

## The National Girls' Empowerment Initiative - Dawwie

### Background

Today Egypt is home for almost 20 million girls below the age of 19 years old and 14 million are the girls between the age of 10 and 24 years old. Egypt has successfully prioritized gender equality within its Sustainable Development Strategy -Egypt 2030, and the National Women Empowerment Strategy 2030 is paving the way for a more equitable society. While there are positive trends for women empowerment, girls in Egypt are less likely to achieve their full potential. For example, in addition to some harmful practices such as FGM and child marriage, girls are 5 times more likely than boys to be unemployed or receive any kind of education or training.

Acknowledging the great untapped potential of girls in Egypt and its catalytic role to achieve Egypt's Vision 2030, UNICEF supported the Government of Egypt to launch Dawwie, the first National Girls' Empowerment Initiative in 2019. Dawwie is a multi-stakeholder's initiative to create an enabling environment and advocate for girls' empowerment through **enhanced access to quality services, skills development, and opportunities to participate and be heard.**

Dawwie is led by the National Council for Childhood and Motherhood (NCCM), and the National Council for Women (NCW), with the support of UNICEF, and in partnership with the Ministry of Education and Technical Education (MoETE), Ministry of Social Solidarity (MoSS), Ministry of Health and Population (MoHP), Ministry of Youth and Sports (MoYS) and Ministry of Culture (MoC), Ministry of Information and Communication Technology (MoICT), National Council for Persons with Disability (NCPD) and the National Population Council (NPC), in addition to civil society organizations and international organizations. In 2022, Dawwie was placed under the auspices of the First Lady of Egypt in commemoration of the International Women's Day on March 8<sup>th</sup> marking enhanced political support on girls' empowerment.

Dawwie – an Arabic action verb that means to echo and reverberate- aims that all the girls in Egypt will fully enjoy all their rights by 2030. This is because when girls are empowered with skills and access to information and quality services, and when the community is willing to listen to their opinions and aspirations, the entire family, community and nation benefit from a more equitable and prosperous society, where boys' and girls' rights are more respected, acceptance of violence is reduced and opportunities for stability and development are increased.

The Dawwie Initiative is closely coordinated with partners engaged with the girls' empowerment agenda, such as UNFPA, UN Women, WHO and others to leverage synergies and partnerships along three key pillars: 1) enhancing access to age-appropriate skills' opportunities to support a successful transition from learning to earning; 2) improving quality, offer, and demand of services instrumental to girls' empowerment such as protection, Mental Health, Psychological Support and Menstrual Hygiene; 3) enhance positive gender socialization, and participation opportunities for boys and girls to experience gender equality and enhance agency.

### **Dawwie's Achievements to date**

More than **600,000** girls, boys, parents and community members engaged with the Dawwie activities such as storytelling circles, intergenerational dialogue, role plays and sport. Over 100,000 boys and girls aged 10-24 years old completed the **Dawwie digital literacy**. **'It Takes a Village'** documentary film on 3 Dawwie Ambassadors showcased at Gouna International Film Festival in October 2021 has won the Best Short Documentary at the New York Movie Festival and over 4 additional national and international awards and it is currently used to engage boys and girls at community level. Overall, Dawwie digital platforms reached more than **33 million people** and actively engaged **4 million**.



### **Dawwie Tools**

The Dawwie journey starts at the individual level with storytelling circle (Dawwie Circles) and the Dawwie digital literacy package to trigger conversations and reflections, face to face and online on equity and empowerment. Girls and boys are called to experience a respectful and constructive dialogue that grows at household and community level with Dawwie intergenerational dialogue, community theatre, storytelling public events, and Dawwie camps where girls, boys, parents and community members can experience the different Dawwie activities aiming at breaking the glass ceilings that may hinder the girls from achieving their full potential.

Dawwie focuses also on connecting girls and boys with policy makers to positively influence the decision-making processes. Among the recommendations that emerged include the need to have opportunities to be heard and influence their own future, as well as the need to close the digital divide for girls that can facilitate the transition towards a productive adulthood.



The Dawwie digital platforms created to nurture the dialogue online include a website ([www.dawwie.net](http://www.dawwie.net)) and Dawwie Facebook page (@DawwieInitiative), that offer access to all Dawwie toolkits and updates organically expanding across the country. Soon, a Dawwie App will be formally launched on Play Store and Apple Store, and a monitoring and evaluation system will be established to assess the impact at individual and community level.

UNICEF's commitment to girls' empowerment based on national priorities is formalized in the current Country Programme Document (2018-2022) between the Government of Egypt and UNICEF – as well as the upcoming Country Programme (2023-2027) - that includes a focus on social and behavioural change to strengthen impact of programme strategies through two main drivers of change: positive parenting and girls' empowerment.

### **Inspirational Stories from Dawwie Initiative:**

[Dawwie – Unlocking the power of girls](#)

[Narrowing the gap](#)