require that new key performance indicators (KPIs) developed for the PARP feed or mirror those of Egypt Vision 2030 to track the progress towards reaching its objective on public governance.

In this context, strengthening the strategic and operational alignment between PARP and Egypt Vision 2030 will be crucial to ensure that PAR efforts support greater socio-economic development in Egypt. The current process of updating the PARP could provide an opportunity to strengthen these links by further aligning and developing objectives, activities and targets based on the new version of Egypt Vision 2030. For instance, this alignment would allow for improving public services through enhanced public participation to increase well-being and reduce inequalities, two key objectives stated in Egypt Vision 2030 (Objective 1: "Improve Egyptians' quality of life and raise their living standards" (objective 1) and Objective 2: "achieve social justice and equality") (MPED, 2023[6]). As discussed in the previous section, the HCAR is a key platform at the ministerial level that could be further built on to support PAR alignment and implementation in Egypt.

Enhancing such coherence in the implementation of these policy frameworks should be based on active and constant collaboration between CAOA and MPEDIC (and all public entities) to support continuous alignment and progress throughout their implementation. Co-ordination between CAOA and MPEDIC

could be further strengthened in a more institutional manner to translate the SDG indicators into the national context with CAOA's technical expertise on administrative reform and ensure constant reporting and discussions on progress to reach those objectives.

In its new version, Egypt Vision 2030 lists a number of ways to achieve its sixth objective on governance, in particular within the first sub-goal on implementing administrative reform (MPED, 2023[6]). While a number of these actions echo those already included in the PARP, several of them include a more in-depth and ambitious accounting of digitalisation, citizens' participation, monitoring Egypt's performance in international governance and more broadly in the area of citizen-centred administration. This could be a relevant starting point for CAOA in its process to update the PARP and reflect the priorities of the Government of Egypt to ensure a whole-of-government implementation of the PAR. While significant achievements have been made to pursue these objectives, further progress could be made to demonstrate the impact and measure the progress of both strategic frameworks.

An additional reform area that will be paramount to inform the PARP updating process will be that of digital transformation led by the MCIT, in particular aligning commitments with those on Digital Egypt for pillars on improving service delivery, staff training and digital databases. Reforms on the digitalisation pillar have been driven by the MCIT and close co-ordination is important to ensure that the implementation of Digital Egypt is consistent with the PARP as well as Egypt Vision 2030This might require the development of a formal mechanism between these entities, such as a dedicated working group that would include the MCIT, MPEDIC and CAOA, and the alignment of measures and indicators in the different implementation plans.

The PARP has been progressively and partly implemented since 2014 along its different strategic pillars

Since 2014, progress has been made across the different areas of the PARP and a number of significant actions have been taken to achieve its ambitious objectives. Some of these achievements include the creation of governance and internal audit units, new legislation on civil service, the development of new training curricula for civil servants and the issuance of the National Anti-Corruption Strategy and of a code of conduct for the public sector. A dedicated budget as part of the national budget is allocated to the PARP to support the delivery of the plan. Progress has been achieved and there is a need to further implement the commitments within the PARP, particularly those not directly under the sole purview of CAOA (i.e. digital transformation, public service delivery, database consolidation, etc). This can be explained in part by the decentralised implementation model of the PARP within CAOA that assigns responsibilities to its various technical units rather than establishing a dedicated unit to steer, track and monitor progress in this regard.

Institutional reform has been a particular focus area where key milestones achieved provide a solid foundation for the subsequent rollout of PAR efforts. Indeed, institutional reform foreseen under Pillar 1 has been pursued through the restructuring of the central government, namely ministries and agencies, and by the creation of new units within ministries (MoPMAR, 2017[20]) (Box 3.4). Aligning structures within government entities has, on the one hand, enhanced capabilities to deliver results for citizens while, on the other, allowed CAOA to gradually combat past fragmented and one-off measures undertaken for PAR.

> ## Box 3.4. Enhancing the effectiveness of the public administration: Progress on the PARP's Pillar 1
>
> Pillar 1 of the PARP on institutional reforms included activities that all aim to increase public sector effectiveness through raising the efficiency of the State's administrative organisation, restructuring the ministries, introducing new organisational units and applying supporting reform procedures.
>
> Regarding the revision of the organisational structures of public entities in Egypt, new organisation charts for ministries were designed around different functions and job groups (Minister's office, technical and administrative). CAOA leads the process of analysis, discussions and approval of the new structure's final draft. It bases its evaluation of the organisational structure on official mandates, institutional relationships with other entities, the number and workload of employees and a number of other data provided by the entity. It also discusses the final analysis with the entity concerned. CAOA follows five principles in its approach: no harm to any employee, clarity of perimeter and hierarchy, law enforcement, co-ordination and co-operation, and capacity building.
>
> The establishment of units involved the creation of new ministerial units on internal audit and good governance, strategic management and policies, evaluation and monitoring, HR, legislative support and information systems, and digital transformation. CAOA was mandated to issue the regulations that govern these units, including their functions and sub-divisions. It also provided advice on drafting laws and decrees on the establishment of new organisational units and jointly developed the organisational chart of a new governmental body with the related organisation. The establishment of HR units has helped build the conditions for the modernisation of HR policies and management.
>
> CAOA has helped establish a strategic management unit in each ministry responsible for strategic planning and for reviewing and updating the SDGs in connection with Egypt Vision 2030, with sub-departments for strategic planning and policies, monitoring and evaluation, project management and crisis management, and risk mitigation. The aim is to ensure the link between SDGs and the strategic plan of each ministry.
>
> These measures have led to the creation of several units and restructuring activities in the Egyptian administration on functions essential for good governance. CAOA has listed and mapped the units established in the various ministries and entities. There is a need to assess the overall impact of these measures on the good governance and effectiveness of public administration. CAOA and the relevant ministries concerned with each unit could further work together to assess their achievements and provide additional support as needed (regulations, training, tools and guidance manuals). In particular, for strategic management units, CAOA and MPEDIC, with the support of the NIGSD, could consider assessing the achievements of these units, developing co-ordination mechanisms and providing further support (see Chapter 2).

Enhancing learning and development systems within the civil service has also been a priority in recent years to catalyse PAR efforts under the PARP (see Chapter 4 for further details). Notably, in Pillar 2 related to building capacity in the civil service, key developments include the delivery of training, the launch of a training platform for civil servants and the establishment of a database on training providers (MoPMAR, 2017[20]).These achievements were reported in the PARP and emphasised the number of training sessions organised in partnerships with universities and international organisations.

CAOA has also focused on the design and delivery of training for civil servants based on its competency framework and needs for the move to the New Capital (see Chapter 4 for further information). In addition to upskilling the Egyptian public workforce, onboarding training has also been delivered along with training for civil servants who are about to retire. The present training framework aims to promote a more inclusive

civil service by offering opportunities for learning and development across the different stages of the professional career of a civil servant. This topic will be further analysed in Chapter 4.

Establishing a robust legal framework has moreover contributed to an enabling environment that allows for PAR efforts to flourish gradually. As part of Pillar 3 of the PARP, the new Civil Service Law was adopted in 2016, along with several decrees to ensure more discipline, flexibility and accountability in public administration. These regulatory frameworks include, for example, Prime Minister's Decree No. 612 of 2017 related to ministerial assistants and deputies and Prime Minister's Decree No. 1146 of 2018 on new units in the public administration (MoPMAR, 2017[20]). Subsidiary laws and regulations have also been subsequently adopted for recruitment, selection, personnel planning, job classification, mobility and promotion, senior civil servants, training and performance appraisal. While this pillar has recorded important developments, it will be further studied in Chapter 4 of this review.

Efforts for the digitalisation of the public sector and the establishment of governance arrangements to consolidate and facilitate the sharing of datasets have progressively been implemented and remain an area to be further evaluated to identify targets for the short, medium and long terms. Notably, Pillar 4 saw the development of a government online platform and the growing digitalisation of services for firms and businesses with more than 200 online services provided, even though the challenge to integrate databases is acknowledged as part of Pillar 5 (MoPMAR, 2017[20]). In addition, the government reports the development of service centres as one-stop shops for citizens and firms, establishing 82 technology centres across the country that offer 222 public services in local offices (MPED, 2023[6]). Once the move to the New Capital is completed, digital infrastructure and capabilities within the administration need to be reviewed in close collaboration with MCIT to continue advancing efforts under this pillar.

Pillar 4 has seen additional developments with the adoption of ad hoc feedback mechanisms and reporting channels for citizens to the public administration. This could be further enhanced towards a more citizen-centred administration as foreseen in Egypt Vision 2030 (MPED, 2023[6]). Acknowledging this importance, CAOA has recently undertaken efforts to establish an observatory for public services. It could build on its efforts to enhance public service delivery models under a user-centric approach that also involves citizens in its design, implementation and review.

While these achievements together show the ample scope and breadth of the PAR in Egypt, recording and communicating outputs, progress and the impact of results will help further solidify gains achieved thus far. The inclusion of indicators to measure outcomes and impact could support more efficient processes by examining whether initiatives reached their target audiences and achieved their intended goals. Doing so would also provide timely insights on challenges or unintended consequences to adjust a given course of action. Such a framework should facilitate measuring progress against key performance indicators of Egypt Vision 2030, for example including the number of citizens per government employee, the share of funds allocated to training as a percentage of the wage bill and the overall government efficiency score. In particular, efforts could focus on developing a methodology to measure the quality and satisfaction of citizens with public services as part of Pillar 4. These areas have been acknowledged and underlined by CAOA as a high priority for reform and a key objective in the updated version of the PARP.

More is to be done in several other fields, such as digitalisation. Egypt currently ranks 103th on the UN EDGI, as also noted in Egypt Vision 2030 (UN, 2022[16]; MPED, 2023[6]). The COVID-19 context has given a new impulse to the government's digital transformation in Egypt through the Digital Egypt strategy. While this theme was already identified in two pillars (4 and 5) of the PARP, the priority put on digitalisation in Egypt has heightened and is reflected in Egypt Vision 2030 as a key enabler to achieve the long-term development of the country. The global digital progress and new innovations in this field – including in areas such as mobile technologies, online consultation, digital payment, cyber security and artificial intelligence – can support the revision of the PARP on this topic (OECD, 2023[25]).

New objectives have been developed since, especially with the move to the New Capital

Six years after its announcement, the Government of Egypt is now undertaking the move to its new Capital - built 28 miles (45 kilometres) east of Cairo. While the New Capital should ease congestion and alleviate pressure from the housing market in Cairo, the government of Egypt is using this move to modernise public administration and group key parts of the government in a single location (see Chapter 4 for further details).

As such, administrative reform has been a key aim of this move since its announcement. By bringing several ministries and departments physically together, the aim is to foster increased co-ordination and coherence. The move also offers the opportunity to restructure existing public organisations and establish new divisions, such as units responsible for internal auditing, strategic planning, monitoring and evaluation, HR, legislative support, information systems and digital transformation, as stipulated by a Prime Minister's Decree No. 1146 of 2018. Furthermore, the move is accompanied by significant efforts to pursue the digitalisation of public administration by investing in a paperless working environment and building capacities for civil servants moving to the new premises. In doing so, the move to the new capital aims to further enhance the professionalisation and upskilling of civil servants in change management, digital transformation, ethics, problem solving, decision-making and strategic policy areas. It is important to note that in this process, special attention is being paid to building awareness around Egypt Vision 2030, efforts that could be built upon to disseminate information further and engage civil servants in the PARP's updating process.

CAOA is charged with leading the move to the New Capital (see Chapter 4 for further details). Its strategic positioning at the forefront of this high-priority and transformative process could be leveraged to advance the overall PAR agenda under the PARP. The ongoing upskilling and other efforts to modernise the administrative machinery with the move would benefit from further articulating and anchoring its efforts alongside the implementation of the PARP. This would not only enhance their impact but also ensure high-level political support, strategic direction and visibility for their long-term sustainability following the completion of the move.

Indeed, the move to the New Capital should continue to be seen by all public institutions as an accelerator for transformation rather than a goal in itself. While it is important to link the move and related digitalisation efforts with administrative reform, the success of these efforts requires a two-pronged approach where efforts mobilised across entities in the New Capital would extend to those public institutions who did not move to the capital and at the governorate level. The interactions between staff and entities transferred and those who were not will require special attention to ensure the continuity and consistency of public administration to ensure the delivery of vital public services across Egypt. In this regard, the PARP update process could consider that its pillars and programmes for public administration transformation go beyond the objectives and context of the move, for instance on digitalisation and citizen-centred administration. In doing so, the move could be considered as a separate objective to be monitored or streamlined as a horizontal pillar across all thematic areas of the plan. Specific targets and measures should be included, such as the number of staff trained and transferred or the number of entities transferred.

The modernisation of public administrations in OECD member and non-member countries covers areas and trends that could further enhance and inform the updating of the PARP

Public administration reform is a field in constant evolution. Technological developments are creating new opportunities for governments to connect with citizens in new places, at new times and in new ways. In addition, recent global trends and multiple crises impacting the functioning of public administrations have emerged and accelerated in the context of the COVID-19 crisis. These transformations, however, are taking place faster than the pace at which governments can effectively or consistently adopt them in their reform plans. Therefore, ensuring governments have the capabilities to readily embrace novel trends is critical to developing ambitious PAR that delivers results for citizens.

Most current reform strategies in OECD member countries were developed in response to the COVID-19 crisis and the disruptive challenges that arose in its wake, which exposed the significant vulnerabilities of public administrations to shocks along with key limitations on their capacity to tackle cross-cutting challenges quickly and successfully. These linkages are particularly evident in EU Member States, many of which have launched PAR strategies as part of the European Union National Recovery and Resilience Plans (NRRPs) to further modernise their public administrations in the wake of the COVID-19 crisis. For example, Italy's current PAR strategy *Riforma della Pubblica Amministrazione* seeks to build the administrative capacity necessary to implement the country's national recovery and resilience plan (Italiadomani, 2021[22]). In the case of Australia, the 2022 strategy *Delivering for Australians: The Government's APS Reform Agenda* addresses the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic yet has its origins in the independent 2019 Thodey Review (PMC, 2022[26]).

Current PAR strategies across OECD member countries largely reflect governments' interests in strengthening their capacity to deliver public services in a volatile, disruptive era of cross-cutting crises. Elements shaping these reforms range from those embracing the digital transition and developing institutional processes to fostering public engagement and participation in the policymaking process. These developments aim to further involve citizens in public service design and delivery and restore public trust in government in OECD member countries in the context of fragile trust in government, with only 4 out of 10 citizens trusting their government (OECD, 2023[11]; 2022[4]). Many OECD countries have, therefore, adopted a whole-of-government approach to current PAR strategies, seeking to bolster resilience to exogenous shocks and deliver citizen-oriented results by addressing key characteristics of public sector modernisation.

The digitalisation of government processes across OECD member countries has greatly accelerated since the COVID-19 pandemic and represents a key pillar of most PAR strategies, which aim to apply technological advancements to improve the design and delivery of public services, reduce spending and enhance citizen participation. Digital processes already in place prior to the pandemic demonstrated their potential to streamline and improve access to public services and strengthen government resilience and transparency. Digitalisation is sometimes embedded as a theme within a PAR plan, such as in Finland's *Strategy for Public Governance Renewal* (Finnish Ministry of Finance, 2020[27]) or is included in a more focused government strategy to digitise the economy and society, for instance, Germany's *Shaping Digitalisation: Implementation Strategy of the Federal Government* (BMDV, 2018[28]).

Public participation is a feature common to all those plans and has been promoted through a number of deliberative and consultative mechanisms, such as citizen assemblies, citizen panels and juries, national dialogues in several OECD member countries (Box 3.5) and online digital platforms in Belgium (Box 3.6). Some countries, such as Finland, have also fostered the involvement of civil servants in the development of the PAR plan itself as the country has carried out extensive consultation and co-creation of the strategy. The involvement of agents is an essential lever for implementation; plans such as Ireland's *Civil Service Renewal 2030 Strategy: 'Building on our Strengths'* seek to strengthen avenues for public engagement to reinforce evidence-based policy responses (Government of Ireland, 2021[29]).

Box 3.5. Examples of consultative and deliberative mechanisms in OECD member countries

Citizen assemblies: The example of Ireland

The Irish Citizens' Assembly provides a strong case study on how citizen engagement can contribute to decision-making and reaching strategic objectives on cross-cutting issues through a deliberative approach. The Citizens' Assembly on climate was established by the Irish government in late 2016 and operated through to early 2018. It consisted of a chairperson and 99 citizens who were selected by a leading market research company to be randomly representative of the Irish electorate in terms of age, gender, social class and regional spread. It included presentations from 15 climate change experts and 6 individuals championing low carbon transition. A dedicated secretariat drawn from staff across the public service further ensured the smooth running of each event. The secretariat wrote the final report with input from citizens and sent it back to a sub-group of citizens for comment and then to the entire group for validation. Ireland established a dedicated parliamentary committee for elected politicians to consider the assembly's recommendations and bring them to the country's legislative agenda.

Citizen and users' panel: The examples of France and the United Kingdom

In the United Kingdom, the Forest of Dean District Citizens Jury takes place over several days. National Health Service bodies commission a citizens' jury to provide residents with the chance to evaluate prospective hospital locations and choose the one that best suits citizen needs.

France has established user panels to support public service reform and co-design new approaches to public services. Usually mobilised ad hoc with a specific objective, these panels help better understand the experiences and issues faced by citizens and businesses when interacting with public administration on specific life events. For instance, France has mobilised up to 650 users to improve the life event of reporting a death in the family, in order to produce a guidance note on what to do when someone dies, with a focus on administrative procedures.

National dialogue: The example of Ireland

The government of Ireland developed a Climate Action Plan in 2019 and then, in 2021, created the National Dialogue on Climate Action (NDCA) to further increase societal engagement and public participation in the Climate Action Plan. The NDCA aims to establish a new social contract on climate, to engage, enable and empower everyone in society, including politicians, policymakers, stakeholders and the public, to co-create and deliver practical climate actions and to inform strategies and policy responses. The NDCA is led by Ireland's Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications and supported by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), which also plays the secretariat role.

The NDCA relies on a number of tools and platforms, including in 2022 alone:

- The Climate Conversations 2022, which involved more than 400 stakeholders, 4 300 members of the public, young people, populations vulnerable to the transition to carbon neutrality, and local and community organisations.
- Three National Climate Stakeholder Forum events, which took the form of deliberative workshops inviting over 300 stakeholders from a wide range of organisations to discuss challenges and solutions to delivering climate actions.
- The first National Youth Assembly on Climate, which engaged over 40 young people to capture views and suggestions from their peers on how the country delivers climate actions.
- The EPA *Climate Change in the Irish Mind* study, which provided nationally representative data on the attitudes and behaviours to climate change of 4 000 citizens.

- The EPA Climate Conference 2022, *Creating Ireland's Climate Future*, which examined the vision for a climate-neutral and resilient Ireland by 2050 and how that vision will be achieved in terms of strategic planning, built and natural environments.
- The National Social and Behavioural Advisory Group, which met three times and was established to provide ongoing expert insight into research findings and help inform policy.

Further examples of national dialogues are presented as part of Chapter 6 of this review.

Sources: OECD (2020[30]), *Innovative Citizen Participation and New Democratic Institutions: Catching the Deliberative Wave*, https://doi.org/10.1787/339306da-en; Government of Ireland (2022[31]), *Climate Conversations 2022*, https://climateconversations.citizenspace.com/decc/climate-conversations-2022/; Government of France (2023[32]), "« Moments de vie » : la DITP associe les usagers à la création du guide « Un de mes proches est décédé en France »", https://www.modernisation.gouv.fr/actualites/moments-de-vie-la-ditp-associe-les-usagers-la-creation-du-guide-un-de-mes-proches-est.

Box 3.6. Digital platform for citizen participation: The case of MonOpinion in Belgium

The Belgian federal platform for citizen consultation, MonOpinion, was created to meet growing public entity demand to offer new ways to connect with citizens. The MonOpinion platform is a Federal Public Service Strategy and Support initiative that renews the relationship between citizens and policymakers. The federal government offers a public service open to all public entities, with a user-friendly platform for both citizens and the administration. Some members of the administration are also invited to participate in a short workshop.

MonOpinion makes it possible to organise participatory processes, such as calls for ideas, participatory budgets or surveys. Its goal is to further engage citizens through inclusive processes on this platform. It enables discussions with citizens and stimulates political debate. To actively participate in a debate, citizens can formulate proposals, react, vote for, follow or comment on existing proposals and recommend them to other users. Once the consultation is closed, a presentation of the results is posted on line.

For instance, the platform was used in 2018 by the municipality of Nivelles for a month to feed the municipal authorities' reflection on the management of the city, resulting in 130 participations, 25 proposals generated and 253 votes. The results of the consultation were presented to the town hall, confirming the validation of the 25 proposals and their integration into a multi-year action plan.

Source: SPF Stratégie et Appui (SPF Stratégie et Appui, 2022[33]), *Mon Opinion*, https://bosa.belgium.be/fr/services/monopinion; Ville de Nivelles (2022[34]), *Homepage*, https://www.nivelles.be/.

Most strategies also underline the need to further improve and modernise public services and ensure equal access and quality for all citizens through a variety of channels. The trend of using public service improvement approaches based on life events is also expanding in OECD member countries and has been implemented in a number of them, including Canada, France, Germany (Box 3.7) and the United Kingdom over the past several years. For instance, France has prioritised improving ten key life events for citizens in its most recent high-level strategic PAR document (Government of France, 2023[35]).

Civil service reform is a major cornerstone of these plans, is sometimes the subject of a dedicated plan or can constitute the main axis of the reform, as in Ireland. Reforms to HR and personnel management, with a particular interest in attracting, retaining and building skills, are fundamental pillars of overall PAR

strategies. For instance, particular attention to civil service reform has been given priority in countries such as Australia, Canada, Ireland, the United Kingdom (Box 3.8) and the United States.

The need to develop a civil service that is fit for the future is seen as a major challenge. A civil service that can anticipate and respond to emerging policy challenges to meet the needs of citizens successfully in a constantly changing environment is expected to be forward-looking and able to anticipate the emerging technical skillsets that will be required of civil servants and candidates for civil service jobs, including the capacity to serve citizens effectively in a paperless, digitalised environment and the ability to learn and adapt to constant change, demonstrating agility, flexibility and the capacity to manage change effectively (OECD, 2021[36]).

Public sector effectiveness is also a central objective of most of these plans. Targets in this regard aim to ensure that the public administration is adequately equipped with the organisation, capacity and resources to perform and deliver cost-effective, quality and inclusive public policies and services. This translates *inter alia* into measures related to reorganising and improving the agility, performance and co-ordination of government entities, strengthening the evidence base for policy and rulemaking, adapting the composition, skillset and structure of the civil service to the changing needs and demands of citizens and modernising and streamlining public service delivery. However, budgetary considerations are rarely a key component of contemporary PAR strategies; these tend to be the subject of separate plans or initiatives linked to spending review development. This represents a stark departure from turn-of-the-century or post-financial-crisis PAR strategies, which framed public management reforms within the context of fiscal constraints and optimisation efforts (OECD, 2005[3]).

Box 3.7. Life events approach in Germany

The Federal Statistical Office, commissioned by the Federal Government, has interviewed citizens and businesses since 2015 about how they perceive co-operation with public authorities and offices in certain life situations.

Based on comprehensive preliminary surveys, citizens' 22 most significant life situations, like the birth of a child, death of a family member/close friend or unemployment, were selected for further analysis. In the business sector, a total of ten central situations, such as a business start-up or appointment of employees, were identified after interviews with representatives of business associations and trade unions.

In the 2019 round of interviews, nearly 6 000 citizens were interviewed about roughly 7 700 situations and their satisfaction with the relevant authorities. More than 3 300 interviews were conducted in the business sector. The respondents assessed the authorities on the basis of certain criteria, such as comprehensibility of the law, digital administration options or opening hours and waiting times. Both surveys were conducted on behalf of the Federal Statistical Office by the Institute for Applied Social Science (infas).

Using this information, the Federal Government will design further activities to achieve significant simplification and improvement for those concerned.

Source: German Federal Statistical Office (2022[37]), "Bureaucracy costs".

Since the PARP was designed in 2014, several recent global trends and multiple crises impacting PAR have emerged, which could be further reflected in the upcoming review process of Egypt's PARP. Therefore, undergoing efforts to update the PARP could incorporate those evolutions and translate them into the Egyptian context to be leveraged as key drivers for modernising public administration. While some of those trends are already mentioned in the pillars of the PARP, and further reflect the ambition, measures

and innovations currently observed within such themes as digital transformation, stakeholder participation and civil service reform. In fact, Egypt Vision 2030 emphasises citizen-centricity of development policies and the digitalisation of the public administration, which are critical for modern public administrations and would further efforts under the PARP by closely aligning objectives under these two strategic frameworks.

In this regard, CAOA could define new objectives and measures in a revised version of the PARP that would be aligned with the revised Egypt Vision 2030 and embrace new global trends and challenges for modernisation public administration (see Table 3.3 for suggestions). This could be based, *inter alia*, on a thorough evaluation of the current PARP and a new assessment of the situation and its needs. In this regard, the implementation of the PARP could benefit from the adoption of steering, co-ordination and monitoring mechanisms.

Since 2014, CAOA has undertaken an ambitious process to modernise the public administration through the rollout of the PARP. While progress has been achieved, challenges remain to fully deliver on all strategic commitments across its five pillars. Indeed, this historic reform is taking place within – and in response to – challenging circumstances, including the COVID-19 pandemic, slow economic growth and food insecurity, which is accelerating and posing barriers to modernising the state's machinery. These factors and administrative challenges have contributed to the uneven implementation of the PARP, with some areas, such as institutional and regulatory reform, achieving impactful results. In contrast, other areas remain to be further catalysed.

In this regard, gains could be consolidated and gaps could be addressed by instilling steering capacities and instruments as well as implementation mechanisms in support of PAR in general, particularly the implementation of the PARP across sectors and levels of government. Instruments observed in OECD member countries, such as inter-ministerial working groups and task forces, dedicated structures responsible for monitoring the PAR and implementation plans could be useful in the Egyptian context and support CAOA in this endeavour.

The steering responsibilities for PAR have been clearly assigned to CAOA and it would benefit from a dedicated unit and more capabilities, formal co-ordination instruments and accountability mechanisms with line ministries

Due to their cross-cutting nature, PAR calls for continued high-level political support, dedicated steering and co-ordination structures with clear roles and responsibilities and formalised working procedures (Vági and Rimkute, 2018[24]). The development of a comprehensive PAR strategy in of itself does not guarantee its successful implementation across all sectors and levels of government. Indeed, strong political support and clear roles and responsibilities for the reform remain essential. These factors have been essential for developing and delivering the United Kingdom (UK) Declaration on Government Reform, with the programme signed by the prime minister, the head of the Cabinet and all ministers (Box 3.8).

Box 3.8. The United Kingdom's Declaration on Government Reform

PAR is one important area covered by the current delivery structure in the UK Government. The Declaration on Government Reform represents the guiding strategic document for PAR in the United Kingdom and outlines how the civil service and ministers will reform the public administration together to better deliver services and policies for citizens.

The declaration sets priorities for reform in three areas:

- **People**, ensuring that the right people are working in the right places with the right incentives.
- **Performance**, modernising the operation of government, being clear-eyed about its priorities and objective in their evaluation of what is and is not working.
- **Partnership**, strengthening the bond between ministers and officials, always operating as one team from policy through to delivery, and between the central government and institutions outside it.

Each minister officially signed the declaration to ensure buy-in.

Source: UK Cabinet Office (2021[38]), *Declaration on Government Reform*, https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/993902/FINAL_Declaration.

Mandating CAOA in 2019 to lead the implementation of the PARP had the merit of strengthening institutional clarity. Efforts by CAOA to advance the PAR agenda have also benefitted from the anchoring and articulation of its mandate in the Civil Service Law. In addition, CAOA plays a key role in civil service reform, an essential component of the PARP and any PAR, and is part of the HCAR, the most important body supervising the PARP.

CAOA's organisational structure and evidence from the OECD fact-finding mission suggest that it is well equipped to implement objectives supported by the Civil Service Law. However, it relies on the willingness and capacity of other ministries to deliver on other sectoral pillars of the PARP. CAOA could, therefore, further strengthen its positioning and ability to spearhead the PARP across sectors and levels of government by establishing a dedicated unit or team charged with the operationalisation of this reform. Indeed, CAOA reports that all departments are involved in the PARP implementation based on their respective scope and expertise. However, resources could be clearly assigned to co-ordinate, manage and support the implementation of the PARP within CAOA and with other public institutions. This would help clarify the process, introduce reporting lines to ensure accountability for delivery and facilitate the flow of information between relevant stakeholders. A dedicated unit or task force, which can be a separate unit or part of a strategic planning unit, would also allow for enough capacity to deliver on this ambitious whole-of-government reform and centralise efforts to avoid duplication.

Indeed, these efforts could build on and enhance existing relationships that CAOA has established with key government partners to deliver the PARP. In fact, CAOA has frequent bilateral interactions with Ministries on public administration matters. With the HCAR as a high-level, strategic steering and decision-making committee on PARP implementation, this platform could be leveraged to promote formal inter-ministerial mechanisms to support CAOA in steering, discussing and monitoring the implementation of the PARP at the administrative and technical levels. This would enhance CAOA's structures and convening power to bring together Ministries to steer and co-ordinate the implementation of the entire PARP.

The HCAR sub-committee could further act as a dedicated inter-ministerial working group at the operational level and be chaired by CAOA with the specific objective of monitoring and co-ordinating the implementation of the PARP and preparations for the future version. Line ministries should appoint sub-

committee participants to supervise the respective PARP pillar relevant to their ministry (which goes beyond the HR and IT departments). This body could be complemented by technical sub-working groups or communities of practices in dedicated areas of the PARP, which would report to the main inter-ministerial working group. CAOA's dedicated unit could act as these committees' technical secretariat and provide ongoing support to them and to the HCAR.

A number of OECD member countries have designed dedicated inter-ministerial committees for the steering and implementation of the public administration plan, usually with bodies at the political (typically a PAR Ministerial council) and at the administrative and operational levels (e.g. inter-ministerial working groups) to ensure proper decision-making and implementation (Vági and Rimkute, 2018[24]). For instance, France has set up an Inter-ministerial Committee for Public Transformation (CITP) that focuses on supervising PAR, but also two additional strategic and operational inter-ministerial committees to co-ordinate and monitor the progress of specific administrative reform initiatives (Box 3.9); the Czech Republic has established a Public Council steered by the Ministry of the Interior and brings together different ministries and local entities to guide, co-ordinate and monitor the national Public Administration Reform Strategy, as well as a sub-working group that focuses on operational follow-up of the strategy. Those structures are supported by a Secretariat that is in charge of preparing the meetings, following up on the implementation of decisions made and, in between meetings, following up on the implementation of the PARP.

In addition, further articulation and awareness raising within the administration will be critical to catalysing the implementation of the PARP across sectors and levels of government. This will be particularly important as, even though PAR is a priority in Egypt Vision 2030, various stakeholders reported during OECD interviews that they were unaware of the existence of the PARP. This can be explained in part due to the absence of a written and formal communication strategy and of stakeholder engagement mechanisms beyond the involvement of experts associated in previous PARP updates.

Box 3.9. France's Interministerial Committee for Public Transformation (CITP)

France's public transformation programme and initiatives are led by a department of the Ministry of Public Transformation and co-ordinated by two strategic committees and an operational monitoring committee:

- As part of the *Action Publique 2022* programme, an **Inter-ministerial Committee for Public Transformation (CITP)** was established to ensure the reform plan's operational implementation, monitoring, inter-ministerial co-ordination and political steering. It assembles members of the government two or three times a year and is chaired by the Prime minister; the role of secretariat is held by the Inter-ministerial Delegate for Public Transformation within the DITP. One of the seven commitments made at the sixth committee meeting in 2021 was the full rollout of the Public Services+ programme by the end of 2021 to work towards the continuous improvement of public service efficiency.

- A **high-level strategic committee** is comprised of central administration directors and the Minister for Public Transformation.

- An **operational monitoring committee** assembles the directors of administration at the local level to discuss compliance to commitments made and measured across indicators.

Source: French Ministry of Transformation and Public Service (2021[39]), *Comité interministeriel de la transformation publique - Dossier de Presse 23 juillet 2021*, https://www.modernisation.gouv.fr/files/2021-09/DP%206e%20CITP%20Maquett%C3%A9%20DEF%202109.pdf.

The PARP could be devolved into concrete action plans complemented by implementation mechanisms, tools and instruments for its effective delivery

The PARP remains a high-level strategic document that sets the overall direction and priorities for PAR in Egypt. While the PARP consolidates its vision for the modernisation of the Egyptian State, the plan should include practical elements on how to translate its commitments, such as planning, key performance indicators and a split of roles and responsibilities across the different players to reach its intended objectives. Thus, its implementation by the whole of the government would benefit from devolving commitments therein into an action plan with sector-specific objectives alongside defined responsibilities, actions per objective determined, KPIs to set targets and track progress, as well as timelines and resources assigned. The implementation plan would act as a roadmap for all relevant actors involved in attaining the defined objectives.

OECD/SIGMA Principles of Public Administration underline the importance of having clear planning documents, such as implementation plans that contain objectives and targets, actions to reach those objectives, costs, timelines and defined roles and responsibilities (OECD/SIGMA, 2017[2]). The action plan usually takes a table format, including those different elements and linking them with the objectives and issues identified in the strategy document (Vági and Rimkute, 2018[24]).

Robust performance management and review systems can help better track implementation and make policy adjustments during implementation to achieve policy objectives. Managing performance and reviewing and measuring progress and results can inform policymaking, feed the performance dialogue and provide accountability (OECD, 2020[40]). They rely on strong institutional setups, processes and tools, such as a dashboard with KPIs, regular reporting through progress reports, data collection systems and well-established performance dialogue mechanisms. In Egypt, OECD evidence suggests that the use of KPIs and monitoring tools remains underutilised in the implementation of the PARP. The development of an action plan with targets, KPIs and a supporting dashboard would significantly enhance CAOA's evidence-based decision-making capacity and identify areas that are overperforming or underperforming to modify its course of action. It would also allow CAOA to build a solid information base and evidence to support discussions with the Prime Minister and other government entities in the HCAR.

In particular, the design and selection of PAR KPIs could include a prominent focus on assessing outputs, outcomes and impact. In doing so, such an exercise would also benefit from including concrete means to measure how specific objectives of the PARP are contributing to the attainment of broader policy goals in government to showcase progress and maintain the present momentum (Box 3.10). This would entail aligning objectives, KPIs and activities across all strategies, including Egypt Vision 2030 and the Government Programme.

The revised version of Egypt Vision 2030 has identified a number of KPIs for public governance, including the World Economic Forum's general institutions indicator, the World Bank Government Effectiveness and Government Performance Overall Indices, EDGI, Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index and the World Bank's Transparency Index, which should all be reflected as key targets in the revised PARP (MPED, 2023[6]).

In this regard, the development of review activities can also be supported by the creation of an integrated digital platform to compile, analyse and share indicators related to the implementation of the PARP and the public administration. For its effective adoption, training CAOA and public entity civil servants on quantitative skills and new digital systems would be paramount to ensure take-up of such a new system (see Chapter 2).

Box 3.10. Defining key performance indicators in PAR

Indicators can be categorised into three general categories according to what is measured: input, output and outcome indicators. The three different indicators can all be part of a framework to monitor the effectiveness of policies but it is important that each type of indicator is used to monitor only the aspects of a policy it is designed to monitor.

- **Input**: These indicators measure the resources spent on policies and measures (money, staff and time). Thus, they are measures of effort.
- **Output**: These indicators measure how efficiently policies are executed, for instance on the number of staff trained or new organisational units set up. They are produced because policymakers expect them to contribute to desirable outcomes.
- **Outcome/Impact**: These indicators measure the results achieved by the outputs, looking, for instance, at the quality of services and satisfaction of users. Outcome indicators are used to monitor the effectiveness of policies in achieving their objectives.

Indicators need to be accompanied by information that helps interpret their significance and connect them with actions and objectives. That is why, regardless of their typology, all indicators should be presented in a way that provides enough information:

- **Description** of the indicator: name, a unit of measurement, data source and formula.
- **Responsibility** for the indicator: institution, department or authority responsible for gathering the data.
- **Frequency** of data collection and update of the indicator.
- **A baseline** that serves as a starting point to measure progress.
- **Target** or expected result.

Source: Schumann, A. (2016[41]), "Using Outcome Indicators to Improve Policies: Methods, Design Strategies and Implementation", https://doi.org/10.1787/5jm5cgr8j532-en.

Further articulating the PARP in measurable targets through the use of KPIs will also benefit from enhancing existing data and evidence collection and dissemination mechanisms. In particular, OECD evidence suggests the need for appropriate data and measurement tools on satisfaction, quality and access to public services, which makes identifying issues and designing relevant solutions more efficient.

A number of OECD member countries have developed surveys of citizens and users to collect information on their satisfaction with public policies and services and their interactions with the public administration. These evidence and data support policymaking and help redesign services in response to the needs and expectations of users. France has, for instance, developed a barometer of the complexity of public services that relies on a survey of firms and citizens (Box 3.11). In the French institutional setting, it should be noted that the survey and data analysis on public service satisfaction is led by the independent *Institut Paul Delouvrier*, in co-ordination with the French public administration (DITP), and a private company implements the survey to ensure the independence, transparency and integrity of results. In that regard, CAOA is envisaging the development of a Public Services Observatory that could help collect and disseminate data on public services.

> **Box 3.11. French Delouvrier barometer of public services**
>
> The government of France is carrying out a regular barometer (survey) of citizens, called the *Baromètre Delouvrier*, on satisfaction with key life events, the obstacles they face and the public service improvement priorities they perceive. The barometer is implemented by independent and public institute Institut Paul Delouvrier as well as a survey company; it is supervised by the DITP. Two thousand five hundred citizens responded to the survey, which was carried out on line over a period of a month in 2021.
>
> The results of the most recent edition, published in January 2022, highlight that satisfaction with the state is high in France and that users are generally happy with public services, though disparities can be observed depending on services. In particular, less than 40% of citizens are satisfied with justice and employment services. In a post-COVID-19 context, priorities identified by citizens relate to health, education and security. They also underlined that further efforts need to be made regarding the access and proximity of public services.
>
> The results of these surveys are shared with the whole government and the general public. They also help inform policies and decisions made by the French public administration, especially during high-level inter-ministerial Committees (CITP) and operational levels when targeting priority services and measures to be improved.
>
> Source: French Ministry of Transformation and Public Service (2022[42]), *Barometer Delouvrier of Public Services*, https://www.modernisation.gouv.fr/publications/22eme-edition-du-barometre-delouvrier-lopinion-des-francais-legard-de-leurs-services.

In OECD member countries, PAR plans often include or are complemented by an action plan detailing policy implementation across a specific timeframe and paired with performance indicators, though these characteristics are not always made public. In the United States, the annual performance goals, priority-level success metrics and strategy leads of the *Biden-Harris Management Agenda* have been fully digitised and made accessible to the public via the performance.gov website (U.S. GSA, 2021[43]). In the Czech Republic, detailed action plans are prepared every three years and include a series of actions for each objective with roles and responsibilities, timeline and budget assigned to each. Such action plans are prepared, co-ordinated and monitored by a specific department in charge of public administration in the Ministry of the Interior, which supervises the overall PAR strategy (Czech Ministry of the Interior, 2020[23]).

The way forward: overview of recommendations for modernising the public administration framework in Egypt

Egypt has been carrying out significant PAR in the past decades, most recently through the PARP. While important progress and achievements have been made through implementing the PARP led by CAOA, a number of key challenges related to the effectiveness and agility of the public administration, the quality and access to public services and the adaptation of the civil service to the future remain. This calls for a new impulse in the revision of the PARP to assess the progress made and the remaining gaps, to ensure alignment with Egypt Vision 2030, as well as new challenges for Egypt and global trends in public administration.

Egypt could strengthen its institutional framework and inter-ministerial co-ordination to further modernise the public administration, particularly in implementing and delivering its strategic objectives as defined by the PARP. CAOA has been leading the PARP's implementation but needs to further strengthen its convening power, the inter-ministerial co-ordination mechanisms and the capabilities to steer, co-ordinate,

implement and monitor reforms across the whole of administration. CAOA will need a new set of instruments and mechanisms to further promote and steer the implementation of the PARP, tools that have been successfully implemented in OECD member countries, from dedicated capabilities to robust performance dialogue framework and mechanisms and implementation plans. This includes updating the HCAR to ensure all key high-level stakeholders are present and creating a new inter-ministerial co-ordination working group on the PARP led by CAOA.

Actionable Recommendations to support the revision and implementation of public administration reforms in Egypt

1. Revising and modernising the PARP

The PARP under current review could reflect the latest developments and issues for public administration, taking into consideration the priorities highlighted in Egypt Vision 2030 as well as innovations and new trends in global public administrations:

- Ensure the continuation of political support for the PARP along with its design and implementation and organise regular discussions with the HCAR Secretariat on the implementation of the PARP. These discussions could focus on selecting key measures for decision by the Prime Minister and be based on an executive dashboard on PAR with KPIs.

- Organise a formal evaluation process of the PARP to help identify success and remaining gaps that should be further addressed:
  - Initiate CAOA's self-assessment based on the PARP 2014 and its pillars, involving other relevant ministries and external stakeholders.
  - Assess the progress made on each pillar and the impact; in particular, evaluate the effectiveness of the new institutional structure and of the redefinition of mandates and roles and the progress made in the establishment of new units in ministries.
  - Assess the progress against public administration objectives and indicators in Egypt Vision 2030.

- Develop the updated PAR plan to address the new issues and needs for a modern public administration in support of the long-term development of the country:
  - Consider designing objectives and measures on a citizen-centred administration, public participation, digitalisation and public sector effectiveness (see Table 3.3).
  - Regarding public participation and citizen-centred administration, consider introducing regular innovative deliberative and consultative mechanisms, such as online digital consultation platforms or focused workshops (see Box 3.5 for examples), increasing the involvement of citizens in public service design.
  - Implement an Observatory of public services with a certain degree of autonomy and using surveys such as the Delouvrier barometer in France (see Box 3.11).
  - Include clear KPIs on inputs, outputs and outcomes in the strategy and ensure clear links and connections between measures and indicators with key strategic plans (Egypt Vision 2030, Digital Egypt, the National Anti-Corruption Strategy, etc).

- Organise a consultation process on the revision of the PARP involving the whole of government, experts and civil society to gather inputs and ideas and help identify priorities.

- Connect and reflect the strategies and objectives that relate to public administration transformation in the PARP by adapting the existing ones or including new ones, in particular: take into account the progress achieved and include public administration measures related to the government's move to the New Capital in the updated PARP; refer to the Digital Egypt strategy and its links with the PARP's digitalisation and IT objectives.

- Ensure that the PARP fully reflects the revised Egypt Vision 2030 by aligning the vision of the public administration, developing and adapting strategic objectives in the PARP and Egypt Vision 2030 and incorporating measures included in the sixth objective on "Enhanced Governance and Partnerships" and on enabling digital transformation; make sure that KPIs are developed and in line with the objectives of Egypt Vision 2030, United Nations 2030 Sustainable Development Goals and Africa's Agenda 2063.

2. Strengthen the institutional framework and the inter-ministerial co-ordination mechanisms for PAR

The institutional framework and the inter-ministerial co-ordination mechanisms related to the PARP could be enhanced to further implement PAR plans (see Chapter 2):

- Strengthen the role of the HCAR and strengthen CAOA's role as technical Secretariat.

- Task CAOA's strategic management and policies unit – or establish a new one – with co-ordinating and monitoring the revision and implementation of the PARP to ensure that there is a horizontal, comprehensive view of the strategy, as well as dedicated capabilities to co-ordinate and follow up internally and externally; this unit would:

  o Collect information and exchange with the different CAOA units in charge of each area.

  o Co-ordinate the revision and preparation of the updated PARP with other CAOA units (this internal co-ordination work can be organised as a task force), based on an action plan design modelling the prioritisation tool of the OECD/SIGMA toolkit.

  o Support the co-ordination and implementation of the PARP with government entities, particularly through the different task forces and committees linked to the PARP (see below).

  o Establish an effective monitoring and evaluation framework and tools for the PARP.

  o Prepare for HCAR meetings.

- Establish an inter-ministerial working group led by CAOA, including representatives from ministries involved in the sectoral pillars of the PARP to co-ordinate and monitor the implementation of the PARP and co-develop and consult on the updated plan:

  o Ensure that this group meets regularly and involves all relevant ministries to discuss, steer and monitor the progress of the PARP based on the strategic document and its future implementation plans and KPIs, and make key operational decisions or report to the HCAR for decisions on the PARP when needed.

  o Establish, when necessary, ad hoc working groups assigned to CAOA to co-ordinate and accelerate the implementation of specific actions and areas.

  o Encourage the appointment of contact points and develop a community of practices on public administrative reform across line ministries.

- Design regular consultation mechanisms, such as interactive workshops and online consultations, to involve experts, civil society and citizens in revising and implementing the PARP. Using online consultation mechanisms, in-person focused workshops or launching a roundtable on the updated PARP considering Costa Rica's experience (also see Chapter 6 of the Review on Promoting Transparency and Participation) is an example of this.

- Continue co-ordination with MPEDIC on integrating the PARP implementation plan within Egypt Vision 2030 and aligning it fully with the Government Programme; install formal co-ordination

and reporting mechanisms on the dimensions related to PAR, particularly between the MPEDIC strategy unit and the new CAOA unit in charge of the PARP (also see Chapter 2).

- Support CAOA's efforts and initiatives to further mobilise the public administration through communications and stakeholder engagement by designing and implementing a comprehensive communications and outreach strategy for the PARP, including on government and CAOA websites and participative mechanisms to involve civil servants and citizens in the design and implementation of PARP measures, e.g., citizen panels, workshops or online consultations.

- Further develop and formalise partnerships (including objectives, ways of working, resources and mechanisms) with MPEDIC, MCIT, MoLD and other training partners by enhancing co-ordination mechanisms, such as the creation of regular bilateral meetings or working groups, to align training offers and regularly engage with them and with the rest of the line ministries to identify, plan and execute training programmes for strategy, implementation of Egypt Vision 2030, audit, governance and IT units in different line ministries and governorates.

- Establish and steer multi-year actionable implementation plans to ensure the satisfactory delivery of the pillars of the PARP, with a concrete timeline on how to deliver clear objectives, identifying intermediate goals and confirming the allocation of the human and financial resources required to achieve them; use the format of a table splitting key objectives by actions and sub-actions, assigning roles and responsibilities, allocating resources and indicating KPIs.

3. Establishing review mechanisms for the implementation of the PARP

Monitoring tools and evidence-based approaches could further help CAOA assess the progress in implementing the PARP and identify gaps and needs for adjustment and support:

- Establish a review framework and instruments by mandating the existing or new CAOA PARP unit to monitor the PARP and its implementation plans:

  o Design a dashboard and KPIs tracking the implementation of the PARP based on the action plans and complete with KPIs that track those used in Egypt Vision 2030 to measure progress in the pursuit of relevant SDGs.

  o Further develop the existing digital systems to collect data and evidence that can track and monitor the KPIs included in the PARP with other government agencies.

- Task CAOA's unit with leading the generation of evidence and data on PARP implementation, whether from audits, surveys, client satisfaction reports or technical studies, to support the pursuit of the PARP, working with key stakeholders from across the government, and ensure evidence-based decision-making of the highest quality.

  o Train the unit's specialised staff on monitoring objectives and processes and the use and analysis of KPIs and data, and digital tools used for the monitoring activities.

- Develop a yearly progress report on the implementation of the PARP that will be shared and discussed with the HCAR and published.

Table 3.3. Example of directions for the revised PAR

Example of objectives	Example of activities	Link with Egypt Vision 2030	Connection with current PARP objectives
Promoting a citizen-centred administration	Fostering public participation, particularly in the design and implementation of policies and services, and testing consultative and deliberative mechanisms	Objective 1: Improve Egyptians' quality of life and raise their living standards Objective 2: Achieve social justice and equality Objective 6: Enhance governance and partnerships	Pillar 6: Enhancing citizen-state relationships
	Streamlining public administration laws and regulations	Objective 6: Enhance governance and partnerships Enabler 5 on the legislative environment	Pillar 3: Legislative reforms
	Increasing the satisfaction of users through better data and monitoring	Objective 1: Improve Egyptians' quality of life and raise their living standards Enabler 4 on data availability	Pillar 5: The databases and information system
Improving public services for all users	Enhancing the access and quality of public services	Objective 1: Improve Egyptians' quality of life and raise their living standards Objective 2: Achieve social justice and equality Objective 6: Enhance governance and partnerships	Pillar 4: Public services
	Fostering multichannel approaches to reach all citizens	Objective 1: Improve Egyptians' quality of life and raise their living standards Objective 2: Achieve social justice and equality	
Developing competent, adaptable HR fit for the future	Attracting and retaining competent staff and skills in demand	Objective 6: Enhance governance and partnerships	Pillar 2: Capacity building and development
	Building leadership framework and capability in the public service	Objective 6: Enhance governance and partnerships	Pillar 2: Capacity building and development
	Developing and aligning training activities		Pillar 2: Capacity building and development
Digitalising the public administration	Digitalising public services	Enabler 3 on digital transformation	Pillar 4: Public services
	Improving public digital and data governance	Enabler 3 on digital transformation Enabler 4 on data availability	Pillar 5: The databases and information system
	Ensuring connected digital platforms	Enabler 3 on digital transformation Objective 6: Enhance governance and partnerships	Pillar 5: The databases and information system
	Fostering an innovative ecosystem and culture	Enabler 2 on technology and innovation	
	Developing digital skills for public servants		Pillar 2: Capacity building and development
Enhancing the effectiveness of the public sector	Supporting co-ordinated and evidence-based policymaking		
	Improving and aligning the structure and mandates of ministries and government agencies	Objective 6: Enhance governance and partnerships	Pillar 1: Institutional reforms
	Defining a performance framework for public administration	Objective 6: Enhance governance and partnerships	
Promoting transparency and fighting corruption	Promoting open data and use of information	Objective 6: Enhance governance and partnerships	
	Increasing public integrity	Objective 6: Enhance governance and partnerships	

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4 Public employment and management: Key issues for the Egyptian civil service

This chapter examines the state of civil service reform in the Egyptian civil service. It discusses avenues to promote a high-performing civil service by aligning recruitment, learning and development, and performance management frameworks. The chapter also explores the role of human resource planning and capability in the Egyptian civil service. Drawing on OECD data and examples of good practice, it concludes with recommendations to support the ongoing civil service reform in Egypt.

Introduction

Civil service reform in Egypt is closely linked to the success of national reform priorities. A central challenge is to streamline a civil service that is bloated by the long-standing practice of providing government jobs regardless of whether or not they are needed (El Baradei, 2021[1]). Managing the public sector workforce in line with efforts to trim the public sector wage bill requires a sustained focus on designing and implementing robust people management frameworks to recruit, train and develop effective public servants. Frequent changes of ministers in charge of the administrative reform portfolio (seven between 2011 and 2019 according to El Baradei (2021[1])) and the large-scale move of thousands of civil servants to the New Administrative Capital (NAC), frame Egypt's path to administrative reform and civil service development.

Egypt has an overwhelmingly young population –60% of the population under 30 years old – with a limited ability in the private sector to absorb youth employment aspirations. Moreover, with nearly three out of ten Egyptians classified as poor by the World Bank (2023[2]), aspects of public employment such as stability and relatively flexible working hours that enable public servants to take care of children/relatives – or supplement wages through other work – means that the Egyptian civil service remains a relatively attractive employer.

There is evidence that Egypt is on the right path to more strategic and professional civil service management, with national-level reform priorities emphasising the link between people management and broader administrative reform. The 2016 Civil Service Law upgrades and tightens the conceptual framework for many aspects of public employment, such as a more professional recruitment process and a modern, forward-looking performance management system. This chapter examines current practice in Egypt across three areas at the core of high-performing civil services: effective recruitment systems, modern learning and development pathways, and simple, relevant performance management systems. Underpinning each of these areas is a forward-looking human resources (HR) function. This chapter draws on OECD data and examples of good practice across each of these areas.

Size and shape of the Egyptian civil service

Public workforce

Public servants in Egypt are divided into two broad categories: the civil service and the broader public sector. The scope of this chapter is exclusively civil servants under the scope of the 81/2016 Civil Service Act. The Unified Public Finance Law No. 6/2022 regulates the public sector. Public administration provides more than 12% of total employment in Egypt and public spending represents more than 30% of total gross domestic product (OECD, 2020[3]).

CAOA reports it is currently working on the "e-profile" exercise which will determine the exact number of the civil servants in all public entities. Recent estimates put the approximate total number of public servants at five million (The Economist, 2019[4]; El Baradei, 2021[1]). Much commentary has focused on the number of public servants relative to the general population: just before the introduction of the new Civil Service Law in 2016, some sources estimated that Egypt had 1 public servant for every 13 citizens (AmCham Egypt, 2015[5]). Strengthening efforts in Egypt to collect comprehensive and accurate data on public service, such as the number of public servants, their location, roles and general demographics, is an important element that will underpin public service reform and general workforce planning.

Figure 4.1. Employment in the general government as a percentage of total employment, 2007 and 2019
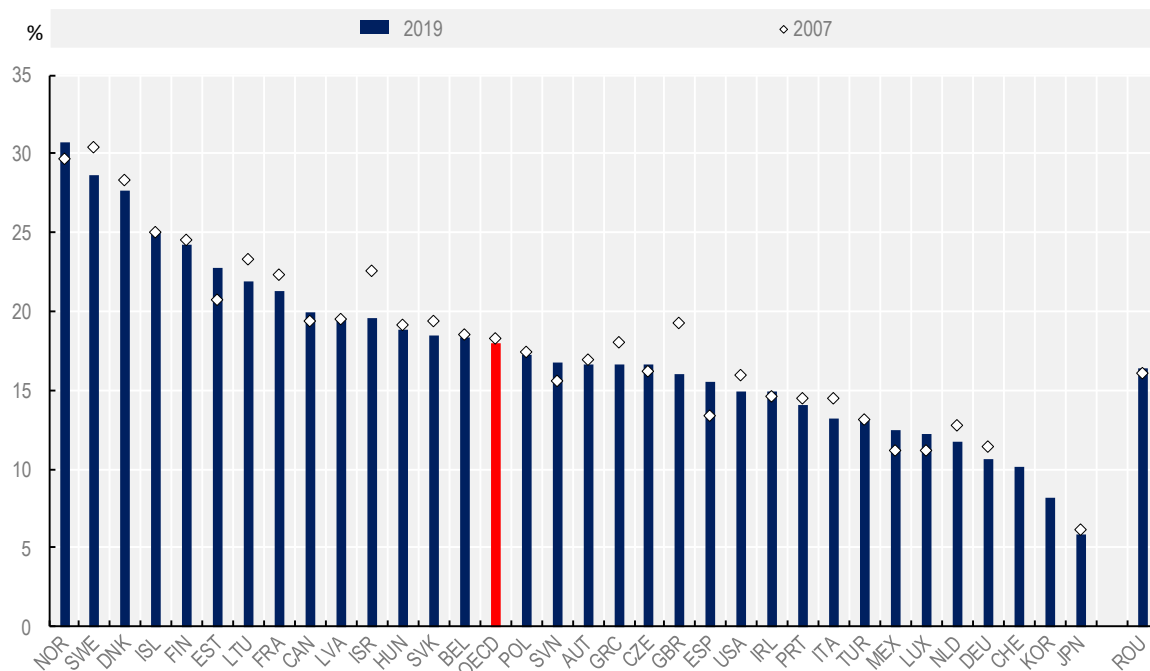
Note: Data for Australia, Chile, Colombia and New Zealand are not available. Data for Korea and Switzerland are not included in the OECD average due to missing time series. Romania was included given its status as an accession country.
Source: OECD (n.d.[6]), *OECD National Accounts Statistics (database)*, https://doi.org/10.1787/na-data-en; data for Iceland, Japan, Korea, Mexico, Switzerland, Türkiye and the United States: ILO (n.d.[7]), *ILOSTAT (database)*, https://ilostat.ilo.org/ and national account data on public employment by sectors and sub-sectors.

The International Monetary Fund expects public expenditure on wages and other remunerations to rise sharply over the coming years (Figure 4.2). This places a premium on the strategic use of new hiring aligned with the objectives of the national reform agenda and a reinforced emphasis on the development of talent in the Egyptian civil service through targeted learning opportunities and robust performance management mechanisms. Egypt needs a skilled public service and a greater focus on the quality of the workforce rather than the quantity of employees.

Figure 4.2. General government operations in Egypt, wages and other remunerations expenditure

In billions of Egyptian pounds
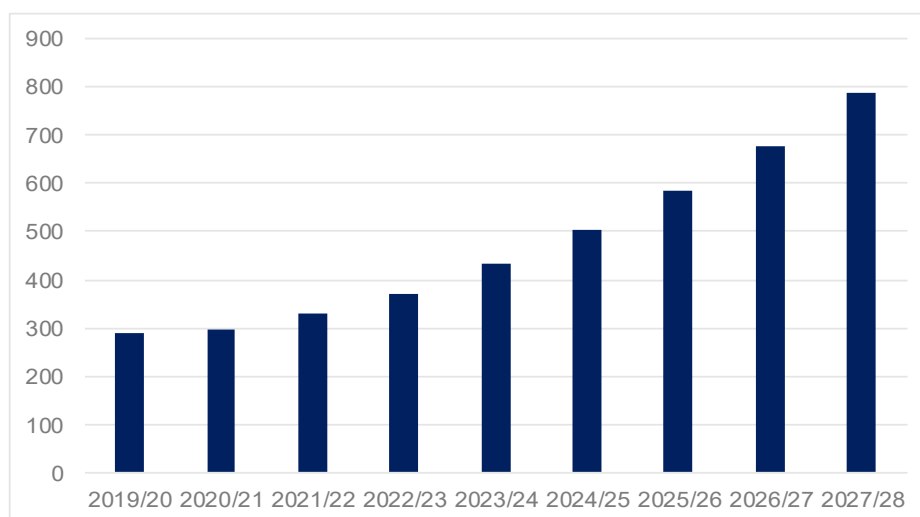
Note: Figures for 2022/23 onwards are projections.
Source: Based on IMF (2023[8]), *IMF Country Report No. 23/2 – Arab Republic of Egypt*, https://www.imf.org/-/media/Files/Publications/CR/2023/English/1EGYEA2023001.ashx

Main institutional actors for the civil service

CAOA is the central HR body for the Egyptian civil service. A recent report found that CAOA performs a combination of regulatory/watchdog, executive and support functions, combining the functions of a Civil Service Commission and Central Personnel Office (Srivastava, 2019[9]). Certain activities and responsibilities – such as learning and development – may be overseen by CAOA on a policy and planning level but are implemented and run by a range of other bodies or institutions. The Civil Service Council (CSC) is a body established under the chairmanship of the President of CAOA and includes other high-ranking officials and experts in the field of HR management and law. The CSC is responsible for advising the government on civil service matters and for proposing reforms to improve the performance of the civil service. Other relevant actors are described in Box 4.1.

Box 4.1. Other institutional actors in workforce management in the Egyptian civil service

In addition to CAOA, the following organisations and actors play a role in workforce development in Egypt:

- **Administrative Control Authority** (ACA): As per Law No. 54 of 1964 and as amended by Law No. 207 of 2017, the ACA has the competence to develop and follow up the implementation of the National Anti-Corruption Strategy in partnership with other relevant bodies and agencies in the country. It investigates administrative, technical or financial errors and monitors the implementation of laws, decrees, regulations and bylaws. Since 2014, the ACA has issued three consecutive strategies, for 2014-18, 2019-22 and 2023-30. The main pillars of these strategies include the "development of an efficient and effective administrative body, provision of high-quality public services, and activating the mechanisms of transparency and integrity in government units".

- **The Ministry of Finance** (MoF): The ministry plays a role in public service management by controlling the size of the wage bill and government budget. CAOA conducts HR planning and decides on employee headcount. The MoF allocates the funding for these roles. Once the announcement of vacant jobs and the selection process for eligible candidates are complete, CAOA sends candidate names to the MoF to release the funds.

- **The Ministry of Communications and Information Technology** (MCIT): Since 1999, a large part of the activities related to public administration reform efforts were focused on modernising the public service delivery using e-government information and communication technology (ICT) and the leading ministry at this period was the MCIT. The latter now focuses on national databases and services modernisation\reform, as well as atomisation activities in partnership with the Administrative Control Authority.

- **The Ministry of Local Development** (MoLD): According to its foundational Presidential Decree No. 380 of 1999, with objectives and mandates issued by a subsequent presidential decree, the MoLD has the competence to promote and co-ordinate decentralisation, civic engagement and local economic development, and build and develop a modern administration in the governorates. The MoLD works in close cooperation with CAOA and other Ministries to buffer and transfer different central PAR efforts at the local level.

- **Line ministries and departments**: Public administration reform and civil service Law No. 81 of 2016 (known as the Civil Service Law) serves all ministries, departments, government agencies, local units and public authorities in Egypt: indeed, Article 2 of the Civil Service Law defines a "unit" as "the Ministry, Department, Government Agency, Governorate or public body". Also, HR divisions in all Public Administration Units are important actors regarding implementation/compliance with the Civil Service Law and broader workforce development.

Source: OECD (2020[3]), "Supporting the capacity of the Central Agency of Organisation and Administration (CAOA) of Egypt", OECD, Paris.

Four priority areas to support a more strategic approach to managing public servants in Egypt

The public service workforce is at the core of Egypt's ambitious reform agenda. With the 2016 Civil Service Law, Egypt has an upgraded legislative framework that can spur concrete actions to further upgrade people management capability across the government. One of the lessons learned from countries that have gone through comprehensive civil service reform programmes, such as Ireland, is the need for extensive consultation and communication about the reform's objectives, expectations and responsibilities. The following sections outline four priority areas where Egypt can accelerate efforts already under way to improve people management capability. These areas were identified through extensive consultation with stakeholders during two OECD fact-finding missions to Cairo in 2022 and 2023:

- **Recruitment**: A growing wage bill and limited room to increase the civil service workforce as expansively as in the past points to the need for recruitment systems and processes to "do more with less". The aim is to streamline communication around government employment opportunities and ensure that job design and assessment methodologies emphasise competencies.

- **Learning and development**: Many institutional actors provide training across the Egyptian public service. There is likely an overlap in training scope and content, and the quality of training varies according to the trainings needs assessment of the entity. This could be further addressed through a streamlined by ensuring the learning and development offer is aligned with the national reform agenda and greater clarity on different providers' core offerings (and value added). Further, the

incentive structure around learning and development does not reflect its necessity. Learning can be better incorporated into growth opportunities and promotions, leadership selection, performance feedback and assessment and mobility systems.

- **Performance management**: Egyptian civil servants are transitioning to a new performance management system. The previous system largely focused on a narrow range of subjective elements that were not necessarily reflective of actual job performance or ability. The new system is designed to emphasise competencies but evidence to date suggests a considerable degree of resistance from public servants and patchy implementation across the civil service. A substantive performance management system can enable the best employees to grow and do good work, and it is an essential aspect of any effective civil service.

- **HR management capability**: Part of administrative reform in Egypt involves upgrading the capability of the HR function in the public service. This echoes the thrust of reform across the OECD, where many administrations are seeking to use the opportunities presented by new digital tools and training to reduce the amount of transactional and time-consuming functions in order to focus on activities that have higher value added, such as more proactive talent management or partnering with business units.

These four areas, outlined above, align with the principles of the OECD Recommendation on Public Service Leadership and Capability (Figure 4.3).

Figure 4.3. OECD Recommendation on Public Service Leadership and Capability

I. Values-Driven Culture and Leadership	II. Skilled and Effective Public Servants	III. Responsive and Adaptive Employment Systems
1. Defined values	5. Right skills and competencies	10. System stewardship
2. Capable leadership	6. Attractive employer	11. Strategic approach
3. Inclusive and safe	7. Merit-based	12. Mobile & adaptive
4. Proactive and innovative	8. Learning culture	13. Appropriate terms and conditions
	9. Performance-oriented	14. Employee voice

Source: OECD (2019[10]), *Recommendation of the Council on Public Service Leadership and Capability*, https://legalinstruments.oecd.org/en/instruments/OECD-LEGAL-0445.

Streamlining recruitment to emphasise targeted and competency-based assessment

Governments across the OECD struggle to attract certain types of skills, usually ones that are either rare or in demand by the private sector (or both). Common challenges include roles in the data, digital and information technology (IT) fields, as well as for management-level roles (OECD, 2021[11]). The Egyptian public service appears to be an attractive employer, with stability of tenure and good work-life balance highlighted by stakeholders during the OECD fact-finding missions as the main reasons that it is generally able to recruit without difficulty. However, three challenges suggest that Egypt should continue its efforts to improve how government recruitment is carried out.

First, to achieve the ambitions of the national reform agenda, people with new skills, ideas and backgrounds must be part of the conversation. That means greater efforts are needed to build a diverse candidate pool, especially featuring people with backgrounds or skillsets that are under-represented in public service. Second, with a growing public sector wage bill (Figure 4.2) potentially limiting room for a substantial increase in headcount in the public workforce in the coming years, Egypt will have to make sure that recruitment/selection processes test candidates for the right things, such as future-oriented and transversal competencies that will enable them to grown and learn throughout a varied career. Third, recruitment will have to take account of the need to demonstrate the appeal and value of a post in the NAC. This calls for an ongoing reflection on effective communication strategies, including through continued efforts to reach out to candidates from under-represented groups in the civil service.

The thrust of reforms related to recruitment since the introduction of the Civil Service Act in 2016 has been to establish a more structured framework for recruitment at different levels of the administration. CAOA has invested in purpose-built examination facilities as part of this reform agenda and is the lead actor in a mainly centralised recruitment system. CAOA has also invested in a centralised electronic system, with regular publications of job posts through media outlets, helping ensure greater outreach to candidates.

Civil service jobs in Egypt used to be advertised in national newspapers. Since 2016, all jobs covered by the Civil Service Law are centralised on the CAOA public jobs portal.[1] This centralisation aims to improve transparency and reduce the potential for "*wasta*", or appointments based on personal connections. Recruitment is broadly divided into two categories: recruitment for specialised, technical, clerical and artisan/assistant roles (Article 11) and recruitment for senior civil service positions (Article 19).

The Civil Service Law provides for the use of contract staff for in-demand roles (i.e. experts with "uncommon specialisation", such as in the field of IT or investment). Such staff are hired for a period of three years and are not bound by salary caps. The use of contract staff for in-demand roles is common across the OECD and is a good example of flexibility in employment frameworks that can help attract specific skills to the civil service. Internships are possible, though the framework regulating them is less developed. However, the law also contains public employment provisions not typically found in OECD administrations. For example, Article 13 of the law states that spouses of some categories of employees (such as disabled employees or employees killed in military or security operations) can replace them if the employee dies or is incapacitated. Although the volume of these appointments is likely relatively low and although there is undoubtedly a well-intentioned social function behind these provisions, such provisions are nevertheless at odds with the principle of merit-based recruitment enshrined in public service legislation across the OECD (2023[12]).

CAOA has a key role in recruiting people for civil service. It effectively acts as the "gatekeeper" for new hiring. Hiring is predominately at the entry and senior levels, with levels in between filled through promotions and internal transfers. Recruitment is primarily position-based. CAOA reviews and approves/denies requests for new recruitment submitted by the HR units in line ministries and government bodies. The review process mostly ensures sufficient funding for the position and that the position aligns with the current organisational structure of the ministry requesting to hire. There is scope to upgrade this process to go beyond budgetary/organisational compliance and include a consideration of aligning new recruitment with in-demand skillsets or future skill needs. CAOA oversees the announcement, examination and appointment process: CAOA's Central Selection Committee runs the examination and selection process through the Centre for Capability Assessment and Competition (CACC). The selection process for non-senior positions involves an electronic examination and all shortlisted candidates are then interviewed by a committee using randomly selected questions, on stage in front of an audience composed of the other candidates. This method is designed to highlight the transparency of the interview process.

The system is a little different for senior civil service positions. Senior leadership positions and permanent undersecretary positions are announced on the central portal, with individual ministries/bodies overseeing elements of the process. Applicants are mainly existing civil servants rather than external candidates:

CAOA reports that the figure for internal applicants is 60-70%. Applicants fill out a template setting out their vision for managing the department. A senior civil service committee is formed in each ministry and is led by the head of the ministry. This committee evaluates the proposals and interviews applicants. There are four criteria for appointment, weighted equally: 25% for past experience, 25% for competencies, 25% for the proposal itself and 25% for relevant educational qualifications.

Improving career outreach to boost candidate quality

One aspect that stands out as particularly relevant for Egypt is better quantifying what skills and competencies are missing. Interviews with stakeholders in Cairo revealed that some ministries use "parallel" employment mechanisms to recruit dynamic and/or specialised staff funded through donor-provided technical assistance funding. This is done on a limited scale and mainly for certain required specialties. The advantages of these systems are seen to lie in a more streamlined recruitment process and potential for more exciting work with better pay. These observations align with the findings of El Baradei (2021[1]).

Use of different types of employment mechanisms can also be found in some OECD countries, where short-term contractual staff can be hired for specific, timebound needs with alternative pay scales and management frameworks than those of regular civil servants. The key is to ensure that these types of employment mechanisms are not simply used as workarounds for public employment systems unable to attract and recruit the right skills. Otherwise, there is a risk of lack of transparency, blurred lines of accountability and poor retention of institutional memory.

Unlike most OECD countries (Figure 4.4), CAOA notes that the civil service does not experience particular difficulties attracting specialist profiles, such as candidates with backgrounds in data, digital and ICT fields. However, without applicant/candidate data to support this, it would be reasonable to assume that some pockets of the civil service do struggle to attract people with the skills they need, especially in specialised or newly-emerging and senior civil service roles. As noted above, the history of Egypt's public service was largely characterised by candidates gravitating automatically toward roles in the public service. Now, with skills across a wide variety of areas needed to help achieve the national reform agenda and support the move to the new capital, this points to the importance of the Egyptian public service continuing to develop a shift in mindset to identify and seek out different groups of candidates, including those who may not consider the public service a good fit for their skills and ambitions.

Figure 4.4. Attraction challenges in the public sector
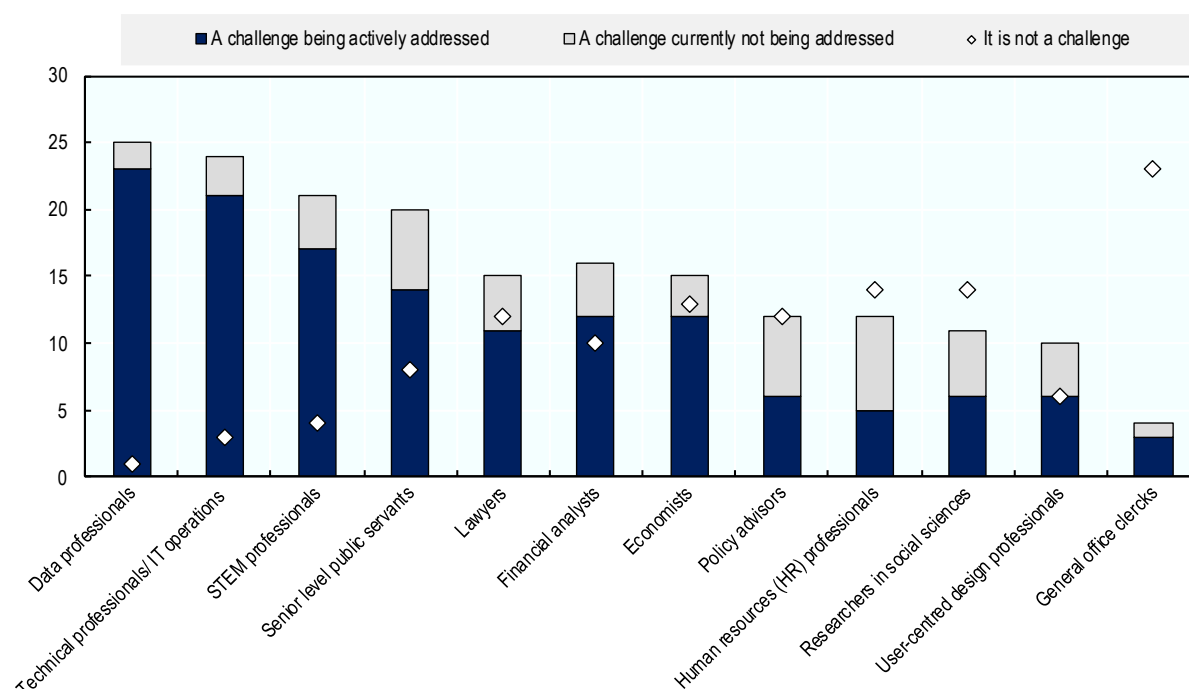
Note: N varies depending on the option, as some options were unknown by some OECD countries. Original survey question: "Does the central/federal administration experience particular challenges in attracting any of the following groups of applicants/skills?"
STEM: science, technology, engineering and mathematics.
Source: OECD (2020[13]), "Survey on public service leadership and capability", Unpublished, OECD, Paris.

One way for Egypt to develop greater ability to attract the right skills is through greater use of proactive recruitment practices: deliberate practices such as strategies to guide recruitment efforts or flexibility to adjust pay for specific in-demand profiles (Figure 4.5). One feature of proactive recruitment practices in many OECD countries, such as the Czech Republic and Ireland, is the development of specific efforts to reach out to younger candidates. This is partly driven by shifting demographics in such countries, with a large cohort of public servants expected to retire in the coming years and the need to bring in young candidates with knowledge of new and emerging policy fields. With a particularly young population, proactive recruitment practices in Egypt could be targeted at young candidates, e.g., through the use of appealing job descriptions, amplification of employment opportunities on social media, and particularly through efforts to identify where younger candidates would be a good fit to fill skills gaps in the public service. Institutionally, the equal opportunities units at the central and local levels could be useful actors to mobilise toward such efforts, including reaching out to young candidates and people from backgrounds not traditionally represented in the public service.

Figure 4.5. Use of proactive recruitment practices
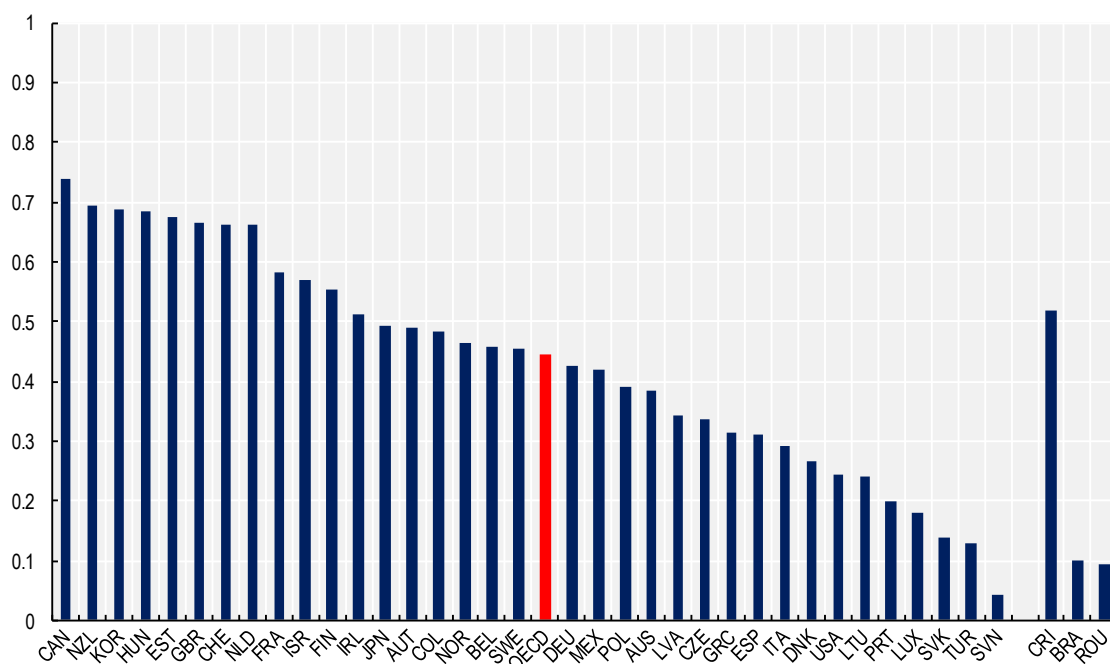
Note: Data for Chile and Iceland not available. CRI, BRA and ROU are included given their status as accession countries.
Source: OECD (2020[13]), "Survey on public service leadership and capability", Unpublished, OECD, Paris.

Improving selection and recruitment

Government recruitment processes have also been around for a long time, with many designed to emphasise standardisation of the treatment of candidates to achieve equality. While this is laudable, a recent trend has been upgrading recruitment processes to ensure that they are fit-for-purpose for an era characterised by continual global crises, increasing complexity and technicality of policy challenges, and the need to make compromises and seek consensus to gain buy-in from citizens. France and Spain, for example, have each begun to adjust the format of their long-standing *concours* to test a wider and more relevant range of competencies more closely linked to the day-to-day work of public servants. And in the United States, for example, the Office of Personnel Management recently issued guidance to federal hiring agencies reminding them of their obligation to scale back reliance upon educational qualifications as a substitute for competencies in hiring processes (U.S. OPM, 2021[14]).

The challenge for CAOA is to identify what competencies will be in high demand in the future in Egypt following the move to the NAC and further develop innovative ways to test candidates for those competencies by adjusting recruitment and selection systems. CAOA has the building blocks in place to further refine its assessment and selection tools. This includes a competency framework with 13 broad competency themes. Two areas of focus for CAOA could be further improving the range of competencies tested during recruitment and forming a more permanent committee to oversee senior-level appointments (see, for example, Box 4.2).

As shown in Figure 4.6, most OECD countries use a wide range of tools to test analytical and behavioural competencies. Based on evidence gathered to date, it appears that the current recruitment process in Egypt should continue to widen the range of tools in candidate assessment to ensure the assessment of analytical and behavioural competencies.

Figure 4.6. Testing for analytical and behavioural competencies
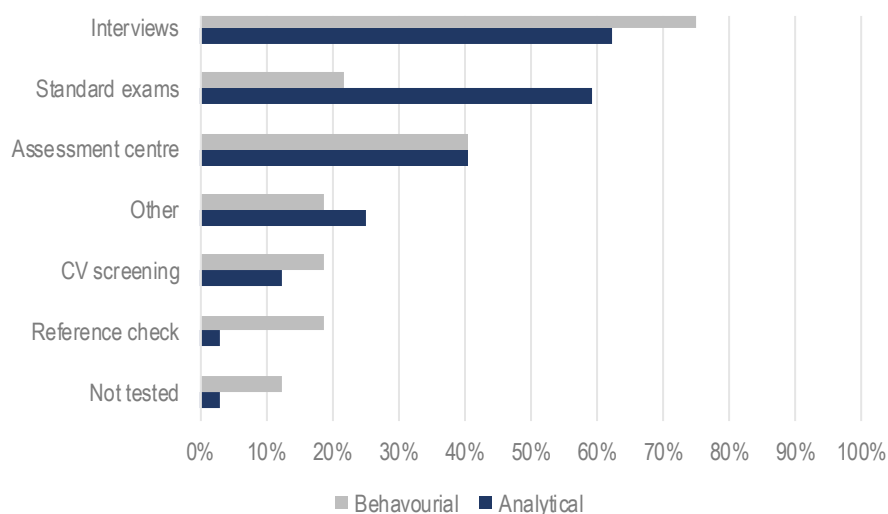
Note: CV: curriculum vitae. Original survey question: "How are the following criteria tested for applicants to the civil service?".
Source: OECD (2020[13]), "Survey on public service leadership and capability", Unpublished, OECD, Paris.

Analytical and behavioural competencies are hard to identify in the first place and tricky to test for in long-established recruitment systems. However, these types of competencies are at the heart of how public administrations across the OECD frame policy challenges and implement solutions. Many administrations describe these types of competencies in competency frameworks. Competency frameworks are guides or strategies that highlight the types of competencies required for specific roles, professions or hierarchical functions. CAOA has a competency framework with 13 competency themes. The institution uses the competency framework to develop electronic examinations for candidates. Nearly 80% of OECD countries also use competency frameworks in recruitment, with OECD data showing that vision and strategy, achieving results, public values/integrity, networking/collaboration, and employee/workforce development were the top five most-included competencies in competency frameworks across the OECD.

In Egypt, there is scope to expand the use of the competency framework as it is currently used in recruitment to develop a broader range of tools to assess candidates, especially for specific roles such as senior civil service positions. Figure 4.7 shows the range of tools used by OECD administrations. For example, Canada, France and Korea use group simulations to examine how candidates perform and interact with peers on assignments. Estonia takes into account 360-degree feedback when considering candidates for senior roles and 14 OECD countries also use psychological assessments when recruiting senior managers.

Figure 4.7. Assessing competencies for senior-level recruitment
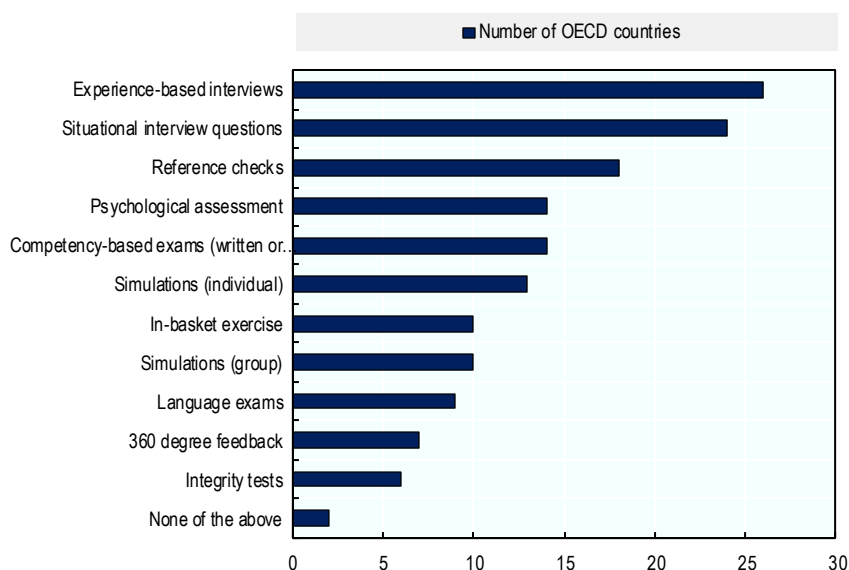
Note: n=33. Original survey question: "How are the competencies of senior-level public servants assessed during recruitment?".
Source: OECD (2020[13]), "Survey on public service leadership and capability", Unpublished, OECD, Paris.

Structurally, Egypt could build on existing efforts to better structure the senior-level appointment process by establishing a permanent committee to monitor and run recruitment for senior levels across the public service. This could complement existing leadership position committees established at the ministry level to cover individual leadership positions at the ministry level. As shown in Box 4.2, the Irish public service has established a body at arm's length from the public service to oversee the recruitment process for senior candidates. The benefits of such committees are the range of external views and ability to draw on a wide range of expertise.

Box 4.2. Senior civil service recruitment in the Irish public service

"[The Top-Level Appointments Committee (TLAC) was established in 1984. The committee's function is to recommend candidates to Ministers and Government for the most senior positions in the civil service – at the assistant secretary level and upwards. By carrying out this function in an independent manner and by making its decisions strictly on the basis of the relative merit of the candidates for the positions concerned, TLAC aims to strengthen the management structure of the civil service] (Government of Ireland, 2018[15])".

In 2012, the TLAC was restructured by the then-Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform to further ensure its independence and transparency. It now comprises nine external members, one of whom acts as chair, and seven members of the secretary general grade from within the civil service, thus maintaining a majority of non-civil servants. Recommendations for appointment are made by in-depth assessment interview panels following a shortlisting of eligible applications. Ministers and the government make the actual appointments.

During this period, the proportion of candidates from the civil service, public service and private sector who were recommended for appointment was tracked and reported. In 2012-19, the proportion of candidates recommended for appointment who came directly from the private sector varied from a high of 21% to a low of 5%. It is noteworthy that in 2021, for the second year in a row, no candidate from the

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private sector was recommended for appointment by the TLAC, although 30% of eligible candidates came from that sector. This did not occur between 2012 and 2019. Although a greater number of eligible applicants in 2021 came from outside the civil service (27% from the wider public service and 30% from the private sector), the success rate for civil servants securing a recommendation is far greater than for candidates outside the civil service. The TLAC notes in its most recent report that the overall standard of candidates presenting for interview during 2021 was impressive, as it has been in previous years. It is also worth noting that, according to the TLAC, while no recommendations for appointment during 2021 favoured candidates coming directly from the wider public service, a number of those recommended or called for final interview would have had private sector experience before joining the service.

The TLAC acknowledges the challenge of identifying the optimal mix of backgrounds in the upper echelons of the civil service. A greater variety of career backgrounds and experience should serve to broaden the service's capacities. However, it is also necessary to have continuity, a strong corporate memory and specialised knowledge.

Source: Based on information provided to the OECD by the Irish Public Appointments Service.

Overhauling a multi-component and siloed learning and development ecosystem

Learning and development are two of the main mandates of CAOA. Notably, the institution is responsible for the creation of overall learning and development and training plans and strategies, whilst other government bodies report to CAOA when setting their own training plans. Financial allocations for these elements are also decided and given by CAOA.

An overall learning and development plan or strategy for the Egyptian public service is a difficult undertaking that has not fully come to fruition. Without a clear idea of the total workforce and accompanying data on roles, tasks, growth and demographics, as well as total workforce planning, the creation of such a plan is a challenge for any administration; ongoing efforts to collect data and create "e-profiles" of the workforce should help in this regard. CAOA is responsible for this but also has many other responsibilities and the resources dedicated to learning need to be increased.

A document reflecting a learning and development plan is made available to ministries, containing nine "categories" under which training is intended to fall. These are:

1. Basic programmes (entry level).
2. Career path programmes.
3. Middle management programmes.
4. Leadership programmes.
5. New beginning (post-retirement) programmes.
6. National awareness programmes.
7. Women in state administrative machinery programmes.
8. Programmes for people with a disability.
9. Programmes for technical and crafts jobs.

Offerings across the public service are sent to all public entities. CAOA does not run all training, learning and development programmes or courses available across the Egyptian public service. The actual delivery of these is wide-ranging and somewhat unconnected in practice, as discussed more below. Given the size of the public service, this can be expected to an extent and efforts can continue to be undertaken to streamline the on-the-ground rollout of the strategy designed and implemented by CAOA.

Streamlining an operationally mixed and complex system

While formally, CAOA has authority over the field of learning and development, in practice, many ministries and other bodies can exercise their autonomy or preference over decisions relevant to their training needs. CAOA oversees any potential public service-wide learning strategy and administrative bodies can officially select from the offerings in that plan and send their requests and own plans to CAOA for approval. It determines the financial allocation to learning, though the MoF is responsible for the overall State Budget, from which the allocation for learning stems (as with all financial resources). Based on the needs assessment from each body, the MOF sets an umbrella envelope for the budget which in turn is managed and allocated by CAOA.. Many ministries also report depending on their own resources for additional training and, indeed, often run their own training centres, which are operationally independent.

While the Central Department for Capacity Building Policies and Plans at CAOA oversees learning and development offerings, OECD fact-finding revealed that there can be complexity and confusion across line ministries regarding the availability and delivery of offerings. There are several training/learning institutions within the Egyptian public sector realm. These include the National Institute for Governance and Sustainable Development, the National Training Academy (NTA), the Egyptian Anti-Corruption Academy and numerous training centres that exist within ministries.

There are also various private training operators or centres that offer additional contracted training. These have to be approved and accredited by CAOA (under Civil Service Law 81/2016). According to a count by CAOA in June 2024, there are 397 registered training centres, including public, private, and not for profit centres. CAOA reported that a list of accredited training institutions is available on the "KMT chatbot" (https://caoakemet.caoa.gov.eg) through which public employees can enquire. Nevertheless, the extremely large size of the public service, long-standing contracts or arrangements with private operators, and the extent of training needs requested and procured by ministries and administrative bodies warrants careful consideration by CAOA and related bodies. CAOA must approve each provider, by reviewing the place and buildings, equipment, programmes, and so on. There are several steps to the licensing requirements for training providers. A provider must apply electronically on CAOA's website, and a committee from CAOA review the application based on several factors including the qualifications of trainers, programmes offered, and facilities. A license is then given to the centre to operate and provide learning or training.

CAOA must approve each provider, by reviewing the locations, buildings, equipment, programmes, etc. There are several steps and requirements in licensing training providers. A provider must apply electronically on CAOA website and a CAOA committee reviews the application based on several factors, including the qualifications of trainers, programmes offered and facilities. The centre is then given a license to operate and provide learning or training.

However, these are annually reviewed and the scope of the tasks – and mapping of what exists – is perhaps overwhelmingly large. Current turnover of accredited centres is reportedly 0% for public entities and 10% for private entities, though new providers are still added. Accreditation is valid for two years but can be renewed for private providers for a small fee. A review of all centres and courses offered is indeed a very large undertaking but one which would bring all training offerings under one coherent umbrella, ensuring that overlap and inefficiencies are reduced.

In OECD countries, extensive numbers of privately-run learning institutions functioning as public sector training services and multiple administration-run or -aligned institutes are unusual. Countries that do well at learning and development tend to have a clear strategy and defined roles for all partners, aligning to meet the administration's learning needs and goals. Figure 4.8 below outlines the actors responsible for learning and development in the OECD.

Figure 4.8. Responsibility for learning and development in central governments, OECD countries, 2022

Percentage of countries that responded to the survey question
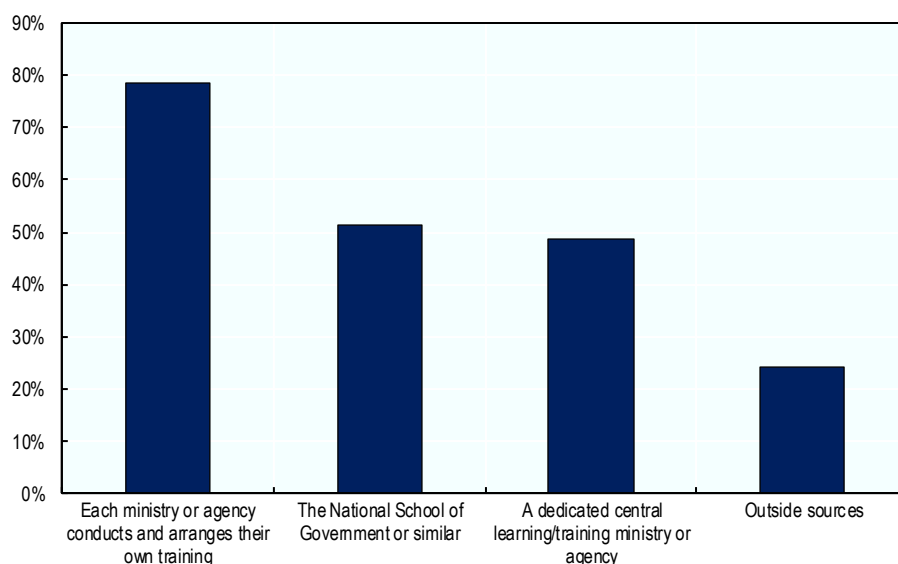
Note: N=37. Original question: "Who is in charge of carrying out training and learning across the central/federal administration?". More than one answer was possible.
Source: OECD (2020[13]), "Survey on public service leadership and capability", Unpublished, OECD, Paris.

In addition to what has already been mentioned, numerous partnerships with international governments, development partners or organisations offer even more learning or training programmes and technical support. Examples of these co-operations include international organisations such as the German development agency (GIZ), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the OECD, among others. To improve clarity, further efforts could be undertaken to map, institutionalise and enhance the coordination and visibility of existing opportunities for training with international and development partners and domestic institutions, given the fragmented training offer in Egypt.

They illustrate the complexity in the breadth of the current learning system; the NTA alone reportedly has 150 programmes and 70 000 graduates along with 8 large new buildings in 6th of October City. Findings from OECD interviews revealed the need to regularise and expand the co-ordination between CAOA and NTA. The NTA is a relevant player in this regard, with which CAOA could consider enhancing co-ordination, given its work in the field and as part of institutionalising the overall learning strategy in Egypt. Currently, this co-operation includes CAOA being invited to participate in NTA board meetings and the NTA providing CAOA with information on employees who have taken training so that it can use this information in their data and e-profiles for tracking information on training.

While training is carried out by a wide variety of accredited institutions, CAOA has been responsible, through its own training centres, for the specific training related to government employees, including those moving to the New Administrative Capital. This wide-reaching training focuses on technical skills needed to undertake digital working methods and new processes for work in the NAC. Certain workers were chosen to move based on their roles but also on their potential to train in digital technology. These workers are also being relied on to learn new ways of working that can lead to a cultural shift in the public service – an ambitious undertaking.

In order to formulate a strategic and effective learning and development plan, a mapping of the state of learning offerings must be undertaken to understand the current situation. Planning for training needs and skills gaps, and workforce data collection are urgent priorities. CAOA reports that considerable efforts are underway to map roles and job profiles, greatly aiding the overall undertaking.

Box 4.3. Competency frameworks and their role in learning and development and performance management

Competency frameworks are useful and often essential tools for developing and managing employees and workforces. In public service, they play an even more important role in helping guide and strategise HR planning in a highly complex environment with a multitude of constraints, which can make employee growth and evaluation a multifaceted undertaking.

Countries that do well at the management and planning of the public service often have one or more competency frameworks,[1] which are implemented into learning and development plans as well as performance management processes. This could mean, for example, using such frameworks to assess learning needs and design coursework, linking competencies to performance evaluations, or using them in making promotion decisions. Competencies are more than simply skills: in public service, they are a set of behaviours, attitudes and capabilities that make people effective public servants.

Competency frameworks are important to design and implement thoughtfully and, when used well, can be a highly valuable aspect of an overall workforce plan. OECD research in Egypt indicates that early work has been done to develop a competency framework in the Egyptian public service but that it is full design, publication and integration into processes is still ongoing. Fact-finding interviews indicate that there is a preliminary framework of 13 competencies, or in this case, "traits", that apply to every public servant.

The document itself outlines some areas related to competency (for example, communication and decision-making), though it includes areas that are not traditionally utilised in good practices in OECD countries and the SIGMA Principles of Public Administration (OECD, 2023[12]). There is an opportunity to learn from such best practices in framework design (for example, the first area outlined is emotional balance, which appears to grade the emotional and mental well-being of employees, which are not competencies but rather a health matter and are unlikely to be equitably and fairly used or included in a matrix that is used for performance assessment). Further, research suggests that it has limited substantive use in either learning and development or performance management at this point. CAOA reports use of psychometric tests to assess the list of 13 traits, job-related competencies and intelligence quotient (IQ). These tests are given in the CACC for recruiting new hires, assessing the capabilities of nominees to leadership positions and identifying training needs. These tests are done in the Capability Assessment and Competition Centre, for recruiting new hires, assessing the capabilities of nominees to leadership positions, and to identify training needs.

Note: 1. Sometimes countries will have multiple or expanded frameworks tailored to levels of seniority and type of role.
Source: OECD (2021[11]), *Public Employment and Management 2021: The Future of the Public Service*, https://doi.org/10.1787/938f0d65-en; OECD (2023[12]), *The Principles of Public Administration*, https://www.sigmaweb.org/publications/Principles-of-Public-Administration-2023.pdf.

Defining the needs, aims and outcomes of learning and development systems

The development of the workforce and a strategic assessment of needed skills and competencies is required. Figure 4.9 illustrates the responsibility for creating and implementing learning and development strategies in central governments in OECD countries. It is most common for countries to have a central

strategy, which is often in addition to more defined or specialised strategies within ministries, which are potentially unique to their needs. Mandates can sometimes be shared, though the delivery of training is more often the responsibility of a school of government or specific learning and development department.

Figure 4.9. Learning and development strategies in central governments, 2022
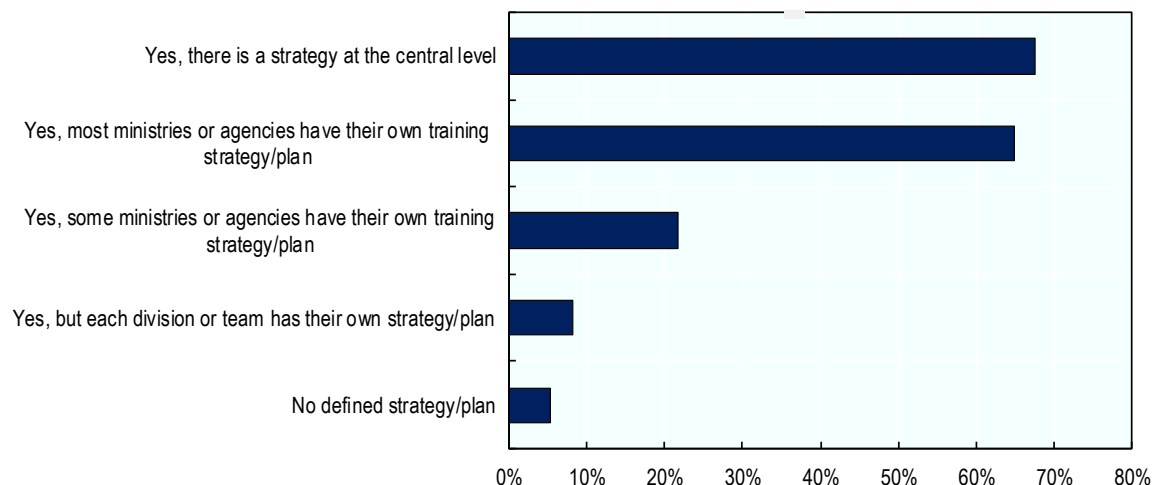
Note: N=37. Original question: "Is there a learning and development strategy/plan for central/federal public servants?". More than one answer was possible.
Source: OECD (2020[13]), "Survey on public service leadership and capability", Unpublished, OECD, Paris.

The availability of accurate workforce data would enhance CAOA's ability to plan and assess learning needs. According to CAOA, data for 3.5 million employees have been compiled, and the process is ongoing to increase this number. While this is a positive step forward, data for the full civil service are currently lacking, as discussed in this chapter. Without knowing the number of employees, their roles and the tasks required of those roles, planning and strategising for workforce development is a very difficult undertaking. Efforts are underway by CAOA to collect more data and better map the workforce and this can be viewed as an essential first stage in creating a foundation on which other strategies can be built.

Beyond basic workforce data, more advanced data that specifically tracks elements of learning and development can also significantly contribute to a stronger learning and development systems. CAOA is endeavouring to track the training taken by each employee and use this to create a better mapping of existing skills throughout the workforce and contribute to an assessment of skills needs in order to offer functional and effective training programmes. Data can also be tracked not just on the needed skills but on the training itself, including learning outcomes, performance impact, budgets, participation and more. Figure 4.10 below shows some examples of data collection efforts on learning and development across OECD countries.

Training needs assessment and the identification of skills gaps are other areas that deserve strategic attention in the Egyptian administration. Currently, the processes and policies in place to identify training needs are fragmented throughout the administration and require further institutionalisation. This requires enhancing the availability and quality of workforce data gathered and used to inform policies and programmes. Feedback from line managers and departmental requests are relied upon; however, these have not formally been systematised but rather "identified naturally". A new website has been developed for ministries to enter their self-identified training needs to be included in CAOA's overall training plan.

OECD evidence from its fact-finding missions revealed that each ministry identifies its own training needs in different ways. For example, the Ministry of Trade and Industry reports the use of questionnaires sent to each department to indicate needs and has a method for individuals to indicate the training they think they need. The Ministry of Planning, Economic Development and International Cooperation (MPEDIC) also uses a survey but says that, due to limited resources, needs assessment is mostly done by asking department leadership directly. The MoF sets an annual plan informed by twice-annual feedback from medium and higher managerial staff. The Ministry of Electricity and Renewable Energy has its own leadership training centre, wherein needs are assessed based on who is nominated for leadership programmes. The Ministry of Housing, Utilities and Urban Communities uses a strategy in which it tries to keep training within the department, having colleagues train each other, though there is neither a formal system nor formal needs assessment related to this strategy.

Figure 4.10. Data and indicators on learning and development, 2022
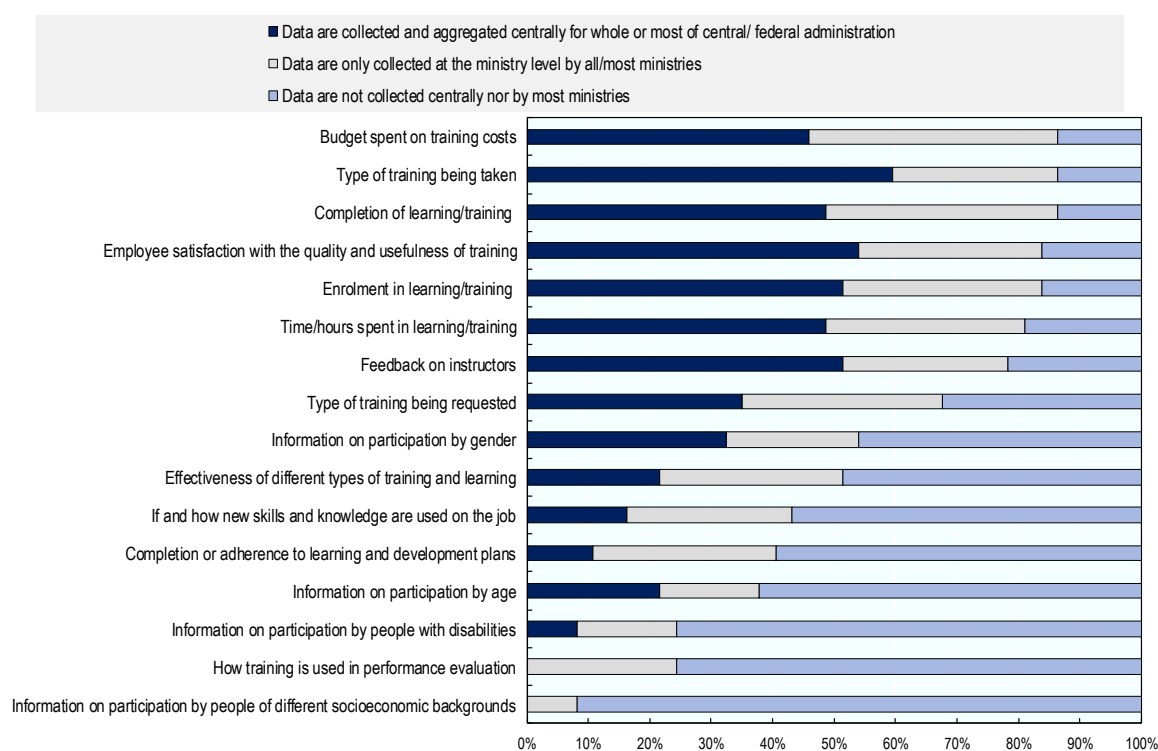
Note: N=37. Original question: "Which indicators do you track regarding training and development?".
Source: OECD (2020[13]), "Survey on public service leadership and capability", Unpublished, OECD, Paris.

Areas of training needs are also, in large part, selected on the basis of priorities in administrative reforms. For example, the Prime Minister issued a decree stating that entity should establish six working units: strategic planning and policies; monitoring and evaluation; internal audit; HR; legal support; and digital transformation. Training plans for the move to the NAC were reportedly established based on these units.

An institutionalised central learning plan was launched in 2018 and is being implemented. It aims to streamline and improve the various forms of planning and deliver training across public entities. CAOA, however, could benefit from a more institutionalised and clear central learning development system and strategy. The aims and goals of training may be nearly impossible to concretely establish without a foundation of both reliable and coherent workforce data and a thorough analysis of skills gaps and learning needs. Because of this, these elements can be seen as urgent priority areas in any public service reform.

Indeed, these elements are themselves a foundation for evaluating the outcomes of training offerings. Impact assessment of learning plans is an essential component of an overall strategy, as it is important to understand when training is – and is not – working, for example to inform the redesign of strategies and offerings or to direct resources to especially useful programmes.

Outcomes assessment is currently being carried out by testing before and after certain training courses. For specialised leadership programmes, which can last up to two years, there is a performance change assessment before and after undertaking the programme, informed by feedback from senior leadership in ministries. However, an outcome assessment would be difficult to carry out without addressing the above-mentioned factors.

Creating and reinforcing a learning culture in the Egyptian public service

A learning culture – in which learning is expected, valued, habitual and "part of the job" for all staff – is an essential factor is successful learning and development systems. This can mean linking learning efforts and progress to promotion and career growth, considering it in feedback and assessment, giving employees a chance to take training they find fulfilling and use new skills on the job, ensuring that staff at all levels engage in career-long development (OECD, 2023[16]). Many of the structural elements and incentives – or lack of disincentives – required to nurture a learning culture are related to performance management processes. Elements of this are discussed in the next section of this chapter.

Another important element of creating a learning culture is offering quality, varied content that is targeted at the audience and tailored to the needs of learners. Because of this, consolidating the learning offerings and providers and improving quality control is essential. It is also important to offer learning in ways that reach learners and embrace available technology, such as through digital means.

Currently, CAOA is working on further establishing an improved online digital learning platform. During 2020, some learning transitioned to online platforms, as CAOA conducted many of the planned training using distant learning tools (via the Internet) in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. A full platform for online learning is being set up, where notably CAOA is currently developing a learning management system (LMS), which will facilitate and track the whole process of training planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation through an automated and connected system. In the future, CAOA plans to apply more e-learning for the transition to the NAC and, ideally, to link online learning with the LMS that tracks staff learning efforts.

When learning efforts of staff are rewarded, learning becomes viewed positively. However, learning is not always viewed positively in the Egyptian public sector workforce. Training being an integrated aspect of career growth, is done according to the training needs assessment (TNA) for all employees. Other training is optional and not always viewed as an expected part of the job or an integrated aspect of career growth, which adds complexities in terms of the willingness and incentives for public service employees to undertake training. Furthermore, in some cases, when training is not an integral part of career growth, there may be a risk of it being perceived as a punishment for "underperforming" employees and, often, only employees who receive weak feedback may be sent to training. Those who are higher-functioning or who are heavily relied on with high workloads may not be given the opportunities to further develop themselves, which may be something they would like to do and which would develop their skills.

A challenge, generally in workplaces and public administrations, is designing training programmes that align with the aims and careers of workers and the needs of the administration. Learning in any workplace should assist workers along their career path and motivate employees as they grow and take on new challenges and roles. Often, workplace learning can be done on the job in an informal way, such as through mentorship, giving people a chance to try new things or leadership tasks, and interacting on multifunctional teams. In the context of CAOA, learning should be encouraged and rewarded through growth and the intrinsic self-motivation of workers. Learning opportunities are to be ideally made available to all staff in an

inclusive way and woven into the expectations of every public servant. Along this process, efforts in Egypt to continue to ensure equal opportunities for career growth and access to learning opportunities between men and women will be fundamental. For a more in-depth analysis and review of gender equality and mainstreaming in Egypt, please refer to Chapter 7 of this publication.

Delivering a substantial shift in performance management systems

Performance management of any workforce is an integral element of resource planning, crisis preparedness, resilience and general readiness as well as the ability to undertake both known and unexpected challenges, now and in the future. It allows organisations to hire the right number of the right types of people, plan for skills needs well in advance, identify and build skills internally, compete in the labour market and build pipelines of workers to fill essential roles. Performance management includes performance assessment and evaluation but it also encompasses other practices such as learning and development, promotion and growth, whole-of-workforce databases of skills and experience and planning for resource allocations now and in longer-term horizons (OECD, 2023[16]).

In the public service, performance management becomes even more essential than in various other sectors due to many of the unique factors of this industry, such as: multiple competing constraints; a need for heightened responsiveness and high-stakes repercussions and outcomes of work and policy decisions; the frequency of decades-long careers inside administrations; and a need to compete for skilled workers with sometimes higher-paying sectors (OECD, 2021[11]). The public sector is a major employer in many countries and its management can be influential for the stability and success of whole economies. The average percentage of total employment in general government is around 18% in OECD countries (OECD, 2021[17]). Indeed, in Egypt, the public sector employs several million people, though its size is likely unjustifiably large and the result of an ever-bloating system that added workers in response to economic and social conditions.

Navigating a difficult but necessary organisational culture change

In 2019, MPEDIC Decree No. 63 issued new guidelines that cover some aspects of performance management, including performance assessment. These guidelines mandate twice-yearly performance reviews of all public servants and a structured rating system for these assessments should follow. The comparative advantages of the new appraisal system include: i) mandating the competent authority in all government agencies to develop – from fiscal year 2019/20 – an integrated system for evaluating employee performance in a way that ensures complete accuracy in measuring an employee's performance and behaviour to reach the natural curve of performance; and ii) allowing, for the first time, employees to submit an objection to their performance evaluation results (the performance evaluation report is not considered final until the deadline for the grievance has passed or a decision has been made with the signature of the employee).

In addition, the organisational culture was – and still is – such that performance evaluations are normally high for nearly everyone. Stakeholders during OECD fact-finding interviews revealed that around 99% of people receive the highest or second-highest "grade". This phenomenon is potentially due to a lack of structure, of properly designed incentives alongside the assessment system and of framework to follow and provide accountability for determining how assessments are done.

A financial bonus system is also tied to receiving a highly ranked assessment. In this system, receiving the bonus has become an expected part of the salary in many ways and having a performance assessment grade that is not at the highest level would keep many employees from receiving it. The bonus is viewed not as a reward for excellence but as the standard: indeed, not receiving it is viewed as a serious and potentially embarrassing or financially difficult punishment.

The shift to the new system in Egypt is already underway, with plans to be fully implemented. A greater challenge in achieving this is implementing the change into an organisation's culture and actual ways of working. There is a strong need to focus on this shift and create processes and accountability to ensure that substantive performance management happens in practice. To this end, a true commitment to the shift through mandate action may be warranted. Managers in the position of conducting performance evaluations can be trained and held accountable and evaluated – substantively – for their ability to carry out the new way of working.

Box 4.4. The new performance assessment outcomes in Egypt

Twice a year, based on the guidelines issued by the Civil Service Law.

- Two consecutive "excellent" appraisals: eligibility for elective promotion for specialised position.
- Two consecutive "competent" appraisals: eligibility for a promotion by seniority.
- Two consecutive "weak" appraisals: transfer for one year to another position of the same grade by the HR committee, after which supplemental pay is to be reduced by 50% for 6 months if performance does not improve, after which the service will be terminated upon the approval of the competent authority.
- One "weak" appraisal: HR enrolment of the employee in the nearest training programme after co-ordination with their direct supervisor.
- Two consecutive "less than above average" appraisals for a leadership position: service termination.

Making performance assessment and promotion fair, substantive and transparent

Performance management depends on reliable, substantive and fair performance assessment. A substantive system would entail performance assessments that reflect actual performance but not only this. Effective performance management systems enable useful feedback, upwards and downwards, in the organisational hierarchy. They foster accountability in managers for ensuring staff development, treating it fairly and equitably, and also receiving feedback and engaging in development themselves. Figure 4.11 illustrates ways in which countries enforce employee development as an expected managerial task. Almost two-thirds of countries provide training on this and employee development is also included in managerial competency frameworks. Other methods are fast emerging in the public sector, where developing workforce skills is a rapidly increasing priority.

In well-functioning public services, professional development and career growth opportunities are available and clear, and the organisation invests in the lifelong learning and growth of staff, enabling them to fill skills needs and to take on roles that reflect their potential and intrinsic motivation and interest. These systems also reduce disincentives for this; through such means and making sure new skills are rewarded and used on the job, reforms and organisational changes are carried out in practice and the most motivated and effective employees do not remain in too-junior positions or carry too much of the workload on account of being valuable where they are.

Ensuring these shifts in the Egyptian performance management system requires creating accountability for managers and decision-makers to foster and enable such changes. Employee development and substantive management of the ways of working and career progression of a team can be expected of managers and mandated. Fairness and objective performance assessment ought to be ensured, eliminating the ability for staff evaluation to be simply based on the relationships between managers and staff rather than on actual performance. Ensuring the integrity of managers in conducting reviews can be prioritised.

Figure 4.11. Employee development as an expected managerial task, 2022
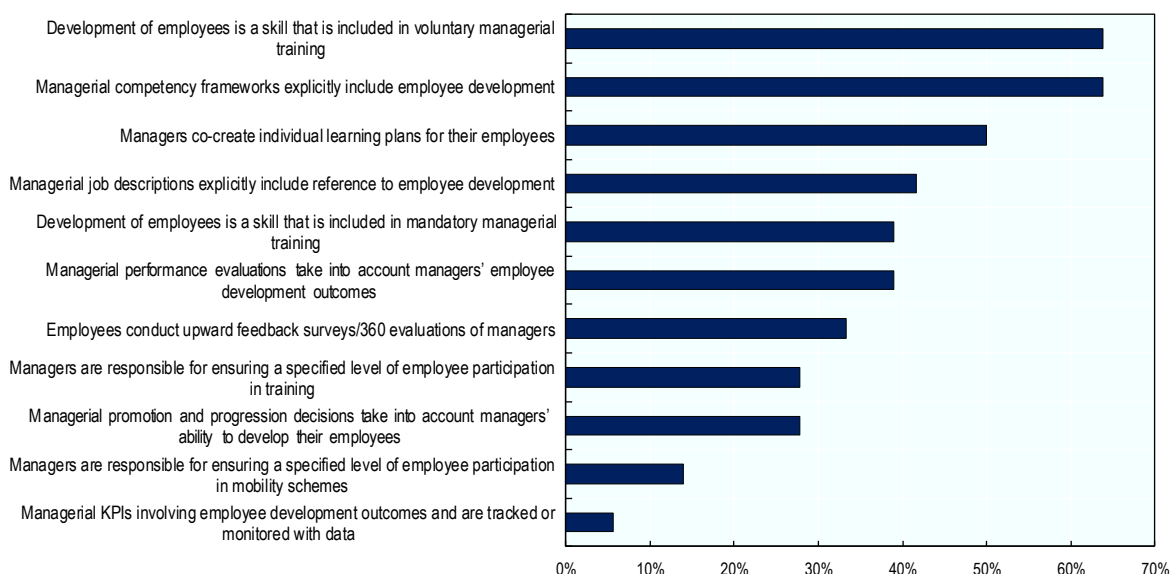
Note: N=36. Original question: "Is employee development reinforced as an expected managerial task through any of the following?". KPI: key performance indicator.
Source: OECD (2020[13]), "Survey on public service leadership and capability", Unpublished, OECD, Paris.

Further, effective performance evaluation often functions under defined and pre-considered frameworks that ensure the correct things are being assessed and that the processes are applied fairly and evenly across the workforce. This can mean applying a competency framework, setting objectives in advance (in conversation and collaboration with employees themselves), considering the outcomes and successes of tasks and projects, considering learning efforts and growth, and so on. Assessments in the Egyptian public service had often focused on non-performance-related factors (e.g. discipline, appearance and times of arrival and departure at the office), an area that new performance evaluation systems are addressing. While each organisational culture may have certain expectations or ways of doing things, actual performance and motivation can be assessed and rewarded at a more substantive level in order to contribute to overall and effective workforce strategies.

Promotion is another area to consider. Promotion based on merit, performance and potential is an essential component of a well-functioning workforce. In Egypt, a great deal of promotion, especially to management positions, is based on seniority. There are some specialised jobs for which promotion can be done based on performance; however, seniority – and not ability – determines the majority of growth and promotion opportunities.

This practice harms an overall workforce in two main ways by: i) leaving high-potential and effective employees in positions that do not take advantage of their abilities and motivations; and ii) filling essential managerial positions with workers who may not have the needed skills or abilities. It creates an environment in which the best performing and most able workers may not be filling the positions in which they would be most effective, leaving them unmotivated in other roles or perhaps causing them to leave the public service altogether to pursue their potential and motivation in another sector. The inverse of this means that important senior roles are mandated to be filled with employees with the most seniority, without as much consideration to the ability or will of the employee to act in a managerial role or the degree to which they have developed their skills and abilities in their career. It also means that there is, by nature,

very little age diversity in management and potentially a large disconnect between workers of different age demographics.

Promotion – to management roles and otherwise – ideally functions in a way that creates intrinsic motivation within a workforce. Rewarding the best employees can be a focus that has a higher impact than penalising underperformers.

Building capacity in HR units

As part of overall reform efforts, the Egyptian government has established six new administrative units to be deployed in each ministry: internal control and governance; HR development, digital transformation; strategic planning; performance monitoring and evaluation; and legislative support (USAID, 2020[18]).

This is an encouraging sign: many of the reforms to civil service management discussed in this chapter – and indeed the broad thrust of reforms in this public governance review – depend on a well-resourced and capable HR function in government. Upgrading the role of HR units at the line ministry level is a strong way to make the most of CAOA's centralised role and the knowledge of HR teams close to diverse business units across the government. OECD administrations are also reviewing how they structure their HR operations (Box 4.5). A common thread in such reforms is the opportunity to use new digital tools to reduce the amount of time spent on transactional, time-consuming and reactive activities. The goal is to upgrade the HR operating model – whether centralised, decentralised or a mix of both – to emphasise activities that have a greater impact on the civil service workforce. These types of activities include working with data and analytics, strategic workforce planning, talent management for the senior leadership group, succession planning and mobility.

Box 4.5. Reflections on the HR function in the United Kingdom civil service

HR business model

The UK civil service has been exploring how to best adapt its HR operating model to align with the future needs of the civil service. A diagnostic review of the current HR operating model identified the scope of improving HR business partners' visibility, scope and effectiveness. HR business partners are specialist HR roles that work closely with line ministries and departments to identify operational and strategic challenges and develop and implement HR policy accordingly. The review identified a series of actions for central and decentralised HR bodies at the ministry level. Underpinning the review was the shift from transactional, reactive and time-consuming HR work to more strategic and value-added.

End-to-end review of recruitment

The UK civil service has launched an end-to-end review of how it carries out recruitment. Driven by many of the 2022 Institute for Government report findings on recruitment, the review is a comprehensive assessment of the available data on recruitment processes, such as time to hire across government departments. The review highlights that recruitment quality varies considerably across government depending on the role and department hiring processes. It maps a number of actions and recommendations across branding, attracting, recruitment/selection and onboarding processes. Some of the key findings focus on the need for better collaboration and connection across systems, a more user-friendly user experience for candidates going through recruitment processes and more support for recruiters and hiring managers.

Source: Information provided to the OECD by the UK Cabinet Office.

One way of conceptualising the future HR role in government is to be able to stay relevant, adapt to changing priorities and anticipate and respond to crises. Digitalisation, demographic shifts and the potential for remote working are all examples of trends that offer opportunities to reshape government workforces and workspaces, and Egypt is no exception. Each of these trends impacts public service (especially in Egypt, with its youthful population) and has a knock-on effect on the HR function, which is to hire, retain and develop staff with the skills and motivation to tackle these challenges.

The question for CAOA is how to best align its role as a central HR body with the operational autonomy and flexibility needed to empower HR units in line ministries. Getting this relationship right is vitally important: with effective communication structures and trust, HR units in line ministries can signal emerging workforce issues and develop proposals for how to implement the HR policy set by CAOA. Notably, the institution has been working on restructuring the HR function in terms of roles within CAOA (highlighted in a United Nations Development Programme report as a priority) (Srivastava, 2019[9]) as well as the functions of HR units in line ministries. This can improve internal co-ordination and also enable a more targeted role for the HR departments in line ministries.

Building HR capacity involves emphasising three elements at the core of the OECD vision for future work in the public service: forward-looking, flexible and fulfilling public service (OECD, 2021[11]). This means HR functions taking on new roles and integrating new tools and ways of working along the way in order to transition to higher value-added roles, as outlined in Table 4.1:

Table 4.1. Vision for a forward-looking, flexible and fulfilling public service: Implications for the HR function

Forward-looking	
From	To
A professional public service	A public service of professions
Task-based job descriptions	Focus on broader professional competencies
Command and control	Inclusive leadership
Rigid operational planning processes	Strategic planning with flexible operational procedures
Flexible	
Working for one specific unit	Working for the government as a whole
In the office at specific times	Flexibility and autonomy to work remotely
Classroom-based training	Culture of learning
Slow and "one-size-fits-all" recruitment	Faster, targeted recruitment
One standard employment modality	A variety of aligned employment modalities
Fulfilling	
Treat everybody the same	Recognise diversity and individuality of public servants
Focus on job stability	Focus on purpose and meaning
Rules-based management	Trust, autonomy and accountability for results
Managers as hierarchical supervisors	Managers as coaches enabling change

Source: OECD (2021[11]), *Public Employment and Management 2021: The Future of the Public Service*, https://doi.org/10.1787/938f0d65-en.

A modern HR function has a clear mandate and the tools and resources to carry out a core number of high-value tasks. Box 4.6 highlights three types of HR roles that characterise high-performing public services. For Egypt, there are two main steps that could be taken to further enhance overall HR capability and ability to carry out such tasks: first, develop a shared vision of priority challenges and potential solutions by developing institutional co-ordination frameworks horizontally (with other HR units) and vertically (with the CAOA and other relevant ministries); second, examine where opportunities afforded by shared service arrangements and/or new digital tools can free up time for HR staff in line ministries to spend more time on higher value-added HR activities.

Box 4.6. Strategic workforce planning

Strategic workforce planning is the ability to understand the layout and intrinsic characteristics of government workforces and to deploy a range of policies and tools to develop that workforce in line with strategic vision and priorities. Good workforce planning requires a number of ingredients, such as a good understanding of the organisational operating model, transformation strategies and objectives, and the broader operating environment, including the socio-political context and the labour market. It depends on high-quality mapping of the current workforce in terms of numbers, skills, performance, potential and diversity of the workforce. Importantly, it also depends on input, engagement and ownership from the highest levels of management (not just HR).

Ability to gather and use workforce data

A future-proof HR function relies on governments' lack of sophisticated and structured workforce data and advanced data analytical capability to generate insights on which to base new workforce policies. Administrative workforce data should be abundant in large organisations such as public service but are often not structured in ways that enable strategic analytics. Moreover, many HR departments grapple with legacy IT systems that lack interoperability and these limit opportunities for data analysis and presentation. Areas for necessary data collection are broad and include information about training and learning, mobility, turnover and worker demographics to ensure diversity. Employee surveys are another powerful data source that can be used to generate important insights about perceptions of employees and the overall motivation and engagement levels of staff. Making the most of the data may also mean investing in modern analytical and visualisation tools, and upskilling the HR workforce to integrate data into optimising organisational structures and processes.

Talent management

Talent management can be understood as the proactive use of strategies to adjust workforce management to the needs of specific groups in order to fulfil organisational objectives. It relates to the systematic attraction, identification, development, retention and deployment of talent within a particular organisation (OECD, 2021[19]). It includes learning and development, recognising that one of the core skills that will come to define high performance in public service in the future is the ability to learn continually. Talent management can bring greater dynamism to public sector careers and work experiences. With the right structure and support, a public sector career can involve multiple learning opportunities and ways to work in different roles across the public sector. With regard to building HR capability, talent management then becomes a case of identifying tools and support structures to help employee development, and building capability to intervene and provide greater direction to employee careers.

Source: OECD (2021[11]), *Public Employment and Management 2021: The Future of the Public Service*, https://doi.org/10.1787/938f0d65-en.

CAOA has a central department responsible for supporting all HR units in civil service entities. Notwithstanding, the civil service have both formal (i.e. exchange in official letters) and informal co-ordination mechanisms among HR practitioners that somewhat enable a shared approach to tackling HR challenges across the government. CAOA's convening power as the central HR body, mandate which is anchored in the Civil Service Law, is an asset that could be leveraged to build on this and create a more permanent or structured way for HR leaders and practitioners to share experience. These types of network are common across government: France brings together senior HR leaders through a 22-member body with representatives from the public and private sector, and researchers to examine HR trends and develop

HR policy proposals. The aim is to produce a strategic HR planning document for the public service. The Office of Management and Budget in the United States runs a Federal HR Institute (FHRI) to continuously develop HR specialists from entry- through to senior-level positions. The FHRI curriculum is designed for the federal HR workforce to both advance individual growth and development and build organisational capacity and competency.

Professional exchange networks are a good way of building capability. A subsequent next step could be to draw on CAOA's resources to develop a strategy for the professionalisation of HR in Egyptian civil service. As outlined in Box 4.7, the Australian Public Service Commission developed a dedicated strategy to frame its vision for what the HR function in government should look like and what it should do. The strategy acts as the basis for a range of upskilling and reskilling initiatives that Egypt could undertake, such as an HR mobility programme whereby HR professionals can experience working in a similar role in another government department in order to develop new skills and insights. Other administrations have targeted professionalisation efforts at specific aspects of HR capability, such as in Ireland, where the Department of Public Expenditure, National Development Plan Delivery and Reform developed a strategy for the professionalisation of HR professionals on ICT (Government of Ireland, 2018[15]).

Box 4.7. HR professionalisation in Australia

In Australia, the Australian Public Service Commission has developed a strategy to guide the professionalisation of strategic HR skills across the public service. The anchoring principles of the strategy are to: i) share knowledge and practice through the creation of an HR professional network, disseminate knowledge and provide learning; ii) collaborate through shared activities; and iii) grow capability through development. With the overall objective of establishing a distinct HR profession, the key steps are set out in concrete activities:

1. Establish a reference group to guide, co-design and develop the professional stream.
2. Identify a head of the professional stream based on experience.
3. Develop an HR professionalisation strategy document.
4. Find resources to support the objectives of the strategy.
5. Establish a professional network of HR practitioners.
6. Develop links with professional bodies for education and professional development.
7. Identify standards and credentials for HR standards.
8. Identify professional HR capabilities (e.g. talent management, design capability).
9. Communicate the case for change.
10. Develop a baseline picture of the HR workforce.
11. Create an implementation plan.

Source: Australian Government (2019[20]), *APS HR Professional Stream Strategy*, https://www.apsc.gov.au/sites/default/files/2021-03/aps_hr_professional_stream_strategy.pdf.

The way forward: overview of recommendations

Egypt has many of the building blocks in place to streamline the public service. Ongoing work to restructure various HR management roles within CAOA and in line ministries points to the ambition for public service transformation. Although the implications of the move to the NAC remain to be seen, the move itself provides an opportunity to upgrade the principles of HR management and provide tools, guidance and

support to leaders, managers and staff across the public service in an effort to transform long-established practices and ways of working.

The following recommendations build on the substantive analysis of this chapter and reflect good practices across OECD administrations. Although the recommendations are divided into "pillars", they should be seen as a cohesive whole: efforts to improve learning and development, for example, can also help attract and recruit the right skills. Equally, the implementation of the new performance management system can help raise standards overall. These recommendations can each be developed into several parts that make up a larger, contextual and detailed strategy for their implementation through the next stages of work focused on implementation and reform.

Actionable recommendations for a fit-for-purpose civil service in Egypt

Produce an annual report on the state of the civil service

- CAOA could lead the development of an annual report setting out a vision for workforce development, analysing trends in the civil service and defining goals and measurement frameworks.
- CAOA could contribute to the report by producing insights into workforce trends.

Streamline recruitment processes

- CAOA to identify a short list of priority skills gaps to be addressed using recruitment of candidates from outside the civil service
- CAOA could explore using a wider range of assessment mechanisms in recruitment processes to better target key competencies and skills
- In addition to the existing committees established to recruit for senior-level positions at Ministry level, CAOA could establish a permanent committee or group that meets regularly to monitor senior-level recruitment trends and capability gaps across the public service. This group could support existing committees in an advisory role, e.g. through helping define expectations and candidate requirements for senior-level positions.
- CAOA could develop a more proactive approach to promoting career opportunities in the civil service for specific in-demand and value-added roles, especially in view of moving to the NAC.

Streamline learning and development

- Continue to develop a learning and development plan for the entirety of the public service. Co-operate with ministries and other administrative bodies to inform them of this plan and create clear spheres of responsibility.
- Improve the collection and use of workforce data that can inform learning and development strategies (for instance, through skills needs analysis, employee surveys, data collection on learning outcomes and participation, etc).
- Continue to map and consolidate learning and development providers to establish a full picture of all learning offerings and continue to create strategies with this "big picture" in mind. Maintain, regularly update and disseminate the list of accredited learning centres and their curriculum, which can be made broadly available.
- Further enhance the competency framework to be implemented in learning and development strategies as well as performance management processes.

- When planning and assessing learning offerings, ensure that they can reach all staff by conducting barrier analysis of opportunities, tracking the demographics of training uptake and adjusting plans as necessary. Building on the recent creation of the equal opportunities unit, further efforts should explore concrete avenues to involve under-represented and disadvantaged groups in recruitment processes to enhance the diversity of the Egyptian civil service.

- Systematise and define skills needs assessment and learning outcomes evaluation processes.

- Work on creating a learning culture by reducing disincentives to learning and creating effective non-financial incentive structures, such as linking learning and development to performance management.

- Continue to institutionalize learning opportunities, scaling them to maximise reach across the public service, while ensuring diversity of delivery on various of topics and skills.

- Focus training and learning opportunities on topics that include competencies and capabilities (i.e. strategic planning, workforce planning, monitoring and evaluation, impact assessment, among others, management skills) for a future fit-for-purpose civil service.

- Continue progress to develop and enhance a full and substantive online learning platform.

Realign and redesign performance management systems and processes

- Continue efforts to undertake a substantive shift – in policy and action – to a new system of performance evaluation. Ensure managerial accountability systems are in place to enable this transition and use the new performance assessment framework that contributes to fair and transparent evaluation based on substantive elements of actual performance.

- Reconsider the use of any financial compensation or bonus related to performance assessment. A financial bonus system based on performance evaluations can function to create an expectation of a high-performance rating or the use of a lower rating as a punishment rather than an opportunity for growth.

- Continue progress in making promotion and career growth decisions systematically (broadly) based on merit, ability and performance rather than on seniority.

- Further implement mechanisms that allow for the lifelong development of managers and leadership. This includes putting in place transparent mechanisms that allow for performance evaluation of managers and leadership. Further, mechanisms that enable them to receive feedback on their own performance from all levels (e.g. 360-degree evaluations, leadership coaching) can be implemented. Ensure that managerial staff engage in learning and development opportunities.

- Increase the relevancy and value of learning and development opportunities and ensure that all staff undertakes such opportunities.

- Increase data collection and the use of data that do exist to enable heightened workforce performance management strategies (for example, a full and comprehensive survey of central government employees).

- Continue work towards the development of a performance management and career growth system that fosters a workforce that reflects the population, particularly at decision-making levels.

Continue to upgrade the HR function

- CAOA could review where upskilling and reskilling in the HR function could help support a shift to higher value-added activities.

- CAOA could create and support an HR community of practice to discuss common challenges and develop shared solutions.
- CAOA could explore where digital tools can free up time for HR officers to work more strategically.
- Pilot the creation/implementation of new HR roles, such as talent management, data analytics or business partnerships. CAOA could lead a stocktaking exercise of HR activities with a view to identifying tasks to save time, increase effectiveness and improve user experience.

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Note

1 For more information, see http://jobs.gov.eg/.

5 Streamlining public service delivery in Egypt: Harnessing administrative simplification and digital solutions

This chapter draws upon international OECD best practices to offer essential guidelines for informing the future delivery of digital public services in Egypt. It examines the challenges and opportunities pertaining to the simplification of administrative procedures in Egypt, noting the predominant emphasis on digitalising to enhance public service delivery for citizens and businesses. Yet, it also underscores the significant burdens businesses and the public encounter when engaging with public entities and the lack of specific policies and guidelines for administrative simplification in Egypt, which should form an integral part of digital government plans moving forward.

Introduction

Egypt has made significant strides in leveraging digital solutions to enhance public service delivery in recent years. Recognising the transformative potential of technology, the government has embarked on a comprehensive digitalisation journey to improve efficiency, accessibility and transparency in its public administration. Adopting digital platforms and online services has undoubtedly brought about positive changes, easing the burden on businesses and citizens alike.

However, it is crucial to acknowledge that digitalisation alone cannot guarantee a seamless and efficient public service experience. While technology plays a pivotal role, it is only one of the tools within the administrative simplification toolbox. Administrative burden measurement and reduction efforts are equally vital to reducing the bureaucratic complexities that often hinder the effectiveness of digital solutions.

This chapter examines Egypt's past and ongoing efforts to enhance public service delivery through administrative simplification and the utilisation of digital solutions. It examines the achievements and challenges the government faces in this regard, highlighting the lessons learned and the way forward. Drawing on international good practices, it provides valuable examples from other countries that have successfully harmonised administrative simplification, burden reduction and digital transformation. Finally, drawing on OECD best practices, standards and legal instruments, the chapter offers policy recommendations to support Egypt's ongoing journey towards streamlined public service delivery.

The chapter finds that Egypt has an extensive strategy for digital government projects, which could help reduce administrative burdens for citizens and businesses. It notes that these digital programmes have been well integrated into the broader national policies of Egypt and enjoy strong political support. Yet, the chapter also observes that Egypt is missing a cross-cutting strategy for administrative simplification, which should form an integral part of the country's information and communication technology (ICT) strategy for public service delivery.

By fostering a conducive environment for innovation, building robust digital infrastructure and promoting administrative burden reduction, Egypt can position itself as a leading example of efficient public service delivery in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. Aligning administrative simplification efforts with digital solutions can significantly reduce the burden on citizens and businesses and ensure a more efficient and citizen-centric public administration.

Advancing streamlined public service delivery through administrative simplification and digitalisation

Most OECD countries have accumulated significant stocks of regulations and administrative formalities over years or even decades without adequately reviewing and managing them. In economic and/or social terms, the accumulated costs can be high. Cumbersome regulations can be challenging for citizens and businesses to comply with. The OECD has found that administrative simplification is one of the most effective *ex post* evaluation tools for reducing regulatory complexity and updating the stock of regulations (OECD, 2010[1]).

Administrative simplification is a regulatory quality tool used to review and simplify administrative procedures by identifying and eliminating outdated and inefficient laws and regulations, thus reducing administrative burdens. Administrative burdens refer to unnecessary regulatory costs, such as asking for permits, filling out forms and carrying out reporting and notification requirements as required by the government (OECD, 2010[1]).

Notably, administrative simplification is an essential prelude to carrying out digital transformation programmes and should be undertaken with a clear understanding of public service users' needs. Its final objective is to offer high-quality public services while promoting the rule of law and efficient economic

environments. Simpler formalities correlate with higher compliance, as fulfilling regulatory requirements implies an opportunity cost for citizens and business representatives. Moreover, when the cost of complying is particularly high, it can represent an entry barrier for small and medium-sized enterprises (OECD, 2010[2]).

Various approaches to administrative burden reduction have been implemented across OECD countries, including consolidation, codification, reviews and revisions of regulations, streamlining and business process re-engineering. Administrative simplification policies can include ad hoc measures or be embedded in comprehensive and long-term strategies and a whole-of-government perspective with clear objectives, measures and allocated resources.

The 2016 OECD Regional Charter for Regulatory Quality, endorsed by Egypt, highlighted that regulatory policy is a cross-cutting theme for MENA countries supporting public administration modernisation, open government and citizen participation, as well as trust in governance. In particular, the charter advocates for:

> *"Regulatory reviews of existing stock of regulations to reduce unnecessary and burdensome regulatory burdens, including administrative burdens as well as implementing an ex post evaluation of new regulatory proposals." (OECD, 2016[3])*

The importance of assessing the ongoing worth of regulations and reducing burdens is also recognised in the 2012 OECD Recommendation of the Council on Regulatory Policy and Governance:

> *"Programmes of administrative simplification should include measurements of the aggregate burdens of regulation where feasible and consider the use of explicit targets as a means to lessen administrative burdens for citizens and businesses. Qualitative methods should complement the quantitative methods to better target efforts." (OECD, 2012[4])*

Measuring administrative burdens

Many OECD member countries have adopted administrative simplification strategies. These typically involve conducting a thorough assessment of the current burdens on businesses and/or citizens in close collaboration with relevant stakeholders from the private and public sectors. The objective is to formulate an action plan to systematically eliminate unnecessary bureaucratic procedures.

A practice that can contribute to a successful strategy for administrative simplification is the measurement of administrative burdens. Measuring the burdens generated by government regulations and formalities makes it possible to undertake a simplification plan based on more robust evidence and set priorities to tackle the most burdensome regulations or regulatory areas.

One of the most popular methodologies used internationally for measuring and reducing administrative burdens that derive from formalities is the Standard Cost Model (SCM). The Dutch Ministry of Finance developed the SCM as a quantitative methodology for determining the administrative burdens that regulation imposes on businesses and/or citizens. It provides a simplified, consistent method for estimating the administrative costs imposed by governments on regulated subjects and provides estimates that are consistent across policy areas. The SCM is popular across the political spectrum as it aims to remove or simplify unnecessary regulations and formalities, but it does not entail changing its policy objectives.

The methodology aims to help policymakers evaluate how much it costs businesses or citizens to comply with information obligations required by regulations. These obligations may include completing licensing applications, approvals, tax forms or providing other necessary data to the government, or a requirement for businesses to collect and maintain data. The SCM can be applied to measure a single law or selected areas of legislation or to perform a baseline measurement of all formalities in a country at different levels (Box 5.1).

Box 5.1. The Standard Cost Model

The SCM has been the international standard method for over 20 years to measure the administrative burden placed on businesses or citizens by government regulation. The methodology aims to help policymakers evaluate how long it takes regulated subjects to comply with information obligations required by regulations. These information obligations may include completing licensing applications, approvals and tax forms, as well as providing other necessary data to the government or a requirement for the regulated subject to collect and maintain data.

To determine the SCM, one simply multiplies the quantity (i.e. the number of affected businesses) by the price of the information obligation or the cost of time incurred in meeting the obligation. The prices are simply the estimated cost per hour of an employee to fill the information obligation, including the hourly wage and the overhead cost per employee. Mathematically, the cost of each information obligation is:

Administrative cost

= [number of hours per administrative activity per year x (cost per hour of the employee + cost of equipment/materials)] x [number of affected businesses x frequency per year]

According to the SCM, administrative costs can be separated into any number of information obligations (Figure 5.1). Each information obligation may be separated into different data requirements and activities to fulfil each data requirement.

Description

1. Break the regulation down into separate information obligations.
2. Separate information obligations into data requirements.
3. Estimate the activities to fulfil each data requirement.
4. Cost each activity.

Figure 5.1. Illustrating the SCM
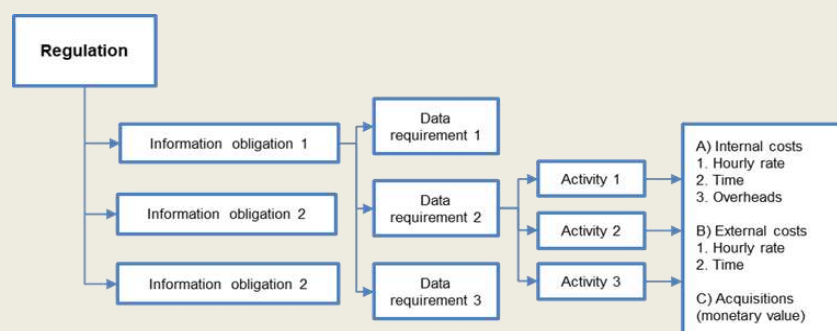
Source: International SCM Network (2004[5]), *International Standard Cost Model Manual*, https://web-archive.oecd.org/2012-06-15/153963-34227698.pdf.

In addition to the SCM, governments have also attempted to introduce qualitative, bottom-up approaches to understanding regulatory burdens by working closely with stakeholders to identify issues of most concern to them. A subset of qualitative techniques consists of perception surveys, which are used in a number of OECD countries, including the United Kingdom, to identify and sometimes measure irritation

costs. A selection of different quantitative and qualitative approaches used internationally are set out in Box 5.2.

Box 5.2. Good international practices on focusing simplification efforts using quantitative and qualitative techniques

Portugal aimed to reduce 25% of the administrative burdens for companies in 2012 through the Simplex programme. The target considered all laws and regulations that had an impact on the companies' life cycle. The exercise was based on an SCM-adapted version and focused on key legislation that would be subject to administrative simplification. The SCM adaptation included the total costs of complying with the regulation as well as the burdens for citizens. It focused on information obligations and integrated the delays and time spent waiting for an official response. From 2006 to 2011, more than 1 000 measures of administrative and legislative simplification and e-government were implemented.

In the **United Kingdom**, the perception of business reduction is measured yearly as part of an initiative called the Business Perceptions Survey, commissioned by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy. The survey covers several topics. These include the businesses' performance and challenges over the last 12 months, their attitudes towards regulation and the effort and cost of dealing with regulation. Businesses are also asked about their use of external support to comply with regulation, their experiences of dealing with regulators and their views on the government's approach to regulation.

In **Denmark**, the Ministry of Industry, Business, and Financial Affairs launched the Danish Business Regulation Forum in 2012 to identify and discuss the compliance and administrative burden that businesses face. Forum members include industry and labour organisations, businesses and experts in simplification and digitalisation initiatives. It gathers three times a year and sends common proposals to the government on the possible avenues for regulatory simplification. These proposals are subject to a "comply or explain" approach, whereby the government is obliged to either pursue the proposed initiatives or explain why these are not pursued. As of 2016, 603 proposals had been made by the forum, of which 191 were fully implemented and 189 partially. The total savings for businesses implementing these simplification measures were estimated to amount to DKK 790 million.

In **Germany**, the Federal Statistical Office was commissioned by the federal government in 2015 to conduct surveys of individuals and companies on their subjective perception of public authorities and the body of law in specific life events. This survey exercise aims to identify measures for a more noticeable reduction in bureaucracy and is repeated every two years. The approach identifies typical life events in which citizens, people and companies interact with public authorities. Twenty-two life events for individuals were selected, ranging from the birth of a child to marriage, unemployment and the need for long-term care. Similarly, ten events for companies were selected based on a company's life cycle, including business start-up, the appointment of employees and business discontinuation. For every life event, an interactive customer journey map was constructed displaying the typical and most important offices citizens or businesses must contact and the procedures they must complete to obtain the respective service.

Sources: UK Government (2020[6]), *Business Regulation: Business Perceptions Survey 2020*, https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/business-regulation-business-perceptions-survey-2020; OECD (2016[7]), *Regulatory Policy in Chile: Government Capacity to Ensure High-Quality Regulation*, https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264254596-en; OECD (2010[2]), *Why Is Administrative Simplification So Complicated?: Looking beyond 2010*, https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264089754-en.

Leveraging digital tools for streamlining public service delivery

The OECD Recommendation on Regulatory Policy and Governance (2012[4]) also points to the use of ICT to support administrative simplification. Concretely, the recommendation advises governments to "employ the opportunities of information technology and one-stop shops for licences, permits, and other procedural requirements to make service delivery more streamlined and user focused" (OECD, 2012[4]).

Digitalisation refers to the use of digital technologies and data as well as interconnection that results in new activities or changes to existing ones (OECD, 2019[8]). Digitalisation can simplify government operations and reduce the costs of transactions. This also has benefits for citizens and businesses, providing them direct and easy access to information on administrative services/obligations and, in some cases, the possibility of complying with the formalities required for business activity. Crucially, administrative simplification and digital processes must go hand in hand. Merely using ICT to provide online public services or portals by itself it not enough to reduce burdens on the public and businesses: a cross-government effort to streamline and simplify the "back office" is also needed. This involves mapping the various procedures in place and then identifying and measuring the key bottlenecks and constraints which could lead to simplification.

The digitalisation of government services also enables a faster exchange of information between the administration and other stakeholders, easier access to information, increased transparency and a reduction in the costs of the administration, thereby becoming more efficient and better at meeting stakeholder expectations (OECD, 2021[9]).

The OECD has developed substantive analytical and normative work to support the development and implementation of digital government strategies and administrative simplification. The Recommendation of the Council on Digital Government Strategies (OECD, 2014[10]) aims to help governments adopt strategic approaches in the use of digital technologies and data. Building on the principles in the recommendation and drawing on the experience of the OECD in analysing countries' digital government transition, the OECD Digital Government Policy Framework was designed to identify key drivers of digital government maturity (Box 5.3). In addition, the Recommendation of the Council for Agile Regulatory Governance to Harness Innovation (OECD, 2021[11]) emphasises the importance of using the full potential of technological solutions to improve the quality of evidence and develop data-driven, risk-proportionate and responsive approaches to regulatory enforcement and delivery. Finally, the "OECD Good Practice Principles for Service Design and Delivery in the Digital Age" provide a clear, actionable and comprehensive set of objectives for the high-quality digital transformation of public services (OECD, 2022[12]).

Box 5.3. The OECD Digital Government Policy Framework

The OECD Recommendation of the Council on Digital Government Strategies (2014[10]) underscores the paradigm shift from e-government to digital government required to realise the digital transformation of the public sector. According to the recommendation, digital government is understood as "the use of digital technologies, as an integrated part of governments' modernisation strategies, to create public value" (OECD, 2014[10]). This recommendation is the basis for OECD Digital Government Reviews, which provide analysis and policy recommendations to help improve digital government maturity around the world.

In 2014, the Recommendation of the Council on Digital Government Strategies was adopted by the OECD and subsequently by ten non-member countries. Over the following years, those ideas crystallised into the importance of six dimensions that help governments leave e-government practices behind. These are:

- **Digital by design**: "Digitalisation" is considered a technical topic and a mandatory transformative element embedded throughout public policy and service processes.

- **Data-driven**: Data are used and managed as key strategic assets in a trustworthy and secure way to generate public value throughout public policy and service design and delivery cycles.

- **Government as a Platform**: Civil servants can focus on meeting users' needs by working in an ecosystem that leverages shared and integrated tools and resources.

- **Open by default**: Public policy processes, digital tools including algorithms and government data are made available for the public to engage with within the limits of legislation.

- **User-driven**: Users are awarded a central role in shaping and informing public policy and service design and delivery processes, and this is conducted inclusively.

- **Proactiveness**: Civil servants anticipate people's needs individually and collectively and take steps to respond to them rapidly.

Sources: OECD (2021[9]), *The E-Leaders Handbook on the Governance of Digital Government*, https://doi.org/10.1787/ac7f2531-en;
OECD (2014[10]), *OECD Recommendation of the Council on Digital Government Strategies*,
https://legalinstruments.oecd.org/en/instruments/OECD-LEGAL-0406.

For a successful digital transformation in governance, digital technologies must be embedded into policymaking and service design from inception, making the public sector "digital by design". This implies harnessing existing and emerging technologies and data to rethink and re-engineer business processes and internal operations. The aim is to simplify procedures, innovate public services and open multiple channels of communication and engagement with the public and private sectors, civil society and the public.

"Digital by design" encompasses the design, development, management and monitoring of internal government processes to maximise the potential of digital technologies and data. However, it should not be equated with "digital by default", where services are preferentially delivered on line, as the latter approach has the potential to generate discrimination against segments of the population with limited online access or ability to use digital technologies (OECD, 2020[13]).

One-stop shops: A key instrument for administrative simplification

One-stop shops have been one of the key instruments used in simplifying the delivery of public services across the OECD and MENA region, to facilitate access to information and make service delivery user--focused. One-stop shops are digital or physical platforms that gather a wide range of information

requirements to provide information to businesses and citizens and/or carry out transactions between the platform's clients and public administration. They can help reduce transaction costs for citizens and increase efficiency. Establishing and managing a one-stop shop requires human, technological and financial resources. It involves co-ordination and collaboration between different institutions, ideally across levels of government (OECD, 2020[14]).

One-stop shops should form part of broader administrative simplification strategies. They are a critical component of regulatory delivery and can help maximise the potential gains of regulatory reduction programmes. One-stop shops should be user-centred and based on life events. In this way, they can help bring the government closer to citizens and businesses in the least burdensome way possible (OECD, 2020[14]).

Some countries have implemented informational one-stop shops that may also provide advice and guidance to carry out various transactions with the administration but, usually, the objective of physical one-stop shops is the delivery of public services. Two basic models exist:

- **Individual services**: Different government entities are present at the one-stop shop providing their own services. Normally, each entity has its own separate counter where its officials and public servants deliver the services.

- **Integrated services**: The provision of services tends to be based on a single life event (e.g. having a child, starting a business, etc.) so that a single official can resolve all transactions with the citizen or business in a holistic manner.

The main model of online one-stop shops is based on providing either individual or integrated services (or both) based on user needs. They generally tend to be central "umbrella" portals across all of government, although more specialised ones can exist in concert with other individually focused one-stop shops (OECD, 2020[14]). To assist governments in implementing one-stop shops, the OECD has developed a set of Best Practice Principles for One-Stop Shops, summarised in Box 5.4.

Box 5.4. The OECD Best Practice Principles for One-Stop Shops

One-stop shops should form part of broader administrative simplification strategies. They are a critical component of regulatory delivery and can help maximise the potential gains of regulatory reduction programmes. One-stop shops should be user-centred and based on life events. In this way, they can help bring government closer to citizens and businesses in the least burdensome way possible. The Best Practice Principles for One-Stop Shops cover ten areas:

- **Political commitment**: One-stop shops need continual support from the top in order to flourish.
- **Leadership**: Managers need to be openly committed to a culture of experimentation. Mistakes will be made but it is most important that these form the basis of improved service delivery in the future.
- **Legal framework**: The early identification of legal barriers to establishing and potentially expanding one-stop shops is crucial to avoid rollout delays.
- **Co-operation and co-ordination**: The extent to which government agencies can (and are permitted to) work together to serve citizens and businesses better is a critical component of one-stop shops.
- **Role clarity**: Establishing one-stop shops with a clear objective is central to managing both internal and external expectations.

- **Governance**: The overarching arrangements are important, particularly for one-stop shops across various levels of government, but should not drive the design of one-stop shops from an operational perspective.
- **Public consultation**: Citizen and business clients are an important source of information about what may or may not work and may also offer solutions to identified problems.
- **Communication and technological considerations**: The standard industry communication means should be emulated wherever possible. Interoperability opportunities should also be identified early in the design of one-stop shops.
- **Human capital**: At the heart of a well-functioning one-stop shop is its people. Like any other part of the organisation, they require investment. They also have valuable insights into day-to-day operations.
- **Monitoring and evaluation**: Assessing whether one-stop shops continue to meet client needs is important, as these may change over time. Gathering citizens' and businesses' views can help establish what is working well and what can be improved and foster a culture of continuous improvement in one-stop-shop staff.

Source: OECD (2020[14]), *One-Stop Shops for Citizens and Business*, https://doi.org/10.1787/b0b0924e-en.

Egypt's efforts to enhance public service delivery through administrative simplification and digital solutions

Egypt has primarily focused on digitising government services to enhance public service delivery for citizens and businesses. While there is no explicit mandate or strategy to manage Egypt's regulatory stock, the digitalisation process has often led, in practice, to the review and optimisation of many processes. However, this is not occurring systematically and in a co-ordinated manner throughout the administration.

National strategies in Egypt for streamlining public service delivery

The policy framework for administrative simplification in Egypt encompasses several high-level documents, including: Egypt's Sustainable Development Strategy: Egypt Vision 2030; Egypt's ICT 2030 Strategy: Digital Egypt; the Public Administration Reform Plan (PARP); and the National Anti-Corruption Strategy 2023-30.

However, none sufficiently addresses the management of Egypt's stock of regulations; in other words, there is still room for developing a holistic, whole-of-government strategy for reviewing and managing this existing stock. Although references to administrative simplification exist in high-level strategic documents, they are discussed in a fragmented, topic-specific manner.

The Sustainable Development Strategy: Egypt Vision 2030 aligns national strategic objectives with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and the African Agenda 2063 and outlines a series of goals to achieve these objectives (OECD, 2018[15]). The vision commits to enhanced governance and partnership in its 6th strategic objective. Within this objective, the vision places considerable emphasis on implementing administrative reform and emphasises the importance of developing a comprehensive plan that targets the establishment of an efficient and productive administrative structure that is accountable through effective monitoring, follow-up and evaluation systems (MPED, 2023[16]). Strategic Objective 6, however, only partially addresses good regulatory practices for managing Egypt's complex stock of laws and regulations. The language level remains relatively high, providing ample opportunity to integrate concrete tools which may support the attainment of the proposed ways forward.

Notably, the updated Egypt Vision 2030 positions digital transformation as a key enabler that aids in achieving all of the objectives outlined in Egypt Vision 2030 (MPED, 2023[16]). As a result, there is a strong commitment across the Egyptian administration to develop a digital society that enhances the transparency and efficiency of all institutions (MoPMAR, 2014[17]). Presently, Egypt stands in a promising position to become a digital forerunner in the MENA region (World Bank, 2020[18]): at the regional level, Egypt is among the foremost MENA countries on issues related to digital transformation and financial inclusion (UNDP, 2021[19]).

In 2018, based on Pillar 1 of the previous iteration of Egypt Vision 2030, the government adopted its ICT 2030 Strategy: Digital Egypt (hereafter Digital Egypt), reflecting Egypt's aspiration to accelerate the digital transformation and embrace the digital economy as the new catalyst for job creation and growth (MCIT, 2018[20]). Embedded within this strategy is the advancement of ICT infrastructure, promotion of digital inclusiveness, transitioning to a knowledge-driven economy, fostering innovation, curbing corruption, ensuring cybersecurity and boosting Egypt's global and regional stand (MCIT, 2023[21]). Digital Egypt outlines a comprehensive vision and blueprint for Egypt's digital evolution, which is built on three core pillars: digital transformation; digital skills and jobs; and digital innovation. Anchoring these pillars are two foundational components: digital infrastructure and the legislative framework (MCIT, 2023[21]).

While administrative simplification is not explicitly included in Egypt's ICT strategy, Digital Egypt is crucially positioned and *de facto* plays an important role in advancing streamlined public service delivery. Through its digital transformation pillar, the strategy emphasises leveraging digital tools to transform existing government services and the community ecosystem into an entirely digital and data-driven one, aiming to simplify and expedite them. However, the lack of direct mention of administrative simplification generates challenges that Egypt could consider addressing. For instance, one of the challenges is the need for a mandate and clearer guidance on administrative simplification. Indeed, the absence of these guidelines hinders the full realisation of the potential benefits of Digital Egypt in terms of enhancing the delivery of public services, as further detailed below. As MCIT has underlined, effective administrative simplification requires a unified approach with clear, overarching guidelines that apply across all government entities. When each entity independently pursues its own simplification efforts without coordination, it can lead to inconsistencies, duplication of efforts, and even confusion.

In addition, streamlined public service delivery has been included as part of the pillars of the PARP led by the Central Agency for Organization and Administration (CAOA) (see Chapter 3). As part of its ongoing efforts, the CAOA is in the process of establishing an observatory for public services in Egypt. The planned primary objective of the observatory is to closely monitor the performance of public services by measuring their performance against predetermined indicators and standards through the collection and analysis of data on service delivery metrics, citizen satisfaction levels and efficiency measures. Based on this analysis, CAOA will propose policy changes or interventions to enhance the quality and efficiency of services. To maximise the impact of this observatory and ensure a comprehensive approach, CAOA may consider incorporating an explicit administrative burden metric to collect data on the burdens associated with these services. In addition, it could also consider further co-ordination and collaboration with the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (MCIT), the key player in services automation and digitalisation, as well as integrating data from the reports generated by the unified government complaints system.

Finally, Egypt's National Anti-Corruption Strategy for 2023-30 highlights the country's efforts to fight corruption through measures aimed at eliminating discrepancies between laws, co-ordinating between government entities, enhancing human and institutional resources, and addressing the oversized administrative system.

While these strategic documents show a commitment to simplifying Egypt's regulation stock and reducing the burden of regulations affecting businesses and citizens, there is no clear detail on how this might be operationalised. Notably missing is any reference to developing a cross-cutting administrative simplification

strategy for Egypt to identify, measure and prioritise policy sectors where burdens should be reduced for citizens and businesses.

Legal and institutional framework for streamlining public service delivery

Currently, Egypt seems to lack an explicit legal framework specifically dedicated to reviewing and managing its regulatory stock. While the country has pursued administrative reform and streamlining public service delivery, no distinct set of laws or regulations comprehensively addresses administrative simplification measures. The absence of a dedicated legal framework for administrative simplification leaves room for ambiguity and may impact the systematic implementation of measures to reduce bureaucratic complexities.

As outlined in Chapters 3 and 4, the structure of the Egyptian government is complex, comprising approximately 707 public entities (Gobba, 2020[22]) and employing 5 million workers (MPED, 2023[23]). This structural complexity raises notable challenges related to overlapping mandates and responsibilities, complex and intertwined administrative components, and a lack of standards for establishing and amending state organisational units (MoPMAR, 2014[17]).

The institutional framework in Egypt for streamlining public service delivery appears complex and fragmented. For instance, it seems that the responsibility for administrative simplification is dispersed across multiple public bodies. Entities such as the MCIT, the Egyptian Regulatory Reform and Development Activity (ERRADA), CAOA and various line ministries all possess mandates related to administrative burden reduction within their respective domains. Co-ordination among those entities is suboptimal, suggesting the necessity to identify a leading institution responsible for streamlining administrative processes across the government: it appears that the MCIT leads the efforts to enhance the provision of digital public services for citizens as well as improve government performance with the simplification of procedures, whereas ERRADA leads the efforts to improve the business environment. However, there is a need for clarification regarding their distinct mandates.

The MCIT leads Egypt's digital transformation, which aims to transform Egypt into a digital society and provide public services online. The ministry notably manages an ecosystem of digital platforms to support a robust infrastructure in Egypt. Findings reveal that the digital transformation has consisted of the digitalisation of over 168 public services from 9 ministries on 5 main outlets\channels: the Digital Egypt e-platform, mobile applications, call centres, post offices and citizen service centres. The MCIT provides training for citizens and public officials to improve their digital literacy and relevant skills. It is also conducting a series of surveys to understand the perceptions and habits of certain population groups on the use of digital technologies.

ERRADA leads the efforts to improve the business environment, focusing on streamlining business administrative procedures. It was established in 2009 under the umbrella of the Sub-cabinet Committee for the Productive Sector within the Ministry of Trade and Industry (Decree No. 1089/2008) and has since transitioned among various ministries (OECD, 2018[15]). By 2019, ERRADA received endorsement at the highest political level and became affiliated with the Egyptian Cabinet (Prime Minister's Decrees No. 998/2019 and No. 1652/2019); it is supervised by the MPEDIC. ERRADA's efforts have been severely hindered by institutional challenges and its role in co-ordinating and overseeing initiatives from various ministries to simplify business administrative procedures needs clarity (OECD, 2018[15]).

Pursuant to the establishment decree of CAOA, its mandate encompasses the improvement of administrative systems as well as public service delivery within the government (See Chapters 3 and 4 for further information). Its role in service simplification entails streamlining procedures, optimising the efficiency of government services and refining work systems. CAOA collaborates with diverse entities, conducts inspections, evaluates performance and engages with scientific institutions to leverage their experiences to continually enhance government operations.

Numerous ministries and authorities, each with distinct roles and operating within diverse sectors, potentially engage in actions without necessarily co-ordinating to streamline administrative procedures effectively in their respective domains (Gobba, 2020[22]). This scenario becomes particularly pronounced when examining the challenges the MCIT faces in leading digitalisation initiatives. In the context of digitalisation, the MCIT assumes a pivotal role. However, findings reveal important difficulties encountered by the MCIT, including varied levels of capacity, knowledge and available tools, as it strives to undertake administrative simplification efforts within the services it champions for digitalisation. Furthermore, this extends to its supportive role for various ministries' digital transformation units (DTUs), as outlined below.

The key role of the MCIT and DTUs in streamlining public service delivery

Within this institutionally complex landscape and given the national priority afforded to digital transformation, MCIT stands out as a key player. The ministry leads in the implementation of Digital Egypt, overseeing digital transformation and national infrastructure modernisation (MCIT, 2023[24]). A central aspect of MCIT's mandate involves establishing and supervising DTUs. MCIT also ensures standardised ICT usage, robust data governance and cybersecurity, all while fostering innovation, sharing good practices and preserving digital service integrity. The ministry leads e-government initiatives and capacity-building programmes, empowering government entities and public servants with digital literacy.

MCIT works towards implementing Egypt's ambitious digital transformation strategy through three key divisions. First, the Administrative Development, Digital Transformation and Automation Division plays a central role in driving digital transformation across government entities through policies, training and the use of emerging technologies, promoting nationwide digital inclusion and societal digital empowerment through capacity-building programmes and initiatives. Additionally, the Institutional Development team within MCIT is responsible for establishing and co-ordinating with government entity DTUs. Second, the Telecommunication and Infrastructure Division plays a key role in advancing Egypt's digital landscape, ensuring citizen connectivity, promoting innovation, supporting economic growth through technology and facilitating integration into the global digital economy. Third, the Institutional Development Division aims to establish a smart and sustainable work model within government institutions, focusing on digital transformation to meet citizens' needs and expectations.

Furthermore, MCIT ensures inter-ministerial co-ordination concerning ICT needs. For instance, it facilitates dialogue to exchange relevant datasets among various ministries. In addition, it co-ordinates with DTUs as further elaborated below.

Digital transformation units

DTUs, through co-ordination with MCIT and other concerned stakeholders, contribute to achieving Digital Egypt. DTUs were established by Prime Minister's Decree No. 1146/2018, which aimed at setting up new organisational divisions in the state's administrative apparatus. Subsequently, Decree No. 87/2019, enacted by CAOA's Information Systems and Digital Transformation Units, establishes the mandate for DTUs. In addition, the Standard Operations Manual (SOM) for DTUs, developed by the MCIT, outlines the competencies of DTUs, which include automating activities, providing technical support, generating digital reports and statistical studies, supplying information to decision-makers, managing the unit's website for effective communication, developing and evaluating training plans for information systems and digital transformation, upholding digital governance and information security, creating a framework for the unit's digital transformation plan in co-ordination with the MCIT, formulating digital transformation plans and initiatives in collaboration with relevant organisational divisions, establishing indicators for measuring and sustaining digital transformation, and managing, updating and securing systems, applications and databases for all internal and external unit activities.

The SOM outlines the key expected outputs of DTUs, emphasising the importance of modern, integrated and secure information technology systems, continuous availability of systems, automation of business activities, digitisation of documents and support for decision-making.

The MCIT has initiated the integration of information systems and DTUs within all ministries and state agencies during the transition to the New Administrative Capital (NAC), a project undertaken by the government aiming to create a modern and technologically advanced administrative hub serving as the focal point for governmental operations. Units have been formed in entities such as the Egyptian Authority for Unified Procurement, the National Authority for Social Insurance and the Supreme Council for Media Regulation. Notably, most ministries now have a DTU and the MCIT is actively engaged in extending this integration to similar public entities as part of the ongoing relocation process to the NAC.

DTUs consist of three organisational subdivisions: i) infrastructure and information security; ii) systems applications and technical support; and iii) statistics, reporting and electronic publishing. Functions within these divisions, such as data and business analysis and policy and operations specialists, could be well placed to play a key role in optimising administrative procedures. The organisational level and number of employees of the entity's information systems and DTUs are determined based on several factors, the most important of which are the volume of operations, services and activities in the entity.

The predominant expertise of public servants employed in DTUs lies in technical domains, encompassing roles such as digital project manager specialist, business intelligence designer, application and infrastructure designer, data engineer and network administration specialist. It seems that they do not possess substantial knowledge and proficiency in administrative simplification, including familiarity with its instruments and tools such as service mapping, user journey and the SCM.

The success of DTUs in achieving their goals and purpose depends on several factors. Foremost among them is the availability of a qualified workforce for information systems. Effective management of the change associated with implementing the digital transformation strategy is also paramount. Support from senior executive management across various entities is crucial for successfully adopting the strategy. Furthermore, a commitment to applying best scientific practices and methodologies, and implementing management by objectives by linking performance evaluation to the achievement of targets and key performance indicators are integral to their success.

Notably, while Decree No. 87/2019 does not explicitly incorporate a mandate for simplifying procedures, DTUs do *de facto* contribute to streamlining services and procedures. By establishing frameworks for digital transformation plans and implementing digital initiatives, these units are strategically placed to streamline processes, reduce bureaucratic complexities and enhance overall efficiency in service delivery. The MCIT has identified this area as a priority area for future endeavours, acknowledging DTUs as key players in leading simplification efforts. However, it should be observed that simplification efforts are currently occurring in a demand-driven and ad hoc manner, and DTUs currently need guidance and expertise on administrative simplification. Additionally, the extent to which simplification efforts are well-planned and incorporated in the planning stage of DTUs' work cycles needs more clarity. Finally, these efforts are not necessarily occurring within all DTUs to enhance digitised processes and services. According to CAOA, Decree No. 22/2019 foresees for organisational development departments affiliated to HR departments to provide support in terms of process engineering and simplification, wherever relevant. Thereby, organisational development departments could be important stakeholders for DTUs to coordinate with in this regard.

Communication and co-ordination between DTUs and MCIT primarily adopt a formal approach. Further, communication is conducted on an ad hoc and irregular basis through meetings, emails and phone calls. Yet co-ordination remains compartmentalised, relying on the mandates of each ministry and the internal mandates of the MCIT. Monthly meetings between MCIT and DTUs are organised based on specific needs, with varying levels of participation depending on the topics to be discussed. To optimise co-ordination and communication, the MCIT could consider establishing a network with a defined mandate, roles,

responsibilities and tools for co-ordination, moving beyond ad hoc calls and emails. Meetings should serve as informative sessions or open discussions with experts to build capacities. MCIT might also explore the creation of communities of practice, with one focused on administrative simplification.

MCIT does not possess a mandate for oversight and quality control over the work of the DTUs. The latter are free to seek advisory support from the MCIT on an as-needed basis. However, the MCIT's advice to DTUs is advisory (i.e. not binding). DTUs function under the MCIT umbrella but report to the line ministries within which they are located. A significant challenge in this context is the empowerment of DTUs, which is contingent upon the ministry's priorities and high-level strategic support. This factor can potentially limit the scope of their role.

In May 2021, MCIT established the *"Digital Transformation Units Academy"* to support DTUs in implementing their work. The academy convenes all DTUs and provides support through capacity-building and training workshops. It is essential to emphasise that, although the academy plays a pivotal role in enhancing capacity, it does not operate as a co-ordination platform. Furthermore, MCIT conducts regular meetings with DTUs to address any challenges they encounter in the execution of their functions. To strengthen this co-operation, the MCIT could consider expanding on this good practice and creating communities of practice, including one on administrative simplification.

Past and ongoing efforts in Egypt to streamline public service delivery through administrative simplification and the utilisation of digital solutions

While the efforts to gather stakeholder feedback on burdensome areas and to simplify administrative procedures were not exhaustive (they did not cover all services or incorporate all segments of users), various ministries and agencies have launched initiatives focused on reducing administrative burdens for citizens and businesses. Digitalisation has been a cornerstone of many of these efforts.

Examples of ERRADA's administrative simplification efforts in practice include:

- **Egypt's e-Registry**:[1] This electronic database offers the public free access to regulations. As a result, individuals and businesses have seen annual savings surpassing EGP 24 million since they no longer need to subscribe to commercial databases. Additionally, by providing easy access to their rights and obligations, the e-registry has promoted higher compliance levels among citizens and businesses (Gawad, 2013[25]).

- **Streamlining inventoried regulations**: In collaboration with the private sector and civil society, over 2 000 regulations were streamlined following ERRADA's recommendations between August 2008 and February 2012 (Gawad, 2013[25]).

- **Reducing administrative burdens**: Using the SCM methodology, ERRADA simplified administrative procedures across various sectors, leading to annual savings of roughly EGP 9 million in areas such as diving and marine activities, hotel management and agricultural land construction. Furthermore, ERRADA made recommendations for numerous industry and trade sectors that could, if enacted, lead to potential annual savings of up to EGP 68 million. Areas of savings concerned construction permits for industrial enterprises, industrial registry and operating licences, customs release for hazardous chemicals, licensing for steam boilers and thermal machines and trademarks.

- **General Guide to the Simplification of Administrative Procedures**: More recently, ERRADA developed a General Guide to the Simplification of Administrative Procedures in co-operation with Support for Improvement in Governance and Management (SIGMA).[2] This guide aims to enable the application of the Principles of Good Administration through the review and simplification of existing procedures or during the development of new procedures (OECD, 2018[15]).

Egypt has also launched multiple reforms to enhance the business environment, aligned with its Egypt Vision 2030. These reforms primarily target the reduction of administrative burdens on businesses. For instance:

- **The Investment Law (No. 72/2017)**: The main objective of the Investment Law is to promote investment in Egypt by offering incentives for investment, reducing bureaucratic procedures and simplifying and improving administrative processes (OECD, 2018[15]). This law empowers the General Authority for Investment and Free Zones (GAFI) to issue "golden licenses", creating a streamlined pathway for setting up certain industrial and infrastructure projects. This singular "golden license" approval encompasses the entire span of a project, from its establishment, including aspects like land allocation and building licensing, to its operation and management.

- **The Errada programme**: This initiative aims to support the implementation of some of the goals outlined in the economic axis and the transparency and efficiency pillar of Egypt Vision 2030. It involves government institutions aiding the state in creating enhanced governmental regulations and enacting policies that sustainably stimulate both economic and social growth. The programme also underscores the Egyptian government's commitment to:
  - Adhere to international best practices and standards and apply them appropriately.
  - Ensure transparency and the availability and accessibility of information for all relevant stakeholders.
  - Work on the legislative frameworks' unification, integration and interdependence and resolve any inconsistencies and complexity.

In addition, Egypt has paid particular attention to the opportunities e-government offers to map and re-engineer business processes in government organisations, with the objective of reducing the cost of business (OECD, 2006[26]). Accordingly, several one-stop shops have emerged as a way for governments to provide better services and improve regulatory delivery to citizens and businesses, including:

- **The Investors Service Centre**:[3] On 21 February 2018, the GAFI launched the Investors Service Centre (ISC), serving as a one-stop shop for business start-ups. Entrepreneurs have the choice of the standard process or an enhanced process for an additional charge (World Bank, 2020[27]). It simplifies the investment process for international investors interested in the opportunities provided by Egypt's domestic economy and its strategic position as an export hub for Europe and the MENA region. Beyond promoting investment opportunities in various sectors in Egypt, the ISC offers a comprehensive service package to investors, which includes: company incorporation assistance, branch establishment, board of directors and general assembly minutes approval, capital increases, activity modifications, liquidation procedures and other corporate affairs (U.S. Department of State, 2023[28]). The centre's goal is to issue necessary licenses, approvals and permits for investment activities within 60 days from the date of application.

- **Digital Egypt e-platform**:[4] This platform, introduced in 2001 in collaboration with the MCIT and the then Ministry of Administrative Development, offers online access to public services (OECD/UN ESCWA, 2021[29]). At present, it delivers 165 online services, with expansion plans for other governorates. Numerous online services were designed and introduced for several agencies, such as law enforcement, notarisation, personal status, family courts, supply, electricity, agriculture, traffic, real estate registration, the Mortgage Finance Fund and GAFI. The platform has witnessed a surge in subscribers, numbering 6.5 million in 2022, up from 4.2 million in 2021. The platform facilitated 28.3 million transactions in 2022 (MCIT, 2023[24]).

Additionally, in 2022, the MCIT documented various achievements in line with its Digital Egypt strategy (MCIT, 2023[24]):

- **Adopting the Digital Egypt 360 vision**, which represents the culmination of efforts to establish integrated, shared national databases. This vision focuses on the transition from traditional government applications to digital platforms, thus streamlining the delivery of public services. The transition rests on three foundational platforms:
  - **Citizen 360**, including all citizen data, i.e. support provided, skills, properties and residence.
  - **Asset 360**, including information on assets, encompassing details such as licenses, registration and taxes.
  - **Company 360**, including data on companies, covering aspects such as exports, workforce and insurance.
- **Strengthening collaboration with authorities within all state sectors**, to accelerate digital transformation and fully digitalise public services. This collaboration aims to offer efficient digital services and enhance government performance. In this context, the MCIT has initiated numerous projects within the Digital Egypt framework to provide digital government services to the public.
- **Creating a government intranet linking government buildings nationwide**. More than 33 000 buildings are being connected.
- **Optimising the Government-to-government (G2G) system**, which facilities electronic sharing of data and/or information systems between government agencies, departments or organisations.

However, in the absence of an encompassing strategy for identifying and measuring administrative burdens stemming from regulation, it is unclear how public authorities have been able to analyse and choose which policy areas to prioritise for reform or to measure the success of the reforms, e.g. whether relevant stakeholders are finding administrative procedures less burdensome.

When assessing administrative burdens, gathering information on the costs connected with complying with information obligations is necessary. Unless relevant standardised statistical data are available and fit for purpose, it is difficult to obtain these data without consulting the regulated subjects. They have real-life experience with compliance and are able to provide data that are closer to reality than expert assessments by civil servants. Therefore, regulated subjects and communication with them play an important part in the process of measuring administrative burdens (OECD, 2010[2]). This is, nevertheless, not the only phase in which regulatees should be involved in administrative simplification. When identifying "candidates" for simplification among regulations or areas of regulation, it is always useful to take the regulated subjects on board. The regulation that is the most burdensome is not necessarily the one that is perceived by regulated subjects as the most irritating and the basic version of the SCM does not provide a tool to deal with this issue. Focusing on the most irritating regulations may contribute to a more positive reaction by regulated subjects to the results of the project (OECD, 2010[2]).

Additionally, Egypt's digitalisation endeavours focus on achieving administrative simplification through the digitisation of multiple administrative procedures. However, the degree to which these procedures are optimised through digitalisation is not well-defined. In fact, MCIT service mapping occurs on various levels based on need and simplification of services prior to digitalisation is not necessarily consistent.

Consequently, Egypt's review and management of the stock of regulation appears to follow an on-demand approach. This means that specific issues are addressed based on the immediate priorities of the competent ministry. Such priorities often correlate with pressing issues or challenges.

Capacities for streamlining public service delivery

Important financial and analytical resource constraints affect the work to streamline public service delivery in Egypt. The most critical element in any digital transformation process is its people. It is, therefore, important to ensure that the project teams within the MCIT and DTUs have sufficient resources and appropriate staff. Training should be broader than technical competencies and also include interpersonal and soft skills as the staff are often the face of the organisation (OECD, 2020[14]). A good starting point for considering the capabilities needed is the OECD Framework for Digital Talent and Skills in the Public Sector (OECD, 2021[30]).

To train public servants and strengthen their skills, the MCIT has undertaken important efforts to date, including:

- **The creation of the Digital Transformation Academy**: In 2021, the MCIT introduced the Digital Transformation Academy in consultation with the heads of DTUs, aiming to promote digital evolution, utilise ICT for government objectives and fortify leadership and technical capabilities. In 2022, the academy hosted numerous sessions and workshops, fostering collaboration between unit heads and ICT experts to enhance their digital knowledge and align with their units' mission, thereby ensuring the sustainability of Digital Egypt's initiatives. Concurrently, the programmes under the academy's auspices provided training for all unit members, culminating in issuing 8 057 certificates (MCIT, 2023[24]).

- **A Standard Operating Procedure Manual**: In 2021, the MCIT collaborated with German development agency Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) to craft the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) Manual tailored for DTUs in public agencies. By April 2022, entities migrating to the NAC had received the issued manual. The SOP Manual is being revised to further bolster digital transformation efforts (MCIT, 2023[24]).

- **Training public servants selected governorates**: In 2022, digital capacity-building initiatives benefited 24 193 employees from 26 governorates, including Aswan, Alexandria, Beheira, Cairo, Damietta, Fayoum, Gharbia, Ismailia, Kafr El-Sheikh, Luxor, Matrouh, Menoufia, Minya, Qalyubia, Red Sea, Sharqia and Suez. In September and October 2022, meetings and workshops were held in Fayoum and Minya governorates to discuss the finalisation of the DTU SOP Manual, the introduction of advanced digital systems and applications in governorates and the development of the nationwide decision-making process (MCIT, 2023[24]).

MCIT encounters significant challenges in training DTU staff. Notably, the varying skill levels among DTU teams in different ministries create a discernible skills gap, necessitating targeted training interventions to bridge this disparity. Furthermore, the complexity and distinct nature of procedures and services offered by diverse line ministries pose a challenge in developing comprehensive and tailored training programmes.

Moreover, the positioning of DTUs within line ministries varies, influencing the ease with which they can access decision-makers. This variability adds an additional layer of complexity to training efforts, as each unit faces unique contextual challenges. The collaboration chain between line ministries, particularly where services are interconnected, and the interdependence of different line ministries' platforms and automated systems' interoperability further complicates the training landscape.

Additionally, technical needs for digitalisation often exceed general skills, requiring specialised technical support. Training efforts face added hurdles where affiliated bodies to line ministries lack uniform infrastructure readiness, especially in areas yet to transition to the NAC. Collaboration dependencies among different departments within line ministries, often without consistent support, also constitute a key challenge.

However, it is worth mentioning that the implementation of a standard organisational chart, terms of reference and procedures for the DTUs' functions have had a positive impact on facilitating the provision

of training. Furthermore, the relocation to the NAC has improved the prospects of having a robust digital infrastructure and increased the availability of shared automated systems. These advancements have greatly aided the DTUs in their tasks and have helped overcome numerous past challenges. However, despite these improvements, there may still be other challenges that exist and hinder the full utilisation and capacity building of DTU members in order to maximise the success of their tasks. To address this challenge, MCIT could consider scaling capacity building efforts and updating the SOPs/manuals for DTUs to explicitly include administrative simplification as tool to reengineer services and procedures before their digitalisation, as in the case of Spain (See Box 5.5). Two examples of bespoke training provided for staff are shown below in Box 5.6.

Box 5.5. The Manual for the Administrative Simplification and Burden Reduction of the General Administration in Spain

In 2014, the Ministry of Finance and Public Service of Spain developed the *Manual for the Administrative Simplification and Burden Reduction of the General Administration in Spain, a*s an instrument to standardise a general methodology for all public entities and departments. It sought to address various challenges to enhance the quality, access and efficiency of public services and procedures in Spain, including: 1) the lack of an integrated vision on administrative simplification further allowing departments to work in siloes; 2) Low levels of literacy and capacity compounded by a lack of overarching simplification culture in the administration; 3) Ad hoc or limited levels of planning capabilities for undertaking administrative simplification reforms.

The Manual is structured around different phases to provide practical guidance along each step of the administrative simplification journey - from the mapping of the procedure to the final phase of its reengineering. In its introduction, the Manual sets out a series of definitions and background to provide relevant context to the end-users for the utilisation of the tool. It also provides an overview of the administrative simplification landscape in Spain, including the responsible entities and applicable regulation in this regard to clarify roles, responsibilities, and procedures.

Source: Ministry of finance and Public Service of Spain (2014[31]), Manual for the Administrative Simplification and Burden Reduction of the General Administration in Spain.

Box 5.6. Formal training for one-stop-shop staff

Service Canada

Service Canada focuses on HR management and development, considering that its employees must be equipped with appropriate skills, attitudes and behaviours and that they need to share Service Canada's values and beliefs. Service Canada College was established in 2005 as a corporate learning institution and provided consistency in the courses and programmes for Service Canada employees. The reason for its creation was that, at the time, there was a significant amount of variance in the quality-of-service delivery. The objective of the college was to provide reliability and professionalism to service delivery through the promotion of the principles of service excellence.

The key offering of the college was the Service Excellence Certification Program, an applied learning programme that includes on-the-job coaching, in-class instruction and follow-up online sessions, complementing functional and operational training. The service excellence stream of courses was

developed and delivered in house at Service Canada but, in 2014, they were transferred over to the Canada School of Public Service, established in 2004, and are currently available to all federal employees. This school is responsible for leading the government-wide approach to learning by providing a common, standardised curriculum. It offers subject-specific courses at the federal Government of Canada level, including courses in its digital academy, Indigenous learning and public sector skills.

ePortugal

The Administrative Modernization Agency (AMA) academy initiative was created in 2019, building on previous training approaches. It aims to give everyone the opportunity to share, participate and collaborate on the development of knowledge, learning and skills, as well as to back new areas and training methodologies. A series of learning communities have been established, including face-to-face learning and e-learning, coupled with on-the-job training, self-training initiatives, microlearning and social learning.

Key success factors of the AMA's training programme have included: the involvement of all agents (board of directors, management units, entities, trainees); use of a multidisciplinary team for delivery; use of simple technology that is both intuitive and interactive; a training model tailored to the target audience and particular context; diverse approaches to the design of teaching materials; and continual evaluation of learning and its effectiveness.

Source: OECD (2020[14]), *One-Stop Shops for Citizens and Business*, https://doi.org/10.1787/b0b0924e-en.

The way forward: An overview of recommendations

This chapter has provided an overview of administrative simplification and digitalisation for streamlined public service delivery; it has also examined some of Egypt's challenges and opportunities to enhance public service delivery through administrative simplification and digitalisation. It has found that Egypt has put in place a solid framework for the delivery of digital government services and an ambitious strategy to roll this out more widely, which aligns with its Egypt Vision 2030.

Despite these efforts, there is still room for optimising sustained initiatives to streamline the back office and implement a cross-government administrative simplification strategy. Egypt's governmental structure remains exceptionally complex and its statute book is intricate, posing difficulties for citizens and businesses in comprehension and navigation. Moreover, a comprehensive set of policies and mechanisms to measure and simplify administrative procedures is yet to be developed. Civil servants face challenges that indicate a need to receive sufficient guidance, methodologies and training for conducting effective simplification reviews.

However, within this complex landscape, the MCIT and DTUs emerge as important actors in driving the simplification of digital procedures across government.

Actionable recommendations to further strengthen the role of the MCIT and DTUs in streamlining public services and procedures

The government of Egypt should consider expanding its current efforts to develop a cross-cutting administrative simplification strategy supported at the highest possible political level. Given the vast political support afforded to the digital transformation in Egypt, the first step and a good place to start could be to more systematically embed administrative simplification in Egypt's ICT strategy, focusing on high-impact regulations and formalities, assessing their costs and supporting their simplification and streamlining. The MCIT could lead this effort as it is the institution spearheading the ICT strategy. In doing this, it could further consider:

- Working closely with internal and external stakeholders to identify the sectors of the economy and society with the most burdensome administrative procedures and regulations. Such an exercise would also help generate some momentum behind simplifying the stock of regulations. The MCIT could run a series of workshops to identify the burdens together with stakeholders in major policy areas and sectors with corresponding ministries. Beyond looking at regulations in isolation, regular review of regulations and policy measures in key policy areas and sectors identified as of particular economic or social importance can have very high returns. This should inform the development of the new e-government strategy.

- Explicitly incorporating references to administrative simplification tools in the strategy. This involves outlining the specific tools and methodologies that will be employed to reduce bureaucratic complexities. Detailing these tools within the strategy provides a clear roadmap for implementation and facilitates a more transparent and measurable approach to administrative simplification.

- Actively seeking, building and maintaining robust political support and effective communication with pertinent government stakeholders.

Egypt should consider ensuring better co-ordination and integration of digital government projects with administrative simplification efforts. Projects in the areas of digital government and administrative simplification should be interlinked (ideally part of one wider strategy) and thoroughly consulted. No digitalisation of public services should be carried out without prior assessment of options for their simplification. To operationalise this, the MCIT could consider:

- Recommending an amendment to CAOA Decree No. 87/2019. This amendment should explicitly include administrative simplification as a fundamental aspect of the DTUs' mandate. Additionally, the MCIT could further contemplate amending the DTUs' Standard Operations Manual (SOM) to provide detailed insights into this proposed mandate for administrative simplification. This includes specifying the stage at which administrative simplification should be considered within the digitalisation process and providing references to the tools and co-ordination required.

- Developing a dedicated manual on administrative simplification that outlines clear and comprehensive guidance and a methodology for administrative simplification. This methodology should clarify when such a simplification exercise needs to be carried out (e.g. x number of years after a regulation or group of regulations are published, prior to undertaking a digitalisation reform of public service), as well as the processes to be followed and the different tools ministries can employ to assess impacts, e.g. the SCM, customer journey mapping. This manual could then be incorporated into the SOM as an essential component of DTUs. As part of this

ongoing co-operation with the European Commission and the government of Egypt, the OECD will aim to collaborate closely with the MCIT to finalise and finetune this administrative simplification manual for the government.

Along with the recommendation above, the MCIT should consider further emphasising **strong cross-government leadership and co-ordination** for the simplification and digital transformation programme. This effort should align with recommendations in the OECD Review on Public Administration Reform (forthcoming[32]). The MCIT could further consider:

- Creating expertise within its Institutional Development Division that can provide support to DTUs on administrative simplification.

- Building on its good collaboration practices with DTUs to develop a strong co-ordination platform. This could take the form of a network with a defined mandate, roles, responsibilities and tools for co-ordination.

- Considering mechanisms to grant the MCIT an oversight function over the work conducted by DTUs. DTUs are not obligated to report to the MCIT on their activities, engaging the MCIT only on an as-needed basis. To enhance oversight for streamlined public service delivery, DTUs could be mandated to report to the MCIT, for example on an annual basis regarding their planned digitalisation initiatives. This reporting obligation would enable the MCIT to monitor and follow up on these plans and facilitate the MCIT's co-ordination role with relevant line ministries.

The MCIT **should consider further developing the capacities of its human resources in key areas of administrative simplification and digital skills**. This will need focus on the following:

- Training DTUs' (selected) staff on how to conduct simplification projects, ensure the quality of reviews contracted out to academics and use evaluations of existing regulations before amending regulations. All evaluations should be published online in a central place that is easily accessible to the public. Resources for reviews could be focused on high-impact regulations to avoid evaluation fatigue. In line with Principle 1 of the OECD Good Practice Principles for Public Service Design and Delivery in the Digital Age, these training sessions should also aim to mainstream a user experience mindset.

- Targeting training efforts at the DTUs (or categories of DTUs). The varying skill levels among teams in different DTUs highlight the need for tailored programmes addressing specific competencies. A modular training approach could be adopted to overcome this complexity. Considering the varied positioning of DTUs within line ministries, efforts should include strategies to engage decision-makers effectively. Additionally, a comprehensive training approach emphasising cross-functional collaboration, technical expertise and infrastructure readiness is crucial to address the collaboration chain and interdependence of systems. These recommendations aim to bridge the skills gap, enhance collaboration and ensure effective training outcomes for DTU staff.

Capacities will need to be developed in key areas of digital skills to ensure the effective rollout and implementation of the digitalisation of Egypt's public services. This will need to focus on building technical capacity in the MCIT and other line ministries, where required.

The MCIT should consider identifying champion DTUs to lead and exemplify best practices in administrative simplification and digital skills. The identification process for these champion DTUs should consider factors such as past performance, demonstrated innovation and a willingness to embrace and implement new approaches. Once identified, these champion DTUs could play a role in sharing their experiences, lessons learned and success stories with other DTUs and stakeholders. This could be done through the proposed co-ordination network.

Annex 5.A. Pilot study: Leveraging administrative simplification concepts and tools in the food safety sector in Egypt

Introduction

As part of the EU-funded project "Support to Enhanced Administrative and Public Economic Governance in Egypt", the OECD is assisting Egypt in its efforts towards embedding administrative simplification in public processes and procedures. Technical support was provided through the implementation of a pilot study to strengthen the Egyptian administration's capacities for administrative simplification and digital solutions, aiming to improve the government's public services for businesses. The study involved offering technical support to Egypt's National Food Safety Authority (NFSA) in analysing and optimising the selected procedure for issuing food-trading licenses to Egyptian businesses.

This pilot study serves as an examination of the feasibility and practicality of integrating administrative simplification tools into these services, with the intention of providing recommendations for broader adoption across public administrative units. The project aims to identify specific needs and draw key recommendations for developing a strategic approach that can be replicated across the entire range of government services. Through thorough examination and strategic planning, the goal is to provide guidance on achieving widespread adoption, thereby ensuring improved efficiency, accessibility and effectiveness of administrative simplification tools in government operations throughout Egypt.

In order to determine the appropriate pilot procedures, the project collaborated closely with the MCIT to establish a set of selection criteria that ensures a recognised need for simplification and improvement in the selected procedures, as identified by the stakeholders themselves. By considering these selection criteria, the project aims to choose impactful pilot procedures that are aligned with government initiatives, transparent, targeted, adaptable and responsive to stakeholder needs.

The pilot study focused on enhancing the registration and inspection procedures for food establishments overseen by the NFSA. During this phase, the main objective was to examine specific administrative simplification tools such as service mapping, user journey optimisation and the Standard Cost Model (SCM) to suit the unique requirements of the selected procedures. The aim was to ensure that these tools could be effectively used within the broader framework of Egyptian public administration. To achieve this, workshops were organised for NFSA staff members and Egypt's MCIT, strongly emphasising the aforementioned tools. These workshops were designed to equip the participants with the necessary skills and guide them through the entire analysis and mapping process, facilitating the transition from the current state (As Is) to the desired state (To Be) for two specific service procedures. This collaborative effort between NFSA service providers and OECD experts aimed to produce a refined set of technical recommendations that would streamline procedures and align with the Egyptian public administration context, following national digital transformation objectives and enhancing public service efficiency and effectiveness.

This section outlines the implementation of the administrative simplification workshops, detailing its objectives, activities and outcomes. It aims to summarise the goals, describe the hands-on exercises and report on the skills and knowledge acquired by participants. It provides both general recommendations on how to further build and strengthen the NFSA's capacities for applying principles and tools of administrative

simplification, as well as specific recommendations to improve the food business registration and inspection processes in Egypt.

Background

The main beneficiary of the pilot, the NFSA, is an independent service authority affiliated with the Presidency of the Republic of Egypt and headed by the prime minister, with the mission to safeguard consumer health and interests. Established in 2017, the NFSA's mission is to protect consumers by unifying the roles of various food regulatory bodies and implementing a preventive system of strict monitoring across all stages of food production, handling and consumption. The NFSA's objective is to enhance the Egyptian food industry's quality and competitiveness both locally and internationally, ensuring the health and safety of consumers and bolstering confidence in Egypt's food safety system to stimulate exports. With a broad mandate, the NFSA ensures compliance with the highest food safety and hygiene standards for all food-related activities in Egypt. This includes supervising, licensing, certifying, inspecting and regulating the import and export of food. The NFSA establishes mandatory control rules, manages registration and licensing procedures and conducts risk assessments and analysis. Additionally, it plays a key role in raising public awareness about food safety, consulting on and reviewing legislative proposals related to food safety and handling regulations to maintain consumer health and safety.

Among other responsibilities, the NFSA issues food trading licenses to all business entities operating in the food sector in Egypt. The licensing procedure is uniform and one that all businesses must navigate, comprising two key stages: registration and inspection. The registration stage requires businesses to submit detailed information and documentation for review, ensuring compliance with the NFSA's standards. Following successful registration, the inspection stage involves onsite assessments to confirm that businesses maintain food safety practices in their day-to-day operations. The approach ensures that all food businesses in Egypt meet the mandatory requirements. While the overarching steps of the licensing procedure apply to every business, the NFSA recognises the unique aspects of different business types: factories, fisheries, supermarkets, mobile food units, suppliers and others. Therefore, it tailors certain steps to address specific requirements for each business segment. The NFSA operates dedicated departments specialising in each business segment to effectively manage this tailored approach. These departments are equipped to handle the particularities of their respective sectors, ensuring that the licensing process is comprehensive and relevant to the distinct business models within the diverse food industry.

The rationale for selecting the food trading licensing procedure for the pilot was strategic, as it both allowed for effective capacity building in administrative simplification and offered a potentially significant reduction in burdens and costs for businesses. Its complexity and the wide range of businesses it affects mean that improving it can offer significant, wide-reaching benefits. Civil servants can develop a deep understanding of effective simplification techniques by analysing and streamlining this process. These skills are transferable, equipping them to enhance other administrative processes. Moreover, focusing on this particular procedure was deemed suitable for empowering the participants to improve the user experience for businesses applying for licenses. Since it directly affects a large number of businesses, making it more efficient can significantly enhance how these businesses interact with government regulations. Learning to view and refine processes from the user's perspective is crucial for public servants, as it fosters a more service-oriented approach to regulation, ultimately leading to a more business-friendly environment.

Key takeaways of activities

The key challenges and pain points identified can be broadly categorised into two distinct groups. The first group encompasses broader issues within the organisation's approach to designing and implementing regulatory processes. In contrast, the second group involves specific challenges directly tied to the

intricacies of the licensing procedure itself. Understanding these challenges is critical to identifying targeted solutions for improving the NFSA's overall efficiency and service delivery.

The licensing procedure at the NFSA currently seems to focus on the agency's own operational framework and protocols rather than being designed from the perspective of the businesses it serves. This means that the process is primarily driven by the agency's internal procedures, regulations and administrative requirements. This focus on agency-driven processes may lead to less perceived efficiencies (from user views) and more frustrations for businesses seeking licenses. As a result, the needs, challenges and experiences of food businesses, which are the end users of the licensing service, may not be adequately considered or addressed.

To that end, the workshop findings detect the opportunity to gradually seek avenues to UX tools (e.g. service mapping, user journey) within the NFSA's operational practices. This would allow the NFSA to better understand businesses' experiences and challenges during regulatory interactions. Without this insight, the agency's processes may risk not aligning completely with the actual needs of food businesses, leading to potential misalignment between service provision and user expectations.

Adopting a user-first mindset is integral to the administrative simplification process at the NFSA. By prioritising the perspectives and needs of food businesses in the design and execution of regulatory processes, the agency can identify and eliminate unnecessary bureaucratic steps, thereby streamlining procedures. This approach not only simplifies the regulatory landscape for businesses but also enhances the overall efficiency of the NFSA. A user-first mindset ensures that every aspect of the licensing and inspection process is evaluated through the lens of its impact on businesses, leading to a more practical, accessible and efficient regulatory framework. Such an alignment between the NFSA's operational methods and the real-world needs of food businesses is crucial for creating a regulatory environment that effectively achieves its safety and health objectives and is supportive of the growth and success of the food industry.

It was discovered that there is room for improvement in the NFSA's utilisation of administrative simplification tools in their regulatory processes. By adopting select simplification methodologies, the NFSA can reduce procedural complexities and inefficiencies, minimise prolonged interactions with businesses and alleviate administrative workload. The absence of these tools hinders the NFSA's ability to streamline procedures, which directly affects the ease and efficiency of regulatory compliance for food businesses.

Furthermore, the NFSA has room to continuously improve its regulatory quality framework by implementing administrative simplification measures. Focusing more on using a streamlined approach in regulatory practices will potentially lead to improved efficiencies and a decreased burden on both the agency and the businesses it regulates. Moreover, the agency can leverage the SCM to measure administrative burdens. This tool could provide valuable insights into the efficiency of its processes and identify areas ripe for improvement. The SCM's application could help the NFSA quantify and subsequently reduce any unnecessary steps in their procedures, aligning their operations more closely with best practices.

The current NFSA licensing process could be reviewed to identify potential areas for redesign through a thorough assessment of each licensing step in terms of the administrative burden it places on businesses. This detailed analysis will likely optimise procedures' efficiency and streamline the process. Each step of the process should be scrutinised to evaluate its necessity or the extent to which it facilitates or hinders the ease of doing business. Additionally, the design and implementation of the license procedure may be better grounded in user feedback. There is room for a more systematic approach to stakeholder consultation, which is crucial for understanding businesses' needs and challenges. Incorporating feedback from those directly affected by the licensing process is essential for creating a user-centric approach that aligns the NFSA's services with the real-world requirements of the food industry.

By adopting a more user-centric approach and placing a stronger emphasis on administrative simplification, the licensing procedure can be further optimised. The NFSA is currently confronted with various operational and technological challenges that could potentially impact its ability to achieve maximum efficiency and could negatively affect the businesses it oversees. First, the existing compliance requirements do not necessarily consider the size of food entities. This one-size-fits-all approach places disproportionate burdens on smaller businesses, which may lack the resources to meet the same standards as larger companies. Second, businesses are required to submit a substantial number of documents during registration and inspection, which may result in a time-consuming process. Manual, paper-based reporting methods exacerbate this and may result in significant process delays. Additionally, introducing new regulatory bodies and changes in procedures, often accompanied by varying levels of comprehension of the instructions, leads to confusion and uncertainty about compliance requirements.

Another set of challenges pertains to the execution and co-ordination of inspections. There are instances of inspectors having different opinions and not sufficiently focusing on corrective actions, leading to potential inconsistency in enforcement and may cause some confusion among businesses. Moreover, arranging and co-ordinating inspection visits effectively poses logistical challenges, such as scheduling conflicts, delays and communication challenges between inspectors and businesses. Varied inspectors' opinions and delayed reporting post-inspection further complicate this aspect of the regulatory process.

The NFSA is confronted with internal operational challenges as well. The absence of a shared database leads to duplicated efforts and less efficient data handling, resulting in longer wait times as information is processed separately by various units. This issue spills over to the financial management aspect, where multiple departments uploading the same payment receipts leads to potential confusion and redundant administrative work. These challenges highlight the need for systemic improvements in the NFSA's processes to enhance efficiency, reduce the administrative burden on businesses and ensure a more consistent and user-friendly regulatory environment.

The pilot was designed to address the specific challenges outlined, particularly focusing on supporting the user-centric approach and the adoption of administrative simplification in the NFSA's licensing procedure. Tailored to meet these exact needs, the workshop provided participants with practical tools and insights into administrative simplification and UX methodologies. Integrating hands-on activities and case studies aimed to equip the NFSA staff with the necessary skills to reassess and redesign the licensing process. The curriculum and approach aimed to prepare grounds for a more efficient, effective and user-friendly procedure directly aligned with the real-world needs of the businesses it serves.

NFSA participants effectively grasped administrative simplification techniques despite their initial unfamiliarity with the topic. They successfully applied key concepts and tools to a real-life business scenario, demonstrating a solid understanding of the material. UX tools were particularly notable, as participants adeptly employed user journey and service mapping in their procedures. The feedback highlighted the tools' immediate practical value, crediting them for providing a comprehensive view of the licensing process from both user and NFSA perspectives. This dual viewpoint clearly identified interaction points, administrative hotspots and common pain points, offering a clear direction for future process improvements. Most participants underscored the value of incorporating the user perspective in optimising the licensing procedure, as this has been reported not a standard practice at the NFSA.

SCM application was met with mixed results. While participants saw the potential of the tool and its applicability, they found it fairly complex and encountered difficulties in using it comprehensively within the time allotted. Also, due to time restraints, the user research part of the SCM exercise could not be fully implemented, which means that some of the input parameters were assumption-based. To fully realise the potential of the SCM, participants need to delve deeper into user research. Conducting interviews, focus groups and expert consultations are crucial steps in gathering the necessary SCM parameters, such as population metrics, frequency of interactions and business segmentation. This research is a critical component of the SCM's successful implementation and will enable a more accurate and impactful

application of the tool in their ongoing efforts to refine and improve the licensing process. This suggests a need for more dedicated, focused workshops to train participants on the SCM, tailored to each specific step of the licensing process.

Discussions aimed at identifying pain points and proposing solutions were productive, yielding a list of specific and actionable items. These insights provide a robust base for developing both broad and detailed recommendations to reduce administrative burdens and enhance procedural efficiency for the NFSA and the businesses it serves. Further training and capacity-building sessions are recommended to deepen understanding and proficiency in applying these UX tools in day-to-day work.

High-level recommendations to improve the registration and inspection procedures in the food safety sector

This sub-section presents a set of recommendations to support the efficiency and effectiveness of the NFSA's licensing and inspection processes. These recommendations are based on a comprehensive analysis of information gathered through interactions with various stakeholders. The analysis has provided a valuable perspective on the procedural challenges and potential areas for improvement within the NFSA's operational framework. Apart from a general recommendation on continuing with administrative simplification (Recommendation No. 1), the set of recommendations is divided into two groups: those aimed at enhancing UX for businesses engaging with the NFSA (Nos. 2 to 4), and those focused on streamlining and optimising internal workflows within the NFSA (Nos. 5 to 8).

Recommendation No. 1: Maintain the momentum by using the pilot as a springboard for a systematic approach to administrative simplification and improving user experience

It is recommended that the pilot be used as a springboard to continue with ongoing efforts in administrative simplification at the NFSA, as these efforts are crucial for enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of food business regulation in Egypt. The NFSA can significantly improve its operational efficiency by simplifying procedures and reducing administrative burdens, leading to quicker and more standard procedures. This benefits the NFSA in terms of reduced workload and streamlined workflows and positively impacts businesses by reducing the time and resources spent on compliance. Adopting a simplified administrative approach aligns with global regulatory best practices and is key to a supportive environment for the food industry, contributing to overall economic growth.

In addition, **incorporating user experience (UX) tools and the SCM into the NFSA's procedures is a key recommendation for further development**. The application of UX tools, such as service mapping, will provide the NFSA with deeper insights into the experiences of businesses, enabling the design of more user-centric services. This approach can lead to higher compliance rates and a stronger relationship between the NFSA and food businesses. Complementary to the UX tools, the SCM is a reliable method to quantify and reduce administrative burdens identified in the user journey, helping to identify specific areas for improvement. Further training and application of the SCM are essential for a comprehensive evaluation of the NFSA's procedures, ensuring a data-driven approach to regulatory reform.

Recommendation No. 2: Adopt a tiered approach to adjust compliance requirements based on the size and type of food business

The NFSA compliance requirements currently do not necessarily consider the size of the food entity, which can lead to perceived disproportionate burdens on smaller businesses. These entities may struggle to comply with standards that are more suited to larger, resource-rich companies, potentially stifling growth and innovation in the smaller business sector. To address this pain point, the NFSA could consider an approach similar to that of the European Commission regarding food safety management for small

businesses. The European Commission has introduced guidelines that consider the nature and size of businesses in food safety management systems. This approach uses clear flowcharts and simple tables to guide small businesses through food safety processes, from hazard identification to corrective measures, adaptable to their specific activities. Adopting a tiered regulatory approach that categorises requirements based on the size and type of food business can address this issue. This approach allows for more manageable compliance expectations for smaller entities while maintaining overall food safety standards. The NFSA could develop similar tiered regulations, offering smaller businesses a simpler method of compliance to ensure that regulatory standards are appropriately scaled to different sizes.

Recommendation No. 3: Reduce administrative burden on businesses by digitalising the submission process and eliminating unneeded documentation

One of the workshop's findings relates to the NFSA requirement for a substantial amount of documentation (as the user is the primary source of data provision) during the registration and inspection procedures. This can result in a perceived time-consuming experience for businesses. This often results in administrative bottlenecks and inefficiencies. Streamlining document requirements and transitioning to a digital submission system could significantly reduce this burden.

An example to consider is the Danish Business Authority's approach, where it has simplified business registration processes using an online platform. This system minimises the number of required documents by allowing businesses to submit necessary information through a centralised, digital portal. Adopting a similar approach, the NFSA could review and reduce the number of documents needed, digitalise the submission process and enable easier document management and retrieval.

Recommendation No. 4: Standardise inspection protocols and training to ensure inspection consistency and a clear procedure

One of the identified pain points from the user side was that inspectors sometimes have different opinions and may not prioritise corrective actions equally, which can lead to inconsistency in enforcement and confusion for businesses. This can undermine the effectiveness of the inspection process and hinder compliance improvements. To address this challenge, the NFSA could consider standardising inspection protocols and training inspectors to ensure consistency is crucial. Such a programme could include clear guidelines on inspection procedures and emphasise the importance of consistent corrective action recommendations to ensure that all inspectors follow uniform standards and procedures. Regular refresher courses and workshops could also be beneficial to keep inspectors aligned and updated. Furthermore, introducing a feedback mechanism where businesses can report inconsistencies can help the NFSA monitor and address any disparities in the inspection process. Additional measures could be standardising and fixing the inspector team member structure to ensure consistency in the inspection process as businesses become familiar with the same set of inspectors. These inspectors, in turn, gain a deeper understanding of each specific business' operations and challenges.

Recommendation No. 5: Enhance business engagement and co-operation through unified guidance

A pain point identified during the workshop is the users' confusion with the introduction of a new regulatory body and resulting new procedures and perspectives. This is compounded by users' varying levels of comprehension of instructions or guidelines, resulting in uncertainty about compliance requirements and processes. The NFSA could consider establishing clear communication channels and unified guidance to mitigate this confusion. This could be achieved through the provision of comprehensive, accessible guidelines and conducting outreach programmes to educate businesses about changes, including detailed guidance documents, frequently asked questions and organising informational workshops or webinars.

Such efforts would ensure businesses are well-informed about new regulations and procedures, easing the transition and fostering compliance.

Recommendation No. 6: Streamline reporting during field inspection visits through establishing a digital reporting system

Another reported pain point relates to the current reporting practices. The current method of writing and sending reports to businesses is manual and paper-based, leading to extended processing times (the delay is reported to be up to five business days) and potential delays in communication. Adopting a digital reporting system could significantly expedite this process. A relevant example is the use of digital platforms such as the United Kingdom Food Standards Agency Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (FHRS).[5] In this system, inspection results are recorded digitally and made available online, providing immediate access to businesses and consumers. The NFSA could streamline its report writing and dissemination process by implementing a similar digital solution. Food businesses could receive timely reports through an online portal, reducing the time and resources spent on manual report generation and distribution. This approach not only speeds up the reporting process but also ensures the accuracy and accessibility of the information.

Recommendation No. 7: Increase the effectiveness of inspection visits by introducing an online inspection and management system

Another problem reported at the workshop relates to manually arranging, co-ordinating and managing inspection visits effectively. The problem involves logistical challenges, such as scheduling conflicts, delays in inspection times or ineffective communication between inspectors and businesses. It might also include a lack of timely reporting post inspection. To mitigate this, the NFSA could consider implementing an online inspection management and scheduling system that allows businesses to book, reschedule and confirm inspection visits. This system could offer real-time updates on inspector availability and allow for automatic reminders for both inspectors and businesses. Additionally, standardising inspection checklists and protocols can ensure consistency. To facilitate timely reporting, the use of mobile devices for real-time data entry during inspections could streamline the process, allowing for immediate action on issues.

Recommendation No. 8: Create a central digital user database for efficient information management

The lack of a shared digital database was reported as a challenge during the workshop, which can lead to duplication of efforts, inconsistent data handling and increased wait times for businesses as their information is processed separately by different units within the NFSA. To this end, the NFSA could consider developing and implementing a centralised digital database accessible to all relevant NFSA units. This database would enable secure and seamless sharing of customer information, documents and records. Such a system ensures that once a business submits information, it can be efficiently accessed by any authorised unit, facilitating a smoother, more co-ordinated interaction with the agency. The NFSA could create a centralised, digital platform where data from various departments are collected, shared and updated regularly. This would facilitate better inter-departmental co-ordination and support optimising transparency and accountability within the food industry and among consumers.

Recommendation No. 9: Introduce a centralised financial management system to streamline payment

Another identified challenge is the duplication of efforts and potential confusion caused by the NFSA's multiple departments uploading the same payment receipts. This can lead to administrative complications, data redundancy and increased chances of errors or discrepancies in financial records. Implementing a centralised financial management system within the NFSA can effectively address this issue. This system

should allow for a single upload of payment receipts that all relevant departments can then access. Once a payment is recorded, it becomes visible and accessible to all relevant parties within the agency, eliminating the need for multiple uploads and reducing the potential for errors. This approach streamlines the financial management process, enhances data accuracy and reduces administrative workload.

Recommendation No. 10: Consider issuing digital licenses

One of the findings that surfaced during the workshop was that the NFSA issues business licenses exclusively in hard copy, which can delay the start of business operations. The NFSA could consider issuing licenses digitally.

A good practice to be considered to this end is one by the Singapore Food Agency that in 2022 began issuing licenses to retail food establishments digitally.[6] This move allowed for a more efficient licensing process, as licenses could be processed and issued quicker. Digital licenses feature a quick-response or QR code for easy scanning and accessing periodically refreshed data such as validity period and track record. This system replaced the need for mailing hard copy licenses, reducing delays in the commencement of operations for new licensees.

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Notes

[1] See the Egyptian Legislation Register, https://eregistry.errada.gov.eg/.

[2] SIGMA is a joint initiative of the OECD and the European Union. Its key objective is to strengthen the foundations for improved public governance.

[3] See https://www.gafi.gov.eg/English/eServices/Pages/Services.aspx?DepartmentID=1.

[4] See https://digital.gov.eg.

[5] See https://www.food.gov.uk/about-us/food-hygiene-rating-scheme-fhrs#:~:text=The%20FHRS%20is%20operated%20in,authority%20inspections%20to%20the%20public.

[s] See, for instance, https://www.sfa.gov.sg/food-for-thought/article/detail/moving-to-digital-getting-your-food-licence-just-got-quicker.

6 Promoting transparency and participation through access to information and public communication in Egypt

This chapter analyses the legal, policy and institutional frameworks that currently enable transparency and citizen and stakeholder participation in support of more effective, inclusive and responsive public decision-making in Egypt. It also assesses how the government could strengthen the role of public communication in promoting these principles and achieving such objectives. This chapter will notably focus on efforts to inform and communicate with citizens in view of achieving the commitments of Egypt Vision 2030 and the Public Administration Reform Plan. The chapter concludes with recommendations on how transparency and citizen and stakeholder participation can be improved through access to information and public communication as part of Egypt's broader public reform agenda.

Leveraging Egypt's high-level commitments and achieving the ambitions of its reform agenda

Egypt adopted a Public Administration Reform Plan (PARP) in 2014 to build a more effective public administration (see Chapter 3). The PARP is also relevant to Egypt Vision 2030 and includes several pillars relating to improving public services, reforming legislation, upgrading data and information management systems, and enhancing the citizen-state relationship (MPED, 2014[1]). As established in its vision statement, the PARP aims to produce an efficient, effective, competent, transparent, fair and responsive public administration that provides high-quality services, maintains accountability, increases citizens' satisfaction and contributes to the realisation of national development goals. It specifically mentions its intention to address several challenges, including overlapping or incoherent legislation, greater transparency and accountability, and a complex administrative structure that delivers inadequate public services (MPED, 2014[1]).

Egypt Vision 2030 covers a set of national goals aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to be met by the same year and emphasises the interdependence of the social, economic and environmental dimensions (see Chapter 2). The Ministry of Planning, Economic Development and International Cooperation (MPEDIC) recently updated the first version given the changing national, regional and international context of the past seven years. The process of updating the vision sought to include and combine the views of public bodies, academia, the private sector, civil society organisations and experts. The four guiding principles of the current vision include "putting the citizen at the centre of development" and "guaranteeing equity and accessibility for all" (Presidency of Egypt, n.d.[2]). The vision also has six strategic objectives that align with the SDGs, one of which is "enhanced governance and partnerships", which embodies the aims of SDG 16 on "Peace, justice and strong institutions". This SDG recognises the importance of transparency and citizen participation for more "inclusive institutions at all levels" through the following targets:

> "- 16.7. Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory, and representative decision-making at all levels.
>
> - 16.10. Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements" (UN, n.d.[3]).

The strategic objective of "enhanced governance and partnerships" in Egypt Vision 2030 outlines the country's intentions to foster "participation of all parties in the decision-making process at both the national and local levels, within a legislative and institutional framework that fosters transparency and accountability" (Presidency of Egypt, n.d.[2]). It reiterates that this endeavour requires "promoting a shift in societal culture and administrative behaviour", all of which will combat corruption, improve policies and services, maintain security and stability and strengthen partnerships between Egypt and other countries, as well as with relevant international and regional organisations, donors and development partners (Presidency of Egypt, n.d.[2]). Achieving the aims of both agendas thus requires a shift towards greater transparency and citizen[1] and stakeholder[2] participation, as they are core foundational elements of an efficient and effective public administration that responds to the needs and demands of the people it serves and improves Egypt's standing in the wider international community.

To support countries in this regard, the OECD has developed a "ladder" of citizen and stakeholder participation to expand upon all of the ways in which all relevant actors can be involved in public decision-making. The 2017 OECD Recommendation of the Council on Open Government (OECD, 2017[4]) defines them as the following:

- **Information**: an initial level of participation characterised by a one-way relationship in which the government produces and delivers information to stakeholders. It covers both on-demand provision of information and "proactive" measures by the government to disseminate information.

- **Consultation**: a more advanced level of participation that entails a two-way relationship in which stakeholders provide feedback to the government and vice-versa. It is based on the prior definition of the issue for which views are being sought and requires the provision of relevant information, in addition to feedback on the outcomes of the process.

- **Engagement:** when stakeholders are given the opportunity and the necessary resources (e.g. information, data and digital tools) to collaborate during all phases of the policy cycle and in service design and delivery.

Information, the initial step, is directly linked to transparency, which the OECD defines as "stakeholder access to, and use of, public information and data concerning the entire public decision-making process, including policies, initiatives, salaries, meeting agendas and minutes, budget allocations and spending" (OECD, 2022[5]). In an increasingly complex information ecosystem, providing timely, reliable and relevant public sector data and information to citizens and stakeholders has become crucial in many ways. In this sense, the right to access to information – understood as the ability of an individual to seek, receive, impart and use information (UNESCO, n.d.[6]) – is a key contributor to the success of any national reform agenda. Access to information is related to and yet distinct from the concept of open data, which promotes the philosophy of making government data available and facilitating the free distribution of datasets without restriction for its reuse (OECD, 2020[7]). Similarly, citizens increasingly demand a say in the decisions that affect their daily lives. In response, public bodies are progressively creating opportunities to "harness citizens' experiences and knowledge to make better decisions" (OECD, 2022[8]), resulting in a fast-evolving landscape for citizen and stakeholder participation.

The role of public communication is also equivalent in this regard, as at its core, it is a government function to deliver information, listen and respond to citizens in the service of the common good. While access to information and public communication are related, public communication refers more to the government's information on its policies and services. The function of public communication thus has significant potential to strengthen transparency around decision-making and establish an ongoing dialogue with citizens that encourages their active participation in the decisions that affect their lives (OECD, 2021[9]).

Governments worldwide increasingly recognise the benefits of integrating citizens' perspectives into policymaking, service design and delivery. While the approach in each country differs, many have introduced initiatives to gather the insights of the public at varying stages of the policy cycle. Many have even institutionalised these processes to safeguard them throughout political cycles, established specific oversight units and allocated significant financial resources to ensure their success. Innovations in citizen participation have also appeared across the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, from Tunisia's public participation portal created in 2014 (Government of Tunisia, n.d.[10]) to Morocco's 2020 nationwide public consultation through their *Commission spéciale sur le modèle de developpement* (CSMD, 2021[11]).

Building on ongoing efforts by the Government of Egypt, there is an opportunity to build upon existing practices to mainstream transparency and citizen and stakeholder participation across public administration and ensure their sustainability and longevity beyond 2030. Prolonged co-operation and collaboration between all key actors involved in the national reform agenda, including the legislative, executive and judiciary branches, independent institutions and subnational governments, is required to achieve a cultural shift towards more open, sustainable and inclusive policymaking and service design and delivery. As is garnering buy-in from citizens and stakeholders on large-scale national reforms and demonstrating that their day-to-day experiences with public services and interactions with public bodies are key to achieving their intended result.

Improving transparency and access to information for an active and engaged citizenry

The right to access public information is a fundamental civic freedom that underpins all other freedoms. It enables citizens to fully participate in public life and brings them closer to public administration. In Egypt, as in other countries, the COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated the importance of government transparency in leading societies through a crisis by informing and communicating with all social demographics at once (OECD, 2020[12]). Importantly, public information does not only refer to statistics and data but also to any public documents – in any format – that may be of interest to citizens and stakeholders, including but not limited to meeting agendas, minutes, salaries, draft legislation, budget allocations, policy documents, annual reports and more.

In practice, this means that governments are responsible for:

- Making clear, complete, timely, reliable and relevant public sector data and information available.
- Ensuring that information is easy to find, understand, use and reuse.
- Updating information regularly and assessing what kind of information is most useful to citizens and stakeholders.
- Responding to requests from citizens and stakeholders for information that is not publicly available.

Why should governments dedicate limited human and financial resources to promoting transparency and access to information? Convincing public officials who operate at the technical level as well as high-level- political leadership of the value added of such an endeavour is key to its success. Access to information improves policymaking and service design and delivery in several ways. First, it contributes to a more informed and, thus, more active citizenry, who are more inclined to seek ways to share their needs and be involved in public decision-making. Public officials also benefit from gathering a range of insights and expertise from diverse groups of citizens, which enables them to tailor and adapt policies and services to the lived reality of the communities they serve. In turn, this improves citizen satisfaction, increases government legitimacy and fosters greater trust in public administration overall.

Furthermore, access to information can support the government in achieving the objectives of its national priorities, plans and strategies (Figure 6.1). Within the government itself, it provides an incentive to improve internal information management, record keeping and archiving systems. In doing so, it professionalises processes and improves the flow of information and data across the public administration. This also facilitates more cross-learning and collaboration between public bodies, which can more easily identify and act upon synergies in their work. Moreover, access to information helps to raise awareness of the efforts undertaken by the government and can serve to promote reforms with citizens and build buy-in across all demographics. In this regard, it can also help to stifle any mis- or disinformation surrounding reforms and allows the government to fact-check and counter false narratives. In demonstrating transparency, access to information can also support anti-corruption efforts and foster inclusive economic growth. It improves credibility and predictability, attracting more foreign direct investment and encouraging greater international co-operation.

Egypt enshrines the right to access to information at the highest level

In 70% of OECD member countries and in some MENA countries such as Morocco and Tunisia, access to information is recognised as a constitutional right (OECD, 2022[5]). Doing so acknowledges access to information at the highest level and has the potential to ensure longevity throughout changing political cycles as the right is constitutionally protected. Such a status also grants legitimacy to the development of other legal and institutional frameworks on access to information at all levels and branches of government.

Figure 6.1. Transparency and access to information in support of reforms
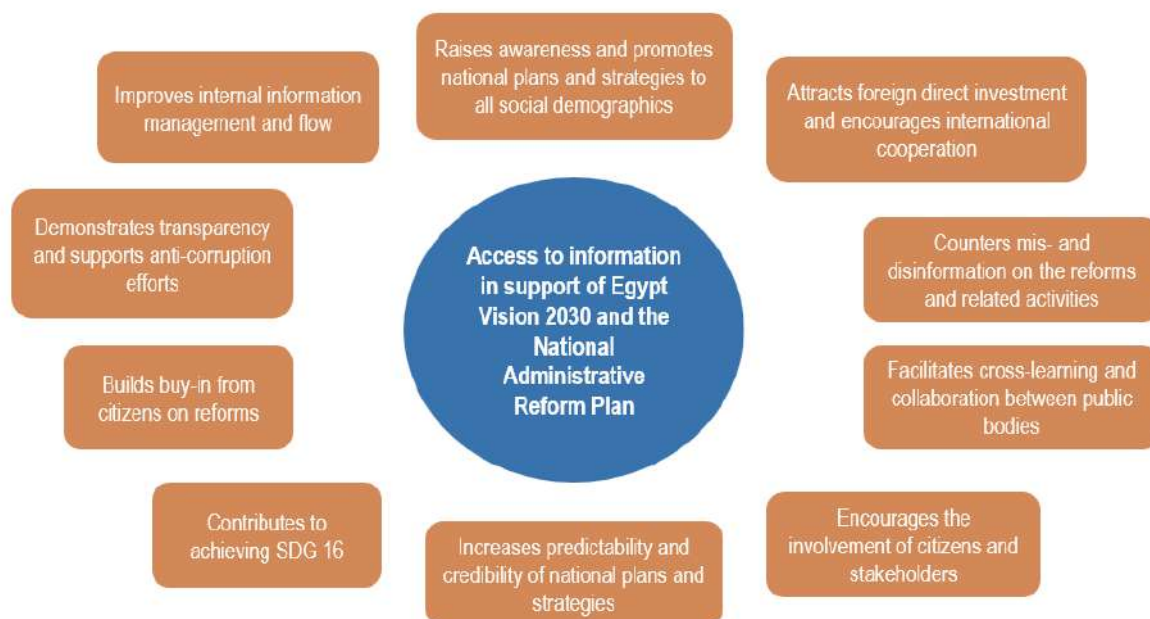
Egypt is building upon a strong foundation as its constitution has already enshrined the right to access public information. Article 68 on access to information and official documents states that:

> "Information, data, statistics, and official documents are owned by the people. Disclosure thereof from various sources is a right guaranteed by the state to all citizens. The state shall provide and make them available to citizens with transparency. The law shall organise rules for obtaining such, rules of availability and confidentiality, rules for depositing and preserving such, and lodging complaints against refusals to grant access thereto. The law shall specify penalties for withholding information or deliberately providing false information" (Government of Egypt, n.d.[13]).

Legal, policy and institutional frameworks that operationalise the right to access to information

While constitutional recognition provides a valuable foundation, countries must also operationalise how this right is afforded to citizens in practice. The majority of countries do so through the adoption and successful implementation of an access to information law. The adoption of such laws has greatly increased at the international level over the past 2 decades, with 75% of existing laws adopted in this period (Figure 6.2). Across the MENA region, **Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Tunisia** and other economies have all adopted access to the information laws, with Jordan being the first in the region.

Where they exist, laws on access to information have broadly similar provisions, with many including or referring to the following (OECD, 2024[14]):

- A definition of the term "public information" and what types and formats of information are covered by the law.
- The scope of the law and whether it applies to the executive, legislative and judiciary.
- The minimum set of information that public bodies should proactively disclose to citizens.
- Guidance on who has the right to file a request for information and what information is needed to submit a request.
- Deadlines for public officials to respond to access to information requests.

- Costs for filing, searching, reproducing and mailing the information.
- Exemptions and exceptions which could allow for a denial of a request for information, including class tests, harm tests and public interest overrides.
- Mechanisms for internal, external and judicial appeals in the case of denials.
- Information on the institutional responsibilities of access to information across public administration and the relevant oversight bodies.

Figure 6.2. Evolution of the adoption of access to information laws, 1766-2021
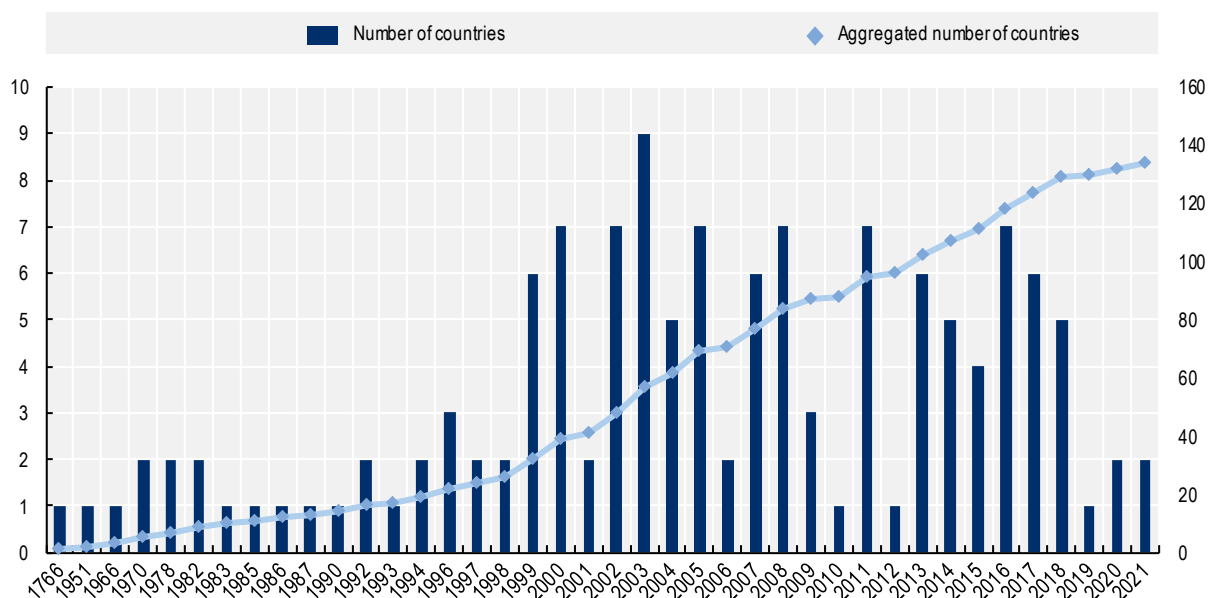
Source: Centre for Law and Democracy (n.d.[15]), *Global Right to Information Rating - By Country*, https://www.rti-rating.org/country-data/.

Promoting transparency in practice through proactive and reactive disclosure

A common element of laws and guidelines on access to information is a reference to proactive and reactive disclosure. Proactive disclosure is defined as all public information that public bodies regularly share without necessarily being asked to do so by citizens or stakeholders (OECD, 2022[5]). Most often, the information is published on their websites, on a central portal, on social media, in official gazettes or by other means. Ideally, it is timely, relevant, up-to-date, accessible and user-friendly. Its purpose is to keep citizens informed and communicate reforms and related programmes, projects and activities to the public. Reactive disclosure refers to citizens' right to request information not made publicly available (OECD, 2022[5]). In practice, citizens need to know who they can ask, how, whether there is a standard procedure or template to request information, whether it is free to do so, and more.

Many countries make substantial efforts to disclose information; however, not all information can and should be automatically published. In all countries, there are legitimate exceptions and exemptions to releasing information to the public, for example, if the information would compromise personal data or the right to privacy, public health and safety, international relations or national security (OECD, 2022[16]). Without clear rules and regulations on what information can and cannot be disclosed, public officials may be afraid of accidentally sharing information that is "classified" and facing sanctions for doing so. Some countries, such as Canada and Mexico, take an "open by default" approach, meaning that information is considered publicly available unless there is a justifiable reason for a refusal.

Fostering proactive disclosure across public administration

Proactively disclosing information enables citizens and stakeholders to better understand how the government functions, its current priorities and its progress in different policy areas and on key initiatives such as Egypt Vision 2030. It is important to note that certain conditions are necessary for an enabling environment where all citizens can access information on line and in person. Egypt has made strides in improving access to the Internet and bridging the digital divide over recent decades. While Internet connectivity remains a challenge, the country has made efforts to improve information and communication technology (ICT) infrastructure and increase the number of Internet users (Freedom House, 2022[17]). That said, the country continues to place an emphasis on enhancing digital inclusion, which contributes to citizens' ability to access information. Two hundred and fifty million government documents have been digitised to date and 75 600 citizens have been trained in digital literacy through the Digital Decent Life initiative (Egyptian State Information Service, 2022[18]).

In countries with laws or guidelines on access to information, provisions on proactive disclosure often provide a minimum set of information that the government must disclose. Figure 6.3 outlines those that are most common, for example an organigram of public bodies, the functions of the institutions and the services it offers. Respondents to the OECD survey in the region, namely Lebanon, Morocco and Tunisia, also proactively disclose the aforementioned common sets of information alongside the minister's agendas, calls for tenders, audit reports and opportunities for public consultation.

Figure 6.3. Information proactively disclosed by central/federal governments as stated in the law or any other legal framework, 2020
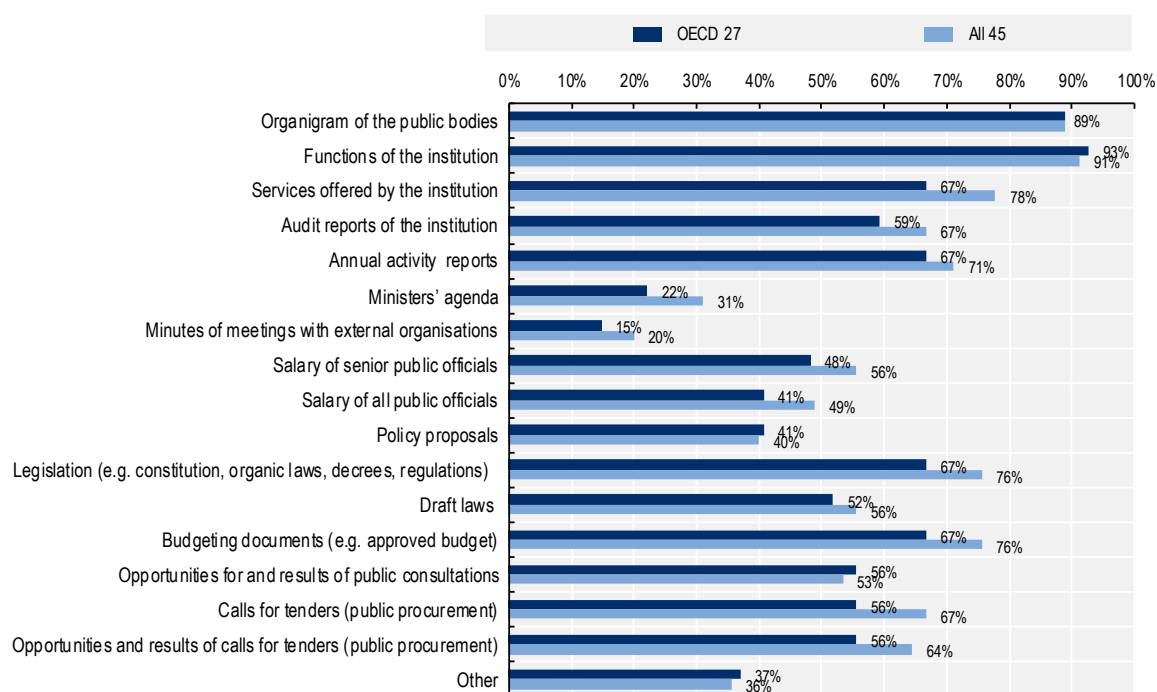
Note: The graph displays the percentage of OECD member and non-members countries that provided data in the OECD Survey on Open Government. "All" refers to 45 respondents (27 OECD member and 18 non-member countries).
Source: OECD (2020[19]), "OECD Survey on Open Government", Unpublished, OECD, Paris

Introducing laws, guidelines and guidance for access to information can encourage public officials to understand the value of sharing information with citizens and stakeholders, leading to a cultural shift of more transparency across the public administration. It also supports them in understanding their own roles and responsibilities in providing access to information and comprehending what types of information they can or cannot disclose. Many countries have guidelines for proactive disclosure to assist public officials in knowing what information to share, how and where. Box 6.1 provides three examples of guidelines and principles for access to information from Australia, Canada and Kenya.

Box 6.1. Guidelines and principles for access to information

Australia

The *Statement of Principles to Support Proactive Disclosure of Government-held Information* was published in 2021 and stipulates that public bodies should regularly review requests for access to information and analyse trends with a view to publishing similar documents in the future. The statement of principles also encourages public officials to consider proactive disclosure from the beginning when developing new policies, plans or programmes (OAIC, 2021[20]).

Canada

The Directive on Proactive Publication under the Access to Information Act was introduced in 2023 and guides public bodies on how to consistently provide citizens with complete, accurate and timely government information (Government of Canada, 2023[21]). The Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat also has a webpage to facilitate access to information and assist citizens, stakeholders and public officials in making and processing requests for information (Government of Canada, n.d.[22]). The page offers policy tools, reports and resources, including a manual and best practices for handling requests.

Kenya

The *Guide on Proactive Disclosure for Public Entities at the National and County Government Level in Kenya* was developed by the Commission on Administrative Justice (Office of the Ombudsman) and launched in 2018 (Government of Kenya, 2018[23]). The guide aims to clarify the concept of proactive disclosure and provides a framework for public officials on how to meet the requirements for access to information under the Kenyan Constitution (2010) and its Access to Information Act (2016).

Sources: OAIC (2021[20]), *Statement of Principles to Support Proactive Disclosure of Government-held Information*, https://www.oaic.gov.au/freedom-of-information/freedom-of-information-guidance-for-government-agencies/more-guidance/statement-of-principles-to-support-proactive-disclosure-of-government-held-information; Government of Canada (2023[21]), *Directive on Proactive Publication under the Access to Information Act*, https://www.tbs-sct.canada.ca/pol/doc-eng.aspx?id=32756; Government of Canada (n.d.[22]), *How Access to Information and Personal Information Requests Work*, https://www.canada.ca/en/treasury-board-secretariat/services/access-information-privacy/access-information/how-access-information-personal-information-requests-work.html; Government of Kenya (2018[23]), *Guide on Proactive Disclosure for Public Entities at National and County Government Level in Kenya*, https://www.ombudsman.go.ke/sites/default/files/2023-08/Proactive%20Guide.pdf.

While no overarching legal framework or guidelines exist for proactive disclosure in Egypt, public bodies publish significant amounts of information on their own websites or social media such as Facebook. Pockets of good practice also include, for example, the Information and Decision Support Centre, hosted by the Egyptian Cabinet, which provides accurate and up-to-date information at the national level to inform decision-making processes and issues reports and policy papers available to citizens. In addition, to inform citizens in plain and simple language about the progress of Egypt's SDGs, MPEDIC has introduced the Citizen Plan, which gives an overview of public investments, key projects and the economic and social

indicators for each governorate (MPED, n.d.[24]). Inspiration can also be drawn from the progress made by the Ministry of Finance (MoF) on budget transparency in Egypt (Box 6.2).

Box 6.2. Enhancing budget transparency through the citizen's budget

In Egypt, the MoF publishes several reports and documents to inform and familiarise citizens with public financial management and the state budget. Each year, the MoF – in co-operation with the World Bank, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) and civil society organisations (CSOs) – issues a citizen's and a child's budget, simplified versions of the official enacted budget that are user-friendly, written in plain language and adapted to the target audience. The MoF notes that the booklet is designed to "present key public finance information in an easy way to the general public to help non-specialist readers understand budget information of their concern" (MoF, n.d.[25]). The booklet's aim is to be "understood by as large of the segment of the population as possible" (IODP, n.d.[26]). The citizen's budget is issued annually after the approval of the general budget by the House of Representatives and the president. Its regular, timely publication is one of the key contributors to the advancement of Egypt's overall transparency score from 43 to 49 in 2023. The MoF has been improving the presentation of the citizen's budget year on year, for example, by adding a summary version and a more detailed version, as well as a semi-annual report which provides an assessment of spending six months into the year (UNDP, 2021[27]). The recently released International Budget Partnership (IBP) Open Budget Survey results (IBP, 2023[28]) give this publication a score of 67 out of 100, indicating high comprehensiveness, making it one of the most highly rated budget documents for Egypt by the partnership. The publication of the citizen's budget, with a mid-year budget review and a pre-budget statement, has improved Egypt's ranking in the survey (Figure 6.4).

Figure 6.4. Egypt's score in transparency in the Open Budget Survey, 2010-23
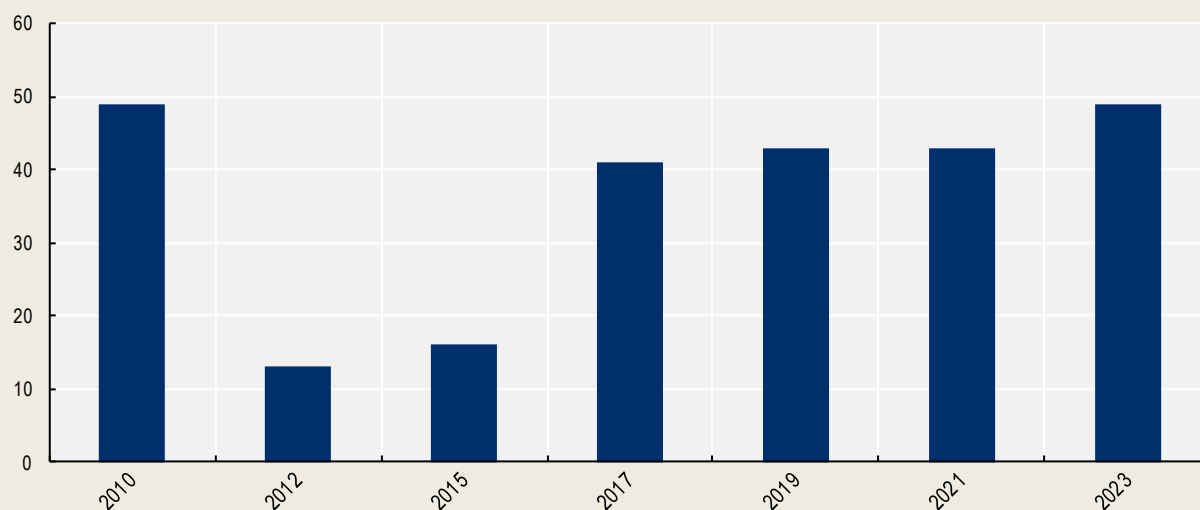
Source: IBP (2023[28]), *Open Budget Survey 2023 - Egypt*, https://internationalbudget.org/open-budget-survey/country-results/2023/egypt.

The ministry has also launched an interactive online platform (http://www.budget.gov.eg/) through which citizens can engage by "sending questions, posting comments, and receiving relevant, timely answers and replies" (UNICEF, n.d.[29]). Citizens can also share their opinions through social media pages of public

bodies and on social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter (UNICEF, n.d.[29]). The MoF also has specific indicators to measure the impact of the citizen budget. However, OECD findings revealed that many government and civil society organisations were unaware of the existence of these platforms and tools. In this context, the MoF could carry out further dissemination campaigns to reach more citizens and stakeholders and increase the uptake of the available platforms and tools.

Sources: IODP (n.d.[26]), *From "Citizen Budget" to Participatory Budgeting in Egypt*, https://oidp.net/en/content.php?id=1631; UNDP (2021[27]), Egypt Human Development Report 2021, https://www.undp.org/egypt/egypt-human-development-report-2021; IBP (2023[28]), *Open Budget Survey 2023 – Egypt*, https://internationalbudget.org/open-budget-survey/country-results/2023/egypt; UNICEF (n.d.[29]), *Budget Transparency Series: A Guide to Egypt's State Budget*, https://www.unicef.org/egypt/media/5861/file/Budget%20Transparency%20Series.

As illustrated below in Figure 6.5, an OECD analysis of government websites finds that while almost all public bodies in Egypt publish the functions of the public body (96%), the services they offer (91%), agendas of government sessions (100%) and ministers' agenda (100%), very few or none publish information regarding the budget of the public body (the annual budget of the government and public bodies is published centrally on https://budget.gov.eg and https://mof.gov.eg), salaries of public officials, policy proposals or audits reports. Some of the benefits of budget transparency, in particular, include greater accountability, legitimacy, integrity and quality of budgetary decisions, as well as increased trust in public administration as citizens can see how public money is being used (OECD, n.d.[30]) (see Chapter 3).

Figure 6.5. Information proactively disclosed by selected Egypt's public bodies
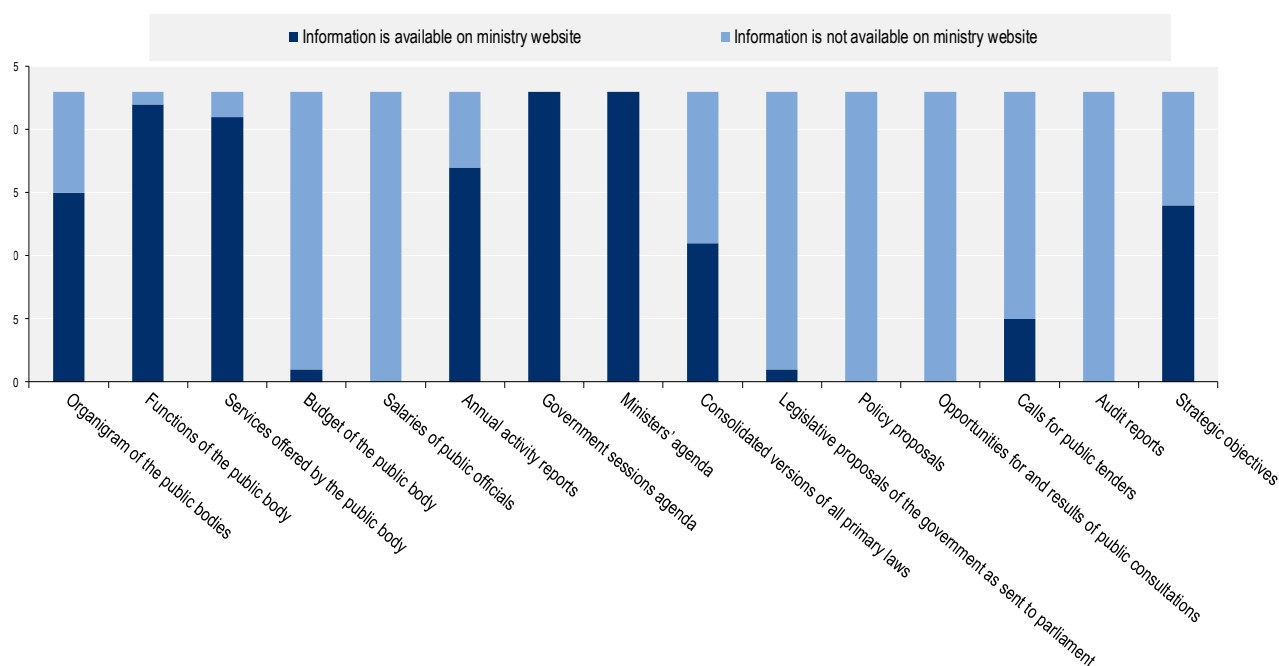
Note: The data are based on the websites of 23 public bodies[3] as well as information scanned from social media where existing. A total of 24 websites and relevant social media sites, including Facebook and LinkedIn, were scanned. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs portal was inaccessible at the time of assessment. It is important to note that the research was undertaken from a user rather than an expert perspective.

Centrally, on the Central Agency for Organization and Administration (CAOA) portal, there is a section dedicated to forms on all government services in Egypt (CAOA, n.d.[31]) and citizens can also access over

160 government digital services through the Egyptian Government Digital Service portal (developed by the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology) (MCIT, n.d.[32]). In addition, numerous central websites publish laws, regulations and bylaws. Some of these websites require payment (e.g. the Egyptian legislative portal developed by the Information and Decision Support Centre, https://elpai.idsc.gov.eg), while a few offer free access. CAOA provides updates on its website on relevant topics related to government employees, in addition to the job portal, the AI Chatbot "KMT" and its official social media outlets. Another example of how data is made available in public institutions is that of the MoIC portal, where information is publicly available on ODA funds and ODA-funded projects, amongst other relevant issues. Lastly, the Cabinet portal offers daily meeting updates, including all discussions and decisions pertaining to various ministers and topics (Egyptian Cabinet, n.d.[33]).

Figure 6.6 provides a detailed breakdown of what types of information are available on each public body's website.

Figure 6.6. Breakdown of information proactively disclosed by selected Egypt's public bodies

Type of Information	MoY&S	MoHUC	MoP	MoTI	MoALR	MCIT	MPED	MoSS	MoEE	MoE	MoLD	MoHESR	MSIT	MoC	MOTA	MOHP	MoJ	MoMP	MoF	MPBS	MoT	CAOA	MoIC
Organigram of the public bodies	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Functions of the public body	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Services offered by the public body	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Budget of the public body	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Salaries of public officials	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Annual activity reports	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Government sessions agenda	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ministers' agenda	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Consolidated versions of all primary laws	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
Legislative proposals of the government as sent to parliament	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Policy proposals	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Opportunities for and results of public consultations	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Calls for public tenders	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	No
Audit reports of the public body	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Strategic Objectives	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes

Note: The data are based on the websites of 23 public bodies as well as information scanned from social media where existing. A total of 24 websites and relevant social media sites, including Facebook and LinkedIn, were scanned. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs portal was inaccessible at the time of assessment. It is important to note that the research was undertaken from a user rather than an expert perspective. The "no" option refers to a lack of availability and/or to refer that it is not applicable to the entity.

Overall, OECD research shows that some websites provide less data than others, with some, for example, only including a brief description of mandates and functions of that public body. Some list strategic objectives, with a greater number a list of their responsibilities. Information should be provided in a user-friendly and accessible manner, ensuring it is easily located by citizens. In Egypt and the MENA region more broadly, it is common for users to find government updates and information on social media, such as Facebook and LinkedIn. While it is a good practice to disseminate information widely through a multi-channel approach, public bodies should also ensure that government websites are easy to navigate.

Certain information is published centrally rather than by specific public bodies or line ministries. For example, subject-specific progress reports or annual reports are often found as part of broader central reports rather than on each line ministry's website. However, this is not always intuitive for users looking for this information. Furthermore, there are a high number of affiliate bodies and smaller sub-units across Egyptian public administration and so some of these public bodies may publish information that the ministries do not. However, the average user would not necessarily have the time or the ability to search and locate information across several websites, which would also necessitate an understanding of the structure of public administration and all of its bodies and units. Ultimately, the most up-to-date and in-depth information is often found in the "news" sections of the websites and on Facebook.

As shown above, many public bodies in Egypt are already demonstrating their commitment to transparency by publishing and disseminating information widely; a systematic approach could serve to streamline and harmonise their efforts. The publication of information already undertaken by some government entities

(e.g. the MoF, MPEDIC and CAOA) could serve as inspiration for other public bodies. Some practical improvements could include upgrading website search engines, so users can easily identify and locate information, and prioritising information system management across public administration.

Sharing high-quality information through a multi-channel approach tailored to its audience is one necessary condition, among others, for Egypt to achieve its objectives regarding SDG 16 and those of Egypt Vision 2030 in its entirety. OECD findings revealed that what is available is not always accessible and there is a need to consider the needs of vulnerable groups (e.g. people with disabilities, refugees and people with low socio-economic status). In addition, there is room for more consultation with stakeholders regarding the type of information that should be published on Egypt Vision 2030 and which channels could be used for its publication and dissemination. Egypt could consider conducting consultations or focus groups with stakeholders (e.g. CSOs, media outlets and journalists, the private sector, etc.) to understand which categories of information are most useful for them (e.g. draft legislation, policy proposals, cabinet decisions, budgets, etc.) and foster greater collaboration in this regard. In a similar vein, MPEDIC or CAOA could conduct a national survey to understand what kind of information citizens and stakeholders are interested in and what they would like the government to publish regarding Egypt Vision 2030, the PARP and other relevant reforms. Public bodies could also undertake specific campaigns, training and workshops with citizens and CSOs to raise awareness of their right to information and make the information that is proactively disclosed (especially on Egypt Vision 2030) more relevant and visible to a wider audience. To address digital divides and other barriers for groups in vulnerable situations, public bodies could endeavour to use plain and simple language and ensure that information is accessible and usable for everyone (e.g. by adding assistive options for those who have visual or hearing impairments).

Box 6.3 illustrates how countries use information and data sharing – by and with a wide range of stakeholders – to measure SDG progress and track government strategies, plans and priorities more broadly. While proactive disclosure alone will not create an enabling condition for effective stakeholder participation, it is imperative as a first step.

Box 6.3. Tracking national progress in a transparent manner

Colombia

The online system SisCONPES (https://sisconpes.dnp.gov.co/) was established to host public consultations and monitor the implementation of relevant strategies and national development plans. It is managed by the Colombian National Council for Economic and Social Policy (CONPES) and is used by the National Planning Department (DNP) to track the progress of action plans. It issued six follow-up reports from 2013 to 2016 (OECD, 2023[34]).

In addition, Colombia launched a digital portal in 2018 to share information and monitor the implementation of its own Agenda 2030 at the national, regional and local levels. Terridata (https://terridata.dnp.gov.co/) allows officials, citizens and other stakeholders to jointly measure progress on the SDGs (Platforma, 2018[35]). In the same year, Colombia established an SDG Corporate Tracker, which is "a multi-stakeholder initiative that measures and reports the contribution of the business sector to the SDGs" (Platforma, 2018[35]). Over 400 companies registered for the platform, which collects and publishes information and data on their activities and assesses their impact.

Jordan

The Prime Minister's Delivery Unit (PMDU) recently completed the intra-Prime Minister's Office development of an online monitoring system and corresponding dashboard for its Economic Modernisation Vision. The dashboard was launched in August 2023 and serves to track all progress on

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more than 400 initiatives internally. A version that tracks all government programmes is also publicly accessible (https://pmdu.gov.jo/dashboard.php). The dashboard allows line ministries and agencies to input their data directly into the system and submit the progress reports digitally. The secretary-general or minister of each public body has to approve all information and data before it is shared with the PMDU. Media and international donors are reported to be frequent users of the new publicly available version of the dashboard.

As a result of the creation of the dashboard, the PMDU stopped producing regular monthly reports and instead amended the dashboard with a quarterly report on the overall progress of implementation. While the dashboard currently only tracks progress on the Economic Modernisation Vision, plans are underway to provide the Prime Minister's Project Management and Implementation Office with a similar dashboard to track the implementation of the Public Sector Modernization Roadmap (OECD, 2024[36]).

Sources: OECD (2023[34]), *OECD Review of Gender Equality in Colombia*, https://doi.org/10.1787/a559fc5e-en; Platforma (2018[35]), "Digital transparency – Measuring development and progress at the local level in Colombia, https://platforma-dev.eu/digital-transparency-measuring-development-and-progress-at-the-local-level-in-colombia/; UN (n.d.[37]), *SDG Corporate Tracker Colombia (SDG CT)*, https://sdgs.un.org/partnerships/sdg-corporate-tracker-colombia-sdg-ct; OECD (2024[36]), *Public Governance Review of Jordan*, OECD Publishing, Paris.

Egypt could also consider whether the information published is fit for purpose, comprehensible and reusable for citizens. It is also essential to consider how it is published: whether information is findable, accessible and predictable, meaning it is shared in a systemic rather than ad hoc manner. To achieve this, several countries share information through one centralised portal, such as Mexico and Morocco (Box 6.4).

Box 6.4. Platforms and centralised portals for transparency

Mexico

The National Transparency Platform (https://www.plataformadetransparencia.org.mx/) is a tool that helps promote the right of access to public information and transparency in Mexico. The platform portal allows anyone to search and obtain proactively disclosed information or make a request if it is not yet available. It was launched in 2016 by the National Institute for Transparency, Access to Information and Personal Data Protection, which is charged with monitoring, oversight and enforcement of the right of access to information in Mexico (INAI, n.d.[38]). The portal allows users to search by thematic area e.g. gender, budget, public procurement, public services and more. It also has an appeal mechanism, as users can submit a complaint if requests were not handled or if they are dissatisfied with the response (INAI, n.d.[38]).

Morocco

The Transparency and Access to Information portal (www.chafafiya.ma) is a government platform that helps all public bodies manage and respond to requests for information across public administration (Government of Morocco, n.d.[39]). It was launched in 2020, following the adoption of Law 31.13 on Access to Information in 2018 to further ensure this right's implementation. The portal's stated aims are the following:

- Strengthening transparency and participation across public administration.
- Supporting the digitalisation of public services.

> - Bringing public administration closer to users and improving public services.
> - Simplifying the processes of filing, tracking and responding to access to information requests electronically (Government of Morocco, n.d.[39]).
>
> Source: INAI (n.d.[38]), *National Transparency Platform*, https://www.plataformadetransparencia.org.mx/; Government of Morocco (n.d.[39]), *Transparency and Access to Information Portal*, https://www.mmsp.gov.ma/fr/nos-services/portail-de-transparence-et-acc%C3%A8s-%C3%A0-l%E2%80%99information-chafafiya.

Overall, Egypt could consider reflecting on how the government can continue to disseminate accurate and up-to-date information relating to key strategies, such as Egypt Vision 2030 and the PARP.

Mainstreaming processes and procedures for reactive disclosure

Any citizen or stakeholder should have the ability to request access to information from public administration. In many countries, legal and policy frameworks on access to information often outline processes and procedures for responding to such requests (OECD, 2022[5]). These can include, for example, who can make a request (e.g. a citizen, a legal resident, anyone residing in the country), whether they need to provide personal information to do so, whether there are deadlines for authorities to respond to their request, whether any exceptions or exemptions to the information apply and how they can appeal the decision if their request was denied or rejected. Ensuring effective reactive disclosure often requires training and capacity building across public administration to guarantee that public officials are aware of their responsibilities and feel empowered to fulfil them.

While there are currently no uniform guidelines in Egypt for citizens and stakeholders on how to make a request for access to information or for public officials to respond to such a request, in practice, citizens, CSOs and journalists can contact any public body to ask for information or data. Certain public bodies, including CAOA and MPEDIC for example, offer citizens the possibility of contacting them directly to ask for information through their website, while others – for example, the Ministry of Health – provide this option through social media websites such as Facebook. In fact, CAOA has also launched the KMT Chatbot, where citizens can make direct inquiries with the agency and receive immediate responses, some of which can relate to access to information (see Chapter 4 for further information).

In regard to reactive disclosure more generally, OECD findings note the important role of the Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS), Egypt's official statistical agency. CAPMAS is the official body that collects data, statistics and reports, and stakeholders can make requests to access this information and data directly from the agency (see Chapter 2 for more information on collecting and storing public information). It is free of cost for citizens to request and receive information from CAPMAS if the data are already final and published. Citizens or CSOs looking for raw data or complete datasets that require processing must pay for this service. OECD findings reveal that disaggregated data or statistics are rarely provided. In addition, the process itself can be burdensome in some instances. Security clearance can sometimes be necessary if individuals or CSOs are requesting data derived from citizens (e.g. surveys or questionnaires). OECD findings show that more than 500 requests have been made and approved and that the body usually responds within 15 days.

It is important to emphasise that public information refers to all information held by a public body that could serve the public interest and could be useful for citizens and stakeholders alike. It is not limited to datasets and statistics but rather broadly encompasses any materials or documentation, ranging from draft laws and calls for tenders to ministers' agendas and minutes of meetings. While encouraging the use, reuse and free distribution of datasets is important, there is a need to reframe and raise awareness among public officials of the fact that all public bodies hold information – in a wide variety of formats – that could be valuable for citizens and stakeholders. Creating official avenues to request access to information from the public administration in its entirety is key to achieving the goals of Egypt Vision 2030 and the PARP.

Prioritising accessibility and inclusion

Certain demographic groups may not be aware of the right to access information or may face significant challenges in doing so, for example, people with disabilities, youth, the elderly, people with few digital skills and those with limited Internet access. Many countries offer support for citizens or stakeholders with special needs and require additional assistance when searching for or requesting information. For example, the government of New Zealand promotes web accessibility, which includes alternative text for images, offering detailed descriptions for visual elements, providing captions and transcripts for videos, using HyperText Markup Language (HTML) elements, ensuring adequate colour contrast, and enabling keyboard-only navigation (Government of New Zealand, n.d.[40]).

Classification of information and exceptions and exemptions

It is important to guarantee that exceptions to access to information are minimal, clearly defined, in line with international standards and are subject to harm and class tests. In regard to national security in particular, the Johannesburg Principles on National Security, Freedom of Expression and Access to Information outline that a government must demonstrate that "the expression or information at issue poses a serious threat to a legitimate national security interest" and that "the restriction imposed is the least restrictive means possible for protecting that interest" (Article 19, 1995[41]). If information is denied and the requester believes it is based on an illegitimate exception, there must be adequate recourse mechanisms, for example, an internal, external and/or judicial appeals process (OECD, 2022[16]).

Egypt could consider defining guidelines for public officials in the short term to better respond to requests relating to Egypt Vision 2030 and in a uniform manner. This guidance could provide a standard process for all public bodies to share information proactively and reactively, and clearly delineate exceptions and exemptions. It could also, for example, stipulate that requests gathered via social media, the mobile application or ministry websites should be answered within a certain time period. The guidelines could also assign access to the information office or person within each public body responsible for answering access to information requests**.**

Prioritising citizen and stakeholder participation for more impactful reforms

The increasing complexity of policymaking and difficulties in finding solutions to many pressing policy areas have prompted many public officials to reflect on how CSOs, the private sector, academia, journalists, activists and citizens can contribute collectively to public decision-making (OECD, 2020[42]). The OECD has collected significant evidence and data that support the idea that citizen participation in public decision-making can deliver better policies, build trust and foster more responsive and effective governance (OECD, 2020[42]).

The OECD defines citizen and stakeholder participation as "all the ways in which stakeholders (including citizens) can be involved in the policy cycle and service design and delivery" (OECD, 2017[4]). This refers to all efforts made by public institutions to hear views, perspectives and inputs from citizens and stakeholders. While the involvement of formal organisations and of individual citizens require different approaches and formats, the OECD Guidelines for Citizen Participation Processes (2022[8]) outline a number of different ways in which both can be involved in public decision-making (Figure 6.7).

Figure 6.7. Different methods of citizen participation and their key characteristics

Participation method	To use when looking for…	Considerations	Type of input it yields	Stage of the decision-making process	Costs (on a scale of € to €€€)
Access to Information and data Publishing information proactively and providing information reactively.	Ways to raise awareness about an issue or a public decision. Ways to keep the public informed about public decisions.	The very least that can be done. Should be used in situations where there is no room for citizens to have a say.	Promotes transparency, creates awareness of public issues, provides necessary information and creates conditions for more advanced methods of participation.	Identification Formulation Decision-making Implementation Evaluation	Depending on the channels used to disseminate the information but can usually be done with existing resources. €
Open meetings/town hall meetings Gathering the public in face-to-face meetings with public authorities, to provide information and openly discuss topics of interest.	Ways to inform the public about public issues and decisions. Space to have a loosely structured exchange and receive broad initial feedback. "Testing the water" for initial public reception of ideas and policies.	Allows for an exchange between public authorities and the public. Does not yield representative judgement or well-informed solutions.	Information sharing and broad feedback from citizens.	Identification Formulation Decision-making Implementation Evaluation	Depending on the scope but can usually be done with existing resources. €
Public consultation A two-way relationship in which participants provide feedback to a public institution (such as comments, perceptions, information, advice, experiences and ideas).	Aggregated individual opinions and feedback from the public. Opinions about a policy debate or a specific question Experts' feedback.	Adaptable to needs – can be done using a range of different methods, from surveys, digital platforms to in-person discussions. Not statistically representative of the population Can be difficult to process the inputs received.	Aggregation of individual citizens' preferences or grouped opinions from stakeholders.	Identification Formulation Decision-making	Depending on the method chosen and the scope of the consultation. Usually requires developing an adapted methodology or technical interface. If in person, participants will need a space and facilitators. € - €€
Open innovation: crowdsourcing, hackathons and public challenges Tapping into the collective intelligence to co-create solutions to specific public problems via crowdsourcing, hackathons or public challenges.	Ideas and collective solutions to framed problems. Involving the public in developing solutions or prototypes.	Requires certain conditions and necessary resources for citizens and stakeholders to work on and develop solutions to public problems. Usually requires certain expertise from participants.	Collective ideation, co-creation of solutions, prototypes.	Identification Formulation Implementation Evaluation	Depending on the method chosen and the scope of the process. Usually requires a technical interface, some communication efforts and a physical space for hackathons. € - €€
Citizen science Involving citizens in one or more stages of a scientific (or evidence-based) investigation, including	Helping to collect or analyse scientific data. Feedback or guidance on research questions and research design.	Is suited for scientific endeavours rather than policy questions and dilemmas. Adaptable to needs – covers a range of participation	Varies from data collected to guidance on research questions and decisions to implement citizen	Identification Implementation Evaluation	Depending on the method chosen and the scope of the process. Usually requires a technical interface; some communication efforts

Participation method	To use when looking for…	Considerations	Type of input it yields	Stage of the decision-making process	Costs (on a scale of € to €€€)
identifying research questions, collecting data and evidence, conducting observations, analysing data and using the resulting knowledge.	Collaboration to implement science related projects.	opportunities in science.	projects.		could require a physical space for meetings and specific technical equipment (for example, air quality sensors to be made available for citizens for data collection purposes). € - €€€
Civic monitoring Involving citizens in the monitoring and evaluation of public decisions, policies and services. Civic monitoring can be considered as a social accountability mechanism.	Collaborative oversight and evaluation mechanisms for public decisions and actions. Ongoing monitoring of and feedback on a policy or a project. Community monitoring of a policy or a service.	An ongoing process which requires sustained participation. Geared towards receiving feedback from individuals during or after implementation. Requires a certain level of commitment from public authorities to take into account feedback to improve services or policies.	Citizen feedback, opinions, suggestions.	Implementation Evaluation	Depending on the chosen method, usually requires developing an adapted methodology or technical interface. € - €€
Participatory budgeting Mechanisms that allow citizens and stakeholders to influence budgetary public decisions through the direct allocation of public resources to priorities or projects or by being involved in public deliberations.	Help from the public to identify budget or resource allocation preferences. Public ideas and projects to be funded. Increased awareness and understanding of public spending by citizens.	Creates conditions for the public to participate in decisions linked to public spending. Can yield either an aggregation of participants' individual preferences (if it takes the form of voting) or their collective judgements (if it has a deliberative element).	Varies from ideas, projects, prioritisation, to binding allocation of public resources through vote.	Identification Formulation Decision-making Implementation	Depending on the scale and scope of the process. Usually requires intensive communication, human resources, developing an adapted methodology and a technical interface. €€ - €€€
Representative deliberative processes A randomly selected group of people who are broadly representative of a community spending significant time learning and collaborating through facilitated deliberation to form collective recommendations for policymakers.	Informed, collective public judgements about a complex policy issue. Recommendations that take into account a broad diversity of views. Legitimacy to take tough decisions.	Helpful when tackling complex, long-term policy issues. Can take place in different models ranging from shorter and smaller citizens' panels/juries to larger scale, longer citizens' assemblies or even permanent bodies.	Collective citizen recommendation, position or judgement.	Identification Formulation Decision-making Evaluation	Depending on the scale of the process. Usually requires intensive communication, human resources, an adapted methodology, a physical space to deliberate, skilled facilitation and compensation for participants' time. €€ - €€€

Source: OECD (2022[8]), *OECD Guidelines for Citizen Participation Processes*, https://doi.org/10.1787/f765caf6-en.

Several OECD member countries consult citizens on a wide range of national strategies in a variety of ways. For example, in Australia, the government has held public consultations on the National Strategy to Achieve Gender Equality (Government of Australia, n.d.[43]) and the National Strategy for the Care and Support Economy (Government of Australia, n.d.[44]). To do so, they invited citizens and stakeholders in the early stages to share experiences and send contributions to inform the strategies, which was done via a survey and discussion paper. They then held roundtable discussions with targeted groups, including academics, experts, unions, CSOs and members of the public. Scotland, United Kingdom, has also undertaken several similar nationwide public consultations, for example, on its National Transport Strategy, which will set a vision for the next 20 years. The consultation is available in accessible formats, in more than one language, and contributions can be submitted privately without being published on the website (Government of Scotland, n.d.[45]).

At present, Egypt could further work towards fostering an enabling environment for citizen and stakeholder participation throughout the policy cycle, from agenda setting through implementation and providing information to actively engaging citizens and stakeholders in programmes and initiatives. OECD findings note that many public officials in Egypt understand a "participatory approach" as the involvement of other public bodies and experts (i.e. academia, the private sector) in decision-making processes. However, less emphasis was placed on the involvement of citizens through public surveys and consultation sessions. Ideally, a diverse range of citizens and stakeholders – with specific outreach to underrepresented groups – should have input in the early stages to set priorities and shape any strategy or policy from the start. The OECD Recommendation of the Council on Open Government states that citizen and stakeholder participation should take place at all stages of the policy cycle, which includes: i) identifying policy priorities; ii) drafting the actual policy document; iii) policy implementation; and iv) monitoring implementation and evaluating the impact of the policy (OECD, 2017[4]). Such efforts would ensure that engagement is meaningful and not merely a box-ticking exercise.

Therefore, the OECD has identified the need to provide a clear understanding of the concept, existing good practices that can be built upon and new mechanisms that could be implemented and demonstrates the benefits of involving a wider range of stakeholders, both in achieving the goals of Egypt Vision 2030 and in the decades that follow.

Legal and institutional frameworks for citizen and stakeholder participation

Article 87 of the Egyptian constitution recognises the right to citizen participation in public life and states it is a national duty (Government of Egypt, n.d.[13]). However, participation is narrowly defined and often refers to voting in elections, running for office and participating in referendums and political parties (Government of Egypt, n.d.[13]). In 2019, amendments were made to several constitutional articles, resulting in additional guarantees to "enhance the political participation of those most in need, such as women, young people, persons with disabilities, workers and farmers, by ensuring their representation in the House of Representatives and local councils" (UNDP, 2021[27]).

Egypt regulates the role of civil society through Law No. 149 of 2019 on Regulating the Exercise of Civil Work (ICNL, 2019[46]), adopted in 2019 with its executive regulation issued in 2021. The law governs the process by which domestic and foreign organisations can achieve legal recognition and includes provisions on their activities, funding and oversight. Other legislation relevant to participation includes Prime Minister's Decree No. 1167/2019 on the Regulation of Program Performance Budgeting. Ministerial Decree No. 574 of 2018 established the Fiscal Transparency and Citizen Engagement Unit in the MoF. However, a unit for this purpose was in operation as early as 2015 and was the first specialised unit tasked with spreading awareness of the importance of disclosing financial and economic information to the public and encouraging more participatory processes. The unit has a range of responsibilities and tasks, including reporting on the budget cycle, managing online and offline communication on citizen engagement,

encouraging initiatives for social accountability, promoting participatory budgeting and forging partnerships with public bodies and non-governmental stakeholders at the local level (MoF, 2022[47]).

Building on existing initiatives and opportunities: Creating more impactful councils, conferences and advisory boards

Egypt has also introduced new mechanisms for participation both within and outside of institutionalised governmental structures. Many of them focus on under-represented groups, such as women and young people, who face barriers to influencing public decision-making and less access to public services. At the national level, one of the most significant examples within public administration is the National Council for Women (NCW), which was established by Presidential Decree No. 90 of 2000 (NCW, n.d.[48]) (see Chapter 7 for further details). The NCW is affiliated with the Presidency of the Republic of Egypt and its membership is drawn from government, academia and civil society. It has a technical council and several specialised committees and is regularly asked to provide comments on policymaking and public services. It has also conducted 4 000 outreach activities, including a national conference to promote Egypt Vision 2030, which included the participation of 1 000 women and people from rural areas (APRM, 2020[49]).

Some OECD member countries have established an advisory board on civil society that functions as a generic platform for formal and informal dialogue and exchange between CSOs and the government, without explicit links to specific policy areas or certain strategies or goals. For example, in Finland, an advisory group composed of CSOs that broadly represent the interests of policy sector is called upon to engage in any decision-making relating to civil society (Box 6.5). In Egypt, MPEDIC has signed a memorandum of understanding with the Federation of Egyptian Industries and the General Federation of Civil Society Organisations to establish the Egyptian Council for Sustainability to ensure coherence and complementarity among the efforts of all different sectors towards achieving sustainable development.

In the long term, Egypt could consider the creation of a longstanding advisory board that works across the entire public administration, which could forge closer relations between the government and CSOs and increase their willingness to collaborate with one another in the future. Members of an advisory board could include, for example, large umbrella organisations (with dozens of CSOs under its remit) as well as national branches of international CSOs and small and medium-sized national CSOs.

> **Box 6.5. Finland's Advisory Board on Civil Society Policy**
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> The advisory board, which is attached to the Ministry of Justice, is tasked with fostering interaction, co-operation and collaboration between civil society and the government and improving civil society's operating conditions. Its tasks include:
>
> - Promoting co-operation and interaction between civil society and the authorities.
> - Monitoring changes in the operating environment of civil society and, in this connection, the European Union and international developments.
> - Taking initiative, making proposals and giving opinions on the development of areas important for civil society policy.
> - Evaluating ministries' non-governmental organisation (NGO) strategies and consultation practices with citizens.
> - Monitoring the coherence and predictability of public administration's decisions concerning NGOs and taking initiatives for their development.
> - Launching research and development projects, promoting research activities and use of their results, and providing information on project and research results.
>
> Source: OECD (2021[50]), *Civic Space Scan of Finland*, https://doi.org/10.1787/f9e971bd-en.

The government also focuses on hearing the views of young people (see Chapter 7 for further details). The National Youth Conference in Egypt brings together public officials and thousands of young people from around the country. It gives them an opportunity to debate the most pressing challenges in Egyptian society and exchange ideas for the future (National Youth Conference, n.d.[51]). The first conference was held in 2016 and there have been regular conferences since then, each of which resulted in a set of recommendations for the government. The 2018 edition also featured an "Ask the President" session (National Youth Conference, n.d.[51]). Several OECD members have similar national youth conferences or events, often led by a National Youth Council in partnership with public bodies. For example, the National Youth Council of Luxembourg represents almost 30 national youth organisations and regularly hosts youth conventions with the Luxembourg Chamber of Deputies (EC, 2023[52]). The council also co-hosted a European Union Youth Conference in 2015. In Denmark, Norway and Sweden, the Nordic Committee for Children and Young People funds a Nordic Youth Conference for youth aged 15-24, which brings together public officials, experts and representatives from CSOs (Nordic Youth Conference, n.d.[53]). However, the Egyptian example is unique given its impressive scale, with over 1 000 participants in each conference.

One successful outcome of the National Youth Conference is the Haya Karima Decent Life initiative, which aims to improve quality of life and contribute to sustainable development by uplifting the most disadvantaged rural communities, all under the framework of Egypt Vision 2030 (Haya Karima, n.d.[54]). It targets "multi-dimensional poverty and unemployment rates, through improving the economic, social and environmental standard of families in poor villages, enabling them to obtain all basic services and providing job opportunities to support the independence of citizens" (UN, n.d.[55]). Most significantly, it calls upon collaboration between the government, CSOs and the private sector. For the first time, more than 20 ministries and agencies and 23 CSOs, alongside numerous youth volunteers, work together to implement a public project (Haya Karima, n.d.[54]).

The local government serves as the primary interface between public officials and their community and is often the first place citizens go if they need information or support. For this reason, local councils are a foundational element of a functioning public administration. In Egypt, local councils are explicitly mandated by the constitution and should be established in each local government unit, from cities to governorates.

However, in practice, they have not been in operation in the country since 2011. That being said, OECD findings revealed that the governorates engage different stakeholders and citizens on an ad hoc basis. Many countries are beginning to realise the value of a strong citizen-centred public administration at the local level and are creating specific youth and elderly councils as vehicles to bring their perspectives to decision-making. One such example is the older people's councils in Ireland, which exist in every local authority area (Age Friendly Ireland, n.d.[56]). Other countries, such as Romania, are undertaking significant efforts to raise awareness of the importance of public officials, creating channels for engagement between citizens and the local administration and encouraging innovative ways to do so (Box 6.6).

Box 6.6. Romania's information sessions on citizen and stakeholder participation at the national and local levels

Romania is encouraging innovation in public participation at the national and local levels through a guide for an innovative approach to citizen involvement in decision-making processes. In 2022, the government's general secretariat held 3 sessions with public officials from 38 central and local public bodies, including ministries and county council. Eight CSOs also took part. The sessions centred around a presentation of the principles of innovation and the need to establish and mainstream new participatory processes.

Source: OECD (2023[57]), *Open Government Review of Romania*, https://doi.org/10.1787/ff20b2d4-en.

Egypt could encourage more citizen and stakeholder participation at the national and local levels in several ways, namely by considering the creation of an advisory board on civil society based on the model of the NCW in Egypt. Such a body could be composed of several prominent umbrella organisations that represent hundreds of CSOs and ensure that a diverse group of CSOs are represented, whether small or large, urban or rural or concentrated in advocacy and watchdog activities or service provision. The government could also commit to instilling the values and benefits of citizen and stakeholder participation at all levels of government and host information sessions, training and workshops that bring public officials from the national and local levels together on this subject. Lastly, it could reinforce public administration at the local level by establishing local councils and fortifying existing structures, such as community councils.

Identifying innovative ways to encourage digital and in-person participation

Fast-paced technological change, increased connectivity and digital infrastructure mean governments are finding new ways to interact with citizens. From online platforms and portals to social media and phone applications, there is a myriad of ways to strengthen the government-citizen relationship while working towards ensuring these initiatives are accessible and inclusive to every social demographic. As part of the PARP, Egypt is seeking to streamline existing institutional frameworks, including those relevant to citizen and stakeholder participation (MPED, 2014[1]). In doing so, it has made progress with several pockets of good practices. Overall, the government of Egypt could adopt new and innovative participatory processes, entrench them into its reform efforts and institutionalise citizen and stakeholder participation in public decision-making to ensure its sustainability and longevity beyond 2030.

Using digital tools for feedback and engagement

Governments are increasingly adopting digital tools and online platforms to expand their reach to more demographic groups and gather greater input from citizens and stakeholders. While the technological transformation brings many benefits in this regard, it is important to recognise that these tools can

complement traditional in-person processes and should not be viewed as easy shortcuts to quality engagement or outcomes.

One of the innovative initiatives introduced in Egypt is the Sharek 2030 (or "Contribute") mobile application, which was launched in 2019 (MPED, n.d.[58]). The application is an interactive interface that allows public officials to demonstrate transparency and communicate with citizens regarding development programmes and projects. Moreover, it enables citizens to send their own proposals on what is needed in their community (Ahram Online, 2019[59]). Significantly, it also allows for monitoring of progress as it includes performance indicators and allows users to see what is being accomplished "through completion rates compared to targets" (APRM, 2020[49]), which encourages social accountability.

Furthermore, the Ministry of Local Development launched the initiative "Your voice is heard" to engage citizens as active participants in combatting misuse of resources, negligence and corruption at the local level (MoLD, n.d.[60]). It covers, for example, building violations, encroachment on agricultural land, utilities and state property, as well as management of waste of various kinds. The initiative also calls for citizens to make proposals and suggestions to public bodies in these areas. Regarding monitoring and evaluation, the ministry will publish monthly reports on the complaints received, their classifications and what has been done to rectify the issue from the governorate level to the village (MoLD, n.d.[60]). As of December 2022, 13 900 messages were received, of which 1 964 were complaints. There was an 81% response rate to the complaints, which mainly focused on construction violations, waste management and infringements on state properties and agricultural land.

MPEDIC also launched a sustainable development partnership platform, which is "designed to serve as a channel of communication between the government, the private sector and civil society" and lead to "more concerted and co-ordinated efforts to achieve the SDGs in Egypt in all its governorates" (MPED, n.d.[61]). It also serves to "monitor and document all development efforts at the national and local levels" and involve relevant and interested stakeholders in the public decision-making process (MPED, n.d.[61]).

Other scattered initiatives exist but are implemented in an ad hoc rather than a holistic manner. For example, in collaboration with the Y-LEAD programme, the Ministry of Youth and Sports supports an online platform called Ma'kana, which aims to make civic education accessible to all (CRISP, 2023[62]). The platform seeks to expand the horizons of young people and hone the skills needed to become active citizens and take on leadership roles within their communities. The platform also hosts the Helios simulation game (https://makana.y-lead.net/helios), which asks players to "find solutions to the challenges related to access to public services such as education, health, facilities, by simulating the role of the decision-maker" while learning "about the role and function of the local councils" (Ma'kana, n.d.[63]).

Many OECD member countries, including Belgium, Italy, Mexico and Spain, have government-wide online participation portals, which provide information about opportunities for consultations and other forms of participatory processes. Italy's portal is particularly advanced as it informs users about their right to participate, showcases past consultations, provides background documents and redirects users to individual, institutional websites where relevant (Government of Italy, n.d.[64]). Egypt could undertake a mapping of existing digital tools and online platforms that facilitate citizen and stakeholder participation and seek to identify ways to integrate and streamline these initiatives in a more user-friendly manner.

Egypt could also consider creating a centralised online portal to facilitate citizen and stakeholder participation on cross-cutting policy issues in the medium to long term, allowing individuals and organisations to quickly locate ways to be involved in decision-making at the national and local levels. Public bodies could feed into this platform and use it as a sole interface to engage citizens and stakeholders on everything from draft legislation to policy proposals. The government could foster interoperability between this platform and the Sharek 2030 mobile application. Lastly, the government could test existing applications and platforms with the most vulnerable groups in society (e.g. women, immigrants, people with disabilities, those with low literacy or digital skills, and those of low socio-economic status) to identify ways to make them more accessible and inclusive.

Raising awareness through workshops, consultations and rewards

According to the African Peer Review Mechanism, MPEDIC holds a series of workshops and training courses for both public bodies and stakeholders to strengthen their institutional capacities and inform them of their role in the policy cycle (APRM, 2020[49]). The ministry has also established an overview of existing CSOs that are involved in different processes, such as the National Dialogue in its efforts to broaden participation (APRM, 2020[49]). Egypt could consider mapping existing good practices across public administration and build on these examples to better engage a wide range of actors in policymaking and form partnerships for service design and delivery (both for Egypt Vision 2030 and beyond).

Egypt could consider prioritising public consultations with a range of citizens and stakeholders at all policy cycle stages, from agenda setting and drafting the strategy or policy to implementation, monitoring and evaluation. The government could also provide consistent and frequent opportunities for digital and in-person consultations on Egypt Vision 2030 with citizens and stakeholders and raise awareness of existing and upcoming opportunities to be involved in policymaking and service design, and of delivery through targeted campaigns to the public. To increase engagement beyond the "usual suspects", Egypt could consider launching open calls to participate and inviting a wide range of CSOs with expertise in the policy area at hand. Undertaking additional efforts to inform public officials of the value and benefits of working with CSOs and how to do so could also prove useful.

The United Nations Development Programme notes that Egypt launched the Egypt Government Excellence Award in 2018. Its objective is "to encourage the spirit of competition and excellence" between public bodies and their staff (UNDP, 2021[27]). The aim is to contribute to the goals of Egypt Vision 2030, achieve better levels of citizen satisfaction and promote creativity. As displayed on its website, there are six awards in total: Distinguished Institution, Distinguished Unit, Government Services, Institutional Innovation and Creativity, Distinguished Leaders and Individual Excellence (Egypt Government Excellence Award, n.d.[65]). The government could also introduce recognition or excellence awards for the public bodies that best improve their participatory practices to encourage uptake and innovation.

Exploring citizens' panels, juries, and assemblies

There is no one-size-fits-all model of citizen and stakeholder participation and the design, implementation and evaluation of participatory processes are highly varied depending on a country's legal, institutional, cultural, historical, socio-economic and political context (OECD, 2016[66]). The OECD sees the outcomes of participation as being roughly divided into two clusters: instrumental benefits (i.e. better results), meaning that it leads to more effective and sustainable policymaking and intrinsic benefits (i.e. a better process), for policymaking that is more transparent, inclusive and accountable (OECD, 2016[66]).

Over recent decades, public authorities at all levels of government around the world have been using citizens' assemblies, juries, panels and other processes to better understand the needs and demands of citizens and act upon them. As explained by the 2020 OECD report *Innovative Citizen Participation and New Democratic Institutions* (OECD, 2020[42]), during these processes, randomly selected citizens spend significant amounts of time learning and collaborating through deliberation to develop informed collective recommendations for public bodies. The benefits of such an exercise are manifold: they can lead to better policy outcomes as they "result in public judgement rather than public opinions"; they can encourage participants to remain informed and active members of their communities in the years following; and they contribute to higher levels of trust in the government.

In this regard, the OECD has published guidelines for public officials on designing a citizen participation process, with ten simple steps for planning and implementation. It begins by emphasising that citizens should only be involved in a decision-making process if there is a problem they can help solve, intention to act on their inputs, genuine high-level commitment, sufficient human and financial resources available

and enough time for meaningful engagement (OECD, 2022[8]). The ten steps outlined in the report can be summarised as follows (OECD, 2022[8]):

- Identifying the problem to solve and the moment for participation.
- Defining the expected results.
- Identifying the relevant group of people to involve and recruiting participants.
- Choosing the participation method.
- Choosing the right tools.
- Communicating about the process.
- Implementing the participation process.
- Using citizen input and providing feedback.
- Evaluating the participation process.
- Cultivating a culture of participation.

As showcased above, Egypt has a variety of ad hoc initiatives undertaken across public administration that could be classified as citizen participation; however, a more strategic approach of co-ordinated efforts across public administration, led by overarching guidelines, could serve to mainstream the practice. In the long term, Egypt could endeavour to test citizens' assemblies, juries and panels, wherein governments gather ordinary citizens from all parts of society to discuss complex policy challenges and develop proposals on the scale that best suits their capabilities and the human and financial resources available at the national and local levels. While such processes are more time and cost-intensive, they can transform the perspective of the citizens who participate in them and their relationship with their government, support decision-makers in finding solutions to complex challenges and give them the legitimacy to push through necessary reforms.

Lastly, the government could consider establishing its own tailored whole-of-government guidelines or strategy on citizen and stakeholder participation to ensure that public administration takes a consistent and uniform approach to hearing and integrating the public's views into policymaking and service design and delivery. A working group within a relevant public body or line ministry could be established and tasked with identifying ways to integrate citizen and stakeholder participation processes into the policy cycle.

Implementing participatory budgeting processes as part of the policy cycle

Participatory budgeting (PB) is a process by which a segment of a budget is allocated to citizens who will decide how to spend it. Usually, citizens make project proposals, which are then subject to a vote, with the most popular choice being chosen and implemented in collaboration with the national or local government. PB is mutually beneficial as it allows citizens who best understand the needs of their communities to fill public officials' knowledge gaps and gain first-hand experience in taking part in government decision-making, strengthening the relationship between government and citizens (OECD, n.d.[67]). Engaging in such processes also contributes to enhanced transparency as citizens can follow a project from beginning to end, oversee its implementation and hold the government to account should the original initiative not be reflected in the result. The experience can also empower citizens to remain active and informed about government activities, pay attention to policies that affect them or where they could offer expertise, and seek other opportunities to contribute to their communities more frequently. However, careful consideration should be given to ensuring that there is equal opportunity for all potential participants to contribute to such processes. Implementing policies on the foot of proposals from a limited number of citizens who enjoy greater access than the majority of their fellow citizens could be counter-productive to democratic decision-making. From its beginning in Porto Alegre, Brazil, in 1989 (OECD, 2022[68]), PB has expanded across the globe with OECD member and non-member countries undertaking such processes at the local, regional and national levels (Box 6.7).

> **Box 6.7. Participatory budgeting at the national and local levels in OECD member and non-member countries**
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> **Poland**
>
> PB has expanded significantly at the local level in Poland over recent years. The first municipality to do so was Sopot in 2011, which served as a role model for others. As of 2021, participatory budgets have been established in about 200 municipalities, counties and regions. One such example is Łódź, which allocated PLN 50 million to PB in 2020. All residents can submit a proposal if at least 15 residents support it. Proposals have previously focused on "education and youth (for instance, buying books for libraries, school computer equipment, construction of playgrounds), sports and recreation (renovation of gyms, sports events), road and communication infrastructure, green areas and environmental protection, and cultural events" (OECD, 2021[69]).
>
> **Scotland**
>
> Scotland views PB as "a tool for community empowerment" that can support the country in delivering on its National Performance Framework, complement the objectives of the Community Empowerment Act, advance equality of opportunity and enable citizens to shape their local communities. Scotland has pledged to mainstream PB by allocating 1% of local government budgets to participatory budgeting. The 2021 Future of Participatory Budgeting in Scotland framework sets out this shared ambition and is led by the National Participatory Budgeting Strategic Group, which oversees progress (Government of Scotland, n.d.[70]).
>
> **Tunisia**
>
> In Tunisia, participatory budgeting was first introduced in 2014 in the four municipalities of Gabès, La Marsa, Menzel Bourguiba and Tozeur following a proposal by the CSO Action Associative. According to the CSO – which also offered capacity building and training to the municipalities – PB "aims to build a relationship of trust between citizens and municipal institutions […] through citizen participation in the decision-making process […] and through implementation of mechanisms for transparency and accountability within the municipalities" (OECD, 2019[71]). The process often involves the following steps: i) an official decision to create a budget line for this activity; ii) an agreement between civil society and the municipality on their co-operation; iii) awareness-raising among the community; iv) the organisation of two-day fora with facilitators; v) a vote on all proposed projects in all neighbourhoods; vi) citizens' monitoring committees to oversee the procurement and implementation phases of the project. Several municipalities have since signed an inter-municipal network to support PB processes and secure their longevity and sustainability.
>
> Sources: OECD (2021[69]), *Better Governance, Planning and Services in Local Self-Governments in Poland*, https://doi.org/10.1787/550c3ff5-en; Government of Scotland (n.d.[70]), *Participatory Budgeting*, https://www.gov.scot/policies/community-empowerment/participatory-budgeting/; OECD (2019[71]), *Open Government in Tunisia: La Marsa, Sayada and Sfax*, https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264310995-en.

Egypt has also made significant efforts to entrench citizen participation in budgetary processes through PB. Overall, the Participatory Budgeting World Atlas finds that there has been a total of 10-13 PB processes in Egypt, including 8-10 at the local level and 3 in large cities (Alexandria, Qena and Sohag). The MoF, in particular, works with MPEDIC, the Ministry of Local Development and CSOs to cultivate collaboration with citizens as part of the pillars of Egypt Vision 2030 (MoF, 2020[72]). There is a high-level commitment from the MoF, with the minister highlighting the benefits of PB for transparency and good

governance in 2022 (Egyptian State Information Service, 2022[73]). Moreover, MPEDIC recognises that PB improves public spending efficiency and raises citizens' capacity to read and understand government plans, programmes and budgets. As a result, the MoF has adopted the National Participatory Budgeting Initiative, which is being led by its Fiscal Transparency and Citizen Engagement Unit. The initiative also focuses on including youth in broader government efforts to engage them in driving sustainable development in Egypt (see Chapter 7).

According to the Participatory Budgeting World Atlas (n.d.[74]), discussions on the PB initiative – which took place in Alexandria – concluded with the following recommendations for such processes:

- Create a three-year incremental process with ongoing monitoring and evaluation.
- Involve different groups of stakeholders both on and offline.
- Ensure the process is inclusive through a multi-channel approach that reaches all demographic groups.
- Introduce campaigns to train citizens on financial literacy.
- Mobilise young people and students to encourage innovation and fresh ideas.

So far, the government has undertaken a range of seminars and workshops on the initiative for university students, training for governmental and non-governmental actors, establishing a network of different actors (e.g. CSOs, ministries and local authorities) and meetings with governors to begin expanding PB in different regions around the country (MoF, 2020[72]). There is an executive committee consisting of two members of the MoF, two from MPEDIC, two from the Ministry of Local Development and two from CSOs that lead the initiative and co-ordinate all relevant parties, obtain political support and any necessary approvals, as well as raise awareness among citizens and partners. An independent monitoring and evaluation committee also closely oversees the initiative and issues periodic reports on what has been accomplished and where there is room for improvement (MoF, 2020[72]).

In addition, a circular distributed in November informs the public bodies of the ceilings for participatory budgeting processes and asks them to prepare a budget for this purpose. The MoF holds public hearings in the municipalities and publishes all relevant information on line. The projects that are chosen during the hearings are then included in the budget and sent to Parliament for approval. While public officials and CSOs highlighted the efforts already being made by MoF, there is room to further publish more information about the initiative and the budget in general and encourage more citizens to attend the public hearings. In addition, there is no guidance as to the amount of public money that could be set aside for this purpose, nor a minimum amount for a PB process (either in concrete terms or as a percentage of the overall budget allocated) set by the national level.

In this regard, the process could be more ambitious, enabling citizens to meet with one another to discuss and propose projects on line and through in-person workshops in what would be an "ideation phase". Public officials could also work closely with CSOs working on inclusion and empowerment to ensure that vulnerable groups are aware of the opportunity and feel able to participate. Finally, public officials must close the feedback loop by informing citizens of which ideas were chosen and which were not, sharing the outcomes of the process and the next steps.

Egypt could continue to move towards its goal of all regions and municipalities undertaking some form of PB based on a future PB model for the country by aiming to involve a higher number of participants and allocate a greater share of the budget year on year. This could be achieved through several options, including awareness-raising campaigns and dedicated focus groups.

At present, PB is voluntary for governorates, cities and municipalities in Egypt, whereas certain countries, such as Poland, have made it mandatory for areas with county status (OECD, 2021[69]). In the long term, Egypt could consider formalising the process and making it obligatory for regions and municipalities to undertake some form of PB.

The role of public communication in supporting transparency and stakeholder participation in public life

While the above sections focused on how access to information can support transparency and participation in public life, the following look at the contribution of public communication to these objectives. While access to information and public communication are both connected and mutually beneficial, public communication refers more to the information the government makes available on its policies and services. Public communication is understood as the government's function to deliver information, listen and respond to citizens to serve the common good. It is distinct from political communication linked to elections or political parties. While communication has often been associated with reputation management to promote partisan agendas or one-way dissemination of information and narratives, it has proven to be an outdated understanding of the function. When conducted effectively and with a citizen-centred focus, public communication can indeed play a key role in strengthening transparency and participation, thereby supporting more inclusive and responsive policies. This role has been enshrined in the OECD Recommendation of the Council on Open Government (OECD, 2017[4]), which includes several provisions that reflect its importance (Box 6.8).

When conducted effectively, public communication can amplify the reach of transparency initiatives. Internal communication campaigns (within and across administrations) can, for example, help promote the contents of proactively disclosed information, while external communication can raise awareness of how and what kind of information can be requested through such a process (Box 6.9).

Box 6.8. Provisions relating to communication in the OECD Recommendation of the Council on Open Government

- Provision 1: "Take measures, in all branches and at all levels of the government, to develop and implement open government strategies and initiatives in collaboration with stakeholders and to foster commitment from politicians, members of parliaments, senior public managers and public officials, to ensure successful implementation and prevent or overcome obstacles related to resistance to change".

- Provision 6: "Actively communicate on open government strategies and initiatives, as well as on their outputs, outcomes and impacts, in order to ensure that they are well-known within and outside government, to favour their uptake, as well as to stimulate stakeholder buy-in".

- Provision 7: "Proactively make available clear, complete, timely, reliable and relevant public sector data and information that is free of cost, available in an open and non-proprietary machine-readable format, easy to find, understand, use and reuse, and disseminated through a multi-channel approach, to be prioritised in consultation with stakeholders".

- Provision 8: "Grant all stakeholders equal and fair opportunities to be informed and consulted and actively engage them in all phases of the policy-cycle and service design and delivery. This should be done with adequate time and at minimal cost, while avoiding duplication to minimise consultation fatigue. Further, specific efforts should be dedicated to reaching out to the most relevant, vulnerable, underrepresented, or marginalised groups in society while avoiding undue influence and policy capture".

- Provision 10: "While recognising the roles, prerogatives, and overall independence of all concerned parties and according to their existing legal and institutional frameworks, explore the potential of moving from the concept of open government toward that of open state".

Source: OECD (2017[4]), *Recommendation of the Council on Open Government*, https://legalinstruments.oecd.org/en/instruments/OECD-LEGAL-0438.

> **Box 6.9. Denmark's Health Data Information campaign**
>
> In 2020, the Danish Health Data Authority launched an information campaign on registering, using and accessing health data. The campaign's goal was to inform Danes about how their data, specifically health data, are used to optimise and improve the Danish healthcare system. Health data from citizens are registered and stored by the Danish Health Data Authority each time a citizen contacts the healthcare system. From doctor's visits and hospital stays to pharmacy and dentist trips, data are collected by the authority and used to optimise a patient's treatment as well as public health services more generally. Most importantly, Danish citizens' health data were used to inform policy during the COVID-19 pandemic. To inform citizens on how their data are used, the Danish Health Data Authority published five animation films, each covering a different aspect of how patient data are collected, stored and used.
>
> Beyond informing citizens about the usage of health data, the campaign also sought to inform citizens about their right to access their data. The right to access one's own personal data was emphasised by the Danish Health Authority to ensure that citizens understand what personal information is registered. The campaign aimed to enhance citizen trust in the Danish healthcare system by understanding how data are collected and used, and the individual citizen's right to access such data.
>
> Source: Danish Health Data Authority (2020[75]), "Ved du, hvad dine sundhedsdata bruges til?", https://sundhedsdatastyrelsen.dk/da/nyheder/2020/brug_af_sundhedsdata_020920.

Furthermore, public communication can support different forms of participation, including electoral (Box 6.10). First, it helps raise awareness of existing opportunities to engage and provides the necessary information for individuals to understand how they can participate and at which stage of the process. It can also help frame issues more conveniently for public audiences to strengthen their interest and motivation to participate. Furthermore, effective communication can help broaden the reach of existing participation initiatives, going beyond the usual suspects (OECD, 2021[9]) (Box 6.10). Finally, communication is also useful at the end of a participation process by relaying its outcomes to a wider public, thereby strengthening the legitimacy of the initiative and closing the feedback loop.

Box 6.10. The Campaign "Think Twice Before You (Don't) Vote"

In 2013, the Danish Ministry of Economic Affairs launched a nationwide campaign in co-operation with associations Danish Regions and Local Government Denmark to encourage citizens to participate in upcoming local and regional elections. The campaign was a response to the historically low level of participation recorded at the 2009 local and regional elections, at which only 65.8% of voters decided to cast their ballot, the lowest percentage in 35 years.

To encourage citizens to participate in the elections, the campaign sought to target and mobilise the approximately 20% of Danes who vote in national elections but fail to "rise from the couch" for local and regional elections. To raise awareness of the upcoming elections, a range of local activities were organised as part of the campaign. Such efforts included the deployment of "election buses" and mobile ballot boxes stationed at education institutions, student dormitories and public libraries. To target specific audiences, especially young and first-time voters, the campaign also partnered with well-known Danes and private companies to broaden the reach of existing participation initiatives. Ultimately successful, the campaign contributed to encouraging just under 71% of voters to cast their ballot in the 2013 local and regional elections, as opposed to 65.8% in 2009.

Source: Government of Denmark (2013[76]), "Tænk dig om før du ikke stemmer"; https://www.valg.im.dk/nyhedsarkiv/2013/sep/taenk-dig-om-foer-du-ikke-stemmer.

It is important to note that the role of communication in participation can go well beyond existing structured processes (such as a consultation on a draft law, for example). Indeed, the ongoing monitoring of public opinion and the audience research regularly conducted by public communicators via traditional and digital communication channels in many OECD member countries provide a better understanding of the public's expectations, needs and fears, which can support the definition of policy priorities. This can be a powerful instrument for listening and responding to people's voices in an ongoing manner. This type of organisational listening allows for continuous dialogue and participation beyond designated initiatives. Furthermore, public communicators are key in engaging with hard-to-reach groups through their ongoing relationship building with community leaders or social media influencers, for example.

Internal communication

While the above sections focused on external communication (i.e. conducted for the public at large), internal communication can play a key role in creating a more effective and transparent public sector while supporting strategic planning efforts. It is understood as the communication within and across public sector organisations, enabling senior officials to inform and engage employees in a way that motivates staff to maximise their performance and allows them to deliver on strategic outcomes (OECD, 2021[9]). It is also central to the design and implementation of public services as it ensures optimal flows of data and information and supports the exchange of good practices while also contributing to breaking siloes between different parts of the administration, as per the OECD Recommendation on Public Service Leadership and Capability (OECD, 2019[77]).

For example, the government of Colombia develops a yearly internal communication plan. In other countries, informal approaches are adopted, including guidelines on the use of internal communication tools, such as in Belgium and Sweden (Box 6.11).

> **Box 6.11. A snapshot of internal communication strategies, protocols and guidelines in OECD member countries**
>
> **The Internal Communication Guide for Federal Communicators in Belgium**
>
> This guide, or "COMM Collection", aims to detail the vision and mission of internal communication within the federal administration. It provides federal communicators with recommendations and good practices on how to foster internal communication within their organisation. It is based on the following five principles:
>
> - Implementing internal communication within the first stages of the decision-making process.
> - Facilitating interactions through the use of mixed media, online and informal communication.
> - Supporting the organisational vision through adequate resources and guidelines.
> - Partnering and engaging with different support services (i.e. ICT and human resource services).
> - Communicating internally before doing so externally.
>
> **The Swedish Communications Policy for Government Offices**
>
> The Swedish communications policy outlines objectives for both external and internal communication. It emphasises the importance of sustaining effective internal communication practices. It states that this can support efficiency, motivation and commitment among employees to ensure the principles of openness, objectivity, comprehensibility, relevance and topicality. It sets out two principles to guide internal communication activities within and between government departments:
>
> - Create conditions for the government and government office employees to feel included and motivated and enable them to carry out their tasks in an efficient and competent manner.
> - Contribute to the organisation's functioning efficiently and appropriately in normal day-to-day activities and in response to serious incidents and emergencies.
>
> Source: Government of Belgium (n.d.[78]), *Travailler dans la fonction publique*, https://bosa.belgium.be/fr/themes/travailler-dans-la-fonction-publique; Government of Sweden (n.d.[79]), *Regeringskansliets kommunikationspolicy*, https://www.regeringen.se/regeringskansliet/regeringskansliets-kommunikationspolicy/.

Communicating around Egypt Vision 2030 and the PARP: Towards increased transparency and participation

This section will cover Egypt's efforts in communicating Egypt Vision 2030 and the PARP, focusing on how communications contribute to more transparency and participation around these two documents. It covers the work of MPEDIC as the lead ministry for the vision and CAOA, a key actor in the PARP. It describes both institutions' governance structures and arrangements relating to communication, related activities, and challenges and opportunities.

MPEDIC and CAOA

MPEDIC includes a Strategic Communications and Partnerships Unit as well as a media team. The latter is in charge of media relations, the drafting of press releases and the update of the ministry's website as well as its social media pages and offline communication activities. The former is in charge of developing partnerships and communicating around events organised by the ministry in collaboration with external actors (such as the private sector, donors, etc.). They work with a wide range of stakeholders, including CSOs and the private sector and their objective is to "enhance the awareness and exposure of the

ministry's strategic projects", as per their responses to the OECD questionnaires. They plan and execute various strategic communications activities locally, regionally and internationally and represent the work of the ministry.

CAOA's communication department includes a digital communication team tasked with internal communication with public administration entities and a media office in charge of external communication. CAOA plays a key role in communicating the PARP's achievements and its goals. It does so using a multi-channel approach, including its website, Facebook page (https://www.facebook.com/EgyptianCAOA, which includes more than 510 000 followers to date) and physical activities. CAOA is also making use of advanced technologies and has recently launched an AI chatbot on its website (the KMT Chatbot, see previous sections of this chapter), where staff can ask for feedback and make enquiries about the Civil Service Law.

With regards to MPEDIC's communication around Egypt Vision 2030 specifically, a number of Facebook pages linked to the vision exist but do not seem to be very active or have many followers. At the time of writing, there does not appear to be a recent mention of the vision on the ministry's Facebook page (https://www.facebook.com/MPEDEGYPT/about), which includes 544 000 followers. MPEDIC has a similarly large following on LinkedIn and the ministry shares daily information about its activities on both these social media pages. CAOA's Facebook page is an important channel for communication based on OECD findings. The communication department ensures that staff dedicate sufficient time to follow and analyse the comments and feedback they receive on the page and posted suggestions.

For previous iterations of Egypt Vision 2030, there had been a series of communication activities, including by the National Institute for Governance and Sustainable Development (NIGSD). Within the NIGSD, the Governance and Sustainable Development Communication and Awareness Unit spearheads these communication efforts. It has developed a three-year plan (2020-23) around sustainable development to raise awareness of the concept and of Egypt's efforts in this regard, strengthening collaboration between relevant actors in this field. In previous years, the unit has organised virtual and physical workshops and conferences (both at the national and regional levels) on the topic of sustainable development, developed booklets and children's story tales, and conducted awareness sessions for university students, civil servants and CSOs. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many activities were conducted virtually but in-person activities have resumed recently.

With MPEDIC's announcement of the updated version of Egypt Vision 2030 in late 2023, it would be beneficial to accompany it with a dedicated written and formalised communication strategy and action plan (Box 6.12), which currently does not exist and was raised as a key challenge by the ministry. Dedicated staff would need to be allocated to develop and monitor the implementation of such a strategy. Such staff could be located within the sustainable development unit and co-ordinate with colleagues relevant to the Strategic Communications and Partnerships Unit and the media team to ensure wide outreach. Leveraging digital platforms, traditional media, community outreach programmes and partnerships with CSOs can significantly contribute to raising awareness and promoting sustainable development in Egypt.

With regard to CAOA's efforts, the focus on inclusive and accessible communication is noteworthy and has been applauded by the Arab Administrative Development Organisation. CAOA recognises the need to communicate about administrative reform in easier and more compelling ways and with less jargon, which it strives to do through videos or infographics. It conducts regular awareness-raising and informative videos on different laws, including those for the civil service. Some CAOA activities are also conducted in sign language. The OECD recognises inclusive and accessible communication as key means to strengthen transparency and participation. Accessibility refers to "the assimilation, clarity and readability of information". As for the inclusion, "it includes digital inclusion but also involves reaching all citizens, whatever their gender, whether they are young or old, isolated by geography, by education, by disability or by social and urban factors" (Cazenave and Bellantoni, 2022[80]).

Finally, CAOA does not currently have a formalised communication strategy for the PARP. In that sense, it has highlighted the need to improve its communication with the public around the PARP. CAOA has highlighted the need for improving communication of its PARP survey answers, pointing to a focus on communication as dissemination, rather than a strategic means to support policies and services. A key challenge raised was the availability of human resources and their qualifications. Staff has noted several training courses that CAOA facilitates, including graphic design and creative content, digital privacy and transparency, with the need for continuous training deemed important. Strengthening skills for social media use is identified as a key challenge that could be further enhanced and delivered to CAOA staff.

Box 6.12. The importance of public communication strategies and examples from OECD member countries

"A communication strategy is a written, timebound document that identifies a communication solution to a problem, sets the approach to achieve its objectives, and defines the activities and tactics to be carried out. It is commonly complemented by a communication plan that details the content to be delivered and actions to be taken in sequence. It can be broad in scope, for example encompassing communications for the whole-of-government or entire ministries and sub-national administrations across multiple policies and issues. Often, they can be specific to each policy area or programme, and the same institution may have several simultaneous strategies dedicated to distinct issues" (OECD, 2021[9]).

A communication strategy can help avoid ad hoc dissemination of information to citizens and the media and a "fire-fighting" approach is often adopted by communicators, given the fast-paced information ecosystem and increasing demands for information from citizens.

The United Kingdom's Government Communication Strategy 2022-25

The United Kingdom's government communication strategy for 2022-25 aims to ensure that, as a profession, they continue to deliver exceptional communications that change and save lives while operating efficiently so that they provide the best value for taxpayers' money. The goals of this strategy, launched in 2022, are to:

- Improve the ability of government communications to work together to tackle the biggest challenges the country faces.
- Harness rapid technological changes in communications for the public good.
- Deliver a more efficient and effective Government Communication Service (GCS).
- Build public trust in government communications.
- Retain, attract and develop the best communications talent.

Source: OECD (2021[9]), *OECD Report on Public Communication: The Global Context and the Way Forward*, https://doi.org/10.1787/22f8031c-en; UK Government (2022[81]), *Government Communication Service: Our Strategy for 2022 to 2025*, https://gcs.civilservice.gov.uk/about-us/government-communication-service-our-strategy-for-2022-to-2025/.

Elaborating such a strategy is a prerequisite for impactful communication. It allows monitoring activities that can lead to measurable impact and helps move beyond ad hoc activities. It supports the identification and agreement on communication priorities in advance and can enhance co-ordination and reinforce coherence within the government. Such a strategy can also help ensure that MPEDIC segments its audience to ensure better targeting. Indeed, the need to strengthen the capacity to tailor its communication to different audiences, particularly traditionally underrepresented groups in policymaking, such as youth, could be underlined. This requires investing in audience insights (which calls for adequate human and

financial resources) to identify how to reach different population categories and what messages would resonate most with them.

Raising awareness in society about Egypt Vision 2030 is crucial for its successful implementation. One of the key challenges identified by the OECD is the existence of numerous long-term strategies focusing on various sectors such as climate, desalination and digital development. While these strategies are important, it is essential to prioritise Egypt Vision 2030 and explain its role and linkages with other initiatives so as not to lead to fragmented efforts that can hinder the country's overall progress towards SDGs. In this regard, a network of communicators with representatives from each ministry to support Egypt Vision 2030 communication could be considered to ensure that sectoral strategies and their impact are linked.

To raise awareness effectively, the added value of Egypt Vision 2030 and the actors involved should be emphasised. It is essential to communicate the benefits and positive impact that sustainable development can bring to the country. This will help garner support and engagement from stakeholders across different sectors and levels of governance. Building on successful efforts such as *Dawwie ya Nourra* - led by the National Council for Childhood and Motherhood (NCCM) in partnership with NCW - which highlights the contribution of gender policies towards the SDGs and the Sustainable Development Excellence Award launched by the General Authority for Investments, other international practices could prove equally inspiring (Box 6.13).

Box 6.13. Successful awareness-raising efforts for sustainable development

For the launch of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in 2015, the then Secretary-General of the United Nations, Ban Ki-Moon, appointed several worldwide sustainable development ambassadors, including Lionel Messi, Shakira and also Queen Mathilde of the Belgians. This inspired the Belgian Federal Institute for Sustainable Development to appoint a number of national ambassadors named SDG Voices to engage the general public in the SDGs. These SDG Voices educate people about the SDGs and encourage them to roll up their sleeves and get involved through various inspiring initiatives. All selected organisations showcased a credible track record in sustainable development based on their past work and had to prove they have an in-depth understanding of the SDG to ensure they are the perfect ambassadors to translate the SDGs into tangible actions and initiatives. Notable examples include newspaper Metro, the Royal Belgian Football Association, the Sustainable Development Solutions Network Belgian and the Port of Antwerp. By linking its awareness efforts to existing organisations with their dedicated audiences, the Federal Institute for Sustainable Development made use of a snowball effect to significantly amplify its SDG awareness efforts.

The SDG Awards are a unique programme in the Czech Republic that rewards participants for promoting the SDGs. Created in 2017, the contest is the brainchild of the Association of Social Responsibility in co-operation with the European Commission, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of the Environment and various partners from the private sector. The main mission is to acknowledge innovative ventures that have a positive impact on society and the planet. The SDG Awards provide an excellent opportunity for both large corporations and small and medium-sized regional enterprises, including non-profit organisations, schools and municipalities, to showcase how their operations actively contribute to fulfilling the principles of sustainable development. Every year, the SDG Awards offer hundreds of Czech organisations an opportunity to compete for the internationally recognised SDG Awards.

As is the case with the Belgian SDG Voices, organisations are motivated to become leaders in sustainability efforts, build their brand, improve the credibility of their projects, inspire others and get a chance to obtain financial assistance for their projects.

Source: (Government of Belgium, accessed on July 2023[35]); (Government of Czech Republic, Accessed on August 2023[36]).

In addition to focusing on national-level awareness, it is equally important to disseminate information and raise awareness at the subnational level, specifically in the governorates, as sustainable development efforts should reach all country regions. Local authorities, communities and individuals in governorates should be made aware of the goals and objectives of Egypt Vision 2030 and the role they can play in its realisation. This bottom-up approach will foster a sense of ownership and participation, leading to more effective implementation of sustainable development initiatives. Another key aspect highlighted is the need to ensure adequate human resources in developing and implementing communication activities. While the ministry currently includes four communication staff working on events and operations (including specialists on content, events, operations and partnerships), these could be expanded to include experts on strategic development, audience insights, digital communication, etc. These additions could build on the strengths of the existing team, which was identified as excelling in collaboration and the ability to work in multiple fields. In addition to a dedicated communication staff for Egypt Vision 2030. Furthermore, in a fast-paced information and media ecosystem, it is vital to ensure that existing staff have access to updated training on advanced communication skills and techniques. OECD members are beginning to establish dedicated public communication academies to ensure their officials are keeping pace with the evolutions in this field (Box 6.14).

Box 6.14. Examples of OECD public communication academies

United Kingdom

In the United Kingdom, the Government Communication Service (GCS) Academy provides government communicators with professional development resources through a broad variety of training, courses and talent programmes. With GCS Advance and GCS On Demand, government communicators can access a wealth of online resources in the form of webinars and tailor-made online courses. In addition, the GCS also offers employees the opportunity to enrol in one of six different talent programmes. Such programmes target entry-level and senior communicators alike and vary in terms of length, ranging from six-week internships to four-year Fast Stream leadership programmes.

Canada

Government communicators in Canada are offered a range of learning and career development resources through the Communications Community Office (CCO). Learning opportunities include digital resources, in-person conferences and mentoring schemes. For instance, the Communications 101 Boot Camp was developed in collaboration with Apolitical, an online learning platform for public servants. It gathers articles and courses on line and can be accessed by any government employee interested in learning about communication. Beyond digital resources, the CCO also organises an annual in-person Learning Day and facilitates a Mentoring Series, allowing young public servants to work one-on-one with an experienced communicator.

The Netherlands

In the Netherlands, the Academy for Government Communication supports government communicators with professional development opportunities and provides a network for knowledge sharing. It also conducts policy professional training in collaboration with the Dutch Institute for Public Administration training centre.

Sources: UK GCS (n.d.[82]), *Academy*, https://gcs.civilservice.gov.uk/academy/; Government of Canada (n.d.[83]), *Communications 101 Boot Camp for Canadian Public Servants*, https://www.canada.ca/en/privy-council/services/communications-community-office/communications-101-boot-camp-canadian-public-servants.html; Government of Canada (2024[84]), *Learning Opportunities for Communicators: Learning Events*, https://www.canada.ca/en/privy-council/services/communications-community-office/learning-opportunities-communicators/learning-events.html; Government of the Netherlands (n.d.[85]), *Organisation*, https://www.government.nl/ministries/ministry-of-general-affairs/organisation.

The issue of financial resources is another possible area for improvement, as ensuring there is a dedicated budget to communicate around Egypt Vision 2030 will be crucial. OECD findings have revealed that there is no such dedicated budget, but rather, funds are in some cases "implicitly available" on a needs basis. This can be addressed by identifying a dedicated communication activities budget as part of the vision's communication strategy. Such resources will be necessary to recruit a communication official in charge of the strategy, conduct audience insights internally and externally, and develop communication campaigns for example.

Finally, no comprehensive internal communication campaigns appear to have led recently on Egypt Vision 2030 and no audience insights for internal communication have been conducted. Such communication can play an important role in strengthening co-ordination for sustainable development within the government. The importance of enhancing information-sharing mechanisms is evident, as consulted interlocutors in Egypt have highlighted the challenges associated with paper-based, lengthy and atomised co-ordination arrangements for policy development and information exchange across institutions. As a result, MPEDIC and line ministries face challenges in being informed about programmes and policies implemented by other ministries that have an impact on Egypt Vision 2030 and in collecting and monitoring data and indicators. This highlights a need for improved internal communication around the vision (See Chapter 2 for further details).

To address this issue, Egypt could draw upon insights from OECD countries, such as Latvia (Box 6.15), which launched a platform for the design of government policies. This platform acts as an "early warning system" among line ministries, promoting timely information exchange and co-ordination. By adopting a similar approach, Egypt could establish a single digital platform that combines relevant data and workflow functions to support early information exchange on policy initiatives as these are being designed as well as interinstitutional co-ordination and stakeholder engagement on these initiatives. This platform could be particularly valuable in addressing cross-cutting policy issues, allowing for efficient communication, collaboration and the integration of perspectives from various stakeholders into the policymaking process. The country can overcome the challenges associated with paper-based, lengthy, and dispersed information-sharing mechanisms by digitising co-ordination processes and establishing a comprehensive digital platform, especially in light of the move to the new administrative capital.

Box 6.15. Creation of the Single Portal for Development and Harmonisation of Draft Legal Acts (TAP portal) to improve information sharing in Latvia

In December 2011, Latvia established a central government planning unit, the Cross-Sectoral Coordination Centre (*Pārresoru koordinācijas centrs*, PKC). The PKC's mandate is to develop a long-term strategic approach to public policymaking while monitoring and co-ordinating decision-making to ensure that public policies are coherent and effective. As of Spring 2023, this function will be transferred to the State Chancellery. The PKC stresses the importance of early and transparent information sharing to facilitate consensus building. To this effect, a new multi-functional platform was elaborated through an inclusive multi-stakeholder process and launched in 2022.

The objective of the creation of the Single Portal for Development and Harmonisation of Draft Legal Acts (TAP portal) is to modernise the process of decision-making within the Cabinet by providing more accessible public participation and a more efficient and rapid process for developing and harmonising draft legal acts, as well as improved session arrangements (development and approval of draft agendas, drafting and signing of the minutes, preparation of resolutions, management of documents adopted at the sitting of the Cabinet), including better functionality of the information system for organising and conducting Cabinet, Cabinet Committee and State Secretary meetings (e-portfolio).

The TAP portal includes the working environment and a public section. The working environment of draft legal acts includes simplified functionalities for developing, harmonising, approving and controlling draft legal acts. Templates for developing draft legal acts and assistance tools can be used to synchronise information input in different information environments (draft legal act, annotation, statement, opinion). The portal also allows the accumulation and analysis of structured data from the initial impact reports (annotations) of legal acts. By upgrading the e-portfolio, the process of organising Cabinet sessions and decision-making is improved. Members of the Cabinet and other meeting participants can familiarise themselves *conveniently and on the same site* with the history of preparing the matters to be considered at the sitting, to record the individual vote, if any and to add individual opinions on the matter under consideration.

Source: Government of Latvia (2021[86]), *Single Portal for Development and Harmonisation of Draft Legal Acts (TAP Portal)*, https://www.mk.gov.lv/en/tap-portals.

The way forward: overview of recommendations

Actionable recommendations to promote transparency and enhance public communication

1. Promoting transparency through the existing legal, policy and institutional frameworks

Proactive disclosure

- Egypt could consider:
  - Disclosing information proactively and in a systematic way as a precursor to adopting and implementing an ATI law. The publication of the information already undertaken by some government entities (e.g. the MoF, MPEDIC and CAOA) could serve as inspiration for other public bodies to address gaps.
  - Ensuring adequate cross-references and links to information where it is published centrally rather than on a specific ministry website.
  - Making government websites easier to navigate and improving search engines to support users in easily identifying and locating information.
  - Prioritising information systems management across public administration in the implementation of its PARP.
  - Conducting consultations with stakeholders to understand which categories of information are deemed to be most useful for citizens and CSOs (e.g. draft legislation, policy proposals, cabinet decisions, budgets) and foster greater collaboration in this regard.
  - Conducting a national survey via a public body such as MPEDIC or CAOA to understand what kind of information citizens and stakeholders are interested in and what they would like the government to publish regarding Egypt Vision 2030, the PARP and other relevant reforms.
  - Undertaking specific campaigns, training and workshops with citizens and CSOs to raise awareness of their right to information to make the information that is proactively disclosed (especially on Egypt Vision 2030) more relevant and visible to a wider audience.

- o Committing to the use of plain and simple language in any promotion of the right to access to information.
- o Identifying potential digital divides and other barriers for vulnerable groups and ensuring that information is accessible and usable for them (e.g. by adding assistive options for those who have visual or hearing impairments).

Budget transparency

- To ensure that the citizen's budget is as accessible as possible, the government could consult with citizens who have and have not read the document in the past to gather their perspectives on whether the information shared is useful, whether it could be presented in a different format and how likely they would be to use or reuse the information shared in the document for other purposes (e.g. for advocacy or lobbying).

Reactive disclosure

- Government entities in Egypt could consider defining guidelines for public officials in the short term to better respond to requests uniformly relating to Egypt Vision 2030. This guidance could provide a standard process for all public bodies to share information proactively and reactively and delineate exceptions and exemptions. It could also, for example, stipulate that requests gathered via social media, mobile applications or ministry websites be answered within a certain period. The guidelines could also assign access to an information office or officer within each public body responsible for answering access to information requests.
- In the medium to long terms, the government could consider reviewing how public entities can continue to disseminate accurate and up-to-date information relating to key strategies, such as Egypt Vision 2030 and the PARP, until the adoption of an access to information law as mentioned in Article 68 of the Egyptian constitution.

2. **Towards the adoption of a framework on access to information for the implementation of Egypt Vision 2030 and the PARP**

- Public bodies in Egypt could take a short-to-medium-term view and consider adopting a framework that covers the most common tenets of ATI laws in line with international standards.
- Such a framework could provide for the following:
  - o Provisions for anonymous requests could be considered.
  - o Provisions could apply to all information held by public bodies
  - o Public bodies could be encouraged to proactively publish certain categories of information or frequently requested information.
  - o There could be clear procedures for requesting access to information, with timeliness standards in place.
  - o Exemptions and exceptions could be clearly defined so as not to be open to interpretation by public officials, e.g. legitimate refusals for reasons of national security could be well-defined and subject to clear guidelines.
- Significant efforts could be made to include CSOs and other stakeholders through consultations on any legal and institutional frameworks for access to information, which could also be extended to as broad an audience as possible to seek their expertise and perspectives.

3. Prioritising citizen and stakeholder participation for more impactful reforms

Creating more impactful councils, conferences and advisory boards

- The Government could encourage more citizen and stakeholder participation at the national and local levels in several ways, namely by:
  - o Considering the creation of an advisory board on civil society based on the model of the NCW in Egypt. Such a body could be composed of several prominent umbrella organisations that represent hundreds of CSOs and ensure that a diverse group of CSOs are represented, whether small or large, urban or rural, or concentrated in advocacy and watchdog activities or service provision.
  - o Committing to instilling the values and benefits of citizen and stakeholder participation at all levels of government and hosting information sessions, training and workshops that bring public officials from the national and local levels together on this subject.
  - o Reinforcing the public administration at the local level by establishing local councils and fortifying existing structures, such as community councils.

Identifying innovative ways to encourage digital and in-person citizen participation

- Overall, the government of Egypt could adopt new and innovative participatory processes, entrench them in its reform efforts and institutionalise citizen and stakeholder participation in public decision-making to ensure its sustainability and longevity beyond 2030.
- Regarding digital tools for feedback and engagement, Egypt could consider:
  - o Mapping all existing websites, digital tools and mobile applications that focus on citizen and stakeholder participation, considering ways to promote these opportunities effectively.
  - o In the medium to long terms, creating a centralised online portal to facilitate citizen and stakeholder participation on cross-cutting policy issues to allow individuals and organisations to quickly locate ways to be involved in decision-making at the national and local levels.
    - – All public bodies could feed into this platform and use it as a sole interface to engage citizens and stakeholders on everything from draft legislation to policy proposals. The government could foster interoperability between this platform and the Sharek 2030 mobile application.
  - o Testing existing applications and platforms with the most vulnerable groups in society (e.g. women, immigrants, people with disabilities, those with low literacy or digital skills, and those of low socio-economic status) to identify ways to make them more accessible and inclusive.
- In relation to workshops, consultations and rewards, Egypt could consider:
  - o Prioritising public consultations with a range of citizens and stakeholders at all policy cycle stages, from agenda setting and drafting strategy or policy to implementation, monitoring and evaluation.
  - o Providing consistent and frequent opportunities for digital and in-person consultations with citizens and stakeholders on Egypt Vision 2030.
    - – Raising awareness of existing and upcoming opportunities to be involved in policymaking and service design and delivery through public campaigns.

- To increase engagement with all relevant stakeholders, consider launching open calls to participate and inviting a wide range of CSOs with expertise in the policy area at hand.

  o Undertaking additional efforts to inform public officials of the value and benefits of working with CSOs and how to do so.

  o Considering recognition or excellence awards for the public bodies that best improve their participatory practices to encourage uptake and innovation.

  o Mapping existing good practices across public administration and building on these examples to better engage a wide range of actors in policymaking and form partnerships for service design and delivery (both for Egypt Vision 2030 and beyond).

- Regarding citizens' panels, juries and assemblies, Egypt could endeavour to:

  o Implement more innovative and deliberative processes such as citizens' assemblies, juries and panels, wherein governments gather ordinary citizens from all parts of society to discuss complex policy challenges and develop proposals on the scale that best suits their capabilities and the human and financial resources available at the national and local levels.

  o Take inspiration from the OECD Guidelines for Citizen Participation Processes, establish their own tailored whole-of-government guidelines or strategy on citizen and stakeholder participation to ensure that public administration takes a consistent and uniform approach to hearing and integrating the views of the public into policymaking and service design and delivery.

  o Establish a working group within a relevant public body or line ministry with the task of identifying ways to integrate citizen and stakeholder participation processes into the existing policy cycle.

- Regarding PB, Egypt could continue to move towards its goal of all regions and municipalities undertaking some form of PB based on a future PB model for the country by aiming to involve a higher number of participants and allocate a greater share of the budget year on year. This could be achieved through several options, including awareness-raising campaigns and dedicated focus groups.

  o In addition, the process could be more ambitious, enabling citizens to meet with one another to discuss and propose projects on line and through in-person workshops in what would be an "ideation phase".

  o Public officials could also work closely with CSOs on inclusion and empowerment to ensure that vulnerable groups are aware of the opportunity and feel able to participate.

  o Public officials must close the feedback loop by informing citizens of which ideas were chosen and which were not, sharing the outcomes of the process and the next steps.

  o In the long term, Egypt could consider formalising the process and making it obligatory for regions and municipalities to undertake some form of PB.

4. **Improving public communication around Egypt Vision 2030 and the PARP in an effort to strengthen transparency and stakeholder participation**

- To further benefit from the full potential of public communication for increased transparency and participation and to support the outreach for and impact of Egypt Vision 2030 and the PARP, MPEDIC and CAOA could consider:

  o Moving towards a more strategic understanding and use of communication for increased transparency and participation and breaking legacy misperceptions of communication's role, namely by adopting dedicated strategies and action plans (in collaboration with relevant

partners such as the MCIT, State Information Service, CAPMAS and NIGSD for example) formalising this mandate, ensuring high-level support for such strategies and the required human and financial resources for their implementation.

- Explicitly recognising in the strategies the need to go beyond one-way dissemination of information to utilising communication as a means to engage in a dialogue with stakeholders, listen to their needs and expectations, and respond to them.

- Operationalising this strategic understanding of the public communication function through communication guidelines adopted by MPEDIC and CAOA can also be supported with practical tips and tricks as well as good practices from around the world.

- MPEDIC, with relevant institutional partners (including the MCIT, which has experience in designing and managing information portals) could consider accelerating the design and launch of a digital Egypt Vision 2030 Policy Platform to act as the single source for information sharing and an "early warning system" among line ministries, while promoting timely exchange and co-ordination.

- Building a mutual understanding of the strategic role of communication among policy teams and senior decision-makers in MPEDIC and CAOA to increase collaboration and ensure communication is recognised as more than press relations and reputation management.

- It could clarify the roles and responsibilities of the Strategic Communications and Partnerships Unit, the media team and the sustainable development unit within MPEDIC as well as the NIGSD, particularly as they relate to communicating internally and externally about Egypt Vision 2030 and strengthening related co-ordination mechanisms.

- Establishing a communication network with representatives from across the government to support communication efforts around Egypt Vision 2030 and the PARP.

- Complement the focus on media relations and press releases with increased outreach and dialogue on social media, strengthening the use of social listening efforts to improve policies and decisions.

- Entities could work towards the professionalisation of the public communication function through the development of dedicated standards, guidance and competencies. This includes revamping training efforts to ensure they respond to the needs of operating in a fast-paced media and information ecosystem. Developing public communication guidelines would be essential in this regard.

- Strengthen the skills of staff working in public communication, particularly their efforts to communicate with youth, women and the broader public regarding topics such as Egypt Vision 2030, government services, the Civil Service Law and government recruitment processes.

- Conducting more regular and advanced audience insights for external and internal audiences, such as those linked to Egypt Vision 2030 objectives, and support the sharing of these insights across the government.

- Internally, a study on public officials' awareness of Egypt Vision 2030 and the PARP could be developed alongside a dedicated internal communication strategy to ensure these documents are made readily available and encourage the government to speak in one voice on this topic, with each ministry knowing their role and responsibilities with regards to the vision and the PARP. This would also help ensure alignment at all levels and foster a shared commitment to implementation. This not only enhances understanding but also encourages accountability, inclusivity and informed decision-making, ultimately advancing Egypt's progress toward sustainable development.

> • The government could establish specific monitoring, learning and evaluation mechanisms to follow the outcomes and impact of communication activities included in the strategy (and not just outputs). This includes the identification of indicators tailored to different campaign types, along with guidance on calculating the return on investment for communication activities.

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Notes

[1] For the purpose of this chapter, unless otherwise explicitly stated, the term citizen is meant as any inhabitant of a particular place and not a legally recognised national of a state.

[2] Stakeholders refers to "any interested and/or affected party, including: individuals, regardless of their age, gender, sexual orientation, religious and political affiliations; and institutions and organisations, whether governmental or non-governmental, from civil society, academia, the media or the private sector" (OECD, 2017[4]).

[3] The websites included: Ministry of Youth and Sports, Ministry of Housing Utilities and Urban Communities, Ministry of Petroleum, Ministry of trade and Industry, Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation, Ministry of Communication and Information Technology, Ministry of Planning and Economic Development, Ministry of Social Solidarity, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Education, Ministry of local development, Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, Ministry of Supply and Internal Trade, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, Ministry of Health and Population, Ministry of

Justice, Ministry of Manpower, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Public Business sector, Ministry of Transportation, Central Agency for Organisation and Administration, Ministry of International Cooperation.

7 Gender and youth mainstreaming in Egypt

In recent years, the Government of Egypt has made important strides to promote gender equality and empower young people. This chapter focuses on mainstreaming gender and youth considerations across and beyond the Egypt Vision 2030 strategy and the Public Administration Reform Plan (PARP) to ensure broad representation in policymaking. It provides an overview of the existing institutional and policy frameworks for gender equality and gender and youth mainstreaming in Egypt. It analyses the gender and youth approach, axes and objectives developed in Egypt Vision 2030 and the PARP, and efforts made by relevant line ministries and agencies to implement and monitor them. The chapter also identifies challenges hindering gender equality and youth empowerment goals while highlighting good practice examples from OECD countries. Finally, the chapter outlines policy recommendations to further strengthen the Egyptian government's capacities for gender equality and mainstreaming, as well as for youth empowerment and mainstreaming.

Introduction

Over the past years, the Government of Egypt (GoE) has made important strides in promoting women's rights. Since the adoption of the 2014 constitution and its amendments in 2019, the country has paid increasing attention to the issues of gender equality and women's empowerment by affirming its commitment to international treaties and conventions on the topic and integrating gender-related considerations into key strategic frameworks and programmes implemented by the government. Still, as observed in OECD member countries, gender gaps persist in various areas of life (UN Women, n.d.[1]; OECD, 2023[2]), calling for a two-pronged approach to promoting gender equality, including both targeted measures and the application of a gender lens throughout government policy and decision-making.

Similarly, since 2014, the GoE has paid particular attention to empowering young people in public life and mainstreaming youth-related considerations across policies and in key strategic frameworks. However, the government could further apply a youth lens and empower young people in the policymaking cycle, government plans and sectoral strategies. Notably, the government sought to progressively empower young people in public life by affirming its commitment to international treaties and conventions, namely the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Security Council Resolution 2250 on Youth, Peace and Security, to design and set objectives for youth-related policies, programmes and services. Since 2014, the government has also set up a number of initiatives and programmes that aim at empowering young people, such as the Egyptian youth conferences under the leadership of the Presidency of the Republic of Egypt that provide a platform to communicate and engage with young people or the Presidential Leadership Program to enhance youth participation in administration (State Information Service, 2023[3]).

This chapter provides a brief overview of the institutional framework for gender equality and mainstreaming in Egypt, including the roles and responsibilities of the country's central gender equality institution and other public bodies engaged in advancing the gender equality agenda. It then assesses Egypt's approach to strategic planning for gender equality policy, including the framework for implementing and monitoring gender-related objectives included in Egypt Vision 2030 and in the National Strategy for the Empowerment of Egyptian Women 2030. It also explores efforts undertaken to integrate gender equality considerations into the Public Administration Reform Plan (PARP) and promote women's representation and leadership in the public sector. Finally, the chapter outlines a series of policy recommendations to tackle existing challenges and further strengthen the GoE's capacities for gender equality and gender mainstreaming to close gender gaps.

The section dedicated to youth mainstreaming examines the opportunities and challenges of empowering young people in public life by building on ongoing reforms in the framework of Egypt Vision 2030, the PARP and beyond. In this regard, it analyses avenues to: i) unite government stakeholders to implement a shared, integrated youth policy; ii) build administrative and institutional capacities to mainstream the perspectives of young people in policymaking; and iii) encourage the participation and representation of young people in public decision-making processes. The analysis and recommendations therein are informed and guided by the recently adopted OECD Recommendation of the Council on Creating Better Opportunities for Young People (2022[4]), the most ambitious and complete legal instrument in this field. The chapter also provides the GoE with innovative good practices from OECD member and partner countries, in particular, building on the recently published OECD report Youth at the Centre of Government Action: A Review of the Middle East and North Africa (2022[5]).

Building a robust institutional framework for gender equality and mainstreaming in Egypt

A robust institutional framework in place for the delivery of the gender equality policy, with clear roles, responsibilities and mandates across government, adequate public sector capacity and resourcing play a key role in achieving a country's gender-related goals (OECD, 2016[6]). Over the last years, the GoE has made efforts to strengthen its institutional architecture for the promotion of the gender equality agenda at the national level, to enable the design and implementation of policies to empower women in all fields and ensure the non-discriminatory treatment of women and men in the public sector. Figure 7.1 provides an overview of the existing institutional framework for promoting gender equality in Egypt at the national level.

This section analyses the roles, mandates and responsibilities of the National Council for Women (NCW), as well as of line ministries and agencies, the Central Agency for Organization and Administration (CAOA) and the National Institute for Governance and Sustainable Development (NIGSD). The contributions of the Ministry of Planning, Economic Development and International Cooperation (MPEDIC), the Ministry of Finance (MoF), the Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS) and the Egyptian Women's Observatory are briefly assessed in the following section as they relate to the promotion of gender equality and mainstreaming in the country. The role of the MoF is also assessed in more depth as part of a forthcoming project by the OECD to develop a gender budgeting action plan for Egypt.

Figure 7.1. Institutional design and mandates for the promotion of gender equality and mainstreaming in Egypt
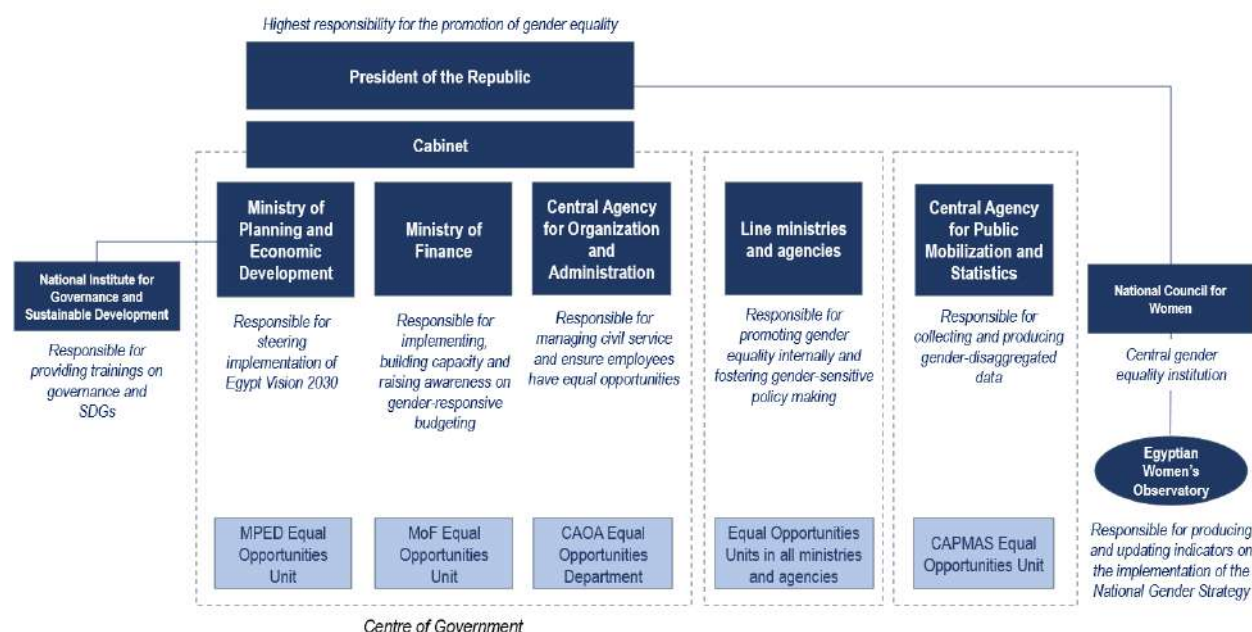
Source: Author's own work

There are opportunities for the National Council for Women to play a stronger role in co-ordinating the gender equality policy and fostering gender-sensitive policymaking

The NCW fulfils the role of the central gender equality institution (CGI) in Egypt. As the bodies primarily tasked with promoting, co-ordinating and facilitating the gender equality policy in a country (OECD, 2019[7]), CGIs play a key function in the advancement of a government's gender equality agenda. Law No. 30/2018

defines the mandate and responsibilities of the NCW, which include, among other things: proposing public policies, national plans, laws and regulations aimed at enhancing the status of women in Egypt; co-ordinating with governmental entities that implement women-related programmes as well as with non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and other relevant international organisations; participating in state committees dealing with policies for women's empowerment; monitoring and assessing the application of women-related policies and the implementation of the National Strategy for the Empowerment of Egyptian Women 2030; reviewing draft laws and regulations on women's affairs; advising line ministries on women's issues in their policy areas of responsibility (NCW, n.d.[8]). The NCW also reportedly co-operates with the CAOA and NIGSD to develop training programmes to increase the capacity of female civil servants and with the equal opportunities units (EOUs) in line ministries (see sub-section below) to ensure a safe work environment for women in the public sector.

Since its establishment by presidential decree in 2000, the NCW has been affiliated with the Egyptian president, as shown in Figure 7.1. A comparable approach appears to be common in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, where institutions (e.g. councils, commissions) under the prime minister, president or equivalent are among the most prevalent arrangements. As of 2023, at least five countries (Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait and Lebanon) have adopted such a configuration.

Across the OECD, although there are no standard institutional arrangements for the promotion of gender equality, since 2011, units located within the centre of government, either under the head of government or state, have become progressively commonplace, with ten OECD countries having set this up in 2021 (Figure 7.2). For example, Australia's Office for Women, which is the country's CGI providing strategic policy advice and support on gender-related matters, sits within the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (OECD, 2023[9]). Its institutional placement within the centre of government offers considerable benefits, indicating high-level political support for its work and ensuring authority when engaging with government departments to co-ordinate and implement the gender equality agenda (OECD, 2023[9]). Notably, in Australia, the highest political responsibility for the advancement of gender equality lies instead with the Minister for Women, who is tasked with improving outcomes for all women in the country (OECD, 2023[9]).

While the NCW and other similar councils or commissions in MENA countries are not located within the centre of government or within a ministry like the majority of OECD countries, their close proximity to the prime minister or president can enhance visibility and high-level support for gender equality and the adoption of important measures to promote the advancement of women (OECD/CAWTAR, 2014[10]), similar to what observed in OECD countries. Indeed, in Egypt, despite the absence of a dedicated ministry for gender equality, as seen in the case of youth affairs (as discussed in later sections of this chapter), the gender equality agenda seems to benefit from strong political support at the highest level, with gender equality and women's empowerment considered as an accelerator for achieving sustainable development. For CGIs to function effectively, it is key to ensure that their high-level profile is complemented by adequate capacities to carry out their mandate (OECD, 2019[7]).

The board of the NCW has 30 members, chosen by the President of the Republic among public figures with experience in women's affairs and social activity. The members serve the NCW for four years, based on a renewable mandate. A technical Secretariat in Cairo supports the Council in carrying out its work (NCW, n.d.[8]). The NCW co-ordinates with MPEDIC through periodic meetings. Furthermore, the NCW actively participates in the technical committee of the National Committee for Monitoring the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goals in Egypt, which includes 17 public institutions involved in the implementation of Egypt Vision 2030 (see Chapter 2). Stakeholders reported that the NCW is represented by its president when meetings take place at the ministerial level or by an officer from its secretariat (normally the Head of Strategic Planning) when the committee meets at the technical level. In addition, as a key monitoring mechanism, the National Strategy for the Empowerment of Egyptian Women 2030 proposes the organisation of quarterly cabinet meetings to discuss the strategy as an item in the

agenda in the presence of the President of the NCW, with the aim to follow up on national implementation efforts. As reported by relevant stakeholders, meetings are also held quarterly to follow up on the work done by the EOUs to integrate key elements of the strategy into ministerial plans. Stakeholder interviews revealed that the NCW has progressively gained institutional strength thanks to its leadership's wide connections with both the Egyptian Cabinet and citizens, which contribute to giving visibility to the country's gender equality agenda. Looking ahead, it would be important to ensure that the NCW can enjoy a high-level profile and have adequate capacities to carry out its mandate, irrespective of the public figures guiding it.

Figure 7.2. Central gender equality institutions in OECD countries, 2021

Number of respondents
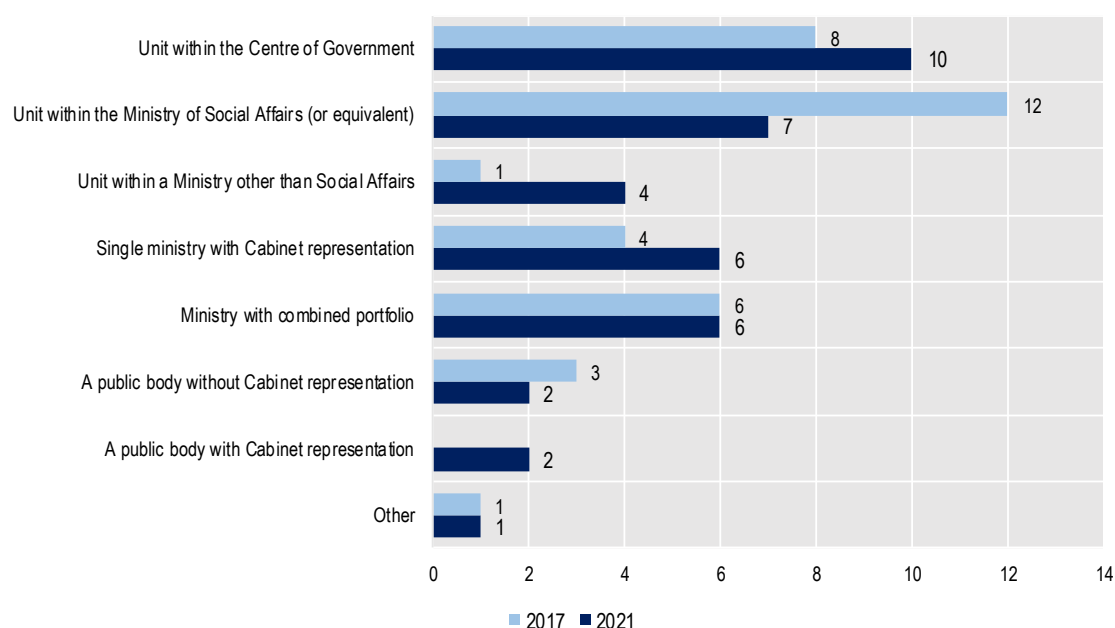
Note: 2021 data were provided by 38 respondents, 2017 data were provided by 36 respondents.
Source: Information collected by the OECD based on desk research and data from OECD (2021[11]), "OECD Survey on Gender Mainstreaming and Governance", Unpublished, OECD, Paris.

In recent years, although delivering specific programmes related to women's empowerment remains one of the main responsibilities of CGIs in OECD countries, their mandate has gradually expanded to: i) ensuring co-ordination with governmental stakeholders by convening inter-ministerial committees to oversee the implementation of gender equality goals; ii) assisting line ministries in integrating gender equality considerations into policy analysis and strategic planning by preparing tools and guidelines; iii) conducting policy research, giving advice and providing recommendations to other government bodies; iv) monitoring the implementation of governmental gender initiatives; v) supporting capacity building in line ministries for gender mainstreaming; and vi) guiding the development of gender-disaggregated data in close co-ordination with the national statistical office, CAPMAS (OECD, 2019[7]).

Against this backdrop, the OECD finds that there is scope to further increase the NCW's ability to co-ordinate an effective and coherent implementation of the National Strategy for the Empowerment of Egyptian Women 2030, which already recognises the importance of having a robust institutional framework and whole-of-government commitment for achieving its multi-dimensional goals (Government of Egypt, 2017[12]). In fact, while Law No. 30/2018 mandates the NCW to monitor and assess the implementation of

the strategy, there are opportunities to strengthen its capacities to effectively co-ordinate and follow up with all government institutions at the national level on the commitments included in that strategic document. Ensuring that the implementation of the strategy is regularly discussed with line ministries and in Cabinet meetings through institutionalised, formal co-ordination mechanisms with the NCW can be effective in this regard. In Switzerland, for example, the Federal Office for Gender Equality leads the Inter-departmental Committee for the 2030 Equality Strategy, which meets twice a year to co-ordinate the country's equality strategy in the federal administration (Confédération Suisse, n.a.[13]).

Furthermore, the NCW could play a stronger role in supporting MPEDIC to meaningfully engage line ministries in mainstreaming gender equality considerations into their policy action as part of implementation efforts of Egypt Vision 2030, which is in line with what was observed in OECD countries. As reported by relevant stakeholders, over the past few years, the NCW has sent official letters to ministers to highlight the importance of promoting equal opportunities, and these efforts should continue in the future. Building on this positive development, there is scope for the NCW to strengthen its impact and contribute to increasing the MPEDIC's leveraging power to foster gender-sensitive policymaking, as discussed in the following section. The NCW could use its gender equality expertise to support line ministries in integrating gender equality perspectives into their policy action as well as MPEDIC in developing a systematic approach and guidance to this effect. For instance, Women and Gender Equality Canada, the Canadian CGI, provides knowledge, technical assistance and training for the whole-of-government implementation of GBA Plus, the analytical gender mainstreaming tool used to assess how different groups of people experience policies, programmes and initiatives (OECD, 2023[14]). For the NCW to play an effective role in supporting gender-related planning and policymaking in relation to other ministries, it would be important to ensure the adequacy of its capacities and resources.

There is scope to institutionalise the role of EOUs in line ministries and expand it to promote gender mainstreaming

The promotion of gender equality is a complex, cross-cutting and multi-dimensional public policy issue that requires the participation and co-ordination of all government actors. Line ministries have a key role in mainstreaming gender considerations by integrating them into their policymaking processes, routine functioning and management structures (OECD, 2019[7]). Ideally, line ministries should work to ensure gender sensitivity of their personnel policies and sector-specific plans and programmes in their policy areas of responsibility, thus fostering gender mainstreaming.

In OECD countries, gender units or focal points in line ministries are predominantly responsible for raising awareness of the benefits of gender equality, developing the gender equality policy/strategy/action plan for the ministry, and supporting gender mainstreaming (OECD, 2019[7]). Ideally, a gender mainstreaming ecosystem within line ministries implies the involvement of the staff responsible for research, policy development, programme design, evaluation, financial and people management, procurement, and front-line delivery (OECD, 2019[7]). In this respect, it is important to make a clear distinction between gender mainstreaming support units for sectoral policies and those for human resource management (e.g. responsible for ensuring gender balance in recruitment and promotion, work-life balance and a gender-sensitive work environment) (OECD, 2023[14]). Some OECD countries, such as Canada, have also established a network of "gender champions" appointed at senior management level in line ministries to convey key commitments to gender mainstreaming across their respective institutions and be the spokesperson for related initiatives and results (Government of Canada, n.a.[15]).

In Egypt, some ministries and national entities currently have EOUs that are tasked with improving the working conditions of their female employees and combating discrimination in the workplace. Established by ministerial decrees, each EOU is expected to collect data and information on women working in ministries and affiliated entities in all job categories and propose initiatives to empower them, as well as solutions for any issues they may face as a result of gender-based discrimination. To fulfil their mandate,

EOUs also co-ordinate with the NCW to raise awareness on the goals of the National Strategy for the Empowerment of Egyptian Women 2030, propose training courses for women wishing to achieve leadership positions and devise solutions to overcome the obstacles that women may experience in the workplace. To this effect, in 2019, the NCW issued a training manual to raise awareness of equal opportunities and gender roles, targeting both women and men. In addition, some of the units work to empower people with disabilities within public institutions. Box 7.1 provides details on MPEDIC's EOU as an example.

Box 7.1. MPEDIC's Equal Opportunities Unit

MPEDIC established its EOU in 2021, following Ministerial Decree No. 9 of 2021. The EOU works on three levels to implement its tasks:

- At the institutional level, it has so far defined its vision, mission goals and values and designed its administrative structural framework with details on the structure, human capacity needs, tasks and required qualifications. The unit has also reportedly implemented a programme on gender-sensitive planning, gender indicators and monitoring of equal opportunities.

- With respect to digitalisation, the unit has set up tools for digitalising its tasks, such as a Gender E-Library Platform, a Communication Platform and an interactive dashboard to showcase data on the ministry's employees.

- Regarding awareness-raising, training and communication efforts, the EOU has organised various initiatives, including a Family Day and a series of workshops with employees to share information on job levels and leadership positions, training opportunities and leave and to foster dialogue on how to improve the work environment.

The MPEDIC EOU also holds dialogues with other ministries, the NCW, members of parliament, representatives of other countries, international organisations and civil society to exchange best practices on relevant topics.

Source: Information provided by the Government of Egypt in 2023.

As emerged during stakeholder interviews, there is no standard practice in place for EOUs and their size and positioning vary across line ministries and agencies. For example, while they report directly to the minister or deputy minister in some cases, others are accountable to other departments dealing with human resources, international co-operation, etc. Consequently, the capacities of EOUs and the ability to influence decisions at the highest level seem uneven. Furthermore, in most cases, EOUs are not established with full-time positions, appointed officials often having to deal with conflicting tasks and demands. Stakeholders especially reported the absence of permanent technical staff and limited budget allocations as main challenges, which *de facto* reduce the scope, performance and impact of the work of the units.

In this regard, there is scope to further institutionalise the mandate and role of the EOUs. Providing a legal basis for the role of EOUs would insulate them from political fluctuations and give them a greater sense of institutional legitimacy and stability. Legislation should clarify the responsibilities assigned to the units and ensure that these roles are established as full-time positions and have a sufficient resource base to carry out their functions. Strengthening the capacities of the EOUs to ensure that individuals are assigned systematically and have the appropriate knowledge, skills, resources and time to promote gender equality initiatives within the ministry would be a critical step in this regard. The work of the EOUs should focus on promoting the representation and empowerment of women in their diversity, making sure that they also create career opportunities for women from under-represented or disadvantaged groups. As good practice, it would also be important to promote a gender-balanced representation within the EOUs themselves since pursuing gender equality is not only a concern for women but should involve and engage men as well.

In the medium to longer term, the GoE could also consider expanding the mandate of the EOUs to act as strategic policy branches and provide advice and support on how to integrate gender equality perspectives in the policy work of the ministries, wherever possible with an intersectional lens, to ensure that the needs and interests of diverse groups of women (e.g. women with a disability or living in remote governorates) are taken into account. As reported during OECD interviews, EOUs in some ministries have already proposed activities for the promotion of gender equality in their policy sectors by taking advantage of their strategic positioning within their respective institutions. To this effect and to go beyond the support that EOUs currently provide to the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment within ministries themselves, it would be key to build the units' capacity and expertise to promote gender-sensitive policymaking and involve staff responsible for research, policy development, programme design, evaluation, financial management, procurement and front-line delivery (OECD, 2019[7]) in all ministry EOUs. With the support of the NCW, the CAOA and NIGSD could back these efforts through training, guidelines and manuals, as discussed in the following subsections. By doing so, Egypt could make further significant progress in advancing gender mainstreaming across the whole government. Czechia offers a good practice example that could inspire Egypt in the future (Box 7.2).

Box 7.2. Gender Focal Points in Czechia

In Czechia, gender focal points, also known as gender equality co-ordinators, are established in each of the 14 ministries to oversee the gender equality agenda and implement gender mainstreaming in their areas of responsibility based on a government resolution (No. 464 of 20 April 2005). The Department of Gender Equality, the central gender equality institution, is in contact with the gender focal points and organises regular meetings to inform them of relevant developments in the agenda. In 2018, the government issued the Standard of the Gender Focal Point (GFP) Positions, which defines seven factors relevant to the position and considered crucial to the effective promotion of gender equality:

- **Organisational placement**: GFPs are located in the Office of the State Secretary or in the Cabinet of the Minister to enable the cross-cutting application of gender equality perspectives across the line ministry's activities.
- **Job description in an internal directive**: The main job responsibilities of GFPs include policy and programme development by ensuring that the line ministry's priorities for gender equality are aligned with national policy: consultation and co-ordination; gender mainstreaming; education and awareness; support for measures to reconcile work and personal life; international co-operation.
- **Competencies**: GFPs have the opportunity to participate in internal review processes for (non-) legislative materials, contribute to gender impact assessments, have access to the legislative electronic library and sit on management meetings when the agenda concerns gender equality issues. They are provided anonymised statistical data on the remuneration and education of line ministry employees.
- **Qualification requirements**: GFPs' gender expertise varies but the standard recommends appointing graduates with degrees in gender studies, law and social sciences. GFPs are required to pass a relevant public service examination in a related field and have at least a B1 level of proficiency in English.
- **Deepening of knowledge**: gender training for GFPs should be officially recognised by their employers as part of continuing professional development.
- **Extent of working time**: GFPs should have full-time (or at least part-time) positions to promote gender equality within line ministries' internal processes and policymaking.

> • **Key rules for establishing and functioning ministerial working groups and task forces for gender equality**: Working groups are established by an internal directive defining their mandate and rules of procedure. At least a significant part of their members should have decision-making competencies. The working groups meet at least four times per year and are chaired by the member with the highest position. GFPs act as secretaries of the working groups.
>
> Source: OECD (2023[16]), *Gender Equality in the Czech Republic: Strengthening Government Capacity for Gender-sensitive and Inclusive Recovery*, https://doi.org/10.1787/c5a3086f-en.

CAOA could further support gender mainstreaming by expanding its training offer and developing guidance material for EOUs with the NCW

Established by Law No. 118/1964 and amended by Law No. 6/2021, the CAOA is the government agency responsible for managing the Egyptian civil service (See Chapters 3 and 4). In line with the provisions of the Civil Service Law (No. 81/2016), CAOA works to ensure that public sector employees have equal opportunities without any kind of discrimination among all employees. To this effect, the agency has established a specific Equal Opportunities Department to ensure that all public entities adopt practices to promote gender balance, prevent harassment and guarantee equal opportunities for all employees, including people with disabilities. As reported during stakeholder interviews, CAOA is in direct contact with the EOUs established in other government institutions to collect data on women's representation, recruitment and promotions regularly but is also working to set up a task force to foster collaboration.

Moreover, CAOA is mandated with identifying the capacity-building needs of Egyptian civil servants and providing specific training. The 2015 OECD Recommendation on Gender Equality in Public Life (hereinafter the 2015 OECD Gender Recommendation) notes the importance of government capabilities for gender mainstreaming at all levels of government, for example, through training, engaging experts and disseminating relevant data and information (OECD, 2016[6]). Currently, CAOA's training programmes relevant to gender equality are mainly focused on leadership development and human rights. As part of its mandate to build the capacity of civil servants, CAOA could increase its key role in promoting gender mainstreaming, by designing, in close co-ordination with the NCW and the NIGSD, systematic training modules on the benefits of gender equality and mainstreaming, collection and analysis of gender-sensitive data, and use of tools for gender-sensitive policymaking, such as gender impact assessments. In the medium term, with the support of the NCW, it could also continue developing and updating manuals and guidelines for the EOUs in line ministries and agencies, to make sure they can effectively carry out their expanded functions in support of gender-sensitive policymaking in their sectoral areas of responsibility. Similar supporting material should also be offered to managers and policy analysts in line ministries, who would be the final actors responsible for integrating gender equality perspectives into their corresponding policy areas. Leveraging the gender expertise of the NCW would be beneficial, as the Council has already reportedly developed brochures on planning, monitoring and budgeting from a gender equality perspective.

Gender mainstreaming could be integrated more systematically into training provided by the NIGSD to all civil servants

The NIGSD is a para-public economic authority under MPEDIC with advisory, training and research functions (OECD, Forthcoming[17]). In 2020, with a decision made by the Council of Ministers, the NIGSD replaced the National Management Institute to promote good governance and enhance the development of human capital, in line with Egypt Vision 2030. The NIGSD is tasked with carrying out regular training of public sector employees on topics related to governance and sustainable development (OECD, Forthcoming[17]). It also collaborates with the NCW in designing training programmes, including a women leadership flagship programme for female civil servants with high potential covering topics such as gender

equality in the workplace, human resource management and sustainable development. The women's leadership training programme began in 2018 in 11 governorates (MPED, 2021[18]) succeeded in training around 12,000 women from 27 Egyptian Governorates to date. It is important to note that other institutions, such as the National Training Academy and the MoIC (i.e. through the Shabab Balad initiative), have also been supporting programs targeting women to complement the ongoing efforts of the NIGSD.

On this basis, there is scope to expand the training offer further and include modules on gender mainstreaming as part of the programmes on governance and sustainable development. Going forward, it would be important that these trainings are developed jointly with the NCW, building on the existing MOU, to expand the offer to all civil servants, both women and men, including at senior levels. Working in close co-ordination with the CAOA would foster synergies and avoid duplication.

Fostering gender mainstreaming in strategic planning

OECD research suggests that deep-rooted gender biases, entrenched social norms and stereotypes can influence policymaking and inadvertently shape laws, regulations and policies in ways that perpetuate gender inequalities (OECD, 2019[7]). Even policies that seem gender-neutral and are assumed to affect both women and men equally can unintentionally widen gender gaps if they do not consider the different needs, experiences and challenges of various societal groups. Gender mainstreaming, as a strategy for assessing the implications of policies on women and men and incorporating their needs into all government action, can help make better decisions to drive gender equality objectives (OECD, 2021[19]).

The 2015 OECD Gender Recommendation calls for mainstreaming gender equality in designing, developing, implementing and evaluating relevant public policies and budgets (OECD, 2016[6]). It also stipulates that countries should develop and implement a whole-of-government strategy for effective gender equality and mainstreaming. In particular, the OECD recommends adopting a dual approach to strategic planning for gender equality by combining cross-cutting national gender strategies with gender objectives integrated into government strategies at the national and sectoral levels (in such areas as national development, environmental protection, transport, infrastructure, etc.) to foster coherent implementation of strategic plans across the whole of government.

The understanding of the concept of gender mainstreaming in line ministries could be further improved

In Egypt, there is institutional awareness – mainly at the top level – of the importance of gender equality, which creates a central foundation for strengthening the country's efforts in this regard. Leveraging this, there is an opportunity to make further progress and ensure that gender concerns are well established in the policy process across all sectors.

As set forth by the 2015 OECD Gender Recommendation, securing commitment to the gender equality agenda from the top, especially political leadership, can play a significant role in making gender equality a priority for the government (OECD, 2016[6]). In particular, line ministries and agencies' leadership reported a willingness to promote and progress towards gender equality. At the same time, OECD interviews at the technical level highlighted opportunities to improve the understanding of the concept of gender mainstreaming, often conflated with the promotion of women's representation and leadership in public institutions. In other cases, there is also a prevalent sense that having a high share of women officials working in line ministries can automatically contribute to ensuring gender-sensitive policymaking. Looking ahead, raising awareness and enhancing the knowledge and understanding of gender-related issues in line ministries would be crucial. Offering capacity-development programmes with specific modules on gender mainstreaming and the use of government tools for gender-sensitive policymaking, as explained in the previous section, would be effective in filling these gaps.

There is scope to promote the adoption of a dual approach to gender mainstreaming across the whole of government

In practice, the gender mainstreaming approach in Egypt focuses on a number of targeted actions to tackle discrimination and gender gaps in certain areas rather than mainstreaming gender equality in the design, development, implementation and evaluation of all public policies and budgets. The OECD recommends that countries combine specific projects to address equality gaps with broader gender mainstreaming efforts, ensuring that all policies and services respond to women's and men's different needs and interests. When policies systematically integrate a gender equality perspective and all government institutions are willing and equipped with the capacities and resources to do so, gender equality is pursued in projects and actions across all sectors and levels of government (OECD, 2023[14]).

MPEDIC has recently undertaken efforts to promote the integration of a gender equality lens in public policy planning. In fact, with the support of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), it published the *Conceptual Manual for a Gender-Responsive Sustainable Development Plan* (MPED, 2022[20]), with the aim to support government institutions in developing policies and plans that respond to the needs of various groups in society (Box 7.3).

Box 7.3. Egypt's Conceptual Manual for a Gender-Responsive Sustainable Development Plan

Published in March 2022 by MPEDIC, the *Conceptual Manual for a Gender-Responsive Sustainable Development Plan* provides a rationale and conceptual framework for adopting responsive planning approaches that take into account the perspectives and needs of women, children and people with disabilities. After reviewing the main legislative developments to guarantee the rights of those groups, the manual identifies in a matrix a series of targeted interventions benefitting women, children and people with disabilities across different sectors (e.g. education, health, agriculture, water and irrigation, housing, transport, local development, industry, investment and finance, social solidarity, labour force, sports and cultural services, information), together with key performance appraisal indicators and the ministries responsible for the implementation and monitoring of those initiatives. The manual also includes examples of international good practice.

Source: MPEDIC (2022[20]), *Conceptual Manual for a Gender-Responsive Sustainable Development Plan*, https://MPEDIC.gov.eg/AdminPanel/sharedfiles/c3f34142-05bd-446a-aa35-e144e15a70fc_c4895595-91cb-4c0a-b8b8-041447de5d7c_(1).pdf.

Going forward, the manual could be used as a good practice and basis to support further efforts to systematically integrate gender considerations in the policy-planning process and foster a dual approach to gender mainstreaming.

The updated version of Egypt Vision 2030 includes gender equality among its goals and is aligned with the National Strategy for the Empowerment of Egyptian Women 2030

Over the last few years, the MPEDIC, as the ministry responsible for developing Egypt's national development plans, has strengthened its commitment to promoting the participation of women in all aspects of society as part of ongoing efforts to catalyse sustainable development. Notably, empowering women has been a priority in drafting, reviewing and updating Egypt Vision 2030 as the umbrella framework for the country's sustainable development strategy, which was first adopted in 2016.

Incorporating a medium- to long-term whole-of-government vision for gender equality into key strategic documents can convey a country's goal for a gender-equal society and measure its commitment to those

values (OECD, 2023[14]). Egypt Vision 2030, in its updated version, includes "Achieving social justice and equality" as one of its six strategic objectives, aiming to address inequalities across various social groups, especially those who are most vulnerable (i.e. women, children, youth, people with disabilities, individuals with chronic illnesses, the elderly, etc.), and promote regional development. That strategic objective is translated into four goals: i) providing social protection; ii) narrowing the gender gap; iii) inclusion and equal opportunities; and iv) promoting spatial and local development. Each goal is accompanied by actions and associated with targets and quantitative indicators to monitor and evaluate performance. A gender equality lens is also integrated into other strategic objectives and in the discussion of the enablers of the strategy. Furthermore, "Guaranteeing equity and accessibility for all" is one of the four guiding principles of the whole vision, serving as its overarching framework.

The NCW participated in all of the activities and consultations organised by MPEDIC for the drafting and update of Egypt Vision 2030, with the aim to integrate women's perspectives in that strategic document and highlight the importance of promoting equal opportunities. In particular, MPEDIC used the National Strategy for the Empowerment of Egyptian Women 2030 as one of the main references in updating Egypt Vision 2030 in order to foster policy coherence. These efforts have been reflected in the inclusion of more extensive references to gender equality in the updated version of Egypt Vision 2030. The actions proposed in the vision to narrow gender gaps also appear to be generally aligned with the ones outlined in the National Strategy for the Empowerment of Egyptian Women 2030. Moving forward, it would be key to ensure that the targets and indicators included in the updated Egypt Vision 2030 are aligned with the ones set in the strategy and to establish clear roles, responsibilities and lines of accountability to track and assess progress in implementing the vision and, ultimately, closing gender gaps in Egypt. The challenges highlighted in Chapter 2 with respect to the implementation, monitoring and financing of Egypt Vision 2030, as well as the need to strengthen policy co-ordination and participation mechanisms, should also be addressed to foster a whole-of-government implementation of gender-related objectives.

There is scope to strengthen gender mainstreaming in the National Strategy for the Empowerment of Egyptian Women 2030

Developing a sound strategy for gender equality represents a key step towards reducing existing gender gaps by providing a policy umbrella for gender mainstreaming and targeted initiatives to achieve gender-related goals (OECD, 2019[7]). The OECD 2015 Gender Recommendation highlights the importance of strategic planning by recommending that countries set a rationale, action plans, priorities, timelines, objectives, expected outcomes and/or targets, and effective policy planning across public institutions for promoting gender equality (OECD, 2016[6]). It also emphasises that governments should engage relevant stakeholders (including non-governmental actors) in developing their gender strategies to ensure a comprehensive and inclusive approach. In 2021, 30 OECD member countries reported having an active strategic framework for gender equality in place, either in the form of an overarching strategy or a strategy addressing specific gender equality issues, such as violence against women (OECD, 2022[21]).

To complement Egypt Vision 2030, which did not include an independent pillar for women's issues in its first version in early 2017, the GoE launched the National Strategy for the Empowerment of Egyptian Women 2030 as the country's main strategic framework for the promotion of gender equality. The NCW led the development of the strategy and reportedly adopted a participatory approach to include both decision-makers and citizens, with more than 100 000 people involved in the process. The strategy builds around four main pillars (Government of Egypt, 2017[12]):

- **Political empowerment and leadership**, which aims to promote women's political participation in all of its forms, including legislative representation at the national and local levels, prevent discrimination against women in leadership positions in executive and judicial institutions, and prepare women to succeed in these roles.

- **Economic empowerment**, which aims to develop women's capacities, increase their participation in the labour force, including through the support of entrepreneurship, and ensure equal opportunities in all sectors, also in key positions within public institutions and private companies.
- **Social empowerment**, which aims to create opportunities for greater social participation by women, increase their abilities to make informed choices and eliminate harmful and discriminatory practices, both in the public sphere and within the family.
- **Protection**, which aims to eradicate all forms of violence against women and other practices that threaten their lives, safety and dignity, and protect women from environmental risks that may negatively affect them in social and economic terms.

The strategy provides a situation analysis of the current gender equality landscape in Egypt while setting an overarching goal under each pillar described above. It also sets a series of objectives, as well as impact indicators with baseline and quantitative outcome targets expected for 2030. Finally, it outlines targeted interventions that integrate an intersectional approach, as they refer, for example, to young and elderly women and women with disabilities. In this regard, such an approach is well-aligned with OECD benchmarks. To support monitoring progress in achieving the strategy's targets, in 2017, the NCW established the Egyptian Women's Observatory, as described in Box 7.4.

Box 7.4. The Egyptian Women's Observatory

The Egyptian Women's Observatory was established by the NCW in 2017 as a mechanism to follow up on the implementation of goals related to the status of women during the period 2017-30. The observatory is attached to the Egyptian Center for Public Opinion Research (Baseera), a private entity aiming to produce reliable information on public attitudes and trends on issues and policies of public interest. As such, it is formally independent from the government and mainly relies on international funds for its functioning. The observatory represents one of the main tools that the NCW relies on to monitor indicators of the National Strategy for the Empowerment of Egyptian Women 2030. To this effect, it collects data and regularly updates follow-up indicators to monitor progress in the strategy's implementation, and indicators on sustainable development and support indicators, which are published on its website. The observatory also prepares periodic reports and studies on the status of women and existing gender gaps in Egypt.

Source: Information provided by the government of Egypt in 2023; Egypt National Women Observatory (n.d.[22]), Egyptian Women's Observatory, https://en.enow.gov.eg/%D8%B9%D9%86%20%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%B1%D8%B5%D8%AF.

The strategy does not assign any specific roles and responsibilities to ministries and other government agencies, thus potentially limiting whole-of-government implementation. The strategy itself states that the second phase of its preparation should foresee the development of action plans for each of its four pillars to define activities and procedures within a specific timeframe and calculate the costs associated with implementation. According to stakeholder interviews, these plans have not been developed yet. In April 2023, the NCW discussed the results of a mid-term review of the strategy that has not been released publicly, highlighting some improvements with respect to its main pillars (NCW, 2023[23]). More generally, the strategy's efforts to promote gender equality seem to be primarily focused on improving women's status in selected areas, such as education, employment, public life and health. Promoting gender mainstreaming in the implementation process remains marginal. Challenges in this respect may include limited understanding across the government of the benefits and the need to adopt a gender approach, and limited availability and use of gender-disaggregated data (see related subsection below).

With six more years before the strategy expires in 2030, it would be beneficial to establish clear roles and mandates for all government institutions in implementing the strategy through detailed action plans with

adequate resources. The government could also consider developing annual reports highlighting the contribution of line ministries and agencies to the implementation of the strategy, to be publicly released. This would reinforce accountability and help ensure the strategy is effectively implemented. As discussed in the previous section, formalised co-ordination mechanisms should also be put in place between the NCW and line ministries and the Cabinet to foster whole-of-government implementation.

The integration of gender mainstreaming objectives in sectoral policy planning could be further enhanced

Although Egypt Vision 2030 and the National Strategy for the Empowerment of Egyptian Women 2030 include gender goals in various policy areas, gender-related action plans and strategies at the sectoral level have not yet been developed in Egypt. This issue has been compounded by the fact that MPEDIC and NCW have limited power to hold line ministries accountable for their gender equality commitments. Similarly, findings from OECD interviews point to the absence of specific mechanisms and formal governance frameworks to enforce compliance and alignment between sectoral strategies and Egypt Vision 2030 and ensure active collaboration among line ministries (see Chapter 2). The OECD's dual approach to strategic planning for gender equality recommends combining overarching national gender equality frameworks with sectoral strategies integrating gender considerations and objectives in specific policy areas at the ministerial level (OECD, 2019[7]).

From the budgeting side, the MoF has taken several important steps in recent months to advance the implementation of gender and equality responsive budgeting but its impact is yet to be seen. Perhaps the two most notable reforms in this area are: i) the development and publication of MoF Egypt's *Procedural Manual for Gender and Equality Responsive Programme Budgets*; and ii) the requirement for budget entities to prepare and submit gender impact assessments of programmes alongside their submissions of 2024/25 budgets. The MoF Equal Opportunities Unit prepared the manual and published it on the MoF website in April 2024. It aims to raise line ministries' awareness of the concept, benefits, components, tools and methodology to integrate equal opportunities and gender considerations in the various stages of the budget process. As for the gender impact assessments, budget circular instructions included tagging, analysing and reporting on the gender impact assessments for all programmes submitted by line ministries. Both reforms are in line with OECD good practice but will require substantial capacity building and MoF guidance for line ministries.

From the planning side and based on the OECD's assessment, there is an opportunity to build on this effort and further promote a systematic approach to incorporating gender-related goals in sectoral strategies in Egypt. As mentioned above, in 2022, MPEDIC published a new manual *Conceptual Manual for a Gender-Sensitive and Sustainable Development Plan* to promote the adoption of responsive planning approaches that take into account the perspectives and needs of women and other groups of society (Box 7.3). The NCW contributed to the development of the manual and has held some workshops with the MPEDIC and MoF to support the integration of gender-related considerations into sectoral plans and budgets. Further efforts to disseminate the publication among line ministries and to raise awareness of the importance of integrating gender equality perspectives in their policy areas of responsibility could continue and be strengthened in the future.

Going forward, line ministries could be required to systematically translate gender equality objectives laid out in Egypt Vision 2030, in the National Strategy for the Empowerment of Egyptian Women 2030 and in any other future plans into ministerial strategic plans, adequately resourced and including gender-sensitive target indicators. As a starting point, the MPEDIC could consider communicating the content of its conceptual manual widely, in specific workshops with line ministries and in co-operation with the NCW, in order to foster an understanding of gender-responsive planning. Then, in the medium to longer term, with the support of the NCW, the MPEDIC should further develop a systematic approach and guidance for line ministries to integrate gender equality objectives into their sectoral strategies. The NCW could consider

grouping all guidance material for relevant ministries on a centralised platform, aiming to create a one-stop shop for public entities to consult manuals, templates, documents and other important sources to mainstream gender equality as part of their daily policymaking work. As the ministry responsible for allocating public resources, MPEDIC could strengthen the formal links between sectoral gender-related commitments and the budget process by setting the integration of gender objectives and indicators in the strategic plans of line ministers as a condition to access public funds and a core criterion against which the quality and implementation of plans are reviewed. This would foster policy alignment and implementation while supporting the MoF's efforts to promote gender-responsive budgeting. In Colombia, for example, to embed the gender perspective in planning and budgeting in different economic sectors, the National Planning Department (DNP) developed a *Guide for the Inclusion of the Gender Approach in the Planning Cycle of Public Policies and for the Use of the Budget Tracer for Gender Equality*, complemented by *Sectoral Planning and Budgeting Guidelines* as described in Box 7.5.

Box 7.5. Gender-based guidelines for Colombian line ministries

To contribute to closing gender gaps in Colombia, the DNP has introduced various strategies to reinforce the use of a gender approach in institutional planning and budgeting. With this goal in mind, in 2021, the DNP developed the *Guide for the Inclusion of the Gender Approach in the Planning Cycle of Public Policies and for the Use of the Budget Tracer for Gender Equality*. The tracer is a tool that helps public institutions track investment and resources aimed at closing gender gaps. To integrate a gender equality perspective in planning and budgeting in different economic sectors, the DNP (with the support of USAID and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women or UN Women) also developed complementary *Sectoral Planning and Budgeting Guides*. These were prepared jointly with the Ministries of Commerce, Industry and Tourism, of Information and Communications Technologies, and of Mines and Energy. The guidelines stem from multiple regional workshops in which members of women's organisations, civil society, academia and international organisations, using a participatory methodology, expressed their views on the problems related to gender equality in the various sectors. These handbooks provide indicators to identify gaps and barriers for women in each sector and include recommendations by strategic lines. They also seek to determine objectives of investment projects or other initiatives or activities related to the gender perspective, with the purpose of mainstreaming gender considerations at different levels of the public sector.

Source: OECD (2023[24]), *OECD Review of Gender Equality in Colombia*, https://doi.org/10.1787/a559fc5e-en.

Enhanced availability of gender-disaggregated data could further support inclusive and gender-sensitive policymaking

Gender-disaggregated data are essential for understanding women's and men's different needs and circumstances and delivering appropriate and evidence-based policy responses and outcomes (OECD, 2023[14]). Indeed, the updated version of Egypt Vision 2030 recognises data availability as a prerequisite and enabler for achieving SDGs, including gender equality. As observed in OECD countries as well, challenges persist with respect to the collection and use of data and evidence in support of inclusive and gender-sensitive policymaking in Egypt.

The Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS) is Egypt's official statistical agency, which collects, processes, analyses and disseminates statistical data and conducts the census. A specific sustainable development unit in CAPMAS devises several sustainable development indicators, including women's empowerment and gender equality. Stakeholders acknowledged that the availability of data disaggregated by gender remains limited, although CAPMAS and the MPEDIC are reportedly joining forces

to improve in this respect. CAPMAS also co-ordinates with the NCW when preparing gender-related surveys (such as the ones on the prevalence of female genital mutilation).

In particular, the 2015 OECD Gender Recommendation emphasises the importance of strengthening the evidence base for gender-sensitive policymaking and systematically measuring progress towards gender equality performance based on impact indicators and measurable outcomes (OECD, 2016[6]). In Egypt, stakeholders highlighted limited data and evidence as a key barrier to tracking performance and evaluating the impact of projects targeting women. As discussed in the previous subsections, Egypt Vision 2030 and the National Strategy for the Empowerment of Egyptian Women 2030 set a series of targets and quantitative indicators that are used as key performance indicators to monitor progress in the implementation of gender-related projects. The Observatory of Egyptian Women (Box 7.4) supports this process by collecting and disseminating data to assess progress on the four pillars of the strategy.

More generally, findings from OECD interviews reveal that gender-disaggregated data in Egypt are collected and used in some sectors only, such as health and education. Furthermore, the lack of data standards hinders the capacity of institutions to collect relevant information, share it and use it for policymaking purposes. Consequently, gender impact assessments[1] or other forms of gender analysis of policies and programmes to analyse their differential impacts on women and men are almost never conducted, except for some specific projects undertaken with the support of international organisations. When policies do not take into consideration the structural gender inequalities embedded in society, they risk perpetuating and reinforcing them. Gender impact assessments can help prevent such unintended consequences and allow policymakers to foresee the impact of a new regulation, policy or programme on women's and men's lives (OECD, 2023[14]).

Looking ahead, Egypt could consider strengthening the collection, analysis, dissemination and use of quality data disaggregated by gender and, in the medium to longer term, by other individual characteristics (e.g. age, migrant status, geographic location, disability status) to promote inclusive and gender-sensitive policymaking. With the support of CAPMAS, the collection and availability of gender-disaggregated data should be expanded to a wide range of sectors, including those traditionally considered gender-neutral (such as environment, transportation, etc.) to fill the knowledge gap and raise awareness among line ministries of the use of such data to inform sectoral policymaking, monitoring and evaluation. Additionally, to translate data into policy-relevant knowledge, it would be important to provide training and tools to strengthen the skills and capacities across the government to ensure the availability and accessibility of gender-disaggregated and intersectional data. In the long term, this would help the GoE adopt a more systematic approach to the use of gender impact assessments as a tool in support of evidence-based policymaking.

Promoting gender mainstreaming in the PARP

Equal representation of women and men in the public sector is a key indicator of progress towards diversity and gender equality and can contribute to shaping public policies and services that adequately respond to the needs of all members of society (OECD, 2023[25]). Achieving substantive equality between women and men in public service employment is also linked to gender-balanced policies and quality service delivery, which prompt perceptions of the civil service as exemplary, responsible, responsive and legitimate and, in turn, contributes to greater public trust in government action. The OECD recommends that countries take measures to improve gender equality in public employment by promoting the flexibility, transparency and fairness of public employment systems and policies to ensure fair pay and equal opportunities for women and men with diverse backgrounds and experience (OECD, 2016[6]).

There is scope to further underpin equality and representativeness values in the PARP

As illustrated in previous chapters, the GoE has promoted a wide public administration reform process over the past few years to transform the state administrative apparatus by modernising its operations, adopting new technologies and upskilling the public workforce. CAOA, as the custodian of the public administration reform agenda, has progressively worked towards ensuring the integration of women into the public workforce as well as the provision of equal opportunities. While commitment to gender equality is expressed in Egypt at the highest political level, there is scope to further adjust the reform plan in order to reflect this will for anchoring gender equality in Egyptian public administration. This would also allow to better align PARP objectives with those of Egypt Vision 2030.

The PARP, launched in 2014, includes establishing a merit-based system for employment, promotion and pay among its guiding principles. The 2015 OECD Gender Recommendation stipulates the importance of promoting merit-based recruitment, which is essential for providing equal access to public employment and opportunities for career development and growth (OECD, 2023[14]). The sixth pillar of the 2014 PARP version, entitled "Enhancing citizen-state relationship", also specifies that some policies for gender equality in the civil service were adopted to that effect and supported through the establishment of EOUs. To this end, CAOA established a general department for equal opportunities that co-ordinates with the different EOUs across the government. Although the NCW was reportedly consulted in the development of the PARP, there is no gender mainstreaming specific section. Therefore, there is scope to further develop a government-wide, compelling vision for gender equality in the public sector by strengthening some fundamental civil service values and principles, such as equality and representativeness, which have very likely contributed to increasing the number of women in public sector employment across the OECD (OECD, 2023[14]).

Embedding a gender lens across the strategic framework would be all the more important in the current process undertaken by the CAOA to further update the PARP. The PARP being a living document, in future revisions, could concretely benefit from further integrating gender equality and mainstreaming lens into its pillars in line with the "economic empowerment" pillar of the National Strategy for the Empowerment of Egyptian Women 2030, which aims to ensure equal opportunities for women in all sectors, including in key positions in public institutions (see previous section).

The Civil Service Law provides a legislative basis for the promotion of gender equality in public employment and further efforts are desirable to ensure that provisions do not reinforce gender stereotypes

On top of the efforts to reform the state apparatus, Egypt issued a new Civil Service Law (No. 81/2016) to increase the efficiency of the service delivery process and enhance transparency and accountability (See Chapter 4). The law establishes a new system for recruitment, promotion and appointment of senior positions to achieve justice and equality of opportunity. Furthermore, it includes a series of provisions granting benefits to female civil servants.

In particular, the law enhances women's rights at work, guaranteeing them the right to apply for public positions in units of the state's administrative apparatus according to merit and without discrimination. It also gives women working in the civil service the right to promotion based on seniority and performance and guarantees them the right to apply for leadership and supervisory positions. Moreover, the law gives both women and men the right to apply for part-time work for 3 days a week at 65% pay. The law also offers women and men: sick and emergency leave; leave to accompany a spouse or a sick person; the right to take leave on test days for employees enrolled in academic programmes; and the right to reduce the number of daily working hours for the care of a child with disabilities. Importantly, the law entitles women employed in the public sector to take four months of maternity leave a maximum of three times during their entire employment period (while the previous Law No. 48/1978 allowed only three months)

and to reduce the number of working hours in the event of pregnancy and breastfeeding. The law does not foresee paternity and parental leave and offers unpaid childcare leave only to women, with the risk of reinforcing gender stereotypes, further confining women to home responsibilities only, and favouring the recruitment and promotion of male employees as observed in other countries, including in the MENA region (OECD, 2018[26]). Table 7.1 provides an overview of the measures adopted by some OECD countries to enhance work-life balance in the public sector.

Table 7.1. Work-life balance measures in public employment in OECD countries (2017)

Work-life balance measures	Percentage of countries
Leave to take care of a sick family member	87
Leave to take care of an elderly family member	87
Childcare facilities provided by the public employer	73
Subsidies for childcare	87
Flexible start, working hours and time saving	100
Part-time employment solutions	87
Teleworking	93
Condensed work week	73
Specific measures to accommodate the needs of pregnant women	87
Specific measures to accommodate the needs of breastfeeding women	93

Note: Data was provided by 15 OECD countries.
Source: OECD (2019[7]), *Fast Forward to Gender Equality: Mainstreaming, Implementation and Leadership*, https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/g2g9faa5-en.

Work-life balance initiatives contribute to higher women's employment rates, creating a diverse public sector workforce and improving public perceptions about the sector's employment, with positive effects on recruitment and retention efforts (OECD, 2014[27]). In Egypt, going forward, it would be important to continue developing work-life balance policies and initiatives and facilitating continuous support systems for family members' care by offering flexibility to both men and women, mothers and fathers. In doing so, the CAOA may study and assess the effectiveness and impact of the measures that were taken during the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as those experimented on during September and August 2023 allowing work from home once per week, to guide further actions towards promoting more work-life balance solutions. This would be particularly important in the future, considering that stakeholder discussions revealed concerns about the viability of conciliating work and family commitments after the move to the New Administrative Capital (see Chapter 3), which would require longer commute times. The promotion of such policies should be accompanied by long-term efforts to change gender norms outlining how women and men are expected to behave, as well as the current perceptions about work-life balance measures and other time flexibility options. This includes, for example, addressing concerns about their potential detrimental impact on career aspirations, particularly for employees in senior positions. Doing so would empower men, including at those senior levels, to take on more family-related responsibilities. In Sweden, for example, the legislation makes it possible for both senior and civil servants to opt for part-time work due to family reasons and a special arrangement called "working time based on trust" allows them to freely arrange their working time (OECD, 2023[14]).

Data collection efforts could be strengthened to foster analysis of gender equality in the public sector and support the development of policies to close gaps

Up-to-date gender-disaggregated and intersectional data are key for public employment planning, development and training, monitoring, evaluating and reporting on all types of human resource management programmes and initiatives (OECD, 2023[14]). Collecting data regularly is important to design initiatives to promote gender equality in the public sector, remove systemic barriers in recruitment and promotion processes, monitor progress in gender equality and hold public institutions and executives accountable (OECD, 2023[14]), as illustrated by the example in Box 7.6.

Box 7.6. Australian Public Service Employment Database

In Australia, the Public Service Commissioner requires agencies to supply data to the Australian Public Service Employment Database (APSED) in order to perform its functions under Section 41 of the Public Service Act 1999. The data are then used to compile reports and evaluate the state of the Australian Public Service (APS). Information on staffing, including trends in the size, structure and composition of the APS, contributes to research and evaluation work on the changing nature of the APS and the impact of people management policies on the structure of the APS. This, in turn, assists agencies in formulating their people management policies and practices. Since 2020, the data from APSED have been presented in a dashboard. The Australian Public Service Employment Database internet interface (APSEDii) is a dashboard presenting information on the workforce characteristics of the APS.

Source: OECD (2023[14]), *Toolkit for Mainstreaming and Implementing Gender Equality 2023*, https://doi.org/10.1787/3ddef555-en.

The GoE is making efforts to improve data collection and analysis of gender equality in the public sector. As explained in Chapter 4, CAOA is reportedly finalising the development of e-profiles for civil service employees, including data on gender, age, qualifications, disability status, job rank, etc. This process has not yet been closed and data on the representation of women in public service (and the exact number of civil servants in the country) have not been released. Challenges in this respect may be due to the fact that, according to stakeholder interviews, data integration across public institutions remains challenging. As of 2020, Egyptian women held 45% of all government jobs (MPED, 2021[28]). Anecdotal evidence also points to an overall balanced representation of women and men. Still, in the absence of detailed data, it is difficult to assess to which extent women and men are equally represented horizontally in all sectors and fields in public administration and vertically at the highest levels. Across the OECD, for example, in 2019, women comprised the majority of employees in the public sector at 58% but composed only 37% of senior management positions in 2020 (OECD, 2022[21]).

Looking ahead, the CAOA should continue promoting the collection and use of gender-disaggregated data to inform the design and delivery of policies and programmes aiming to close remaining gender gaps in the public sector. Civil service employee surveys should be ideally conducted every year, allow disaggregation by gender and integrate a gender-sensitive lens. In particular, a systemic and systematic approach to data collection and analysis of gender representation and equality in the public sector could be supported by the development of an analytical framework for gender equality issues, with requirements for relevant data categories and data sources. The framework should include the examination of a range of various intersecting identity factors such as age, geography, disability status, etc. This would significantly help assess the extent of horizontal and vertical occupational segregation, understand differences in the uptake of flexible arrangements between women and men, and design evidence-based policies and tools to tackle those issues.

Addressing gender norms could further support the modernisation of the Egyptian civil service

Changing the organisational culture and removing gender stereotypes is crucial for attracting and retaining a gender-balanced workforce within the public sector, including at the upper management levels. For cultural shifts to occur, it is important to increase awareness, make efforts to remove biased behaviour and establish a sound process to deal with sexual harassment cases (OECD, 2023[14]).

In Egypt, as observed in various other countries (UNDP, 2023[29]), some societal norms and expectations related to which jobs are suitable for men and women may challenge the CAOA's efforts to modernise the civil service. For example, as revealed by stakeholder interviews, there is scope to increase employee awareness and understanding of the importance of promoting merit-based recruitment and combating favouritism in the public sector. Similarly, traditional gender stereotypes persist in society (OECD, 2023[2]) and can extend to the civil service, where some male employees may reportedly express challenges or discomfort when working under female supervision. As discussed in the previous section on institutional arrangements, EOUs in line ministries have a key role in sensitising on the importance of gender equality, promoting women's empowerment and preventing discrimination in the workplace.

Inappropriate behaviour and all forms of gender-based harassment can be a challenge to women's advancement in public employment. It is most often under-reported and systematic data on the issue are lacking, including in Egypt (Arab Barometer, 2020[30]). OECD countries have adopted a wide range of measures to address sexual harassment in the public sector, including: standardised and confidential complaints procedures; voluntary in-service training for staff on sexual harassment; measures to foster openness and transparency in the workplace culture; and sexual harassment policies (OECD, 2022[21]). However, a limited number of OECD member countries report collecting data on sexual harassment complaints in the public service (OECD, 2019[7]). The GoE reported having standardised, non-confidential complaints procedures for victims that aim to address and prevent sexual harassment in public employment. More generally, the NCW also has a Complaint Office that works closely with the Ministries of Interior, of Health, of Social Solidarity and the Public Prosecution Office. The office receives women's complaints through its branches in 27 governorates, its hotline number and various social media platforms, and offers psychological, social and legal support for victims of violence across the country.

To strengthen its measures to tackle all forms of gender-based harassment, specifically in the public sector, the GoE could consider strengthening existing confidential complaint mechanisms for public employees and undertaking regular confidential assessments, which would likely contribute to obtaining a more realistic estimate of the incidence and nature of harassment, be it online or offline, as well as on the effectiveness of measures to combat it. At the same time, to encourage victims to report cases of sexual harassment, it would be important to develop targeted initiatives within the civil service to raise awareness as well as reduce stigma and fear of retaliation. This becomes particularly crucial as women often occupy subordinate positions, emphasising the importance of tailored measures for effective impact. This could be done by adapting the various existing initiatives and awareness-raising campaigns on violence against women promoted by the NCW to suit the unique context of the civil service.

In addition, consideration could be given to updating and embedding a gender equality lens into the civil service code of conduct, including explicitly mentioning measures to tackle all forms of gender-based harassment or abuse. In this respect, stakeholders confirmed plans to update it by adding a specific chapter on this issue. Finally, EOUs should continue communicating the importance and benefits of promoting women's representation in the public sector to change norms and attitudes that perpetuate gender inequalities, as well as sensitising the existence of institutional mechanisms to report cases of offline and online sexual harassment in the workplace.

Assessing the situation of young people in Egypt

With a share of 60%, young people aged between 18 and 35 represent more than half of the total population in Egypt, a percentage that is foreseen to continue increasing over the next years. This trend emphasises the need for a deep and broad transformation of public governance in the country that takes into account the existing challenges faced by young people. In fact, young Egyptians are still facing numerous challenges that, in some cases, worsened during the global COVID-19 pandemic. Egypt's labour market presents structural challenges and low-quality jobs, which has led young Egyptians, particularly those from vulnerable backgrounds, to turn towards the informal sector and economy. Employment in the informal sector has become widespread in Egypt, with 90% of young workers participating in economic life through this means (OECD, 2023[31]). Egyptian young people also report facing inequalities and difficulties accessing quality education, decent jobs and affordable housing, thus hampering their transition to adulthood and sometimes leading them to migrate (49% of Egyptian people aged 18-29 surveyed in 2020 have considered migrating from their country) (Arab Barometer, 2020[32]). In addition, young people remain disengaged with the possibility of taking part in political life and decision-making, as 35% of young people between 18 and 29 surveyed in 2019 are not interested in politics, compared to an average of 24% of young people across OECD countries (OECD, 2022[5]).

Therefore, and in line with the provisions of the OECD Recommendation of the Council on Creating Better Opportunities for Young People (2022[4]), achieving policy outcomes that are responsive to today's young people and future generations is a matter of priority. It is therefore, crucial to successfully engage young people in public life and ensure that their needs are taken into account (Box 7.7).

Box 7.7. Recommendation of the Council on Creating Better Opportunities for Young People

In June 2022, the OECD Council at the ministerial level adopted a recommendation, agreed upon by OECD member countries, on the proposal of the Employment, Labour and Social Affairs Committee and the Public Governance Committee. This recommendation sets an international standard that both OECD member and non-member countries can use to assess their current practices, identify key areas for improvement and access international good practice.

The recommendation promotes government-wide strategies and sets out a range of policy principles to improve youth measures and outcomes in all relevant areas, including skills and competencies, labour market outcomes and social inclusion and youth well-being, and to strengthen young people's trust in government and public institutions, address age-based inequalities by promoting their participation and representation in public and political life, and strengthen administrative and technical capacities. This legal document outlines how countries can implement government policies that are supportive of young people's needs and highlights the need for a holistic and co-ordinated approach to creating better opportunities and outcomes for young people in public life.

The recommendation is structured around five fundamental components recommending its adherents to:

- Ensure that young people from different backgrounds acquire the relevant skills and knowledge.
- Support young people in their transition into the labour market and enhance the labour market outcomes.
- Advance social inclusion and the well-being of young people.
- Establish the legal, institutional and administrative frameworks needed to build trust among young people from all backgrounds in public institutions.

> - Strengthen administrative and technical capabilities to provide services that take into account the needs of young people across all levels of government.
>
> Source: OECD (2022[4]), *OECD Recommendation of the Council on Creating Better Opportunities for Young People*, https://www.oecd.org/mcm/Recommendation-on-Creating-Better-Opportunities-for-Young-People.pdf.

Nevertheless, defining "youth" is one of the prerequisites to effectively analyse the participation and representation of young people in public life and ensure that policies are targeted and responsive to the specific needs of this age group. There is no international definition or clear age range to determine the period of youth. The United Nations defines youth as people aged between 15 and 24 (UNDESA, n.d.[33]). On the other hand, certain definitions, like the one found in the African Youth Charter, aim to consider the extended period of independence that defines adulthood today by defining youth as the age group from 15 to 35 (African Union, 2009[34]). In Lebanon, Morocco and Tunisia, for instance, "youth" generally covers the period between the ages of 15 and 29 (OECD, 2022[5]). In Egypt, the most commonly used age range by the MoYs to define young people is 18 to 35.

The OECD defines youth as a period of transition from childhood into adulthood, which is characterised by significant changes in young people's lives and the consolidation of their autonomy. Young people refer to individuals aged 15 to 29 to compare outcomes across countries and facilitate standardisation of data collection by age group.

Building administrative and institutional capacities to mainstream the perspectives of young people in policymaking in Egypt

The institutional and policy framework in Egypt could be further enhanced

Effective co-ordination mechanisms among both governmental and non-governmental stakeholders are essential due to the cross-cutting nature of youth policy. In line with the OECD Recommendation of the Council on Creating Better Opportunities for Young People (2022[4]), policies and programmes for young generations should be delivered in a co-ordinated manner to allow young people to better access services and facilitate their transition to an autonomous life (OECD, 2020[35]). Adopting a whole-of-government approach in youth policy, characterised by a shared vision and co-ordination mechanisms, is therefore crucial for aligning diverse stakeholders towards common strategic and operational goals, underpinned by a well-defined distribution of roles and responsibilities (OECD, 2022[5]).

Over the past few years, the GoE has made efforts to enhance its institutional set up to co-ordinate the national youth empowerment agenda and design and implement policies and programmes across sectors and levels of government. This section willassess the policy and institutional capacities provided by the GoE to support young people in their transition to an autonomous life. It will look at how "youth affairs" are being organised across the public administration and different approaches set in place by the GoE to co-ordinate and implement youth policy. It will briefly assess the roles, mandates and responsibilities of the Ministry of Youth and Sports (MoYS), MPEDIC, CAOA, NIGSD and the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (MCIT) and how these governmental stakeholders integrate and mainstream youth across their different policy areas.

The MoYS could play a stronger role in co-ordinating youth policy and fostering youth-sensitive policymaking

The GoE has undertaken various efforts to ensure the integration of young people into public life. Notably, the MoYS is charged with drafting and implementing youth policies, designing and delivering programmes

and services dedicated to young people and advising line ministries in drafting policy. According to MoYS' OECD survey responses, its functions also include providing funding to non-governmental youth stakeholders and regulating all youth authority groups and centres in Egypt. This is consistent with institutional setups across the MENA region, where a majority of public administrations have established a youth ministry often combined with the sports portfolio and, in some cases, the culture portfolio, namely in Algeria, Lebanon, Morocco and Tunisia. There is a clear distinction between the portfolio regarding the organisational and institutional setup, for example establishing a dedicated directorate for sports and another directorate for youth affairs (OECD, 2022[5]). The formal responsibility for youth affairs in OECD countries is often situated within a unit or department within ministries with broader tasks, such as education or social development. Conversely, the youth portfolio is most frequently assigned to a ministry with combined responsibilities in the MENA administrations. Despite its organisational anchoring, government bodies responsible for youth affairs typically undertake similar responsibilities in both OECD governments and MENA administrations. For instance, 91% of OECD government bodies and 4 out of 5 responding entities from MENA administration are tasked with implementing youth policies and programmes and delivering services to young people. They are also responsible for formulating and designing programmes and advising line ministries on designing and delivering youth policies (OECD, 2022[5]).

These trends together underline the importance of formalising and strengthening the mandate and functions of the MoYS while also expanding its youth-related portfolio and elevating youth to the highest priority within the ministry's agenda. In Egypt, several institutions and ministries are implementing youth related- initiatives and programmes. However, there is room for improvement when it comes to monitoring progress and assessing the effectiveness of policies aimed at promoting youth empowerment. This challenge is primarily attributed to the need for greater clarity in defining stakeholder roles and responsibilities. Additionally, there is a need for enhanced training and specialisation within the ministry and increased capacities in line ministries, as emphasised during stakeholder interviews. It was also highlighted that guidelines, manuals and tools could be further developed to effectively implement its mandate and deliver on its functions. Therefore, the MoYS could further strengthen its mandate and fulfil the central authority's role in promoting, co-ordinating and facilitating youth mainstreaming in Egypt. It could play a leading role in co-ordinating the implementation of youth-related programmes and policies with governmental entities, strengthen its advisory role on youth-related issues with line ministries, enhance the ministry's workforce through specialised training and strengthen line ministries' capacities. The MoYS could play a crucial role in establishing clear roles and responsibilities for both state and non-state entities involved in youth initiatives throughout Egypt, both at the national and subnational levels, by building on its existing structures and outreach. Additionally, the MoYS can take the lead in developing a youth policy that is evidence-based, transparent, informed by active participation, inclusive and spanning various sectors. This endeavour should be underpinned by political dedication, sufficient resources and robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms (OECD, 2020[35]).

In addition, in co-ordination with MPEDIC, the MoYS could play a role in monitoring progress of the delivery of youth-related policies under the umbrella of Egypt Vision 2030 and ensure coherence with the vision. This also applies to the national youth strategy that is currently being developed. The MoYS could play a stronger role in supporting MPEDIC in meaningfully engaging line ministries in mainstreaming youth considerations into their policy action and sectoral strategies. To attract and develop talent, the MoYS offers a number of internship programmes and career development programmes for young officials, as well as capacity-building activities to build youth skills. There is an opportunity to co-ordinate closely with the NIGSD and CAOA to consolidate the career development programmes and training offered to young people and staff working across the administration.

The role of MPEDIC could be further strengthened to encourage youth mainstreaming in line ministries and ensure coherence with Egypt Vision 2030

As previously highlighted, MPEDIC is the ministry in charge of developing Egypt's national development plans and updating Egypt Vision 2030. Notably, the first version of Egypt Vision 2030 adopted a mainstream approach across its three social, economic and environmental dimensions to identify avenues for integrating and empowering young people in Egypt. While the updated version does not specifically provide detailed information solely dedicated to youth, it emphasises the importance of investing in Egypt's young population as a key pillar for achieving sustainable development. Egypt Vision 2030 recognises the potential of the country's rapidly growing young population (15-29 year olds) as a pivotal force for economic and social development. It highlights the need to create an enabling environment for young people to unlock their potential, acquire necessary skills and participate actively in decision-making processes. The vision also encourages young people's active civic participation and engagement in decision-making processes at all levels. It highlights the importance of youth representation and involvement in policy formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, recognising their unique perspectives and ability to drive change (MPED, 2023[36]). High-level political commitment and prioritising youth in key strategic government documents are essential to ensure government stakeholder buy-in (OECD, 2020[35]). MPEDIC can, therefore, play a critical role in fostering the political determination and leadership necessary to adopt a cross-sectoral approach, both horizontally, spanning various ministries, and vertically, across different government levels. For instance, MPEDIC could promote inter-ministerial working groups involving representatives from various ministries to collaborate on youth-centric initiatives, thereby facilitating horizontal co-ordination and ensuring that youth-related policies are integrated across different sectors. In Ireland, the 2014-20 National Policy Framework for Children and Young People, Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures (BOBF) aimed to streamline political oversight, inter collaboration and stakeholder engagement by establishing a consolidated framework with clear lines of communication and accountability. New implementation structures were put in place, such as the Children and Young People's Policy Consortium and the Sponsor's Group, a sub-group comprising of departments with lead responsibility for implementation. Further good practices on horizontal co-ordination mechanisms for youth policy are mentioned below.

In addition, MPEDIC could advocate for the inclusion of youth impact assessments in developing strategic plans for various ministries to ensure that the potential effects of policies on youth are considered from the initial planning stages. Some OECD countries have started to implement "youth checks" to assess the potential impact of new regulations on young people with a view to anticipate and mitigate negative effects and ultimately foster more inclusive and youth-friendly societies and economies (OECD, 2018[37]). In addition, sustainability impact assessments can play a crucial role in informing decision-making and strategic planning by identifying cross-cutting challenges and short-term and long-term effects while encouraging multi-stakeholder engagement and integrating intergenerational fairness into sector policies. In Switzerland, the sustainability impact assessment framework is built upon three dimensions (economic, social and environmental) to promote solidarity with both the current generation and with future generations and is operationalised through 15 sustainability criteria, 3 of which specifically emphasise intergenerational fairness (OECD, 2020[35]). Lastly, MPEDIC could collaborate with ministries to establish specific performance indicators related to youth development in key strategic documents to create a measurable framework for evaluating the impact of policies and initiatives on youth.

OECD findings identified opportunities to further expand and formalise opportunities for young people to have a say on the issues that matter most to them and place them at the heart of the sustainable development agenda. At present, there is room for improvement in providing spaces for these actors to share their concerns and directly contribute to the annual strategic planning process led by the MPEDIC, as well as in the development, monitoring and evaluation of sustainable development projects. While it was highlighted that young people were consulted in the formulation of Egypt Vision 2030 through dedicated channels, the consultations largely took place in the review phase when the main targets and

objectives had already been set. The updated Egypt Vision 2030 represents an opportunity to strengthen efforts in this regard, notably by actively involving young people in implementing, monitoring and evaluating its targets and objectives. Engaging youth in national sustainable efforts and the SDGs is essential to foster a more resilient and inclusive society.

Strengthening existing institutional capacities within MPEDIC to engage young people and co-ordinate with other public institutions supporting their empowerment, namely the MoYS, will be vital to ensure sustainable development reforms respond to the needs and expectations of this group. Building on the advisory role of the MoYS when it comes to youth-related matters, MPEDIC could build on the MoYS' expertise to support line ministries in integrating a youth perspective into their policy action and fostering youth-sensitive policymaking. In addition, the MPEDIC could play a stronger role in co-ordinating with the MoYS to monitor the progress of the delivery of youth-related policies and the future national youth strategy to ensure that they are coherent and in line with Egypt Vision 2030. This could entail establishing a robust monitoring framework with targeted indicators and actively engaging with line ministries to establish clear benchmarks and foster collaboration, thereby ensuring impactful and coherent policy delivery in alignment with the goals of Egypt Vision 2030. In Ireland, for example, the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth established an implementation team within the Policy Innovation Unit to drive accountability, cross--government co-ordination and collaboration for better outcomes in child- and youth-related objectives as part of the aforementioned 2014-20 BOBF implementation. This strategic initiative ensured effective implementation and also helped identify emerging trends, foster knowledge transfer and encourage shared responsibilities, highlighting the pivotal role of cross-departmental structures in actively engaging and contributing to Ireland's child and youth-related objectives (OECD, 2024[38]).

There is scope to further develop NIGSD programmes aimed at young graduates

The NIGSD's mandate includes drafting and implementing youth policy and allocating financial resources to line ministries based on the government's priorities, together with the delivery of various programmes, trainings and initiatives targeting young people. It is, therefore, crucial for the NIGSD to co-ordinate with the MoYS, the entity in charge of drafting and implementing youth policy, to ensure that targeted policies are efficiently delivered across the government.

The MPEDIC in cooperation with the NIGSD launched a wide range of programmes and initiatives targeting young people, namely the *Be an Ambassador* programme, to train young people (aged between 18 and 35) on sustainable development and Egypt's policies, opportunities and challenges in achieving its SDGs, Egypt Vision 2030 and social justice. The NIGSD also launched the *She is for a Digital Future* training programme, which aimed at developing and strengthening the capabilities of young women to bridge the digital divide and develop their knowledge of SDGs, financial inclusion and gender mainstreaming. The NIGSD also implemented a training programme on *Strengthening the Understanding of International Trade for Youth* that supported young innovators and young representatives of small and medium-sized enterprises in their integration into global value chains by spreading export awareness and providing young people with academic content and training on export for incubated projects (NIGSD, 2021[39]).

The NIGSD is currently in the process of launching a training programme for government officials to raise awareness and train them on how to engage with people with special needs. The programme will target government employees responsible for recruitment in the public sector, those responsible for providing training and those in mobile services units. This could be an opportunity to expand the training programme and include young people with disabilities and vulnerable groups. The NIGSD, in co-ordination with the MoYS and CAOA, can further expand its internship programmes and programmes targeting young graduates to attract them to join the civil service. This will be even more important to ensure that initiatives to engage young people are well-coordinated among institutions in Egypt and lead to a larger-scale impact.

MCIT could further expand its youth-related programmes in co-operation with MoYS

In charge of leading the implementation of the national strategy Digital Egypt, MCIT plays a crucial role in supporting youth-related initiatives in Egypt by providing training, support and resources to help young people succeed in the digital economy. In alignment with Egypt Vision 2030, Digital Egypt seeks to transform Egypt into a digital society by 2030. It is built upon three main pillars: digital transformation, digital skills and jobs, and digital innovation. This strategic framework also aims to improve transparency, enhance stakeholder engagement and reduce corruption. Promoting the use of digital communication tools can be highly effective in reaching a large number of young people, gathering input on youth-relevant issues and building a more participatory political culture (OECD, 2019[40]).

Fostering digital literacy among youth, MCIT grants access to a wealth of online resources and educational content, equipping them with the essential skills to navigate digital technologies effectively and securely. In addition, MCIT provides online resources and training materials to individuals actively seeking to enhance their digital proficiencies. MCIT also offers various training programmes covering key domains such as coding, web design and digital marketing. Furthermore, the MCIT has established numerous innovation hubs across Egypt, creating collaborative spaces for young innovators to connect, innovate and spearhead new technologies. Moreover, MCIT is committed to supporting young entrepreneurs through a range of programmes, including funding opportunities, mentorship and networking events, all designed to facilitate the initiation and growth of technology-oriented businesses run by young innovators. More specifically, MCIT launched the Digital Egypt Builders Initiative in September 2020, which provides free scholarships to 1 000 university graduates annually majoring in engineering and computer science in collaboration with a number of international universities specialising in modern technologies as well as international companies specialising in information and communication technology. In addition, launched in December 2020 by the MCIT in collaboration with the MoYS, the Digital Tomorrow initiative aims to build the digital capacities of young people nationwide. The initiative is part of the *Tawar w Ghayar* (Develop and Change) project, implemented by the Central Administration for Projects and Youth Training at the MoYS and the Institutional Development, Training and Human Capacity Building Sector at the MCIT, which serves as a concrete example of successful partnerships in the planning and implementation of youth-related programmes. Building upon such initiatives, the MCIT could consider further expanding its youth-related training programmes and activities in co-operation with the MoYS.

Enhancing central co-ordination mechanisms between the government stakeholders working on youth-related policies and programmes

In Egypt, youth policy and services programmes are designed and delivered by a variety of governmental and non-governmental stakeholders. As mentioned above, the MoYS is responsible for designing and delivering programmes and services dedicated to young people, while MPEDIC and NIGSD provide young people and civil servants with programmes and capacity building in sustainable development-related areas through the "*Be an Ambassador*" programme.

Avoiding fragmentation and duplication and promoting synergies requires strong co-ordination mechanisms across different ministries and agencies. High-level political commitment is an initial and critical step in rallying diverse governmental and non-governmental stakeholders around a shared vision for young people. This commitment serves as a catalyst for launching efforts towards developing a comprehensive strategy for young people across different sectors, galvanising stakeholders to actively implement it and fostering greater public awareness regarding government initiatives targeting young people. In some OECD countries such as Austria, Colombia, Italy and Japan, youth policy is guided by the centre of government (OECD, 2020[35]).

Stakeholders highlighted that the MoYS co-ordinates with other line ministries in their annual planning process for sustainable development plans and investments to support programmes for and by young

people through standing committees, working groups, cross-departmental co-ordination meetings, informal co-ordination and memoranda of understanding (MoUs). However, it remains unclear whether these bodies have indeed taken place and if they convene regularly or ad hoc.

Inter-ministerial or inter-departmental co-ordination bodies consist of ministries tasked with implementing specific obligations outlined in the national youth policy. The ministry formally responsible for overseeing youth affairs consistently plays a role in these structures and typically takes on co-ordinating and preparing meetings. For example, in Slovenia, every ministry designates a specialised youth focal point responsible for enhancing co-ordination efforts with the Council of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia for Youth (URSM) and other government ministries (see Box 7.8 for other examples) (OECD, 2020[35]; 2021[41]).

Box 7.8. Good practices on horizontal co-ordination mechanisms for youth policy

Luxembourg

Luxembourg has established an inter-departmental committee with the aim to co-ordinate youth affairs and effectively implement commitments of the national youth policy. This committee is comprised of representatives from various ministries, including those responsible for children and youth, children's rights, foreign affairs, local affairs, culture, co-operation and development, education, equal opportunities, family, justice, housing, police, employment, health and sports. Specialised working groups are occasionally formed on an as-needed basis and tasked with specific topics. Generally, only ministries with relevant portfolios participate in the respective thematic working groups. Inter-ministerial co-ordination bodies may also be supplemented by working groups, in which line ministries may assume leadership roles in co-ordinating their activities.

United States

An Interagency Working Group on Youth Programs has been set up in the United States to play a role in facilitating co-ordinated federal initiatives related to youth. Within individual ministries, focal points may be designated to supervise youth affairs and synchronise youth-related programmes with the relevant youth affairs entity.

Source: OECD (2020[35]), *Governance for Youth, Trust and Intergenerational Justice: Fit for All Generations?*, https://doi.org/10.1787/c3e5cb8a-en.

Setting up strong co-ordination mechanisms to co-ordinate youth-related policies across the administration is particularly relevant in Egypt, where stakeholders need to define clear roles and responsibilities in tracking progress, evaluating the impact of policies, co-ordinating youth-related policies and promoting youth empowerment in Egypt. After establishing an inter-ministerial co-ordination body, it is crucial to guarantee its efficiency by fostering inclusivity in its membership, defining clear roles and responsibilities, and conducting regular meetings (OECD, 2020[35]). The GoE could further work towards achieving a clearer vision for policies and services for young people through different tools and means, including:

- Adopting "youth laws".
- Developing a national youth strategy.
- Ensuring youth mainstreaming in strategic planning and sector policy planning.
- Collecting, sharing and making use of age-disaggregated data for youth-sensitive policymaking.

Achieving policy coherence and co-ordination through youth laws

Youth laws are an effective tool to support policy coherence and inter-ministerial co-ordination. In fact, national youth laws establish the institutional framework of youth policy and work and often cover youth-related activities across the level of government (OECD, 2020[35]). They also often define age brackets and provide a clear understanding and definition of young people and youth institutions (OECD, 2020[35]). These legal frameworks shape youth's access to engagement opportunities in public life and reflect an overall vision on the role and status of young people in social and political life (OECD, 2018[37]). As of 2020, 14 OECD member countries adopted a national youth law (OECD, 2020[35]). In several OECD countries, these youth laws also govern the government's support for non-governmental stakeholders in the youth sector (Box 7.9). However, as of 2022, no public administration within the MENA region had established a comprehensive national youth law (OECD, 2022[5]). Nonetheless, in some countries, governments have introduced legislation to delineate the responsibilities of the lead ministry overseeing youth affairs or have enacted laws in various sectors to clarify these roles, as demonstrated in the case of Jordan. Regulation No. 78 of 2016, entitled "The administrative organization of the Ministry of Youth", delineates the ministry's organisational structure following the transition from the Higher Council for Youth to the establishment of a dedicated ministry (OECD, 2021[41]).

Box 7.9. National youth laws in OECD member countries

Colombia

In 2013, Colombia enacted the Statutory Law on Youth Citizenship (*Ley Estatutaria de Ciudadanía Juvenil*) to establish the institutional framework for youth policy and youth-related initiatives and to define the rights of young people. This law introduced the National Youth System (*Sistema Nacional de Juventud*), which facilitates the active involvement of young individuals in shaping, executing and assessing youth policy. Additionally, the law designates the Presidential Council for Youth (*Consejeria Presidencial para la Juventud*) as the entity responsible for managing the system and promoting the implementation of the national youth policy. Furthermore, it delineates local governments' and territorial entities' roles and responsibilities in carrying out youth policies and outlines measures to ensure effective co-ordination with the Presidential Council for Youth.

Finland

In 2016, Finland undertook a renewal of its Youth Act, which originated in 1972. This legislation is designed to encompass all individuals under the age of 29 and addresses various facets of youth activities, youth work and youth policy at all levels of government. The Youth Act designates the Ministry of Education and Culture as the primary state authority tasked with managing, co-ordinating and advancing the national youth policy. This responsibility is carried out in collaboration with other ministries, central government agencies, local authorities, youth associations and other pertinent organisations. The Youth Act further outlines the specific roles and obligations of each of these stakeholders in the realm of youth-related matters. Additionally, it clarifies the requirements that national youth work organisations must fulfil to be eligible for state subsidies.

Lithuania

In 2003, Lithuania adopted a national law on Youth Policy Framework, which determines the principles of the implementation of the youth law, namely a definition of what a youth policy is and how to implement and organise youth-related matters.

Sources: Estatuto de Ciudadanía Juvenil, Ley Estatutaria 1622 de 2013 modificada por la Ley Estatutaria 1885 de 2018 110920_Ley1622-1885-NEW.indd (colombiajoven.gov.co); Ministry of Education and Culture, Finland, Legislation - OKM - Ministry of Education and Culture, Finland; European Commission, 2023, (OECD, 2020[35]) (OECD, 2022[5]).

Adopting a national youth strategy could ensure policy coherence and foster inter-ministerial co-ordination

The implementation of a national youth strategy can enhance policy coherence and simplify inter-ministerial and multi-stakeholder co-ordination by clearly defining assigned roles and responsibilities. These strategic frameworks have emerged across various OECD and MENA countries to serve as guiding frameworks to shape a vision for young people and streamline the delivery of programmes and services across various government departments. They also serve as a tool for mobilising public and private resources for youth-related initiatives. In 2020, among the 33 OECD countries that participated in the OECD Youth Governance Survey, 25 had operational national and federal youth strategies in place (OECD, 2020[35]). These strategies encompass government commitments spanning a wide range of policy areas and public services, including measures to promote the active participation of young people in public life. In the MENA region, as of 2022, at least seven countries in the region have adopted a national youth strategy: Algeria, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, the Palestinian Authority and the United Arab Emirates (Box 7.9). In Mauritania and Morocco, a national youth strategy has been developed but not yet officially adopted. Bahrain, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and Tunisia are in the process of formulating their strategies.

Figure 7.3. MENA administrations with a national youth strategy in place or currently being elaborated
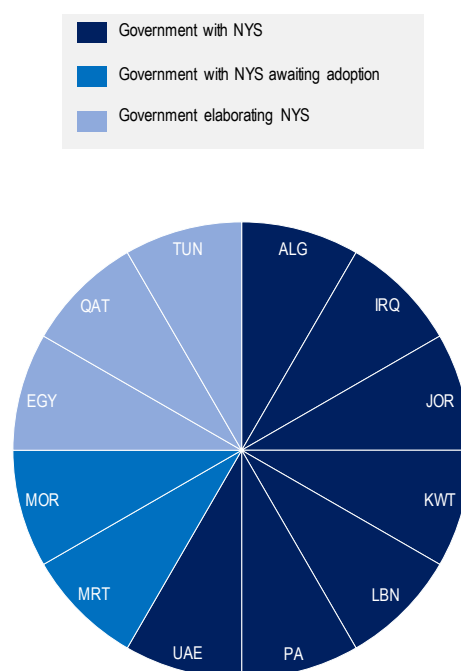
Source: OECD (2020[35]), *Governance for Youth, Trust and Intergenerational Justice: Fit for All Generations?*, https://doi.org/10.1787/c3e5cb8a-en; OECD (2022[5]), *Youth at the Centre of Government Action: A Review of the Middle East and North Africa*, https://doi.org/10.1787/bcc2dd08-en.

In Egypt, the MoYS is in charge of elaborating a national youth strategy, which is currently being developed and should be finalised before being officially launched, as highlighted in recent interviews. Over the past period, great efforts have been made through the MoYS, in co-ordination with partners, which started in 2021 to work on formulating a national strategy for youth with the primary goal of strengthening the status of Egyptian youth, building and developing their capabilities, and meeting their needs and aspirations during the next five years. The strategy addresses the co-ordination of capabilities and efforts between

governmental, societal and international actors to integrate and co-ordinate actions regarding the various issues and topics relevant to youth and young people.

While the strategy is being developed, there is no version shared or made available on line at the time of writing. The national youth strategy is set to cover thematic areas, including youth participation in public life, education, employment, health, sports, culture, youth work, environment, gender equality and the environment. OECD findings have demonstrated the importance of designing youth strategies that take into account a comprehensive and integrated approach to improving young people's social and economic well-being and participation.

Box 7.10. Example of countries with a national youth strategy in place

Jordan

Jordan was the first country in the region to adopt a multi-year strategy back in 2004. It aimed to address the needs of its young population from 2005 to 2009. However, this strategy was put on hold due to the lack of an effective monitoring and evaluation system. More recently, in 2019, the Cabinet of Jordan formally adopted the National Youth Strategy 2019-2025.

The formulation of this strategy drew upon a range of inputs, including a review of royal directives and national strategies, an evaluation of the 2004-09 strategy, international best practices, a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats analysis and the findings of a survey conducted by the General Statistics Department in 2014, which gauged the perspectives of Jordanian youth (OECD, 2021[41]). The strategy is structured around seven key themes, each further elaborated into nine strategic objectives with each objective aligned with one of the SDGs. These goals encompass poverty reduction, promoting good health and prosperity, ensuring quality education, fostering industry, innovation and infrastructure development, reducing inequalities, promoting peace, justice and robust institutions, as well as forging partnerships to achieve these objectives (OECD, 2021[41]).

United Arab Emirates

In 2016, the United Arab Emirates introduced its National Youth Agenda 2016-2021. This agenda was developed through a comprehensive process involving various data sources, including leadership meetings, input from young individuals via local youth councils, youth fora, a youth survey, social media engagement and face-to-face youth meetings. Additionally, it incorporated a baseline assessment of existing youth-related statistics, national strategies and international best practices. While identifying the strategic priorities for the youth sector, the plan considered the critical transitions that young people in the United Arab Emirates undergo as they transition into adulthood. The final National Youth Agenda 2016-2021 established five corresponding objectives for young people. These objectives encompass involvement in policymaking and civic participation, access to education and continuous learning, employment and entrepreneurship opportunities, ensuring health and safety, nurturing families and planning for the future.

Sources: OECD (2021[41]), *Empowering Youth and Building Trust in Jordan*, https://doi.org/10.1787/8b14d38f-en; https://moy.gov.jo/sites/default/files/jordan_national_youth_strategy_2019-2025_english_compressed_1.pdf; OECD (2022[5]), *Youth at the Centre of Government Action: A Review of the Middle East and North Africa*, https://doi.org/10.1787/bcc2dd08-en; https://u.ae/about-the-uae/the-uae-government/government-of-future/youth/the-national-youth-strategy.

Youth mainstreaming in strategic planning and sector policy planning could be further enhanced

Youth mainstreaming could be understood as an approach to policymaking that takes into account young people's needs and concerns in any government action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all policy areas and at all levels. It is an approach that helps governments make better decisions to achieve more inclusive outcomes for young people and all age groups, including as they relate to policy and spending decisions (OECD, 2018[37]). A commitment to youth mainstreaming is one of the most effective ways for governments to address age-based inequalities and promote intergenerational justice. Integrating a youth mainstreaming objective in sectoral policy planning can support policy coherence and co-ordination (OECD, 2020[35]). Youth policy spans various ministerial sectors, encompassing education, sports, employment, health, housing, transportation, public administration, civic and political engagement and numerous others. Simultaneously, progress in one of these sectors can significantly impact and shape the outcomes experienced by young individuals in other areas. Sectoral strategies should reflect and set commitments and priorities to empower young people in the political, social and economic fields and strengthen their participation and representation. For instance, different ministries should consult young people in formulating their sectoral strategies in developing their policies and programmes, particularly those that impact young people. For instance, MPEDIC could play a leading role in ensuring the alignment between national strategic goals and line ministries' plans and sectoral strategies. It could further encourage the inclusion of youth-lens and youth-related goals in the different sectoral strategies.

Enhanced availability of age-disaggregated data could further support youth-sensitive policymaking

In order to deliver youth-responsive services and address age-based inequalities, the OECD Recommendation of the Council on Creating Better Opportunities for Young People (2022[4]) highlights the need to improve the collection, use and sharing of data and evidence disaggregated by age, sex and other relevant characteristics. Disaggregating data by age can help policymakers deliver evidence-based policies that are responsive and appropriate to young people's needs and inform future planning. It is also relevant to track the performance and evaluate the impact of the various programmes and initiatives targeting young people in Egypt. Nevertheless, the collection and use of data that are disaggregated by age remain a challenge in Egypt and can be further developed with CAPMAS.

To do so, MPEDIC and MoYS could co-ordinate with CAPMAS to establish clear arrangements for age and systematically gather data and indicators disaggregated by age, gender and other relevant characteristics across all policy and service areas. As Box 7.11 illustrates, it is therefore important to equip policymakers with the adequate skills, resources and capacities to make sure that age-disaggregated data are available and accessible (OECD, 2022[4]).

Box 7.11. Collecting age-disaggregated data in OECD countries

Canada

Acknowledging the diverse effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on different demographic segments, the Canadian government has committed CAD 172 million over 5 years to Statistics Canada. This financial support is intended to facilitate the execution of a Disaggregated Data Action Plan to promote evidence-driven decision-making in key areas such as healthcare, quality of life, environmental issues, justice, business and the economy. This plan places emphasis on intergenerational equity concerns and the requirements of various population groups.

France

To provide policymakers with data that are disaggregated by age, the Research Centre for the Study and Observation of Living Conditions (CRÉDOC) in France has been conducting surveys that focus on the living conditions and aspirations of the French population. In 2018, it released the third edition of the DJEPVA Barometer, a nationwide survey that involved 4 500 young individuals aged 18 to 30.

Sweden

In Sweden, the Local Follow-up of Youth Policy (LUPP) survey tool, initiated in 2003 and managed by the Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society, serves as a crucial policy design tool for both the central government and subnational governments. Implemented by over 175 municipalities, covering 60% of the population, the survey collects extensive data on youth experiences, informing policymakers on various aspects, including education, health and quality of life. The tool, administered every 2-3 years to high school cohorts, has positively impacted local youth policy, cross-sector collaboration and knowledge dissemination within communities. Additionally, its success has inspired similar initiatives in Lithuania, Poland and Russia.

Sources: OECD (2020[35]), *Governance for Youth, Trust and Intergenerational Justice: Fit for All Generations?*, https://doi.org/10.1787/c3e5cb8a-en; OECD (2022[5]), *Youth at the Centre of Government Action: A Review of the Middle East and North Africa*, https://doi.org/10.1787/bcc2dd08-en; OECD (2024[42]), *OECD Youth Policy Toolkit*, OECD Publishing, Paris; MUCF (2019[43]), *LUPP Follow-up 2015-2018: Better Local Youth Policy Through LUPP*, https://www.mucf.se/sites/default/files/2022/01/luppfoljning_2015-2018_EN_web.pdf; MUCF (n.d.[44]), *LUPP Youth Survey 2023*, https://www.mucf.se/uppdrag/ungdomsenkaten-lupp.

Emphasising the role of young people in public administration reform and integrating a youth-lens and mainstreaming perspective in the PARP

CAOA could further promote youth employment in the public sector by providing targeted training and programmes for young people

The GoE has expressed a strong commitment to promoting equal opportunities for young people and their broader inclusion in public life. Ensuring and improving youth employment in the public sector in Egypt remains a priority area that needs to be addressed and further embedded in the PARP, given the current challenging context with high levels of unemployment and economic uncertainty facing this age cohort. Promoting equal opportunities for young people in the public sector, as one of the largest employers in Egypt, can ensure wider diversity and ultimately lead to policies that are more responsive to their needs and aspirations. The PARP (see Chapter 3 for further details), as the overarching framework for the modernisation of the state, includes measures to improve efficiency, effectiveness and transparency within the civil service. However, its goal can be seen as encompassing the creation of a more favourable

environment for young people and promoting their participation in public administration. In light of the government's commitment and efforts to foster youth capabilities, engage youth in policies and decision-making and appoint them to leadership positions, the PARP could further emphasise the role of young people in public administration and integrate a youth and mainstreaming perspective across its pillars and initiatives.

As mentioned in Chapter 4, CAOA has the mandate to build the capacities of civil servants. It offers training focused on leadership development and a variety of training programmes aimed at developing the skills and capacities of public sector employees, focusing on enhancing managerial, technical and leadership capabilities to improve government performance and efficiency. At the same time, CAOA also provides training opportunities for young people in Egypt, although the scope of these programmes remains limited (i.e. internship programmes). They aim to equip young individuals with the necessary skills and competencies to contribute to the overall development of the country, namely through:

- **Youth leadership development programmes** to enhance their leadership skills, self-confidence and decision-making abilities. These programmes focus on personal and professional growth, encouraging youth to take an active role in society.
- **Professional skills development**. CAOA offers various training programmes focused on developing professional skills among young people. These cover topics such as communication skills, teamwork, time management, problem-solving and critical thinking. They aim to prepare young individuals for the job market and improve their employability.

Building on these key milestones, there is scope to further enhance and promote youth employment in the public sector. In line with the OECD Recommendation of the Council on Creating Better Opportunities for Young People (OECD, 2022[4]), the GoE could encourage the representation of young people in the public sector workforce by consistently overseeing age diversity and inclusivity by conducting data collection, analysis, communication and administering employee surveys, all aimed at fostering an inclusive workplace. This could be included as a priority area further embedded in the PARP within its relevant sections. For instance, by providing targeted training for young people, making sure to have adequate human resources and development of civil servants that are fit for purpose to deliver for young people. CAOA should continue to play a leading role in ensuring diversity in the public workforce and attracting young talent from diverse backgrounds. To do so, CAOA should ensure that public recruitment systems and evaluation methods remain aligned with evolving skills, competencies and shifting aspirations. It is, therefore, essential to implement effective onboarding initiatives and opportunities for mobility, such as specialised graduate programmes (OECD, 2022[5]). In that sense, in co-ordination with the MoYS and NIGSD, CAOA could design and co-ordinate with the training modules delivered to young people, ensuring coherence among the training programmes offered. Some OECD countries such as Australia, France and the United Kingdom have put in place collaborations between the civil service and universities to provide skill development opportunities for university graduates to initiate their civil service careers and for high-potential civil servants to advance into leadership roles (OECD, 2017[45]; 2022[5]).

Building on the Civil Service Law, there is scope to further promote youth mainstreaming in public employment

As mentioned earlier in the chapter, the Civil Service Law (No. 81/2006) establishes a new system primarily focused on Egypt's civil service structure, recruitment and regulations. It explicitly mentions young people and provides specific provisions for them. The law highlights the need for and importance of training and capacity building for civil servants. This is relevant to young employees seeking skill development and career advancement opportunities. It also promotes continuous professional development of new knowledge and expertise, which can be beneficial for young professionals. Article 8 of the Civil Service Law stipulates that public administration entities may also extend their training to young people in specialised fields upon their request, without any obligation on public administration entities to appoint

them. The executive regulations specified the determinants to train young people in public administration and provide them with the skills required in the labour market. According to Article 22, it is permissible for the "unit", which refers to a ministry, department, government agency, governorate or public authority, to train young people, including students, on specialised activities upon their request and with no obligation on the public administration unit to recruit or appoint the trained personnel.

The development of civil servants is key to the advancement of more effective policies. Ensuring they possess the requisite skills and competencies to engage with and serve young individuals is essential for successfully delivering youth-responsive policymaking and programming (OECD, 2022[5]). Stakeholders have identified areas for improvement, including the enhancement of capacities within ministries, the need for more specialised and trained staff, and additional guidelines, manuals and methodological tools to further support the development and implementation of youth-responsive policies.

Limited financial and qualified human resources were also highlighted as one of the main challenges by the stakeholders, which hinders the effective tracking of progress and the evaluation of the impact of policies aimed at promoting youth empowerment in Egypt. Similarly, this challenge was also identified in Jordan, Lebanon, Mauritania and Morocco, according to the OECD Youth Governance Survey (OECD, 2022[5]). Therefore, adequate capacities and capabilities within the public sector are needed to support the development of staff within ministries and develop their skills in the field of policy and programme design for young people. Improving the skills of public officials to deliver on young people's concerns and priorities was highlighted by the different stakeholders as one of the high-priority areas for delivering policies and services that are responsive to youth's needs.

CAOA should continue to play a key role in supporting and advancing youth mainstreaming by expanding its training offer and developing material to upskill the staff of various ministries. In doing so, CAOA can ensure that youth-responsive services are effectively delivered across public administration. As mentioned earlier, training offered by CAOA is mainly focused on leadership development, human rights and other relevant programmes. As part of its mandate to build the capacity of civil servants, CAOA could increase its key role in promoting youth mainstreaming by designing, in close co-ordination with the MoYS and NIGSD, systematic training modules on the benefits of youth mainstreaming and youth empowerment, and the collection and analysis of youth-sensitive data. It could also develop manuals and guidelines for line ministries and agencies to ensure they can effectively carry out their expanded functions to support youth-sensitive policymaking in their sectoral areas of responsibility. Similar supporting material should also be offered to managers and policy analysts in line ministries, who would be the final actors responsible for integrating young people's perspectives into their corresponding policy areas. For instance, Jordan has established a Youth Leadership Centre that runs training for new staff in the Youth Directorate and youth centres (OECD, 2021[41]). Similarly, CAOA could incorporate a youth lens in the training they offer to responsible staff in line ministries and make sure that young people are also able to participate in existing capacity-building offers.

Youth representation and participation in public life in Egypt

Further efforts are needed to promote an enabling environment for youth representation

Promoting trust and strengthening the relationship between young people and public institutions is crucial to sustaining the effective implementation of government policies and creating consensus for structural reforms to tackle long-term challenges. The OECD Trust Framework has identified the capacity to participate in politics and the perception of having a say as key factors influencing trust in government (OECD, 2022[5]). Nevertheless, young people frequently encounter obstacles that impede their presence in public institutions. Across the OECD, an average of 19.8 years is required to run for a seat in the national parliament (OECD, 2020[35]), whereas in Egypt, the Senate requires its members to be at least 35 years

old, while the House of Representatives has a minimum age requirement of 25. The eligibility requirements for individuals aspiring to run for local council in Egypt are set at 21 years of age by the constitution. Despite the introduction of youth quotas in the electoral laws and constitutions in some countries, overall, the representation of young people in public institutions remains very low compared to their demographic weight. For instance, people under the age of 40 constitute an average of only 16.4% of members of parliament in the MENA region, in contrast to 22% in OECD countries (OECD, 2022[5]) (Figure 7.4). In 2021, the Egyptian House of Representatives had 596 members, with 10% (60) aged 25-35 and 21% (125) aged 36-45. The combined representation of individuals aged 25-45 constituted about 31% of the total membership, representing a significant increase from 2015, with 29 representatives aged 25-35 and 66 aged 36-45. Nonetheless, the absence of elected local councils since 2011 has prevented young people from participating in local councils, which can provide a vital platform for addressing the needs of local communities, promoting transparency and accountability in government, and fostering citizen engagement in democratic processes.

Furthermore, young people are often not adequately represented in the public sector workforce and government cabinets. To enhance youth participation and representation in public life, it is essential to advocate for a supportive environment, addressing legal, policy, and institutional factors (OECD, 2022[5]).

Figure 7.4. Percentage of parliamentarians below the age of 40
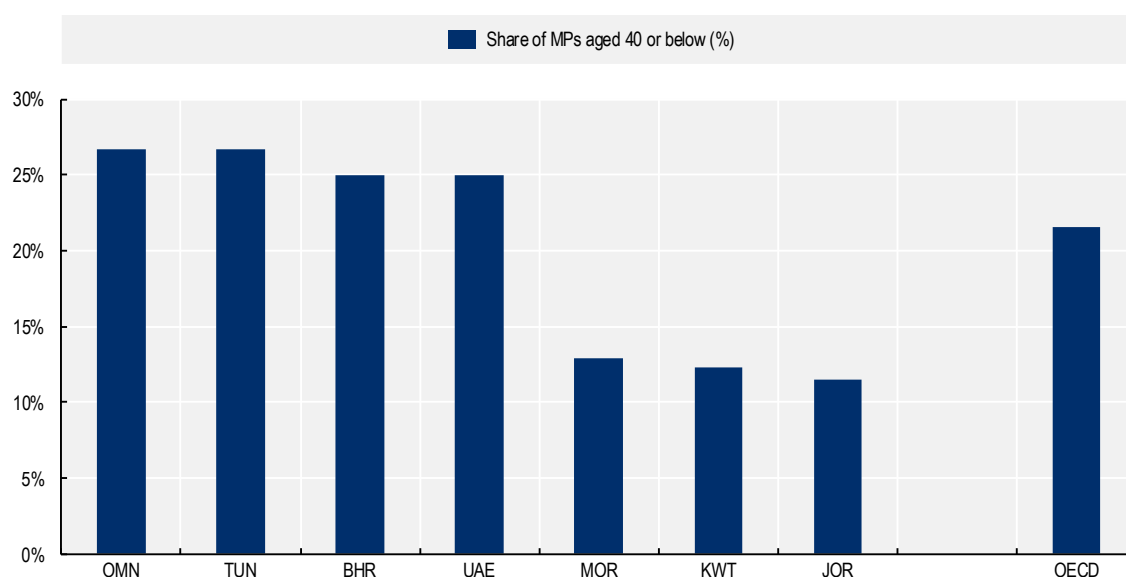
Source: OECD (2022[5]), *Youth at the Centre of Government Action: A Review of the Middle East and North Africa*, https://doi.org/10.1787/bcc2dd08-en.

This is also the case in Egypt, where young people face specific barriers that hinder their representation in public institutions. The public sector is one of the largest employers in Egypt. Young people are often excluded from policymaking due to their age and often associated with certain stereotypes and perceived limitations (OECD, 2018[37]). Young people can bring in new and innovative ideas and skillsets and ensure that policy outcomes are responsive to their needs, which is key for a modernised public administration. Therefore, ensuring a fair representation of young people in the public sector will require addressing their under-represented levels in Egyptian public institutions. According to OECD interviews, there are 60 elected members under the age of 35 (10%) and 125 members between the ages of 36 and 45 years (21%), bringing the total number of young people in parliament to 185 members or 31% of the total number of members (596). In 2020, the Cabinet approved a resolution for ministers and the prime minister to

appoint up to ten young assistants (Resolution No. 422 of 2020) as an alternative to the system established by Prime Minister's Decision No. 612 of 2017, amended by Resolution No. 1273 of 2019, for one year for a renewable period of one year. The resolution also stipulates that these jobs should be in accordance with a decision issued by the competent authority determining each job's title and tasks, following approval by the CAOA. The draft resolution specified the conditions that must be met to assume those positions. According to the draft resolution, a database on the occupying assistants will be established in the CAOA, provided that the competent authority evaluates the performance of assistants according to specific estimates based on objective criteria. In addition, in 2017, a presidential decree established that the recommendation that each minister appoint at least 1 associate (up to 4) under 40 years of age as associate minister.

The OECD Recommendation of the Council on Public Service Leadership and Capability (2019[46]) emphasises that governments should build an inclusive and safe public service that reflects society's diversity, including age diversity. As highlighted in the OECD Recommendation of the Council on Creating Better Opportunities for Young People (OECD, 2022[4]), governments should actively promote the benefits of a multi-generational workforce by leveraging talent management practices and tools such as mentoring programmes, coaching and support networks to foster intergenerational teamwork and learning. While the stakeholders have highlighted that internship programmes and training are offered to young people, the Government could rethink its recruitment process and training programmes. It can proactively promote the diversity of the public sector workforce through longer-term structured graduate programmes to attract, develop and retain highly qualified young talent through training, mentoring, job rotation and accelerated promotion tracks. For instance, CAOA could provide dedicated training and internship programmes targeting young graduates from universities aged 18 to 29 and in co-ordination with the training and programmes offered by the NIGSD. To enhance the attractiveness of young people in the public sector, OECD findings suggest rethinking the recruitment processes and tools available to select young people as well as the contractual arrangements (OECD, 2020[35]). For example, Box 7.12 illustrates how in Canada, the Federal Student Work Experience Program (FSWEP) is the largest student employment programme, which provides opportunities for students at all levels and in all programmes of study to acquire experience in the federal public service and gain insights into potential future career options within the federal public service (Government of Canada, n.d.[47]).

Box 7.12. Programmes for young graduates in the public service

Australia

The APS Graduate Programs offer recent graduates in Australia an initial route into the public sector. Typically spanning 10 to 18 months, these programmes involve 2 to 3 rotations across various work domains to provide participants with diverse skills, knowledge and early career experience. Participants typically engage in in-person workshops, training sessions and simulation activities. Successful programme completion can open doors to additional career advancement opportunities within the public sector and may also provide study support for further training.

United States

Established by an Executive Order in 1977, the Presidential Management Fellows Program in the United States is a two-year training and leadership development programme to attract outstanding advanced degree candidates who have an interest in and commitment to excellence in the leadership and management of public policies and programmes. Administered by the United States Office of Personnel Management, it is the premier pathway for the federal government to access government leadership positions in participating federal agencies.

Sources: Australian Government (n.d.[48]), *Department of Finance Graduate Program*, https://www.finance.gov.au/publications/information-sheet/graduate-program; Australian Government (n.d.[49]), *Graduates*, https://www.apsjobs.gov.au/s/graduate-portal; OECD (2020[35]), *Governance for Youth, Trust and Intergenerational Justice: Fit for All Generations?*, https://doi.org/10.1787/c3e5cb8a-en; U.S. Department of State (n.d.[50]), *Presidential Management Fellows Program (PMF)*, https://careers.state.gov/interns-fellows/pathways-programs/presidential-managment-fellows-program-pmf/.

There is scope to increase opportunities for young people to participate in public life

Young people's participation in public and political life should be based on an enabling environment that allows them to fully engage and contribute to shaping government policies and practices (OECD, 2020[35]). The Egyptian constitution of 2014 places an important focus on young people. Article 82 stipulates that "the state guarantees the care of youth and children and works to discover their talents and develop their cultural capabilities". International legal frameworks are important tools that encourage governments to act and implement strategies that empower young people and encourage their participation in public life. In this regard, the World Programme of Action for Youth, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1995, has been instrumental in shaping subsequent initiatives to promote the rights and participation of young people, including milestones such as the 1998 Lisbon Declaration on Youth Policies and Programmes and the 2014 Baku Commitments to Youth Policies. In 2015, the United Nations Security Council adopted the landmark Resolution 2250, specifically recognising young people's positive role in shaping sustainable peace, which Egypt has endorsed. At the regional level, Egypt has also ratified the African Youth Charter, which acknowledges in its Article 11 the right of every young person to participate in the public sphere and requires signatories to take active measures and implement strategies to empower young people and foster their participation in the public sphere (OECD, 2020[35]).

The OECD Recommendation on Creating Better Opportunities for Young People offers policy guidance on whole-of-government strategies and how to enhance young people's trust in governments and their interactions with public institutions (OECD, 2022[4]). As highlighted in the OECD Recommendation, governments should ensure "to promote meaningful youth participation in public decision-making and spaces for intergenerational dialogue at all levels, with targeted measures to engage disadvantaged and under-represented groups for more responsive, inclusive and accountable policy outcomes".

In this regard, the GoE developed some national flagship programmes and initiatives across various sectors to build national capacities in sustainable development and enable youth participation (See Box 7.13).

Box 7.13. Avenues for youth engagement and participation in public life in Egypt

Be an Ambassador

The NIGSD, in co-operation with a number of universities and ministries, launched an initiative under the title of Ambassadors of Sustainable Development. The initiative aims to build the capacity of Egyptian professionals in sustainable development. The training programme covers an array of topics and fields by co-operating with various entities that adopt a developmental approach. A series of discussions on various topics give a comprehensive understanding of the following: environmental protection, sustainable development, social justice, the SDGs, and green and circular economy as tools to achieve sustainable development.

Sharek 2030

Sharek 2030 is an initiative launched by the MPEDIC to spread awareness among citizens of the development programmes, initiatives and projects implemented by the state, as well as propose priority initiatives and projects in a way that contributes to the activation of "citizen follow-up". The objectives of the initiative include: i) achieving the greatest degree of transparency in providing information on development programmes/strategic projects/related performance indicators; ii) expanding community awareness of the size of the country's achievements on a regular basis; iii) giving citizens the opportunity to participate in follow-up activities (citizen follow-up) and suggest priority initiatives and projects (participatory planning); iv) spreading the culture of performance in administration and among citizens to engage young people in Egypt in driving sustainable development and social change in Egypt.

Youth Presidential Leadership Program

The Youth Presidential Leadership Program is a flagship youth programme initiated by the government to develop young people's leadership skills and empower them with the necessary tools to contribute effectively to society. The programme includes training, monitoring and networking opportunities. The programmes' mission lies in expanding the base of youth participation in state administration, preparing thousands of young people to assume leadership positions and creating a model for professional education and practical training that is easy to replicate on a larger scale. This in view of supporting public institutions with competencies for improving the level of performance and productivity, solving chronic problems and raising levels of political and cultural awareness.

National youth conferences

Since 2016, under the auspices of the president, national youth conferences are organised across governorates to offer an interactive platform for young people from different backgrounds to engage with government officials, private sector and civil society representatives and make their voices heard on topics that matter to them. The conferences also include an Ask the President discussion panel, enabling young people to ask the president questions. Conferences provide youth with an opportunity to discuss the national, social, political and economic policies in place in light of Egypt Vision 2030, the various projects' developments and their challenges, and come up with a list of recommendations by the end of each conference to be translated to national plans and policies.

> **Decent Life /** *Hayah Karima*
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> Decent Life or *Hayah Karima* is an initiative endorsed by H.E. President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi and launched in 2019 with the aim of improving quality of life in the poorest rural communities within the framework of Egypt Vision 2030. It focuses on providing essential services, infrastructure development and income-generating projects to enhance the well-being of rural youth. It is worth noting that the concept originated during the involvement of young volunteers presenting their visions and ideas at the inaugural conference of the *Hayah Karima* initiative, held alongside the 7th National Youth Conference on 30 July 2019.
>
> Sources: NIGSD (n.d.[51]), *Be an Ambassador*, http://nigsd.gov.eg/be-an-ambassador/#:~:text=The%20training%20is%20conducted%20by,economy%20as%20tools%20to%20achieve; MPEDIC (n.d.[52]), *Sharek*, https://MPEDIC.gov.eg/home/GlobalSearch?lang=en&searchText=Sharek; MPEDIC (n.d.[53]), *Sharek 2030 Application*, https://MPEDIC.gov.eg/DynamicPage?id=112&lang=ar; https://profile.plp.eg/; https://www.hayakarima.com/about_en.html.

While these programmes provide a space for young people to engage in governmental initiatives, the initiatives and programmes remain scattered. Under the leadership of the MoYS, the government could, therefore, envisage adopting a whole-of-government approach and ensuring that ministries and agencies across the government co-ordinate their efforts and interventions, as this would lead to more responsive action and make these programmes more impactful. For instance, the MoYS could take the lead in convening youth stakeholders on a regular basis through co-ordination meetings and ensuring that thematic areas covered by the programmes and initiatives remain in the ministerial portfolios of dedicated ministries. These types of institutional mechanisms (joint committees, workshops, MoUs) can facilitate co-ordination of programmes and initiatives across the government.

With regards to Egypt Vision 2030, OECD findings reveal that young people had the opportunity to participate in the elaboration and development of the vision. Yet the consultations largely took place in the review phase when the thematic areas and objectives covered by the vision were already set. The active and continued engagement of youth in sustainable development efforts is critical to achieving inclusive, equitable and sustainable development for present and future generations. With the newly published Egypt Vision 2030, young people can play an important role in implementing, monitoring and evaluating its targets and objectives. Serving as ambassadors of sustainable development, young people are both beneficiaries and essential partners in the vision's implementation. In Denmark, for example, the Danish Youth Council sits on the 2030-Panel national advisory body since 2017 while in Finland, the Agenda 2030 Youth Group aims for young people to serve as advocates for sustainable goals and participate in the national planning and implementation of the SDGs. Following a wide youth consultation process in Ireland, a dedicated chapter on youth was included in the country's latest Voluntary National Review (Government of Ireland, 2023[54]). In Kenya, Youth 4 SDGs provides a platform for youth to spearhead innovative solutions to challenges faced at the national, regional and international levels.

The GoE could take further steps to ensure the participation of young people in broader participation channels such as public consultations, meetings, public hearings or participatory budgeting programmes. This will lead to increased buy-in from younger populations and ensure that their voices are heard and reflected throughout the policy cycle. One common high priority highlighted by the different surveyed ministries in Egypt in view of delivering policies and services that are responsive to youth's needs is improving communication with young people and strengthening transparency. This is an important step towards establishing and ensuring the meaningful participation of young people in the policy cycle.

As highlighted in Chapter 6, ensuring access to information and open data is also relevant to young people in order to enable their participation in the policy cycle. This is all the more important as ensuring that information is clear, available and easy to find is a precondition for promoting transparency. At the same

times this requires targeted communication efforts, particularly innovative ways of communicating with youth (OECD, 2021[55]).

In Egypt, communication with young people usually occurs through face-to-face public meetings, expert groups, surveys and informal consultations with selected groups. However, the main channels used to communicate with young people appear to be social media groups, namely Facebook. In addition, OECD interviews revealed that the language used tends to be overly technical and not adapted to young people's context. Addressing these barriers will be all the more important, as the OECD Recommendation of the Council on Open Government (2017[56]) highlights the need to deliver tailored public communications that are pertinent, easily understandable and readily available to young people, based on active listening and understanding of young people's concerns and interests, including through digital means, as part of broader open government initiatives.

Therefore, the GoE could adopt targeted efforts to engage young people in public and political life through more strategic and evidence-based public communication supported by a manual with guidance for ministries in this regard. This could be done through the collection of insights and data on media consumption habits, interests, motivations, values and perceptions related to different issues from various sectors of the young population in Egypt. For example, Ireland engaged with youth organisations to tailor communication efforts to their needs and activate these actors as direct content developers for official campaigns (OECD, 2021[55]). Promoting more accessible communication to young people would also benefit from using "plain language" techniques to simplify communication messaging and use visual aids. In the United States, for instance, centre for plain language Plain Language.Gov was established to oversee the implementation of the Plain Writing Act, provide training and share good practices across the public sector to enhance the use of these techniques within their communication to citizens (OECD, 2021[55]). OECD guide *Engaging Young People in Open Government* also provides a series of potential avenues to promote meaningful communication with youth (OECD, 2019[40]) (See Box 7.14).

Box 7.14. The OECD *Engaging Young People in Open Government: A Communication Guide*

The OECD guide *Engaging Young People in Open Government* provides ideas and approaches on how to communicate effectively with youth to promote their participation, drawing on recent research and case studies from across OECD member and partner countries. It provides concrete avenues for communicators to learn more about youth audiences, reach them effectively and ultimately promote their participation in the design and delivery of policies and services. The guide underlines the importance of engaging with youth as important stakeholders and equals rather than "citizens in training". To reach young citizens effectively, it emphasises that digital technologies should be used strategically in tandem with traditional forms of engagement, such as youth councils. The guide also encourages governments to conduct activities on line and provide spaces for young people to partake in the definition, monitoring and implementation of open government reforms to improve the credibility of the messages and encourage collective action within that particular demographic.

Source: OECD (2019[40]), *Engaging Young People in Open Government: A Communication Guide*, https://www.oecd.org/mena/governance/Young-people-in-OG.pdf.

Youth-led organisations and youth representative bodies

Furthermore, youth-led organisations and youth representative bodies, such as youth councils, are important tools to ensure the representation of a wide diversity of voices from young people. They represent an effective body that acts as a bridge between the public authorities and young people to facilitate their meaningful engagement in the policy cycle. Youth councils are representative bodies that

elect or appoint a group of young people to discuss and advise policymakers on specific topics and issues. Usually, these councils are formed and established at the local level and are sometimes mandatory, such as in Finland and Norway (OECD, 2020[35]). They, therefore, offer a formal channel through which the government communicates and interacts with young people.

In Egypt, Article 180 of the Egyptian constitution stipulates that:

> *"each local unit elects a council by direct secret public vote, for a period of four years, and the candidate is required to be at least twenty-one years old. The law regulates other conditions for candidacy and election procedures, provided that a quarter of the number of the seats are for young people under the age of thirty-five years, and a quarter of the number is for women, provided that the percentage of representation of workers and farmers is not less than fifty percent of the total number of seats, and that percentage includes an appropriate representation of Christians and people with disabilities".*

However, as mentioned above, these local councils have not been functioning since 2011. Building upon the success of the national youth conferences, the MoYS could promote the creation of dedicated local youth councils at the subnational level to enable young people to shape the decisions that affect them. By encouraging participation in local decision-making, local youth councils empower young people while fostering a sense of belonging and responsibility within the community. Moreover, youth councils can act as valuable partners for governments in gathering information, conducting consultations and co-ordinating joint activities and programmes (OECD, 2020[35]) (See Box 7.15 for examples). To ensure that youth organisations and youth councils fulfil their role and are able to contribute to the participation of young people in decision-making processes, the MoYS could ensure that these organisations are well-equipped with the necessary resources, technical assistance and adequate allocation of budget to support their activities. In addition, the government should ensure that it regularly consults and includes these councils in draft legislation, policies and programmes that are of direct interest to and impact young people. Youth councils can, therefore, support the MoYS and youth stakeholders across the government in enhancing effective co-ordination and facilitating the mainstreaming of young people's voices in the policymaking process (OECD, 2022[5]).

Box 7.15. Youth councils in OECD countries and MENA economies

Chile: Youth Cabinet (*Gabinete Juvenil*)

Chile's National Institute of Youth (INJUV) has been running its *Gabinete Juvenil* initiative since 2018, bringing together 155 young individuals between the ages of 15 and 29, elected at the local level, into regional youth cabinets. This initiative serves as a platform for fostering dialogue and discussion, and incorporating fresh and new ideas into the institute's policymaking process. It achieves this through national commissions addressing a wide array of issues and subjects.

Lithuania

In Lithuania, Youth Affairs Councils operate at the national and local levels, serving as advisory bodies to facilitate collaboration and co-ordination among youth representatives and relevant institutions, guided by the principle of equal representation. The Council for Youth Affairs, implemented at both levels, is a longstanding practice aimed at actively involving young people in decision-making processes, focusing on submitting draft legislation related to youth policy and determining priorities for youth-related strategies. The Municipal Council for Youth Affairs, with approximately 60 councils across the country, operates as a public advisory institution, fostering youth participation at the local level. Consisting of representatives from municipal institutions and youth organisations, the Municipal Council for Youth Affairs functions as a vital platform for young people at the local level to contribute to decision-

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making processes, examine youth policy issues and propose initiatives to develop youth policy in their municipalities.

United Arab Emirates

In the United Arab Emirates, an advisory youth council was established in 2017, enabling young individuals to have their voices heard by the government. Known as the Emirates Youth Council (EYC), it serves as a consultative body for the government and the Minister of State for Youth on matters of national importance and engagement with both governmental and non-governmental entities. The EYC framework has been adopted and replicated across 13 ministries, where young employees from each ministry collaborate with other ministries and various stakeholders to address issues concerning youth. They also oversee the planning and execution of relevant activities and programmes.

Source: https://programassociales.ministeriodesarrollosocial.gob.cl/programas_otrasinic/62713/2019/4; Information provided by Lithuania's Ministry of Social Security and Labour; Federal Youth Authority in the United Arab Emirates, 2020; OECD (2020[35]), *Governance for Youth, Trust and Intergenerational Justice: Fit for All Generations?*, https://doi.org/10.1787/c3e5cb8a-en.

Youth volunteering programmes and activities encouraging young people to engage in public life could serve as important instruments to foster trust and co-operation between young people and the government, thus bolstering societal resilience (OECD, 2022[5]).

To do so, increasing the allocation dedicated to promoting volunteerism within the ministry's budget responsible for youth affairs could empower youth organisations to effectively assume their function as platforms for youth education and engagement. Youth houses or youth centres offer an additional institutional platform for young individuals to cultivate active citizenship and engage in public and political activities. OECD findings have revealed that one of the functions of the MoYS is to regulate youth centres across the country. In 2020, a draft law stipulating the establishment of "youth development centres" was approved by the House of Representatives, amending some provisions of the Youth Organizations Law promulgated by Law No. 218 of 2017 to focus on building youth skills and developing their talents. The draft law also subjects all 4 273 youth centres to a new legal system, ensuring the regularity of their work and services. The GoE could further build on the existing youth houses to promote civic engagement and meaningful participation, namely through the existing programmes and initiatives different stakeholders across the administration are implementing. Moreover, administration could adopt proactive measures to engage young people in the collaborative design of activities and programmes conducted by youth centres, ensuring they align with the needs of young people.

Participatory budgeting with and for young people

Young people can participate in various formats. Participatory budgeting is one example through which young people have the opportunity to be involved in the policymaking cycle, by having a say and engaging in the allocation of public resources (OECD, 2018[37]). In OECD countries, participatory budgeting usually takes place locally, namely at the municipal level (OECD, 2018[37]). As mentioned in Chapter 5 and according to the Participatory Budgeting World Atlas, Egypt has seen a number of participatory budgeting processes taking place at the local level and in three cities. MoF, in particular, collaborates with MPEDIC, the Ministry of Local Development and CSOs to foster engagement with citizens, aligning with the pillars of Egypt Vision 2030. In Egypt, participatory budgeting aims to spend efficiently, engage citizens and give them a voice on how to allocate public budget. MoF in Egypt has also taken steps towards engaging young people in participatory budgeting processes. However, it was mentioned that there are opportunities for improvement in terms of enhancing participatory budgeting tools, strengthening communication between service providers and citizens, and allocating additional resources (MoF, 2023). MoF could build on existing initiatives and programmes implemented by the MoYS and MPEDIC to further strengthen young people's engagement in participatory budgeting activities.

Box 7.16. Enhancing youth participation through participatory budgeting

Poland

In Lublin, the Youth Civic Budget, developed by the Youth City Council and the local authority's Team for Children and Youth, was designed as a participatory budgeting process to stimulate youth participation and educate young people on independent budget planning and management of local activities. Launched in 2019, this unique initiative was implemented by the youth-focused NGO Teatrikon, in collaboration with the Youth City Council.

Portugal

In 2017, a nationwide participatory budgeting effort was launched, inviting young individuals aged 14 to 30 to develop proposals in various areas that matter to them, including sports, social innovation, science education and environmental sustainability, with a combined budget of EUR 300 000. Additionally, at the subnational level, the municipality of Gaia in Portugal initiated a 3-year participatory budgeting programme in 2019, specifically designed for young people aged 13 to 30, with a total budget of EUR 360 000 allocated for 2021.

COM'ON Europe, the European Platform of Participatory Budgeting for Youth

COM'ON Europe is an initiative and strategic effort implemented in 2017 to improve young people's civic participation in local life through local-level participatory budgeting mechanisms. The project provided a comprehensive framework and platform for European cities to implement participatory budgeting processes targeting young people as initiators and decision-makers. Partners cities include Torino 2010, Braga 2012, Maribor 2013, Thessaloniki 2014, Cluj-Napoca 2015, Varna 2017 and Cascais 2018, all of which are active cities in the Network of European Youth Capitals.

Sources: CoR (2022[57]), *The State of Local and Regional Democracy – A Youth Perspective*, https://cor.europa.eu/en/engage/studies/Documents/The%20State%20of%20Local%20and%20%20Regional%20Democracy%20-%20A%20Youth%20Perspective/4794%20CIVEX%20study%20-%20The%20State%20of%20%20Local%20and%20Regional%20Democracy%202022.pdf; information provided by the Municipal Council of Gaia; OECD (2020[35]), *Governance for Youth, Trust and Intergenerational Justice: Fit for All Generations?*, https://doi.org/10.1787/c3e5cb8a-en; EU (n.d.[58]), *COM'ON Europe*, http://www.comoneurope.org.

Recommendations

Over the past years, supported by a strong political commitment, the GoE has taken important steps to integrate the promotion of gender equality in key strategic documents, coupled with efforts to strengthen the institutional architecture for gender equality and mainstreaming at the national level. However, challenges persist in ensuring a whole-of-government implementation of gender equality objectives and a homogenous approach to gender mainstreaming. Indeed, the country could further benefit from systematically adopting a dual approach to the gender equality policy, with strategic plans mainly focusing on a number of targeted actions to tackle discrimination and gender gaps in certain areas rather than mainstreaming gender equality in the design, development, implementation and evaluation of all government action. Further reinforcing the mandate and capacities of key government actors involved in promoting the gender equality agenda and formalising co-ordination mechanisms could contribute to filling those gaps. Efforts have also been made to promote meritocracy as a key element of the PARP but there is scope to further develop a government-wide, compelling vision for gender equality in the public sector

and take measures to address challenges to women's representation and leadership, such as gender stereotypes and all forms of harassment.

With regards to youth, the GoE has progressively sought to empower young people in public life. While significant strides have been made, ongoing efforts should continue to systematically apply a youth lens and mainstream young people's perspective across the policies and strategic documents. The government could further benefit from building administrative and institutional capacities and setting up effective co-ordination mechanisms between governmental and non-governmental stakeholders regarding youth policy and programmes. Achieving policy coherence and co-ordination could be achieved by adopting youth laws that establish the institutional framework and implementing a national youth strategy to enhance policy coherence for a common vision for young people. In addition, the government could benefit from further mainstreaming youth in strategic planning and sector policy planning and including young people's perspectives in sectoral strategies. The GoE has expressed a strong commitment to promoting equal opportunities for young people and inclusion in public life. Ensuring and improving youth employment in the public sector in Egypt remains a priority area that needs to be addressed and further embedded in the PARP. Nevertheless, it could benefit from further emphasising the role of young people in public administration and promoting youth employment in the public sector.

The way forward: overview of recommendations

Actionable recommendations to enhance gender and youth mainstreaming

1. **Further strengthen the institutional framework for gender equality and mainstreaming**

- The GoE could consider bolstering the capacities of its central gender equality institution:
  - Enhance the capacities and resources of the NCW to: i) effectively co-ordinate and follow up with all government institutions on the implementation of the National Strategy for the Empowerment of Egyptian Women 2030, including through the establishment of formalised mechanisms to be led by the NCW; ii) foster gender mainstreaming across the whole of government, by providing expertise to line ministries to support them in integrating a gender equality perspective in their policy action, as well as to MPEDIC to develop a systematic approach and guidance to this effect.

- It could also further institutionalise the role and mandate of EOUs:
  - Provide a stronger legal basis for the role of EOUs, currently established through ministerial decree, to insulate them from political fluctuations and give them a greater sense of institutional legitimacy and stability. Legislation should clarify the responsibilities assigned to the units and ensure that these roles are established as full-time positions and have a sufficient resource base to carry out their functions.
  - Strengthen the capacities of EOUs to ensure they have the appropriate knowledge, skills, resources and time to promote gender equality initiatives within line ministries. As part of their work, EOUs should also create pathways for women from under-represented or disadvantaged groups. In addition, as a good practice, it would be beneficial to foster gender balance in the EOUs themselves to show that achieving gender equality requires the active involvement of both women and men.

- o In the medium to longer term, expand the mandate of EOUs to act as strategic policy branches and provide advice and support on how to integrate gender equality perspectives in the policy work of ministries, with a particular focus on promoting the diversity of women's voices in policymaking.

- Consideration could also be given to strengthening co-ordination mechanisms for the gender equality policy:

  - o Institutionalise and formalise co-ordination mechanisms between line ministries and the Cabinet with the NCW (e.g. the regular meetings to discuss the strategy's progress) to promote the implementation of the National Strategy for the Empowerment of Egyptian Women 2030 and pursue gender mainstreaming across policy areas.

- The role of MPEDIC in fostering gender mainstreaming in line ministries could also be expanded:

  - o Strengthen MPEDIC's mandate to keep line ministries accountable for incorporating gender equality considerations in sectoral strategic plans, as appropriate, by monitoring the existence and quality of gender-related objectives and overall gender mainstreaming.

2. **Build public service capacities for gender equality and mainstreaming**

- The Government would benefit from strengthening capacities for gender equality and mainstreaming in line ministries:

  - o With the support of the NCW, develop systematic training modules for all civil servants, including at senior levels, on the benefits of gender equality and mainstreaming, collection and analysis of gender-sensitive data, and use of tools for gender-sensitive policymaking.

  - o In the medium term, further build the capacity and expertise of EOUs in line ministries, as well as of managers and policy analysts, to promote gender-sensitive policymaking through guidelines and manuals to be prepared by CAOA in co-operation with the NCW.

3. **Integrate gender equality perspectives in strategic planning**

- The Government could work to strengthen gender mainstreaming in strategic planning:

  - o Ensure that the targets and indicators included in the updated Egypt Vision 2030 are aligned with the ones set in the National Strategy for the Empowerment of Egyptian Women 2030 and establish clear roles, responsibilities and lines of accountability to track and assess progress in implementing the vision and its gender-related objectives.

  - o Develop an adequately resourced national action plan(s) and establish clear roles and mandates for all government institutions to guide the implementation of the National Strategy for the Empowerment of Egyptian Women 2030.

  - o Publish annual reports highlighting the contribution of line ministries and agencies to implementing the strategy, reinforcing accountability and helping to ensure implementation.

  - o Introduce a requirement to systematically translate gender equality objectives laid out in Egypt Vision 2030, in the National Strategy for the Empowerment of Egyptian Women 2030 and any other plans into ministerial strategic plans that are adequately resourced and include gender-sensitive target indicators. In the medium to longer term, it would be key for MPEDIC to develop a systematic approach and guidance for line ministries to integrate gender equality objectives into their sectoral strategies, benefitting from the gender expertise of the NCW. To encourage gender mainstreaming, MPEDIC could set the integration of gender objectives and indicators in sectoral strategic plans as a condition to access public resources and core criteria against which quality and implementation of plans are reviewed.

- o Widely communicate the content of the *Conceptual Manual for a Gender-Responsive Sustainable Development Plan* in specific workshops with line ministries organised by the MPEDIC in co-operation with the NCW, in order to raise awareness of the importance of integrating gender considerations into sectoral strategic planning. The NCW could consolidate all guidance material for relevant ministries in a centralised platform in order to establish a resource hub where public entities can access manuals, templates, documents and other essential references to integrate gender equality into their routine policymaking work, thus creating a "one-stop shop" for their needs.

- o With the support of CAPMAS, expand the collection and availability of gender-disaggregated and intersectional data to a wide range of sectors, including those not traditionally associated with gender equality, to inform sectoral policymaking, monitoring and evaluation.

- o In the long term, consider adopting a more systematic approach to the use of gender impact assessments (GIAs) as a tool in support of evidence-based policymaking. This could include the development of guidance material in the form of templates, manuals or guidelines to formalise and systematise the use of these evaluations.

4. **Further integrate gender mainstreaming into the PARP**

- The Government of Egypt, and CAOA in particular, could take steps to integrate gender equality considerations in the PARP and promote gender equality in the civil service:

  - o Integrate a gender equality and mainstreaming lens into the pillars of the ARP in its future revisions and provide a compelling vision for gender equality in the public sector, underpinned by some fundamental civil service values and principles, such as equality and representativeness.

  - o Further develop work-life balance policies and initiatives and facilitate continuous support systems for family members' care, by offering flexibility to both men and women, mothers and fathers.

  - o Continue promoting the collection and use of gender-disaggregated data on gender representation and equality in the public sector through annual civil service employee surveys, ideally supported by an analytical framework for gender equality issues, with requirements for relevant data sources and data categories with an intersectional lens. This would considerably help assess the extent of horizontal and vertical segregation, understand differences in the uptake of flexible arrangements between women and men, etc., and devise effective solutions to tackle those issues.

  - o Strengthen the use of confidential complaint mechanisms and regular confidential assessments, such as anonymised surveys, to encourage reporting of all forms of gender-based harassment cases in the public sector, both off and on line. Consideration could also be given to updating the code of conduct to include provisions on gender-sensitive behaviour and language, with the aim of tackling harassment and other forms of gender-based abuse.

  - o Develop initiatives to raise awareness and reduce stigma and fear of reprisal, and encourage victims to report cases of offline and online gender-based harassment in the public service.

  - o Communicate the importance and benefits of increasing women's representation in the public sector, promoting meritocracy and making use of work-life balance solutions, including at senior levels, to change norms and attitudes that perpetuate gender inequalities and empower men to take on more family-related responsibilities.

5. **Strengthen the administrative and institutional framework to mainstream the perspectives of young people in policymaking**

- The Government of Egypt could consider strengthening the capacities of institutions delivering youth-related policies and:

  o Develop the institutional setup and ensure that roles, responsibilities and capacities are clearly allocated between stakeholders to effectively deliver for young people.

  o Ensure that youth policies and programmes are delivered in a co-ordinated manner.

  o Adopt a whole-of-government approach in youth policy, characterised by a shared vision and robust co-ordination mechanisms.

  o Formalise and strengthen the mandate and functions of MoYS by expanding their youth-related portfolio and elevating youth to the highest priority within the ministry's agenda.

  o Enhance the capacities and resources of MoYS to: i) effectively co-ordinate and follow up with all government institutions on the implementation of youth-related policies and programmes, including through the establishment of formalised mechanisms to be led by MoYS; ii) foster youth mainstreaming across the whole government, by providing expertise to line ministries, supporting them in integrating a youth perspective in their policy action, as well as to the MPEDIC, to develop a systematic approach and guidance to this effect.

- The role of MPEDIC in fostering youth mainstreaming in line ministries and expanded to:

  o Strengthen the MPEDIC's role and commitments to further encourage line ministries to incorporate young people's perspective and a youth lens in sectoral strategic plans and in line with Egypt Vision 2030, as appropriate, by monitoring the existence and quality of youth-related objectives and overall youth mainstreaming. This may involve developing clear and comprehensive guidelines for line ministries on incorporating youth-related objectives in their strategic plans, and outlining expectations, indicators and criteria for effective youth mainstreaming.

  o Foster the political determination and leadership necessary to adopt a cross-sectoral approach to youth, both horizontally, spanning various ministries, and vertically, across different government levels.

  o Engage with young people in the annual strategic planning process and in the development of sustainable development projects by building on MoYS expertise.

  o Lead the monitoring progress of the delivery of youth-related policies and ensure coherence with Egypt Vision 2030 in co-ordination with MoYS.

6. **Integrate youth perspectives in strategic planning**

- The Government could further strengthen youth mainstreaming in strategic planning:

  o Develop a legislative framework for youth that identifies the main stakeholders, defines youth and youth institutions, and sets out a youth age limit and the financial and budgetary considerations, for instance, through a national youth law.

  o Develop and adopt a national youth strategy to enable a co-ordinated approach to youth policy and ensure that governmental and non-governmental stakeholders have a common vision and strategy for young people.

  o In co-ordination with CAPMAS, establish clear arrangements for age and systematically gather data and indicators disaggregated by age, gender and other relevant characteristics across all policy and service areas.

  o Ensure that the targets and indicators included in the updated Egypt Vision 2030 are aligned with the ones set in the future national youth strategy and establish clear roles,

responsibilities and lines of accountability to track and assess progress in implementing the vision and its youth-related objectives.

- o Introduce a requirement to systematically translate youth objectives in Egypt Vision 2030 into sectoral strategies and any future and ministerial strategic plans. In the medium to longer term, it would be key for MPEDIC to develop a systematic approach and guidance for line ministries to integrate youth objectives into their sectoral strategies, benefitting from the expertise of the MoYS.

7. **Build public service capacities for young people and youth mainstreaming across the administration**

- The Government would benefit from improving youth employment in the public sector. It could:
  - o Encourage the representation of young people in the public sector workforce and attract young talent from diverse backgrounds.
  - o Ensure that public recruitment systems and evaluation methods are adapted for young people and graduates.
  - o Develop targeted programmes for young people to join the public sector in co-ordination with the NIGSD and MoYS.

- The government would benefit from strengthening capacities for youth mainstreaming in line ministries and:
  - o With the support of the NIGSD and MoYS, develop the capacities of civil servants by establishing training modules for all civil servants, including at senior levels, on how to include young people's perspectives and youth mainstreaming, collection and analysis of youth-sensitive data, and use of tools for youth-sensitive policymaking.
  - o In the medium term, further build the capacity and expertise of staff in line ministries, as well as of managers and policy analysts, to promote youth-sensitive policymaking through guidelines and manuals to be prepared by CAOA in co-operation with the NIGSD and MoYS.

8. **Further integrate youth mainstreaming in the PARP**

- CAOA could take steps to further integrate young people's considerations in the PARP and promote young people in the civil service:
  - o Integrate a youth mainstreaming lens into the pillars of the PARP in its future revisions and provide a compelling vision for youth empowerment in the public sector.
  - o Continue promoting the collection and use of age-disaggregated data on youth representation and equality in the public sector.

9. **Promoting an enabling environment for youth representation and participation**

- The Government could:
  - o Ensure the representation of young people in the civil service and government administration.
  - o Adopt a whole-of-government approach to co-ordinate the efforts and interventions when designing and delivering programmes and initiatives for young people.
  - o Continue to enhance communication with young people and strengthen transparency to ensure meaningful participation of young people; develop targeted communication channels adapted to young people.
  - o Enhance the participation of young people through broader participation channels such as youth-led organisations to represent their voices, public consultations and participatory budgeting programmes in co-ordination with various agencies and existing programmes in place (MoF, MPEDIC, NIGSD, MoYS).

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Note

1 Gender impact assessments are a policy tool for the screening of a given policy, programme or budget proposal, in order to identify and assess its likely differential impact or effects on women, men and other people. This is known as *ex ante* assessment. Gender impact assessments may measure programmatic impacts (results within the framework of public sector performance) rather than impacts at the level of societal change. These assessments, also known as *ex post* assessments, can also be undertaken after the implementation of a given policy, programme or budget at the evaluation stage to understand its gender-specific impacts (OECD, 2019[7]).

OECD Public Governance Reviews

EGYPT

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