



Position Paper

**Coptic Evangelical Organization for
Social Services**

on National Issues

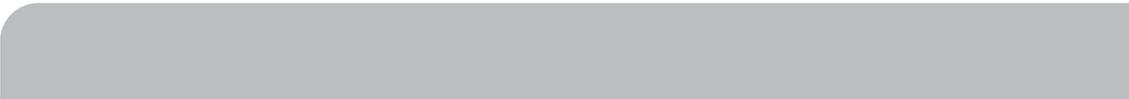


Coptic Evangelical Organization for Social Services

Position Paper

**Coptic Evangelical Organization
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On the Occasion of the 75th Anniversary of the
Coptic Evangelical Organization for Social Services in Egypt



Introduction

The **Coptic Evangelical Organization for Social Services (CEOSS)** is an Egyptian non-governmental organization of public utility, non-profit in nature, and registered with the Ministry of Social Solidarity under No. 468, Cairo. It was founded by the late Reverend Dr. Samuel Habib in 1950, starting as a literacy project in a village in Minya Governorate. Over the decades, it has evolved into a pioneering institution in the field of development and social services.

Since its inception, CEOSS has pursued a mission centered around valuing human life and working to enhance its quality, promoting the principles of justice and equality, fostering a culture of enlightened thinking, and affirming shared ethical and human values advocated by religions. It also seeks to instill values of loyalty and belonging, respect for diversity, and acceptance of the other.

CEOSS places particular emphasis on improving the quality of life for the poor and marginalized by working in the most underserved local communities, including rural, urban, and informal settlements, while focusing especially on vulnerable and at-risk groups such as women, youth, persons with disabilities, and children at risk. This is achieved through development mechanisms and models aimed at building the capacities of poor individuals, institutions, and communities, enhancing their cohesion, and increasing their readiness to develop effective tools that contribute to societal resilience in the face of current and potential risks, threats, and changes across various domains. These efforts strengthen their ability to eradicate poverty and move towards achieving equitable, inclusive, and sustainable development.

Throughout its journey of more than seventy-five years, the Organization has continually developed its programs and areas of intervention in line with the rapid transformations in the Egyptian society and the needs of its various segments, particularly the poor and marginalized. It has actively contributed to addressing key national and development challenges, supporting the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals at the local, national, regional, and international levels. In doing so, it has become

a strategic partner in comprehensive development efforts and a prominent contributor to building more just, cohesive, and inclusive societies.

CEOSS' work spans a wide array of sectors through its specialized working areas represented in units, which operate in an integrated and coordinated manner to advance its developmental objectives. These units include: Local Development Unit, Housing and Resource Development Unit, National Initiatives and Volunteering Unit, Microloans Unit, Medical Centers Unit, Agricultural Projects Unit, Agricultural Services Center (Agricultural Hub), Itsa Wood Unit, Training Centers Unit, Forum for Intercultural Dialogue, "Dar El Thaqafa" Unit, as well as Media and Artistic Production Unit.

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Preamble

Since its establishment in 1950, **the Coptic Evangelical Organization for Social Services (CEOSS)** has embodied a pioneering model of comprehensive development work, championing the humanitarian, social, economic, and cultural concerns of Egyptian society. Grounded in the principles of human dignity, citizenship, and social justice, CEOSS has consistently placed the human person at the heart of its mission. Guided by its vision of building a just and inclusive society that values every individual, CEOSS has worked through its programs and projects to address pressing developmental and national priorities- contributing to sustainable development at the local, national, regional, and international levels.

This document seeks to **document the long-standing engagement of CEOSS** with national issues by presenting its practical experience, which has evolved over time, and by highlighting its positions in addressing sustainable development challenges as both a national and societal priority. It also illustrates CEOSS' active partnership with the state and society, reflecting its firm strategic commitment to core community issues. This commitment is evident in the wide range of themes and concerns CEOSS has embraced, its ability to respond to societal transformations and shifting contexts, and the positive impact of its programs on individuals and communities- reinforcing its standing as a national civil institution with regional and international reach, and as an active contributor to global development agendas.

The document explores nineteen key themes that have represented major priorities on the national and developmental landscape throughout CEOSS' 75-year journey. Among such priorities are: food security, climate change (CC), unemployment and economic empowerment, financial inclusion, combating illiteracy and safeguarding children at-risk, women empowerment, gender equity, disability, prevention of avoidable blindness, public health, family planning, eliminating discrimination and gender-based violence (GBV), decent housing, social protection, citizenship, countering hate speech, cultural justice, and investing in human development.

In so doing, the document demonstrates how the engagement of CEOSS in such areas aligns with its institutional mission of empowering individuals and communities and integrating marginalized groups into the development processes- upholding human dignity, justice, and citizenship. It also underscores the commitment of CEOSS to its vision of a society that guarantees rights and freedoms without discrimination.

At the national level, the document reaffirms CEOSS alignment with the State's strategic direction, particularly Egypt Vision 2030, as well as sectoral strategies including the National Human Rights Strategy (NHRS), the National Strategy for the Empowerment of Egyptian Women, the National Climate Change Strategy 2050, the National Population and Development Strategy (2023–2030), **and the National Health Strategy (2024–2030)**. CEOSS also contributes actively to major national initiatives such as Hayah Karima (“Decent Life”). At the international level, CEOSS has remained firmly committed to global reference frameworks, most notably the United Nations *Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)*, the *African Union Agenda 2063*, the *Conventions on the Rights of the Child*, on the *Rights of Persons with Disabilities (PwDs)*, and other agreements that advance the concept of inclusive and equitable development.

Finally, this document represents an open call for strengthening cooperation, partnerships, and synergy among all stakeholders, to face current and emerging challenges and to contribute to building a future that is more just, inclusive, and humane.

Food Security

Food security is one of Egypt’s most strategic and pressing priorities, given its direct impact on economic and social stability. The concept rests on four key dimensions: food availability, accessibility, long-term stability, food safety and quality. With rapid population growth and declining natural resources- particularly water- Egypt faces major challenges in achieving self-sufficiency. This is especially critical considering its dependence on importing essential commodities such as wheat, which leaves the country vulnerable to global market fluctuations, rising prices, and supply chain disruptions triggered by international crises such as wars and climate change.

CEOSS accords special importance to supporting food security and advancing the agricultural sector. This commitment stems from its developmental and humanitarian mission, centered on community empowerment and social justice, particularly in rural and underserved areas. CEOSS’ projects reflect its vision of building more resilient and sustainable communities by enhancing agricultural production, promoting sustainable farming, and empowering vulnerable groups- particularly rural women and smallholder farmers. In so doing, CEOSS contributes to improved livelihoods and establishes food security as a cornerstone of an inclusive development.

CEOSS’ efforts in this area are fully aligned with Egypt’s national priorities for strengthening the agricultural sector and ensuring food security, as provided for in Article 79 of the Constitution, which guarantees citizens the right to adequate and healthy food. Such efforts are also consistent with *Egypt Vision 2030*, which places food security and sustainable agriculture at the heart of its economic and environmental pillars, as well as the Government Action Plan (2023–2027), which focuses on both horizontal and vertical agricultural expansion, empowering small farmers, and improving supply chains to achieve self-sufficiency and reduce the imports bill.

At the international level, CEOSS’ work clearly aligns with the United Nations 2030 *Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)*, namely: Goal 2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture, ensuring access of all to safe and sufficient food, Goal 5: Achieve gender

equity and empower all women and girls and Goal 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.

CEOSS' Role Since its Establishment

Since its inception, CEOSS has played a pivotal role in enhancing food security through its wide range of developmental programs and projects targeting the agricultural sector, the primary driver of this strategic objective. This role has been manifested in supporting agricultural, livestock, poultry, and fisheries production- integrated efforts that collectively contribute to achieving comprehensive and sustainable food security. Among the most notable contributions CEOSS has made since its foundation are:

In Crop Production



· CEOSS started its efforts in agricultural development in **1960**, by reclaiming 1,200 feddans of desert land in East Nile, in Minya Governorate, with the aim of granting land ownership to the poor and providing sustainable sources of income. This was part of an integrated model in cooperation with relevant government authorities.

- During the 1970s and 1980s, CEOSS expanded its work into agricultural extension and improving crop productivity.
- During the 1990s, CEOSS partnered with the Ministry of Agriculture and research centers, adopting agricultural projects for high-yield crops such as wheat and sweet corn. CEOSS also introduced concepts of clean agriculture, reducing dependence on chemical fertilizers and carrying out awareness-raising programs on good agricultural practices (GAPs).
- From the beginning of the millennium until now, CEOSS has strengthened its orientation towards sustainable agriculture, broadening its interventions through agricultural programs and projects that support food security across crop, livestock, poultry, and fishery sectors. Key milestones include:
 - Implementing integrated developmental projects focused on sustainable agri-



culture and ecological systems, contributing to the continuity of agricultural production and meeting long-term food needs.

- Expanding the planting and productivity of strategic crops such as wheat and corn, which are pillars of food security in Egypt. This is achieved through improved agricultural practices and by developing model farms and demonstration pilot fields to train small farmers on environmentally sustainable farming, thus ensuring safe and sufficient food production.

- CEOSS has supported clean agriculture as a component of healthy food security, by reducing the use of chemical fertilizers and relying on

organic alternatives like compost- preserving soil health and food quality, while reducing health and environmental harm.

- CEOSS established laboratories to produce micro-organisms (microbial cultures) to accelerate anaerobic decomposition, which enhances compost production as a natural organic fertilizer used to improve soil and increase soil fertility. This raises the efficiency of agricultural production and contributes to sustainable food security.
- Linking agriculture to healthy nutrition by training women to prepare balanced meals based on local produce, which helps improve nutrition at the level of rural households and contributes to addressing manifestations of malnutrition within an integrated vision of food security.
- In 2015, CEOSS launched the *Agricultural Hub (A Social Business Model in the provision of agricultural services to farmers)*, which represented a paradigm shift in supporting small farmers- treating them as “agricultural investors,” not just producers. The Hub provides a comprehensive package of agricultural ser-



ices through several components, including a marketing module to increase farmers' income by creating market opportunities and establishing contractual relationships with agricultural marketing companies (contractual agriculture). It also offers technical support and supplies for production inputs, contributing to producing high-quality crops that meet market needs. The Hub system includes a **post-harvest sorting and packaging unit** that links small farmers to value chains through processing of crops according to required specifications, which helps reduce post-harvest losses. The modern agricultural mechanization raises productivity per feddan by reducing the cost and time of irrigation, improving water use, and increasing crop productivity per area. The **Medicinal and Aromatic Plants Unit** focuses on enhancing the economic value of such crops by preparing them in line with market standards, supporting marketing and providing an additional source of income. All such components work together to support food

security by increased output, improved quality, reduced losses, and enhanced incomes of small producers, thus contributing to a more stable and inclusive food system.

- The Agricultural Projects Unit plays an important role in enhancing agricultur-



al production and supporting food security. It established the Ismailia Farm on an area of approx. 130 feddans, as well as El-Berensat Farm which implements intensive cultivation models to maximize the productivity per feddan. The Unit also adopts clean agriculture methods by reducing the use of agricultural chemicals, which helps protect the environment and consumer health. In addition, it implements protected agriculture models (greenhouses) allowing vertical integration in producing vegetable crops outside of their natural seasons, increasing their market value.

- From 2022 to 2025, CEOSS implemented the Cul-

tivate “Ezraa” initiative under the umbrella of the National Alliance for Civil Development Work (NACDW) in partnership with the Ministry of Social Solidarity (MoSS) and the Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation (MALR). This marked another paradigm shift in CEOSS’ national role in supporting food security. The initiative aims to increase cultivated areas of strategic crops- primarily wheat- reduce the import bill and increase the incomes of hundreds of thousands of small farmers by providing high-quality certified seed. The initiative also seeks to preserve natural resources and strengthen farmers’ capacity to face climate changes, reflecting the integration of state and civil society efforts to protect Egypt food security.

In the Area of Livestock, Poultry, and Fisheries Development

- CEOSS has placed considerable emphasis on developing livestock and poultry wealth. In the 1970s, apiculture (beekeeping) was introduced in Minya Governorate by CEOSS as a pioneering step in this domain. During the 1980s, CEOSS established pilot extension farms for cattle and poultry breeding. The farms aimed to improve local breeds by introducing high-productivity dairy cows



and employing modern methods such as artificial insemination to raise production efficiency. They also produced milk and dairy products, which served as educational models to train small farmers. This role has continued from the 1990s till date. CEOSS has provided improved breeding livestock of cattle, sheep, and goats to groups of breeders, with the condition that they use same for breed improvement within their villages. Simultaneously, high-productivity poultry strains were provided, and support was extended to fishermen to increase productivity and ensure quality and safety through improving their knowledge, skills, and tools. Efforts also included creating model livestock pens, organizing training and

awareness campaigns on care and nutrition methods, implementing preventive and therapeutic veterinary campaigns, and executing vaccination programs- thus contributing to increasing the availability, quality, and safety of animal-based protein.

Key Highlights

- A **quadrupartite protocol of cooperation** was signed between CEOSS, the Ministry of Social Solidarity (MoSS), the Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation (**MALR**), and the National Alliance for Civil Development Work (NACDW) to launch the fourth phase of the “Ezraa” initiative. This was part of state and civil society efforts to achieve food security and support Egyptian farmers. Over three wheat seasons (2022/2023 – 2024/2025), the initiative supported over 518,000 small farmers to cultivate approximately 784,000 feddans. These efforts increased average productivity per feddan by approx. 4 ardeb (1ardeb equivalent to 150 KGs), resulting in production exceeding 3 million ardeb (equivalent to 4.7 million tons of wheat)- an effective vertical expansion



equivalent to 174,000 extra feddans without horizontal expansion.

- CEOSS has successfully contributed to a comprehensive system for enhanced food safety and security, by improving both crop and livestock production, providing sufficient, safe food for rural communities, while adhering to sustainable agricultural and ecological practices and adopting environmentally friendly farming methods.
- CEOSS has helped increase the incomes of hundreds of thousands of small farmers (those who own or operate three feddans or less) by raising productivity, reducing cultivation costs, and improving crop quality. This allowed them to access more profitable markets and achieve a tangible improvement in living standards.
- Small farmers have shifted from being recipients of support to becoming active agricultural investors capable of decision-making within democratic organizational structures. This shift has been manifested through the formation of farmer associations and cooperatives across various governorates.
- CEOSS has succeeded in integrating rural women into production and marketing value chains, providing agricultural projects that ensure food security and income generation, thereby enabling women to play a meaningful developmental and social roles within their communities.
- Successful models of integration between development and environmental protection have been created, demonstrating how economic efficiency and preservation of natural resources could go hand in hand.
- CEOSS impact has extended across a broad geographical scope, reaching 16 governorates in Egypt, reinforcing its approach of reach and community impact. CEOSS has succeeded in forging integrated developmental partnerships with various sectors- governmental, civil, private, and research centers- helping coordinate efforts towards achieving national food security goals.

For more details, you may refer to the following link:

<https://ceoss-eg.org/annual-report/>

<https://ceoss-eg.org/annual-report/?lang=en>

<https://ceoss-eg.org/agricultural-projects/>

<https://ceoss-eg.org/agricultural-projects/?lang=en>

<https://ceoss-eg.org/agrihub/>

<https://ceoss-eg.org/agrihub/?lang=en>

-Signing a new Quadripartite Protocol for the “Ezraa” Initiative to support small farmers and achieve food security in Egypt

<https://www.moss.gov.eg/ar-eg/Pages/news-details.aspx?nid=4109>

<https://is.gd/rLqo3n>

-Dr. Andrea Zaki: We are contributing to a project to cultivate one million feddans of wheat.

<https://youtu.be/mfQw8ujPhWs>

-Ahl Baladna - The Coptic Evangelical Organization for Social Services (CEOSS) organizes a veterinary convoy to support farmers and breeders as part of the “Ezraa” Initiative (video report)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hvbk-jEa13A>

<https://www.elwatannews.com/news/details/7379434>

CEOSS makes progress in the contract farming model in Upper Egypt

<https://www.almasryalyoum.com/news/details/2685250>

- CEOSS holds sessions to transfer good practices to rural communities

https://www.gomhuriaonline.com/Gomhuria/1359171.html?srsltid=AfmBOop-DJ-N7_IyOPmJxJKIXVTo8kb3nyis63mSCEIGD77OfqX1P36e

-CEOSS, a member of the National Alliance for Civil Development Work (NA-CDW), has received a number of agricultural projects

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RE93BmVTR30>

-Sabah El-Kheir (Good Morning) movie

https://youtu.be/CRg_xznsi2k?list=PLyvIl1KGnpdZkmgHrU-VW75qLuruzE1dYR&t=1183

Environmental Issues, Climate Change, and Preservation of Natural Resources

Environmental issues, climate change, and the depletion of natural resources are among the most prominent challenges facing the world today, whether at the local or international levels. The increasing climatic phenomena- such as rising temperatures, changes in rainfall patterns, and the growing number of environmental disasters- have highlighted the direct effects of global warming resulting from human activity, foremost among which are greenhouse gas emissions. The environment is no longer merely a matter related to cleanliness or waste management; it has become an issue closely connected to food security, climate justice, sound resource management, and community stability, which makes addressing it a collective responsibility requiring the integration of roles between the State, civil society, and the private sector.

Based on its mission, since its establishment the Coptic Evangelical Organization for Social Services (CEOSS) has adopted an integrated development vision that made the environmental dimension a main axis in its interventions and programs. This has been embodied through the integration of environmental and climate issues into the core of its projects covering multiple sectors, including agriculture, health, rural development, and community awareness, in pursuit of comprehensive development that considers the balance between human beings and the environment.

CEOSS' efforts in this field are consistent with Egypt's national directions, in particular with the **National Climate Change Strategy 2050**, launched as a roadmap for the transition to a low-emission green economy that strengthens the resilience of communities in facing climate change, and also with **Egypt Vision 2030**, which integrates the environmental dimension into all areas of development and calls for the sustainable use of resources, improvement of air and water quality, and reduction of pollution- reflecting a shared commitment to achieving environmental sustainability goals. At the international level, CEOSS' work is clearly aligned with the **United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**, particularly: Goal 13: Climate Action, Goal 11: Sustainable Cities and

Communities, Goal 12: Responsible Consumption and Production, Goal 15: Life on Land (preserving ecosystems and biodiversity).

The Role of CEOSS in Addressing Environmental, Climate Issues and Preservation of Natural Resources



· CEOSS began its role in environmental issues and the preservation of natural resources in the 1950s and 1960s, focusing on land reclamation projects and applying techniques aimed at protecting agricultural land from desertification and rationalizing the use of water resources.

· In the 1970s and 1980s, with the expansion of its health and economic programs, CEOSS introduced the environmental dimension into its work by linking concepts of public hygiene with community health and carried out awareness campaigns in rural communities that included personal hygiene and household waste management.

· The 1990s witnessed a paradigm shift towards organic agriculture, where CEOSS supported farmers in reducing dependence on chemical fertilizers, applied sustainable environmental systems for managing agricultural waste, and introduced environmentally friendly technologies such as solar heaters and bio-gas. CEOSS also expanded afforestation programs in streets and institutions with the aim of increasing green spaces and reducing carbon emissions. Contributing to this is its ownership of a nursery that provides high-quality seedlings supplied throughout the whole country.



· In 2004, CEOSS launched an integrated project to improve the urban environment in West Minya District, in collaboration with Minya Governorate, focusing on solid waste management, improving housing conditions, and public health, while enhancing resi-

dents' awareness and participation in environmental issues. The project directly contributed to preventing random burning of waste, which led to a reduction in carbon emissions- one of the main causes of climate change. Building on this approach, CEOSS intends in 2025 to launch a new project aimed at strengthening the capacities of 14 local CBOs in the governorates of Qena, Assiut, and Gharbia, enabling them to implement local initiatives for managing solid and agricultural waste, thereby contributing to environmental protection and reducing adverse impacts of climate change at the local level.



· CEOSS work also extended to the economic field through supporting environmentally friendly projects, including the development of pottery kilns to reduce carbon emissions and training youth to establish projects based on the principles of the green economy and sustainable development.

- CEOSS also gives special importance to raising awareness and changing prevailing culture regarding environmental issues. In this context, the **Forum for Intercultural Dialogue** included climate change among the training topics in its program to build the capacities of intermediary leaders, with a focus on the relationship between religion and climate change, as well as the impact of climate change and natural resource management on community peace.
- Within the framework of CEOSS' adoption of the issue of climate change and the preservation of natural resources, and especially its close connection with agricultural development, CEOSS has focused on building the capacities of local communities- individuals and institutions- through an integrated methodology aimed at strengthening community resilience in facing climate risks. **This methodology has been embodied in five main pillars:**
 - **First Pillar: Monitoring Climate Change** - CEOSS established four automatic climate forecast stations in the governorates of Qalyoubia, Fayoum, Minya and Beni Sueif to measure climatic variables (temperature, humidity, rainfall, and others), with the aim of transforming this data into technical information to be provided to small farmers through various means of extension to support their ability to adapt.

- **Second Pillar: Sustainable Use of Agricultural Resources**- In light of water scarcity, CEOSS provided farmers with modern irrigation models such as drip irrigation to reduce water waste, protect soil from degradation, and limit the spread of plant diseases caused by flood irrigation. CEOSS also cooperated with the Ministries of Agriculture and Land Reclamation (MALR) and Ministry of Irrigation to purify irrigation canals, contributing to improving their efficiency. Interventions also included supporting soil with fertilizers and enhancers, providing crop varieties resistant to climate change, recycling agricultural and animal waste to produce compost, as well as promoting awareness of good agricultural practices. CEOSS was keen to apply such models and practices in its agricultural projects, such as the Ismailia Farm and El-Berensat Farm.
- **Third Pillar: Digital Agricultural Extension**- CEOSS developed the “Smart Guide” application, the first interactive application that provides 16 technical programs for various crops, relying on climate station data to provide accurate guidance. It also supplies users with information on quality certification standards, agricultural services, and marketing opportunities.
- **Fourth Pillar: Raising Community Awareness on Preserving Natural Resources** - This is implemented through awareness campaigns in cooperation with several universities, such as Minya University and Benha University, as well as the Climate Information Center at the Ministry of Agriculture. Efforts also included initiatives by religious leaders, who explained Islamic and Christian texts highlighting the importance of preserving the environment as God’s creation. In addition, awareness initiatives were launched at schools and universities and at public gathering spaces such as water companies, health units, and other community facilities, with the aim of promoting

a culture of environmental sustainability and conservation of natural resources.



- **Fifth Pillar: Building Strategic Partnerships**- CEOSS built partnerships with several state institutions to mobilize joint efforts and integrate in adopting these issues. In this context, CEOSS signed a cooperation

protocol with the Egyptian Ministry of Environment to support integrat-

ed environmental management and ensure a healthy environment. The protocol focuses on integrating the environmental dimension into development projects, raising environmental awareness, and strengthening coordination between governmental and non-governmental entities to address the effects



review mechanisms for addressing them and adapting to their impacts.

And in a paradigm shift in the progress of CEOSS' role in adopting Climate Change issues, CEOSS achieved being a United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) accredited observer organization, granting it the right of participation in the official Blue Zone in the Conference of the Parties



of climate change and conserve natural resources, with an emphasis on integrating gender issues and activating the role of women and youth in environmental plans.

– Consultative sessions and conferences were also held with intellectual leaders, parliamentarians, and decision-makers to discuss climate change issues and

review mechanisms for addressing them and adapting to their impacts. This accreditation has come based on CEOSS' long track record in developmental work, especially in the fields of agriculture, environment, and climate change; and is considered a strategic step that enroots CEOSS' presence on the global arena for climate work.

The following section sheds light on the progress of CEOSS' participation in COP:

1. The first participation – COP27 – Sharm El Sheikh – Egypt, 2022:

COP 27 in Sharm El Sheikh

in 2022 marks CEOSS' first participation in COP, where CEOSS hosted a both in the Green Zone for the entire COP duration, where it showcased its various interventions and experiences related to climate change. Additionally, CEOSS organized 5 panels that addressed the following topics:

- **Environmental Citizenship,**
- *Small Farmers' Resilience for Climate Adaptation and Mitigation,*
- *Resilient Housing to Face Climate Change,*
- *The Role of Environment in Enhancing Community Peace,*
- *The Challenges and Needs of Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) in Facing Climate Change."*

2. **Applying for accreditation with the UNFCCC (2022):**

In the same year, 2022, CEOSS officially applied for accreditation as a UNFCCC observer organization.

The application was based on CEOSS extensive experience in the programs of agriculture, economic development, solid waste management; in addition to the compliance of CEOSS' approaches with the policies of the Egyptian State in dealing with climate changes as presented in its committed Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) with the UNFCCC.

3. **Official UNFCCC accreditation and Blue Zone participation – COP28 – Dubai, 2023**



With the launch of COP28 in 2023, CEOSS got its official UNFCCC accreditation, allowing for its participation with a delegation and organizing of events in the Blue Zone starting the following year.

In the same year, and in collaboration with Bread for the World (Germany), CEOSS participated in a panel in the Faith Pavillion in the Blue Zone, entitled: *'Consolidated Technical Development and Interfaith Efforts to Preserve Natural Resources Impacting Food Security – a Case from Egypt.'*

4. Expanding international participation – COP29 – Baku – Azerbaijan, 2024:



In 2024 CEISS expanded its participation in COP29 as an accredited organization in the Blue Zone through a delegation organizing and participating in the following events:

- *“Climate Change and its Impact on Persons with Disabilities” – at the Arab League Pavilion, organized by CEISS in collaboration with Diakonia (Sweden)*
- *“Climate Adaptation Finance for Egyptian Small Farmers” – A UNFCCC official side event, a UNFCCC official side event in collaboration with Bread for the World and Act Alliance*
- *“Just Transition to Sustainable Food Systems in Local Communities.” – at the Faith Pavilion, upon invitation from Bread for the World.*

Highlights



- CEISS was accredited as an official **Observer Organization to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)**, which granted CEISS the right to formally participate in global climate conferences inside the Blue Zone. This recognition was based on CEISS longstanding track record in development, particularly in agriculture, environment, and climate change.

- **Producing a variety of knowledge and awareness tools** that highlight the relationship between **religion, culture, and**

climate change, in addition to introducing new concepts such as “**environmental citizenship.**”

- Developing a **contemporary religious discourse** that provides interpretations of religious texts related to the environment and emphasizes humanity’s role in preserving God’s creation. This discourse has been adopted in many **Islamic and Christian religious institutions**, contributing tangibly to raising environmental awareness, especially in local communities, given the significant influence enjoyed by faith leaders in these contexts.



- Signing a **Cooperation Protocol with the Ministry of Environment**, aimed at supporting environmental work and coordinating efforts to raise public awareness of all environmental issues, particularly climate change, across all the Egyptian governorates.



- Launching several initiatives and training programs in cooperation with Egyptian universities, including: **The “Our Students, Champions of Change” Initiative**, implemented in cooperation with the Faculty of Agriculture, Benha University (Moshtohor), which aims to prepare university students to raise awareness on

climate change, its impacts, and adaptation measures. **A training program with the Creative Innovation Hub at Minya University**, targeting the development of community cadres in eight Upper Egypt governorates to implement awareness campaigns focused on natural resource conservation, water rationalization, and climate adaptation.

- CEOSS succeeded in integrating the **environmental dimension** into various development sectors such as agriculture, health, and education, making

environmental action an inseparable part of a comprehensive development system rooted in environmental and social justice as an entry point to sustainable development.

- CEOSS interventions contributed to strengthening the capacity of rural communities to adapt to climate change by empowering target groups- particularly small farmers- to use knowledge tools based on real data.
- Reducing water consumption by more than 30% through the adoption of **drip irrigation methods** compared to flood irrigation.
- Participating local NGOs achieved a qualitative leap in their institutional capacities, becoming more efficient in designing, implementing, and managing environmental initiatives, thanks to enhanced technical and managerial skills. This enabled them to work with greater independence and stronger impact in their communities.
- Continuous community work led to a tangible improvement in individuals' behaviour towards the environment, embedding positive practices in cleanliness, resource use, and waste management, thereby fostering a collective environmental awareness that influenced the daily lives of families in target communities.
- CEOSS successfully localized **appropriate environmental technologies**, such as biogas systems and solar heaters, within rural contexts, contributing to the dissemination of low-cost, environmentally sound, replicable solutions built on local resources.
- Economic initiatives contributed to opening new opportunities for the **green economy** at the local level, through supporting eco-friendly projects led by youth and women, fostering economic empowerment aligned with environmental sustainability.

For more information, please refer to:

<https://ceoss-eg.org/annual-report/>

<https://ceoss-eg.org/annual-report/?lang=en>

- [Al-Ahram Gate: CEOSS signs a cooperation protocol to support environmental work in all governorates | Photos](#)

<https://gate.ahram.org.eg/News/3549887.aspx>

- [El-Watan: CEOSS is implementing an initiative to raise awareness among farmers in Assiut about the impact of climate change.](#)

<https://www.elwatannews.com/news/details/7415013>

- Youm7: “Our Students, Champions of Change” - An initiative by CEOSS and the “Faculty of Agriculture - Benha University” to preserve natural resources

<https://is.gd/qrSwPV>

- Minia University launches the “Preserving Natural Resources Amid Climate Change” Campaign in partnership with CEOSS.

http://www.minia.edu.eg/minia/desofnew.aspx?new_id=769084

“Smart Guide”... an interactive electronic application enabling farmers to combat climate change.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ew1dNW6jNAY>

- COP 28 – 29

https://www.youtube.com/live/YBKF_9HTcc0?si=Jc73ch3KoVFF2-0L

• <https://www.facebook.com/share/p/PtjzWLMUuT4566FS/?mibextid=WC7FNe>

- Look at this post on Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/share/B6C3FAQzazjjq8yo/?mibextid=WC7FNe>

- Look at this post on Facebook

• <https://www.facebook.com/share/p/19YGmZdiqe/>

<https://www.facebook.com/share/p/piVgQCcNG8joxgYP/?mibextid=WC7FNe>

• Faith Pavilion full event recording:

<https://www.faithpavilion.com/Session/Index/72>

Unemployment and Economic Empowerment

Unemployment and economic empowerment are central issues in achieving sustainable development, given their profound impact on quality of life and economic growth. Their impact is not limited to the economic aspect alone but extends to social and human dimensions, especially when addressing the most vulnerable and marginalized groups, such as youth, women, and persons with disabilities, who often face challenges that hinder their full integration into the economic system.

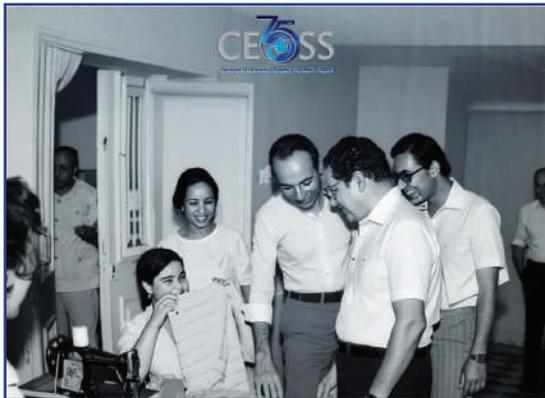
- **CEOSS' efforts in this matter stem from a comprehensive vision that places the human being at the core of the developmental process** and considers economic empowerment not as an end per se, but as a fundamental entry point for reproducing a free, productive, and responsible individual. CEOSS has adopted this issue as one of the fundamental pillars of social justice, launching programs and initiatives based on actual empowerment and investment in human capital, with a focus on capacity building, providing the necessary tools for engagement in the formal economy, and promoting a culture of work and entrepreneurship.
- CEOSS interventions align with the national directions of the Egyptian state, foremost among them Egypt Vision 2030, which emphasizes the importance of economic empowerment as a means of combating poverty and achieving social justice, and calls for expansion of small and micro enterprises and providing decent job opportunities, particularly for the most vulnerable groups. These efforts also complement the National Strategy for the Empowerment of Women and the National Youth Strategy, which represent reference frameworks for supporting groups that have long suffered from marginalization in the labour market. In addition, they are consistent with the Egyptian state's focus on small and micro enterprises, as well as with the issuance by the President of the Arab Republic of Egypt of Decree No. 141 of 2014 regulating the microfinance market, as amended by Decree No. 201 of 2020.
- **At the international level, the efforts of CEOSS are consistent with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**, specifically:

Goal 1: No Poverty, Goal 5: Achieve Gender Equality, and Goal 8: Promote Decent Work and Economic Growth.

The Role of CEOSS Since its Establishment

Since the early 1980s, the Coptic Evangelical Organization for Social Services (CEOSS), through its Development Unit, has adopted a practical and proactive approach to addressing unemployment and economic empowerment. This approach has relied on implementing a set of intervention strategies developed over different periods of time, which included the following:

- **Since its establishment**, CEOSS placed the issue of unemployment at the top of its priorities. Its interventions evolved from simple vocational training



programs to more advanced models of microfinance. Since 1983, these interventions have aimed to create new job opportunities, develop, and sustain existing projects, and ultimately improve people's quality of life.

- **Since 1996 till present**, the developmental efforts

by CEOSS have witnessed the launch of more specialized programs and projects to tackle unemployment and promote economic empowerment for young men and women, with the aim of enabling these groups to obtain decent work opportunities, increase income, and secure a decent life. These efforts have also sought to build a more resilient community environment that strengthens opportunities for inclusive and sustainable economic growth in poor and marginalized communities. Key programs and interventions have included:

- **Administrative training programs:** equipping youth to enter the labour market by developing their administrative and organizational skills in line with market requirements.
- **Vocational and technical training programs:** providing trainees with practical and technical skills aligned with market needs, opening opportunities in diverse sectors.



-**Supporting direct employment:** facilitating effective linkages between youth and available job opportunities through partnerships with the private sector, establishing and operating technological and employment centers within partner CBOs in target areas, and organizing job fairs and employment forums in collaboration with major private sector companies to ensure access to available opportunities for young men and women.



-**Entrepreneurship development services:** targeting youth entrepreneurs and owners of start-ups. In this context, CEOSS established The **Central Entrepreneurship Development Services Unit EDSU**, followed by **12 sub-units** across governorates, offering non-financial services, technical and legal support, and encouraging young entrepreneurs to launch innovative projects that enhance the **use of technology** and **digital transformation** while contributing to the transition towards a **green economy**.



- CEOSS helped women working in informal sector integrate through their business registration and obtaining operating licenses, which strengthened their legal and social protection and enhanced their economic efficiency.



provide them with model employment contracts, health and social insurance, and rights in line with international standards. The campaign “*We Need a Law to Protect Us*” supported these efforts by collecting data and mobilizing broad parliamentary and community support for comprehensive legislation that strengthens the legal and economic protection of women in this sector.



CEOSS also supported the establishment of 30 women-led production units within communities, representing a qualitative shift in women empowerment and their role in economic development.

- **Policy advocacy:** CEOSS, in cooperation with civil society organizations and local partners, spearheaded advocacy efforts for the adoption of a draft law to protect domestic workers, alongside official discussions with the Ministry of Labor and the Ministry of Social Solidarity (MoSS) on the draft “Domestic Workers Law.” This direction aims to regulate the status of female domestic workers and provide

-**Within the same context,** CEOSS advanced the economic empowerment and productive participation of rural women as an essential entry point to supporting household income and achieving sustainable local development. CEOSS worked to create decent



contribute to food security while providing them with the technical and administrative skills needed to independently manage their projects. This empowerment has enhanced their economic participation, improved their living standards, and reinforced their role as active contributors to the local economy.



employment opportunities for women in agricultural value chains, particularly in post-harvest services such as sorting, packing, and packaging, thereby ensuring their effective integration into the economic process. Additionally, CEOSS supported rural women in implementing income-generating agriculture-related projects that

In 2000, CEOSS witnessed a qualitative shift in the field of economic empowerment when the small projects program was transformed into an independent unit managed by a specialized team, allowing for greater focus and effectiveness in providing financial services.

Since 2011 till now, CEOSS has managed financing programs more institutionally and professionally, expanding partnerships and introducing digital technology to enhance impact and reach broader segments of beneficiaries.



- In 2015, the program was officially registered with the Financial Regulatory Authority (FRA) as a licensed entity for practicing microfinance activities. A new manual and executive regulations were issued in alignment with international standards in this field, contributing to improved performance efficiency and achieving advanced global rankings from the American

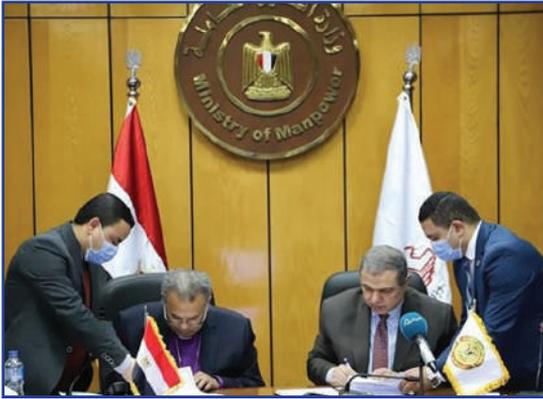
MIX Market authority.

- During the period 2020–2025, CEOSS strengthened its efforts towards digital transformation, integrating non-banking financial services into a comprehensive system, while expanding institutional partnerships to support financing and training opportunities across various target communities.
- Through its specialized entity, *Amal Microfinance*, CEOSS plays an active and vital role in addressing unemployment by providing genuine and recurring job opportunities through supporting small enterprises. Its key roles in this area include:
 - **Financing small projects:** offering affordable loans to creative entrepreneurs and innovators with competitive interest rates and flexible repayment options tailored to the circumstances of beneficiaries.
 - **Capacity building:** organizing specialized training programs on entrepreneurship, marketing, and business management to equip youth and women with the skills necessary to enter the labor market or confidently and efficiently establish their own projects.
 - **Advisory services:** providing beneficiaries with continuous consultancy throughout the various stages of their projects, from ideation to implementation and growth, ensuring the intended impact and fostering economic sustainability.

Key Highlights

- Signing a cooperation protocol with the Ministry of Manpower aimed at joint action in the fields of community development, training, promoting

the culture of self-employment, entrepreneurship, and occupational safety and health. An MoU was also signed with the Micro, Small and Medium



Enterprises Development Agency (MSMEDA) under the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MoTI) with the aim of promoting the culture of entrepreneurship and self-employment.

· Since the launch of microfinance activities, CEOSS has successfully supported project owners by providing over one million loans granted to its clients in 10 governorates, approx. 70% of whom were women. This support contributed to creating a large number of new job opportunities for youth, in addition to preserving existing jobs. Profits from these loans were reinvested to enhance the production capacity



of existing projects and create opportunities to employ additional individuals within the same projects, contributing to their growth and sustainability.

- Improving institutional performance of small enterprises and startups.
- Strengthening the capacities of economically marginalized groups, particularly women, youth, and persons with disabilities (PwDs), in ways that contribute to their economic independence.
- Promoting an effective participatory model between civil society, the private sector, and government entities.
- Expanding the application of financial inclusion in alignment with national directions.

For more information, see:

لمزيدٍ من المعلومات يمكن الاطلاع على:

<https://ceoss-eg.org/annual-report/>

<https://ceoss-eg.org/annual-report/?lang=en>

<https://ceoss-eg.org/amal-for-microfinance/>

<https://ceoss-eg.org/amal-for-microfinance/?lang=en>

<https://www.facebook.com/AmalMicroLoans/>

- Cooperation between CEOSS and the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise Development Agency (MSMEDA) to support female entrepreneurs and craftsmen.

<https://ceoss-eg.org/28860/>

- El-Watan: CEOSS concludes a project to protect female workers in the informal sector.

<https://www.elwatannews.com/news/details/5731663>

- Al-Masry Al-Youm: In the presence of the Minya Governor, CEOSS organizes a Youth Employment Forum.

<https://www.almasryalyoum.com/news/details/2702147>

- CEOSS and the “Arab Networks” discuss improving the status of working women. Photos

<https://is.gd/rgMcjv>

Financial Inclusion

Financial

inclusion is one of the fundamental pillars for achieving sustainable economic and social development, as it contributes to enabling individuals and the most vulnerable groups to access formal financial services such as savings, finance, insurance, and digital payment methods. The focus on financial inclusion in Egypt is aligned with *Egypt Vision 2030*, which emphasizes promoting inclusive and sustainable growth and reducing poverty rates. It also aligns with international orientations led by organizations such as the World Bank and G20, which consider financial inclusion a key tool for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Goal 1: No Poverty, and Goal 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth.

CEOSS adopts this issue as a strategic step reflecting its ongoing commitment to inclusive development and enhancing opportunities for economic development. CEOSS advances in integrating financial inclusion at the core of its development strategy through a comprehensive approach combining digital transformation, community empowerment, financial literacy, and effective partnerships. Through this, CEOSS seeks to facilitate access to formal financial services, support small projects, and economically empower women and youth, thereby enhancing sustainability and improving living standards in the communities it serves.

CEOSS' Role Since its Establishment

Since the beginning of 2016, CEOSS has taken serious steps to implement financial inclusion, overcoming many challenges through a set of initiatives and services that helped bring a large number of individuals into the formal financial system. The most prominent of these efforts include:

- **Digital transformation:**

advanced electronic systems were introduced, “tablets” were distributed to staff, and administrative workflows were automated.

- **Collaboration with banks:**

CEOSS signed a cooperation agreement with the National Bank of Egypt (NBE) to issue *Meeza* cards for clients, which significantly facilitated financial transactions.

- **Provision of e-payment solutions:**

Multiple e-payment services were made available, such as *Fawry* and *Opay*, in addition to using prepaid cards. The rate of e-repayment within CEOSS has reached 100%.

- **Enhancing credit rating:**

CEOSS concluded a cooperation agreement with a specialized credit inquiry company, which helped integrate a large number of beneficiaries into the formal financial system.

Strategic Approaches Adopted by CEOSS to Promote Financial Inclusion

- **Financial literacy and awareness:**

CEOSS is keen to raise the financial awareness of beneficiaries by organizing training workshops aimed at teaching individuals how to manage their money effectively and understand the nature of financial products and services available to them.

- **Protection of financial consumer rights:**

CEOSS commits to applying clear regulatory frameworks to ensure customer rights are protected, by providing a dedicated hotline to receive complaints, publicly displayed on notice boards at all CEOSS offices, with a commitment to promptly addressing and responding to complaints.

- **Disclosure and transparency:**

CEOSS ensures that all terms and conditions of financial products are clear and understandable to all clients and commits to informing them of all necessary details before contracting or subscribing to any financial service.

Key Achievements Resulting from the Adoption of Financial Inclusion

1. Significant increase in ownership of bank and digital accounts:

Thanks to the application of financial inclusion policies, CEOSS achieved remarkable growth in the number of bank accounts opened for its clients. Acting as an agent of the National Bank of Egypt, CEOSS succeeded in opening **9,410 cards and bank accounts** from March 2022 to 23rd of May 2025.

2. Economic empowerment of women:

Financial inclusion played a pivotal role in reducing the gender gap in access to financial services. The percentage of women benefiting from CEOSS microfinance portfolio rose to 62%, helping enhance their economic and social independence within local communities.

3. Poverty reduction and promoting economic growth:

By providing financing for small income-generating projects, financial inclusion efforts helped lift approx. 10% of financed clients out of poverty, positively impacting living standards.

4. Development of digital financial services:

CEOSS witnessed a breakthrough in offering digital financial services, such as mobile payments, and developing innovative products in lending and savings, in line with global trends in financial technology.

5. Enhancing transparency and reducing the size of the informal economy:

By accurately tracking financial flows, CEOSS contributed to reducing reliance on the informal economy, which is estimated to represent approx. **40% of Egypt GDP**.

For more information, kindly refer to:

<https://ceoss-eg.org/amal-for-microfinance/>
<https://ceoss-eg.org/amal-for-microfinance/?lang=en>
<https://www.facebook.com/AmalMicroLoans/>



Combating Illiteracy

Illiteracy is one of the most pressing challenges hindering sustainable development efforts, due to its strong links to circles of poverty, marginalization of most vulnerable groups, and absence of effective participation in public life. Since its establishment in the 1950s, the Coptic Evangelical Organization for Social Services (CEOSS) has recognized that illiteracy is not merely an inability to read and write, but rather a form of social exclusion that limits individuals' capacities and undermines their opportunities for empowerment, dignity, and active citizenship.

CEOSS adopts a holistic vision of the illiteracy issue as an integrated entry point to development connected to education, social empowerment, and capacity-building of individuals. This stems from CEOSS firm belief that investing in knowledge is the foundation for building human beings and sustainable communities. CEOSS' mission embodies a deep commitment to the values of social justice and equality, by promoting access to education, raising awareness among marginalized groups, and enabling them to fully participate in development.

Efforts exerted by CEOSS in this field are aligned with Egypt Vision 2030, particularly its pillar on improving the quality of education and eradicating illiteracy. CEOSS efforts also consistent with the National Strategy for Literacy and Adult Education and integrated with Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4), which states: "Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all." These efforts further support international directions that emphasize empowering individuals through education, a principle reaffirmed by UNESCO in highlighting literacy as a key to sustainable development and social justice.

The Role of CEOSS Since its Establishment

- In 1952, CEOSS launched its first literacy initiative under the name "*The Campaign*" in the village of Hazar, gradually expanding to other areas such as Deir Abu Hinnis and Deir al-Barsha. This was based on the method "*Each One Teach One*", which contributed to spreading learning progressively and effectively.



-By the late 1970s, CEOSS focused on expanding its efforts geographically, relying primarily on local community cadres who were trained to become teachers and volunteers. This strengthened the impact of educational programs on families and contributed to integrating women into community work.



-At the beginning of the 1980s, CEOSS entered a new stage by developing educational curricula to become functional and life-oriented, tailored for specific groups such as farmers and workers. This increased the effectiveness of the programs and attracted homogeneous groups within local communities.



-By the mid-1990s, CEOSS began engaging in the national literacy system and became a member of the General Authority for Literacy and Adult Education at the Ministry of Education. CEOSS also contributed, in cooperation with international partners

such as the British Council, to developing a unified national curriculum. Despite its insistence on maintaining its field-based, practical approach to adult education, CEOSS decided to gradually integrate the official curriculum of the General Authority for Literacy into its programs. Initially, CEOSS used its own curriculum during the first three educational stages to ensure



real learning tailored to learners' needs, while using the curriculum of the General Authority for Literacy in the fourth stage, enabling learners to sit for official exams and obtain recognized certificates. Through this integration, CEOSS achieved two important goals: providing effective, practical education while enabling learners to obtain certificates that opened opportunities for employment and continued formal education.

-In the late 1990s and early 2000s, CEOSS expanded its partnerships with international organizations such as the World Food Program (WFP), UNICEF, CEDPA, UMI, and The Egyptian Swiss Development Fund (Closed 2009). This expansion allowed CEOSS to widen its scope of work, especially in girls' education, one-class schools, community schools, and life skills development for young girls. CEOSS also developed supporting educational materials, such as the "Free

Reading Series", to consolidate acquired skills and prevent relapse into illiteracy.

- In this context, CEOSS also became a member and one of the founding organizations of the Arab Network for Literacy and Adult Education (ANLAE), es-



established in 1999. ANLAE plays a vital regional role in advancing literacy and adult education, with clear objectives in education, community empowerment, research, and documentation, within the framework of regional and international partnerships.

-Between 2012 and 2017, CEOSS entered a strategic partnership with Vodafone Egypt Foundation for Community Development within a national literacy campaign. During this period, over 45,000 learners were educated, over 150 CSOs were trained, and schools' infrastructure was improved. Technical support was also provided, especially in reducing school dropout rates and promoting enrollment of girls in education. These efforts further strengthened CEOSS' role as a key national partner in this field.

-To this day, CEOSS continues its efforts to combat illiteracy through a comprehensive strategy built on two

main pillars. The first is **illiteracy prevention**, by encouraging enrollment of children in formal education, supporting their retention, protecting them from dropping out, and reintegrating dropouts through incentive programs and field interventions that focus on improving the school environment and teacher capacities. The second pillar is **adult literacy**, enabling illiterate

adults to acquire reading and writing skills through targeted educational programs that respond to their life needs and help them realize positive integration into society.

Key Highlights



government jobs, pursue higher levels of education, and improve their professional and social pathways.

- Contributed to reducing school dropout rates and reintegrating children, especially girls, into basic education.
- Improved the local educational environment by enhancing school infrastructure, equipping classrooms, providing appropriate learning materials, training teachers, and increasing student participation in educational activities—thus creating an attractive and safe learning environment.
- Raised collective awareness on the importance of education and empowerment.



CEOSS' experience in combating illiteracy is not merely a program, but a comprehensive community-based educational and developmental movement that has successfully:

- Educated tens of thousands of illiterate individuals and enabled thousands to obtain officially recognized certificates, which allowed them to apply for

-Expanded community participation in education by engaging civil society organizations, local leaders, and volunteers.

-**Developed a generation of young local leaders** capable of driving development in their communities, thanks to sustained investment in

their training and capacity-building in non-formal education and community-based classroom management.

- Changed societal perceptions of education, particularly regarding women, while enhancing female participation in education and community life.

For more information, see:

<https://ceoss-eg.org/annual-report/>

<https://ceoss-eg.org/annual-report/?lang=en>

- [Masrawy: The Ministers of Manpower and Education witness the graduation of 42,000 students freed from illiteracy.](#)

<https://is.gd/i2AhW0>

- [Vodafone Literacy Initiative \(Knowledge is Power\)](#)

<https://ceoss-eg.org/2572/>

- [Youm7: In pictures... Honoring 4,833 students in “literacy classes” in Beni Suef](#)

<https://is.gd/q2UxhB>

- [Branch Manager of the General Authority for Literacy and Adult Education in Minya sends a thank you letter to the Director General of CEOSS.](#)

<https://ceoss-eg.org/2754>

- [Knowledge is Power Initiative](#)

<https://youtu.be/scHya54bW9A?list=PLyvIl1KGnpdZkmgHrU-VW75qLuruzE1dYR>

<https://youtu.be/lh•HICϣcϣϣY?list=PLyvIl1KGnpdZkmgHrUVWϣqLuruzE1dYR>

Disability

The issue of disability represents a central pillar for achieving social justice and inclusive development, especially since persons with disabilities constitute around 10.64% of Egypt's population. Despite this percentage, they continue to face multiple challenges that hinder their full integration and enjoyment of rights on an equal basis, with the severity of these challenges doubled in the case of women and girls, who face multiple forms of discrimination and marginalization, both within the family and in society. Globally, perspectives on people with disabilities (PwDs) have undergone a fundamental transformation- from perceiving them as a group in need of care, to recognizing them as rights-holders and active partners in society. This change comes in response to social, legislative, and cultural obstacles that hinder their participation, requiring that the issue be addressed from an inclusive human and societal perspective based on empowerment and inclusion, rather than isolation or exclusion.

Since the 1980s, the Coptic Evangelical Organization for Social Services (CEOSS) has paid particular attention to the issue of disability, considering it an integral part of its mission to promote dignity and justice without discrimination. CEOSS has been committed to empowering PwDs to be active in their lives and communities, not merely recipients of service. Efforts exerted by CEOSS in this field are aligned with national orientations and the public policies of the Egyptian state, drawing on the Egyptian Constitution (especially Article 81), Egypt Vision 2030, Law No. 10 of 2018, as well as the National Human Rights Strategy, which emphasizes inclusion, equality, and non-discrimination.

At the international level, CEOSS relies on global conventions and standards such as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which enabled CEOSS to develop an integrated model aimed at empowering PwDs and enhancing their role as active citizens in building a more just, equitable, and inclusive society.

CEOSS' Role since its Establishment



The role of CEOSS in adopting the issue of disability has evolved over time to become an advanced and integrated model in terms of concept, strategy, and impact. The most prominent stages include:

- In 1988, CEOSS officially established its first specialized rehabilitation centers, including the *Better Life Center* for people with mental disabilities in Shousha village, Minya Governorate, and another center for the visually-impaired in Cairo, aimed at vocational and social empowerment and providing a safe environment for training and production.
- Since 1994, CEOSS expanded its services to include comprehensive development programs encompassing healthcare, prosthetic devices, surgical operations, and economic empowerment through loans and income-generating projects.
- In the early 2000s, CEOSS adopted the Community-Based Rehabilitation (CBR) approach, transitioning from institutional rehabilitation to community rehabilitation, by integrating disability issues into community development, training community cadres, and establishing referral systems to ensure PwDs could access services within their environments, instead of relying on closed



centers. This work proceeded on a dual path: rehabilitating PwDs, and removing barriers as a key factor in the occurrence of disability, which significantly affects their access to rights and integration in society.

- In 2005, CEOSS began a gradual shift towards adopting the *Rights-Based Approach*

(RBA) in addressing disability issues at the local level. This approach views disability as a human rights issue, considering persons with disabilities as individuals exposed to discrimination and exclusion rather than mere recipients of care. RBA interprets disability as a limitation to an individual's ability to perform daily activities, resulting from the interaction of personal factors (ex. impairment or reduced capacity) and environmental factors (ex. barriers and obstacles). RBA is based on key principles, foremost among which is the effective participation of people with disabilities at all stages of work related to their rights, transforming them from beneficiaries into rights-holders who must be empowered.

- In the following years, CEOSS succeeded in building local rights-based models that empowered people with disabilities to access their rights within their communities, while also working to influence public policies- a decisive factor in ensuring justice and equality in access to rights. From this perspective, CEOSS continued to develop an integrated RBA model operating at three levels: local, national,



and regional within the Arab world. This model seeks to strengthen rights-based initiatives locally, while simultaneously working to improve and develop public policies on disability issues. A key outcome of this direction was the establishment of the *Egyptian Forum for People with Disabilities*, a community movement composed of Disabled People's Organizations (DPOs),

which works to influence relevant state policies, laws, and strategies. The model also aims to support learning and exchange of experiences with disability movements in Arab countries, to build a strong and cohesive Arab disability movement capable of advancing the rights of persons with dis-



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abilities regionally and internationally.

- Continuing its role in adopting disability issues, CEOSS embraced an integrated approach aimed at supporting an inclusive environment that enhances the effective participation of people with disabilities in daily life and contributes to their social integration. In this context, CEOSS established in 2005 the *Erada Factory* as a non-profit industrial activity dedicated to manufacturing mobility aids and implementing accessibility modifications. The factory produces a wide range of devices such as wheelchairs, braces, prosthetic limbs, crutches, and balance walkers. It also ensures prolonging the lifespan of these devices by organizing mobile maintenance convoys equipped with a special vehicle to maintain devices and ensure their efficient continued use.

- In addition, the factory plays a pivotal role in evaluating and improving public accessibil-

ity by conducting *Access Audits* in line with Egyptian and international standards and implementing the necessary engineering modifications to adapt buildings and institutions to the needs of persons with disabilities. The *Erada Factory* is distinguished by providing a practical model of an inclusive workplace, employing

technicians with disabilities on its production lines. The factory has achieved wide-ranging accomplishments, including producing and distributing over 20,000 mobility aids, and carrying out accessibility work in a large number of universities, youth centers, hospitals, ministry buildings, places of worship, rehabilitation offices, as well as non-governmental institutions.

Key Highlights



-CEOSS contributed to changing societal perceptions of people with disabilities, working to break down stereotypes and social stigma that surrounded them, restoring recognition of their human and social value, and thereby facilitating their broader inclusion in various aspects of public life.

-CEOSS successfully shifted disability work from a care-based approach to a pathway of empowerment and social inclusion through adopting the Community-Based Rehabilitation (CBR) model, enhancing self-capacities through training, education, and employment, which enabled people with disabilities to actively participate in economic and social life.

- CEOSS played a pivotal role in expanding access to education and educational inclusion, marking a qualitative shift toward genuine integration from early stages of learning.
- CEOSS made progress in developing practical models for adapting buildings, public institutions, and universities to be accessible and safe for people with disabilities by applying universal access standards, thereby strengthening their ability to move freely and benefit from public services and facilities.
- CEOSS actively participated in the development of public policies, legislation, and state strategies regarding disability, notably:

- **Playing an active role in drafting the Egyptian Constitution of 2014** by organizing broad community dialogues with strong participation from Disabled People’s Organizations (DPOs), such as the Egyptian Forum for People with Disabilities, as well as civil society groups. These efforts led to the inclusion of the rights of persons with disabilities in Article 81 of the Constitution, according to the text officially submitted to the “Committee of Fifty for the Amendment of the Constitution 2013.” This was considered a significant constitutional precedent affirming the commitment of the Egyptian State to protect and respect their rights.
- Participating in the preparation of the National Strategy of the Ministry of Social Solidarity in 2015 regarding the rehabilitation and empowerment of people with disabilities, reflecting CEOSS role as a partner in shaping public policy.
- Taking part in parliamentary hearings on amending the **Law on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Law No. 10 of 2018)**, where CEOSS presented



ed policy papers and practical proposals, contributing to essential amendments aligned with international human rights principles and inclusive standards <https://www.vetogate.com/2335964>.

- CEOSS promoted awareness of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) by simplifying its provisions and making them available in accessible formats, including a simplified version, a Braille version for the visually impaired, and a sign language version for persons with hearing disabilities, thereby facilitating knowledge and access to their rights.
- CEOSS fostered opportunities for joint learning, networking, and knowledge-sharing at the regional level through:
- Cooperation with Arab countries including **Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Bahrain, Morocco, and the UAE** to discuss disability issues, particularly in rela-



representing North African countries following elections at the Zambia Conference in 2018.

- CEOSS participated in the International “AccessAbilities Expo” in Dubai, a platform for manufacturers and developers of technological and mobility aids for persons with disabilities.
- CEOSS successfully established effective partnerships with State institutions to mobilize joint efforts on disability issues, including:
 - Signing a cooperation protocol with the National Council for Persons with Disabilities to strengthen joint efforts for empowerment, improve quality of life, enhance integration into society, and ensure equal and fair access to rights and services without discrimination.



- Signing a cooperation protocol with the Ministry of Social Solidarity (MoSS) aimed at protecting, rehabilitating, and empowering persons with disabilities, thereby supporting their effective integration in society.

For more information, kindly refer to:

<https://ceoss-eg.org/annual-report/>

<https://ceoss-eg.org/annual-report/?lang=en>

<https://ceoss-eg.org/erada-program/>

<https://ceoss-eg.org/erada-program/?lang=en>

<https://ceoss-eg.org/category/erada-factory/>

[The Deputy Minister of Social Solidarity attends the closing ceremony of the CEOSS's "Promoting Health Rights for Persons with Disabilities" project.](#)

<https://is.gd/kjU3jG>

[A cooperation protocol between "CEOSS" and "MoSS" to protect, rehabilitate, and empower Persons with Disabilities.](#)

<https://gate.ahram.org.eg/News/2023852.aspx>

[Cooperation protocol between the National Council for Persons with Disabilities and CEOSS](#)

<https://is.gd/PPGWJ4>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DQ9zqc3S7Sc>

["Ataa" Charity Investment Fund to Support Persons with Disabilities and CEOSS signed a cooperation protocol to provide basic services to children with disabilities in marginalized areas.](#)

<https://is.gd/IwQtN9>

[Youm7: CEOSS participates in the community dialogue on the Law on Persons with Disabilities.](#)

<https://is.gd/7jGhFP>

[Youm7: CEOSS organizes a conference on reproductive health rights for persons with disabilities in Bahrain.](#)

<https://is.gd/wVQXg9>

[Irada Program: We have many goals and dreams... and this is just the beginning.](#)

<https://youtu.be/FGa2jFdkdwE?list=PLyvII1KGnpdZkmgHrU-VW75qLuruzE1dYR>

Children At Risk

The issue of children at risk is among the most pressing challenges facing the social protection system in Egypt, particularly concerning child working children, street children, and children in care institutions. Estimates indicate the presence of more than 1.6 million child laborers, many of whom work in hazardous environments that threaten their physical and mental health and negatively affect their upbringing. These phenomena have worsened because of economic crises and high poverty rates, which have driven many families to push their children into work, amid limited awareness of the risks this poses to the child.

Street Children also suffer from a lack of protection, leaving them vulnerable to violence and exploitation and depriving them of their rights, while children in care institutions face neglect, marginalization, and social stigma. Despite existing legal and legislative commitments such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Egyptian Child Law No. 12 of 1996 and its amendments, there remains a gap between texts and implementation, amid weak monitoring mechanisms and deficiencies in services.

In this context, the Coptic Evangelical Organization for Social Services (CEOSS) efforts place child protection at the heart of its mission, striving to enable children to access their rights, as part of its vision of building a just and humane society that enhances children's rights and safeguards their human dignity. CEOSS has made child protection and empowerment a central pillar of its mission, with a vision aimed at building a just society that guarantees human dignity. These efforts align with the Egyptian State directions and the international agenda for sustainable development, drawing on the Convention on the Rights of the Child, Egypt Vision 2030, the National Human Rights Strategy (2021–2026), the National Plan to Eliminate the Worst Forms of Child Labor by 2025, and the Egyptian Constitution commitment to protecting children's rights (Article 80).

CEOSS' Role Since its Establishment



CEOSS' role in addressing children at risk is directed toward securing a decent life for these children and their families and creating a safe environment that protects them from poverty, exploitation, and violence in all its forms, thereby preserving their humanity, dignity, and childhood. This role has developed over time, as CEOSS moved from providing direct services to adopting a developmental approach focusing on empowering families and communities, and then to adopting a rights-based approach that places children's rights at the core of interventions, recognizing them as active partners in the development process rather than passive recipients of services. In this same context, CEOSS adopted the approach of resilience

and community adaptability to enhance the capacity of individuals and institutions to cope with current and future challenges and risks. This took the following forms:

- During the 1980s, CEOSS focused on the issue of child labor, establishing community committees, providing necessary trainings for workers in this field, in addition to offering direct interventions to support working children and meet their needs.
- During the 1990s, CEOSS approach witnessed notable development, shifting its focus toward the developmental dimension of local communities. At this stage, role of CEOSS focused on supporting families economically to reduce children's entry into the labor market, reintegrating dropouts into formal education, and improving their living conditions. CEOSS also established

day centers to provide psychological, social, economic, and health support to street children, and prepared a Child Rights Charter made available to those working in this field, in line with children's realities and needs in the Egyptian context.

- With the accumulation of field experience, CEOSS role developed to a new level of community empowerment, through building the capacities of local leaders and institutions to analyze and understand children's issues and develop effective intervention plans to address them, while strengthening community participation in child protection. Efforts focused on reintegrating school dropouts, transitioning child laborers from hazardous occupations to safer ones through retraining *for career transition*, continuing to provide vocational and psychological support to street children, and raising community awareness of the risks of exploitation and neglect.
- From 2005 until today, CEOSS has witnessed a strategic transformation by adopting the rights-based approach to development, grounded in human-rights principles and based on justice, accountability, empowerment, and participation.



This approach has been reflected in CEOSS roles in integrating children at risk into its programs and development projects, which have focused on enabling children to reclaim their fundamental rights, based on national and international references, through:

- **Raising legal rights awareness** at the individual and institutional levels on issues of children at risk and their social, health, educational, and cultural rights, based on relevant national and international legal frameworks.
- Enhancing mechanisms for empowering and engaging children at risk through sup-





porting the establishment of democratically elected committees formed by them, while working on building their capacities and equipping them with the knowledge and skills necessary to express their issues and claim their rights.

- Integrating children at risk and their families into public resources and services, ensuring their fair and non-discriminatory access to available development opportunities and resources.
- Working to develop the institutional child protection system, aimed at strengthening the protection of children at risk from all forms of violence, abuse, and discrimination, through activating child protection committees and reporting mechanisms, and building the capacities of those working in community protection and case management, to ensure effective and sustainable responses. This also includes supporting social care institutions to provide a safe and supportive environment that upholds the best interests of children in their care.
- Working to influence policies, legislation, and procedures related to children's rights, by empowering children's organizations, civil society organizations, and various support entities to engage in constructive dialogue with decision-makers at both the local and national levels, with the aim of developing a legislative and institutional environment that protects and supports children's rights.



-Building institutional capacities of civil society organizations, including associations and NGOs, to enable them to play effective roles in supporting children at risk, including providing protection programs and direct support services.

-Building strong partnerships

and alliances with relevant government bodies, the National Council for Childhood and Motherhood (NCCM), child protection committees, civil society organizations, the private sector, business owners, and the media, to broaden the scope of impact.

Key Highlights:



Building Community Awareness on the Rights of Children at Risk:

- Successfully worked towards building broad community awareness on issues related to children at risk by embedding a culture of child protection within local and institutional environments.
- Used art as an awareness tool by engaging children themselves in expressing their issues and experiences through theatrical performances such as “Green Light” and “Birth Certificate”. This contributed to enhancing their self-confidence, achieving positive psychological and social impact, and delivering powerful awareness messages to the community.

Protection and Reintegration of Children at Risk:



- Protected tens of thousands of working children by withdrawing them from hazardous work environments, reintegrating them into education, providing psychosocial support, and intervening in cases of physical and psychological violence and neglect. This was complemented by linking them to protection networks that included families, schools, NGOs, and workplaces.

- Rehabilitated and reintegrated hundreds of street children by developing their life, vocational, and professional skills, and integrating them into community activities within a safe and supportive environment.
- Addressed specific hazardous child labor issues, such as child labor in quarries, by highlighting their conditions and working to ensure their protection, which raised community awareness and strengthened responses to safeguard their rights.
- Economically empowered thousands of households by supporting small projects, providing training and employment opportunities, and linking them to government social protection programs. This directly contributed to reducing child labor by improving household income.

Influencing Policies and Legislation Supporting Children at Risk:

- Actively participated in community dialogues related to the Egyptian Child Law (2008) and the amended Egyptian Constitution (2014), which contributed to ensuring that the concerns of marginalized children were represented in national policies.
- Enabled children's organizations and civil society institutions to engage in advocacy and dialogue with decision-makers at both local and national levels, thereby promoting children's rights.

Supporting and Developing an Institutionalized Child Protection System:

Contributed to strengthening the roles of Child Protection Committees in the governorates of Minya, Beni Suef, and Greater Cairo, in addition to activating reporting mechanisms for violations such as the Child Helpline (16000). This formed part of developing the child protection system, enhancing rapid responses to cases of children at risk, and ensuring their immediate protection.

Enhanced the capacity of several social care institutions to deal with street children and provide a supportive environment, including psychosocial support, while working to ensure the best interests of the child.

- Obtained civil society membership in General Child Protection Committees, which granted CEOSS a larger role in supporting and activating protection mechanisms at local and institutional levels.
- Signed a cooperation protocol with the National Program for Homeless Children and Adults Protection of the Ministry of Social Solidarity aimed at enhancing protection, care, rehabilitation, and community reintegration of street

children, and ensuring their access to education and health rights, in line with the principles of the best interests of the child.

For more information, kindly refer to:

لمزيد من المعلومات يمكن الاطلاع على:

<https://ceoss-eg.org/annual-report/>

<https://ceoss-eg.org/annual-report/?lang=en>

[Cooperation protocol between Homeless Children and Adults and CEOSS | Photos - Al-Ahram Gate](#)

<https://gate.ahram.org.eg/News/3205683.aspx>

[Stories and success stories of children in Upper Egypt at the “Together Against Child Labor” conference](#)

<https://www.almasryalyoum.com/news/details/3351146>

[In photos: Celebrating World Day Against Child Labour in Minya](#)

https://www.elbalad.news/519933#google_vignette

[CEOSS celebrates the World Day Against Child Labor – Youm7](#)

<https://is.gd/Heb13F>

[“CEOSS” organizes “Birth Certificate” issuance to protect vulnerable children - El-Watan](#)

<https://www.elwatannews.com/news/details/5808820>

[- A theatrical performance starring homeless children](#)

<https://www.elwatannews.com/news/details/3862515>

[Civil society sounds alarm over “street children” - Al-Ahram Daily](#)

<https://gate.ahram.org.eg/daily/NewsPrint/746663.aspx>

[Children draw their rights in cartoons](#)

https://www.alwafd.news/589477#google_vignette

[- Media coverages and success stories](#)

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1JJ9vNzpmVc3DFBIPF2Sm0s_xVLMF9oiN/view?usp=sharing

<https://www.facebook.com/share/v/16iyU7cCCL/?mibextid=wwXifr>

[- A movie on children’s rights](#)

<https://is.gd/EF8qiS>

[- A movie on children’s rights](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nyOLChooaV0&list=PLyvIII1KGnpdZk-mgHrUVW75qLuruzE1dYR&index=19&pp=iAQB>



Preventable Blindness

In a world where over 1.1 billion people suffer from visual impairment, more than 80% of these cases could have been prevented. The issue of preventable blindness emerges as one of the most urgent in the health and development field. It is not merely a loss of sight, but loss of education, work, productivity, and dignity... particularly for the most vulnerable groups: women, children, and **the elderly** in poor communities.

From this reality, the Coptic Evangelical Organization for Social Services (CEOSS) has committed itself to its mission of **empowerment** and **social justice** and has made **the fight against preventable blindness** a core focus of its health and development work, particularly in rural and marginalized areas. CEOSS vision is based on the principle that health is not a luxury but a human right, and that the poor deserve the same quality of services available to the financially able- without discrimination.

CEOSS trajectory in addressing this issue aligns with Egypt Vision 2030, which places health at the heart of sustainable development and emphasizes achieving universal health coverage, especially in rural and Upper Egypt. It also aligns with the “Noor Hayat” presidential initiative launched by the State for early detection of eye diseases among children and the elderly. At the international level, it is in alignment with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, namely: SDG3: Good Health and Well-being, SDG10: Reduced Inequalities, and SDG17: Partnerships for the Goals. It also aligns with the Eye Health Strategy (2021–2030) of the World Health Organization (WHO) that calls for “equitable and inclusive vision for all.”

CEOSS' Role Since its Establishment

- CEOSS began its role in addressing the issue of eye health in 1980 by including eye examinations within its community health programs. These efforts later developed to include regular eye check-up clinics within healthcare teams, in cooperation with specialized doctors, focusing on remote and informal communities that lacked eye care services.



-In 2000, CEOSS launched a specialized intervention in the field of eye health by deploying **mobile eye units** equipped with the latest medical devices. This intervention responded to the need of poor and marginalized communities for specialized eye health services. These units aim to conduct eye examinations and **early**

detection of eye diseases, provide **health awareness**, **reduce service costs**, and face the rising rates of eye conditions, particularly among **women, children**, and the elderly.

- In a strategic step to enhance sustainability and expand service coverage, CEOSS established **Horus Eye Hospital in Minya Governorate** as a model of socio-economic investment that combines medical service provision with a development vision. This model is based on the principle of social justice, where the hospital offers free or low-cost services for the underprivileged, while providing the same high-quality services for affordable fees to the financially able. The profits are directed to support the underprivileged, ensuring the financial sustainability of the hospital. The hospital is equipped with advanced medical facilities including:



- Ultrasound and CT scan devices
- Fundus photography cameras
- Advanced devices for cataract and retinal surgeries
- Laser treatment and vision correction technologies
- The hospital focuses on addressing the most common

causes of vision loss, including cataracts, glaucoma, retinal diseases, diabetic retinopathy, and untreated refractive errors.

- To expand access, the hospital manages **five mobile units** that provide early detection services, vision screening, and **community awareness** programs to promote eye health. Cases requiring specialized interventions are referred to Horus Hospital, where specialized staff and advanced equipment are available, contributing to improved recovery chances and enhanced quality of life for patients.



- In an integrated approach, CEOSS works through its Local Development Unit to direct a comprehensive eye health program, including specialized development projects that target preventable blindness, focusing on poor and deprived areas. Building on CEOSS evolving strategies in applying the rights-based approach to development and the resilience approach, CEOSS has advanced its role in addressing this issue.

- Within this framework, CEOSS projects rely on a

set of integrated pillars, including:

- Raising rights-based awareness on the issue of vision, forming community organizations (elected committees) from citizens and coordination committees with the participation of relevant NGOs and community institutions in targeted areas. These committees are trained and capacitated to enhance social accountability mechanisms and active participation in adopting the issue of preventable blindness.
- Providing **examination and early detection services, surgical interventions, correction of refractive errors**, and provision of treatment for needy groups. This includes implementing referral systems to ophthalmology hospitals and eye departments in public and university hospitals, through part-



refractive errors and determine the need for eyeglasses. This is in addition to providing centers with the necessary equipment to perform preliminary eye examinations and establishing an effective two-way referral system with local hospitals.

- Integrating and linking eye health with the environment in targeted communities as a key intervention component, by raising awareness of the link between eye health and environmental conditions, reducing risk factors that cause eye diseases, and implementing environmental initiatives that include improving public cleanliness, safe management of solid and agricultural waste, cleaning canals inside residential blocks, and improving barns managed by women in rural areas, thus reducing pollution sources and infection risks.
- **Working to develop supportive policies for eye health**, most notably advocating for integrating eye health services into primary healthcare centers.



Building strategic partnerships and actively participating in national programs and initiatives to combat preventable blindness, most notably the international “Vision 2020” initiative that Egypt joined, and the “Noor Hayat” presidential initiative, which aims at early detection and treatment of eye diseases among school students, the elderly, and persons with disabilities, with a focus

nerships with these institutions or referral to Horus Hospital.

- **Strengthening the capacity of health service institutions** such as primary healthcare centers by training physicians on preliminary examination skills, and training technicians and nursing staff to measure visual acuity and

- Building strategic partnerships and actively participating in national programs and initiatives to combat preventable blindness, most notably the international “Vision 2020” initiative that Egypt joined, and the “Noor Hayat” presidential initiative, which aims at early detection and treatment of eye diseases among school students, the elderly, and persons with disabilities, with a focus



on villages and targeted areas under the “Decent Life” project. CEOSS also supported the national vision “Right to Sight for All,” and contributed to achieving universal health coverage through integrated free medical campaigns that included screening, treatment, and surgical interventions for underprivileged groups. The initiative “For Sake of Our Children Eyes,” which targeted children in social care institutions, homeless children, and children in community schools, in partnership with the Ministry of Social Solidarity. – “Satr w Aafiya” Cover and Wellness convoys under the umbrella of the National Alliance for Civil Development Work (NACDW).

Key Highlights

- Improved eyesight for hundreds of thousands of citizens, directly contributing to better quality of life and enhancing opportunities for education and work.
- Increased access to eye care services in poor and underserved areas that lack specialized medical services, ensuring that the most marginalized groups gained access to healthcare and contributed to achieving health equity.
- Successfully established a pilot model for the prevention of avoidable blindness, based on balanced components that integrate human resource development, infrastructure support, and the provision of effective eye health services.
- Linked health issues with environmental concerns within an integrated framework and comprehensive interventions, helping to reduce factors that cause eye diseases.

- Enhanced the readiness and efficiency of primary healthcare centers in dealing with eye diseases and increased their capacity to respond to patients' needs.
- Strategic partnerships at the national level represented remarkable successes, contributing to expanding the scope of impact and ensuring program sustainability. In parallel, participation in national initiatives supported the realization of Egypt health vision, reflecting the integration of efforts toward a more equitable and sustainable health system.
- "Horus Hospital" represents a sustainable socio-economic model that combines providing low-cost services for the poor with paid services for those who can afford them, ensuring its operational sustainability and continued impact.

For more information, kindly refer to:

<https://ceoss-eg.org/annual-report/>

<https://ceoss-eg.org/annual-report/?lang=en>

<https://ceoss-eg.org/horus-hospital/>

<https://ceoss-eg.org/horus-hospital/?lang=en>

<https://ceoss-eg.org/25199/>

- [A health convoy as part of the Presidential Initiative "New Beginning" in Minya.](#)

<https://www.elwatannews.com/news/details/7624092>

- [Al-Masry Al-Youm: CEOSS participates in the Presidential Initiative "Light of Life" convoys to open the eyes of Egyptians.](#)

<https://www.almasryalyoum.com/news/details/2255725>

- [CEOSS celebrates the completion of the international action plan for comprehensive eye care.](#)

<https://is.gd/95Eygs>

- [CEOSS launches the "For the Eyes of Our Children" Initiative in partnership with the Ministry of Social Solidarity.](#)

<https://is.gd/YP9Hsf>

- [The National Alliance launches a convoy to examine patients with eye diseases at the Beba Center in Beni Suef.](#)

<https://www.elwatannews.com/news/details/6804055>

- [CEOSS: We conducted a medical survey of more than 17,000 people as part of the "Light of Life" Initiative.](#)

<https://www.almasryalyoum.com/news/details/1463045>

Public Health

Health is one of the most defying areas posing profound challenges on communities, given its direct impact on the well-being of individuals and their social and economic stability. The spread of chronic diseases, deteriorating nutritional conditions, poor reproductive health services, limited healthcare access, particularly within marginalized areas, leads to a general deterioration in health conditions and severely affects vulnerable groups (ex. children, women, adolescents, and the elderly). Furthermore, such health challenges, along with existing gaps in health policies and legislation, result in poor guaranteeing of health rights of citizens, highlighting the need for comprehensive and equitable solutions that respond to the actual priorities of communities.

From this perspective, since its inception, the Coptic Evangelical Organization for Social Services (CEOSS) has given top priority to the health sector, considering it a cornerstone of its humanitarian and developmental vision. CEOSS has sought to empower vulnerable and marginalized groups by raising their awareness and facilitating their equitable access to healthcare services. This was achieved through a series of targeted interventions addressing multiple areas such as: promoting public health, prevention of breast cancer, tackling malnutrition among children, pregnant women, and adolescents, maternal care, improving reproductive health services, combating communicable and chronic diseases, supporting mental health, and adolescent health, in addition to improving the overall quality of healthcare services.

CEOSS efforts in this area are closely aligned with the Egyptian national priorities, particularly as stipulated in the Constitution, Article (18), in addition to the National Health Strategy – 2024-2030, which aims to improve the quality of primary healthcare services and ensure their accessibility to all citizens. These efforts are also in line with the National Population and Development Strategy 2015 2023–2030, particularly its focus on reproductive health and family planning, as well as with the National Nutrition Framework 2022–2030, which aims to reduce stunting and anemia rates and promote healthy dietary patterns.

At the international level, these interventions are consistent with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Goal 3: Good Health and Well-being, and with the Global Action Plan for Universal Health Coverage (UHC2030), reflecting CEOSS commitment to aligning with global directions in promoting the right to health and achieving comprehensive health equity.

The Relevant Role of CEOSS Since its Establishment



- From 1950 to 1970, in its early years, CEOSS focused on health awareness and education on common diseases such as malaria, measles, tuberculosis, bilharzia, and liver diseases, especially in marginalized and poor areas. These efforts aimed to promote positive health practices and reduce harmful

health habits that were widespread at the time. CEOSS heavily relied on local community participation and volunteers to carry out health activities, in cooperation with the Health Directorates, in areas of health education and awareness-building, and conducting medical examinations. This contributed to broadening the outreach of health services and awareness messages, reaching the most disadvantaged groups, and preventing disease spread.

- During the period 1970–1990, CEOSS role evolved significantly in providing primary healthcare services, particularly in Upper Egypt. CEOSS focused specifically on maternal and child health through vaccination campaigns, pregnancy follow-up services, first aid, family health education, and family planning services, which were provided through community clinics.
- At the beginning of the 1990s, CEOSS role further developed by establishing strategic partnerships with the Ministries of Health and international organizations, alongside close cooperation with local civil society organizations. CEOSS participation in the International Conference on Population (ICPD) in 1994 was a significant milestone in strengthening its presence and role at both the national and international levels. These partnerships expanded the scope of health services in the framework of improving population indicators, particularly in health, to include new areas such as prevention of chronic dis-

eases, HIV/AIDS, enhancing reproductive health services, addressing child malnutrition under the age of five, in addition to organizing health campaigns aimed at providing comprehensive and integrated services for the most vulnerable groups.

- **Since 2005, CEOSS has witnessed a significant shift in its strategic direction, adopting a rights-based approach (RBA) to development and beginning to address health issues from the perspective that “health is a fundamental right for every human being.” Based on this orientation, health programs and initiatives were designed to ensure empowerment of citizens, particularly the poorest and most marginalized, to secure equitable and safe access to healthcare services. Within this approach, CEOSS roles focused on:**



- Awareness raising of citizens on their health rights, and activating their community participation through the formation of elected committees that were trained and empowered to claim these rights. Partner civil society organizations were supported, alongside enabling community leaders to apply community monitoring and accountability mechanisms to health services, thereby strengthening transparency and improving service delivery.

Enhancing the integration of citizens into the public health system, according to standards of quality and equity and without any form of discrimination. This was achieved through working to establish and activate a referral system to governmental health institutions, improving the capacities of health units and medical centers in rural and urban areas, while strengthening partnerships among governmental, civil, and private sectors to expand the scope of services and ensure their sustainability.

- **Within this rights-based approach, CEOSS played tangible roles in influencing health policies and legislation to guarantee citizens’ rights. Among the most prominent efforts:**
- Strengthening citizens’ participation in discussions of proposed amendments

to the draft Universal Health Insurance Law by organizing broad-based community dialogue meetings. These culminated in a wide conference attended by health leaders and members of Parliament, which resulted in an official recommendation to include citizens' demands within the law.

- **Active community participation in amending the Universal Health Insurance Law** through a series of community dialogue sessions to discuss the draft law, culminating in a wide conference attended by health officials and members of Parliament. This led to an official recommendation to incorporate citizens' proposals, which was indeed reflected in the final version of the law issued at the end of 2017.
- Contributing to supporting effective national policies for breast cancer prevention in 2018, in cooperation with the National Women's Health Program, by launching an awareness campaign to promote early detection. This took



place under the auspices of the Minister of Health and Population, with active participation from decision-makers and stakeholders such as the National Council for Women (NCW), the National Cancer Institute, universities, the private sector, the media, civil society organizations, and several members of Parliament. This effort led to the establishment of a national committee to assess the existing situation and develop a comprehensive national plan, later incorporated into the "Egyptian Women's Health" Initiative, which currently follows up on this issue nationwide.



- Since 2017 until now, CEOSS has adopted the strategy of community resilience, focusing on enhancing the readiness of local communities- individuals, groups, and institutions- to address current and anticipated

risks, including health risks. In this context, CEOSS has played pivotal roles in several main areas within this methodology, most notably:



- **Strengthening local communities' ability to anticipate and proactively address health risks.** In this regard, CEOSS adopted several initiatives, including protecting children and women from lead poisoning. These efforts are implemented in cooperation with the Ministries of Health, Environment, and Local Development, along with the National Institute of Nutrition, Ain Shams University, Benha University, and a group of academics and researchers. Activities include specialized studies on the presence of lead in work environments of pregnant women and children and its effects, as well as raising community awareness and encouraging preventive practices to protect these vulnerable groups. CEOSS also launched the “Save a Life” Caravans in cooperation with the Egyptian College of Critical Care Physicians (ECCCP) to detect risk factors leading to cardiac arrest and sudden heart failure as a preventive and proactive measure.

- **Flexible response to health risks and crises,** which was evident during the

COVID-19 pandemic, where CEOSS carried out extensive awareness campaigns, conducted sterilization and disinfection activities, and helped facilitate access to COVID-19 vaccines, especially in marginalized areas.

- **Building partnerships, integration, and active engagement in many national initiatives** aimed at improving public health, including: the “*100 Million Health*” Initiative, through early detection of chronic and hereditary diseases and providing free treatment to citizens; the National Campaign to Eliminate Hepatitis C and Non-Communicable Diseases; the “Egyptian Women’s Health” Initiative, through early detection of breast cancer, reproductive health services, and follow-up on chronic diseases in women; and the “the Golden 1000 Days” Initiative, by delivering a health and awareness program focusing on optimal maternal and child care and nutrition during the first 1,000 days of a child’s life, from pregnancy until two years of age, with the goal of ensuring healthy growth and reducing the risks of malnutrition and chronic diseases in the future.

Key Highlights

- **Improvement of health status of hundreds of thousands of the most vulnerable groups, particularly children, women, and the elderly**, through comprehensive programs in the fields of public health, reproductive health, nutrition, mental health, chronic and communicable diseases, among others. This has contributed to reducing infection rates and enhancing health prevention in the targeted communities.
- CEOSS has played an active role in improving the quality of health services provided by public health institutions in local communities, through building the capacities of medical teams of healthcare providers, and providing some essential needs such as diagnostic equipment, beds, blood pressure monitors, scales, and rapid testing devices for detecting diabetes and anemia. This has made a tangible contribution to promoting fair and sustainable access to health services in those institutions.
- A qualitative shift in citizens’ awareness and their civil organizations of their health rights and their ability to claim such rights, as well as the establishment of the principle of community accountability to ensure access to and improvement of the quality of health services. This also strengthened their effective participation in advocacy and lobbying efforts aimed at amending health policies and legislation that meet their rights and respond to their priorities.

- Increased capacity of local communities to respond to health emergency and anticipated risks, reflected in their ability to efficiently deal with health crises, as was clearly demonstrated during the COVID-19 pandemic, where communities showed resilience in confronting and adapting to emerging health challenges.
- Successful building of effective institutional partnerships with state institutions and supporting entities from civil society organizations and academic institutions, which led to the integration of efforts, expansion of health services, and improvement of their efficiency and effectiveness in reaching the targeted groups.



- Remarkable success in implementing many qualitative health initiatives targeting the most vulnerable groups, such as reducing exposure to lead poisoning, screening and awareness raising among children on diseases such as rheumatic heart disease, combating breast cancer,

osteoporosis, in addition to integrating dedicated programs for adolescent girls within healthcare units. Nutrition issues were also linked to public health through awareness initiatives based on scientific foundations, which enhanced health and nutritional awareness in the community.

For more information, kindly refer to:

<https://ceoss-eg.org/annual-report/>

<https://ceoss-eg.org/annual-report/?lang=en>

- [CEOSS discusses the new Health Insurance Law in preparation for adoption.](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IUxald69Mno>

- [CEOSS: We are participating with the State in the 100 Million Health Initiative.](#)

<https://is.gd/Xbs2av>

[Nada's Papers, a movie on reproductive and sexual health issues in adolescence, starring: Mona Hala](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xqkuDtl81mE&list=PLyvIl1KGnpdZk-mgHrUVW75qLuruzE1dYR&index=36&pp=iAQB>



Family Planning

The issue of family planning is considered a fundamental entry point within the framework of reproductive health, as it enables individuals, particularly women, to make informed and free decisions regarding childbearing, ensuring a healthy and safe life for both mother and child, and contributing to improving the quality of life for the family as a whole. This concept is also an integral part of the right to health, as stipulated by international conventions and the SDG agenda, particularly Goal 3 on good health and well-being, and Goal 5 on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.

CEOSS interventions on this issue are aligned with Egypt Vision 2030, the National Population Strategy (2023–2030), and the Egyptian government plans, as the accelerating population growth represents a major challenge threatening development efforts. The state is fully aware of the issue and seeks to address population growth through comprehensive and integrated plans. Family planning is a fundamental pillar in facing the population issue, as it contributes to improving the efficiency of resource distribution, increasing the per capita share of basic services, and enhancing quality of life.

Accordingly, CEOSS plays a prominent role in supporting the efforts of the Ministry of Health and Population in this field, particularly in rural and informal communities. This is done to support population policies that focus on awareness-raising, ensuring fair and accessible family planning services, and improving the associated health and social indicators.

The Role of CEOSS Since its Establishment

- During the 1970s–early 1980s, CEOSS focused its role on community awareness of this issue and the integration of family planning concepts within community health programs, with an emphasis on raising awareness of the risks of repeated pregnancies and birth spacing through awareness campaigns led by female leaders and volunteers, in cooperation with community health units.



- During the 1980s, CEOSS began to expand nationally working on family planning issues through the implementation of effective programs that presented a successful model of delivering these services efficiently and at low cost, particularly through community clinics spread across poor rural and informal areas. In this

phase, CEOSS relied on training community leaders and local volunteers to ensure the sustainability and efficiency of community interventions.

- This successful model received wide official recognition. CEOSSS was invited to share its expertise in a number of official forums and was included in the membership of the National Council for Population and Family Planning, as well as its committees at the governorate level. Through this membership, CEOSS became a key partner in shaping population policies and implementing awareness campaigns in various governorates. It was also officially recognized as a provider of family planning services for poor and marginalized communities, contributing to disseminating the experience and expanding replication.
- Following the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) held in Egypt in 1994, CEOSS developed its approach in family planning programs to work within a comprehensive reproductive health framework. ICPD 1994 represented a turning point from focusing on reducing

population growth rates to empowering individuals and improving their quality of life, particularly women. The new areas of intervention included recognizing reproductive health as a human right, empowering women socially and health-wise, expanding the scope of reproductive health services,





strengthening partnerships with civil society to spread awareness in rural and deprived areas, in addition to allocating awareness programs for youth and adolescents on delaying marriage age, preventing early marriage, and integrating reproductive health concepts into educational curricula.

- Since 2005, CEOSS has adopted the RBA to development, addressing the issue as both a developmental and human rights matter. Practically, CEOSS has directed community projects towards awareness raising on rights to reproductive health, enabling citizens to access these services through activating referral systems to government institutions, and enhancing community monitoring of the quality of these services. CEOSS has also worked on building the capacities of health teams in rural and urban health units and medical centers, as well as community cadres, to ensure improving the quality of family planning services.
- In this context, CEOSS role has stood out in awareness raising and community mobilization efforts toward the issue of population growth, thereby contributing to pushing for the adoption of comprehensive policies focused on empowerment of individuals, particularly women, and changing cultural perceptions associated with childbearing. This represents a fundamental entry point for regulating population growth and achieving balance between fertility rates and available resources. CEOSS efforts included developing strategies



based on a holistic approach to ensure strengthening reproductive health services, in line with Egypt Vision 2030, the National Population Strategy, and the international commitments to SDGs. Within this framework, the Local Development Unit organized a series of discussion sessions and

conferences to launch community dialogue on the population issue under the title: “*The Population Growth Issue: Between Reality and Aspiration*”, with the aim of disseminating the Population Strategic Plan 2015–2030 and enhancing community participation in its implementation.

- The Forum for Intercultural Dialogue has also adopted an intellectual platform for dialogue on this issue through three main dimensions: the place of population growth issue in the religious discourse of official religious institutions, its place in cultural discourse represented in the messaging of cultural, educational, and media institutions, and the future of population culture among youth.

Key Highlights and Achievements



- CEOSS has adopted a comprehensive developmental approach linking family planning, women’s empowerment, and health rights, reflecting a deep understanding interlinkages among health, social, and economic aspects of individual and community lives.
- Contribution to linking family planning and reproductive health services on one hand, and population policies and sustainable development on the other, in line with Egypt Vision 2030 and the global SDGs.
- Active participation in presenting enlightened visions and perspectives for contributing to the formulation of national policies and strategies of reproductive health and population, through its membership in relevant national councils and committees, in addition to launching community dialogues and intellectual platforms on the issues at hand.
- Effective engagement in national initiatives and significant contribution to the efforts of the Ministry of Health to deliver reproductive health and family planning services to the neediest groups, particularly in rural and marginalized areas.

- CEOSS has applied an RBA in addressing the issue, by empowering communities, especially marginalized groups, to access reproductive health services, enhancing community monitoring of these services, and linking them to social justice and human dignity.

For more information, kindly refer to:

<https://ceoss-eg.org/annual-report/>

<https://ceoss-eg.org/annual-report/?lang=en>

- [CEOSS organizes a symposium on the population issue.](#)

<https://www.dostor.org/2355093>

- [CEOSS outlines a plan to address the population issue.](#)

<https://www.vetogate.com/3326452>



Issues of Gender Equality, Combating all Forms of Gender-based Violence (GBV) and Discrimination, and Combating Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Gender Equality and Combating GBV

Gender equality represents a fundamental pillar for achieving social justice and sustainable development, as ensuring equal rights and opportunities for men and women is an indispensable human and moral entitlement, particularly in poor and fragile communities where women suffer from discrimination and marginalization that limit their participation in economic, social, and political life.

The Coptic Evangelical Organization for Social Services (CEOSS) grounds its work on gender equality in its vision and mission, based on a firm belief in the value of human life, justice, and dignity. These principles are not fully realizable without ensuring equality and empowering women as active and equal contributors in society. CEOSS commitment to respect for pluralism and diversity includes full equity in rights and opportunities without discrimination. CEOSS considers the empowerment of women an essential part of spreading enlightenment, strengthening human values and ethics, and promoting principles of coexistence, thereby contributing to building a more conscious and cohesive society and serving the goals of social justice, sustainable peace, and inclusive development.

In this context, efforts on gender equality and empowerment of women are consistent with the strategic orientations of the Egyptian state, which places great focus on strengthening women's role in public, economic, and political life. CEOSS supports the implementation of the National Strategy for the Empowerment of Egyptian Women 2030, which falls under the framework of Egypt Vision 2030, and works on integrating gender into development policies and programs

to ensure the achievement of justice and equality among all citizens. These efforts are also aligned with the global SDGs, particularly Goal 5 on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, intersecting with other goals such as eradicating poverty, quality education, decent work, peace and justice, and building strong institutions.

The Role of CEOSS Since its Establishment



– Since its establishment in the 1950s, CEOSS employed young women in the villages of Deir Abu Hennes in Minya Governorate, believing in women’s role in community empowerment. At the same time, it launched the *Resalat Al-Nour*, which was back then the only magazine in the Arab East issued in Arabic language addressing the issues of empowering girls and women, such as equality of opportunities and freedom in choosing a life partner.

– In June 1959, CEOSS organized the first conference on gender equality in rural Egypt, and its development programs focused on education, reproductive health,

family planning, and combating harmful practices. This contributed to engaging communities in dialogue on gender justice.

– In the 1970s, CEOSS expanded its work with women through establishing the *Women’s Movement Unit*, aimed at raising community awareness of the importance and status of women, and confronting prevailing beliefs that entrenched discrimination against them.

– Following the International Conference on Population and Development

(ICPD) in 1994, CEOSS adopted an approach integrating gender into all its development programs. It focused on bridging the gender gap by supporting girls' education, women's literacy, and providing opportunities for volunteering, leadership, and community participation, ensuring women's enhanced role in decision-making within civil society institutions.

- In 2005, CEOSS adopted the rights-based approach (RBA) to development, considering humans as key partners in change and entitled to equal opportunities. RBA focuses on the economic, social, and cultural rights of women by supporting their economic opportunities, strengthening their professional and administrative skills, and their economic empowering in the fields of agriculture and marketing, while addressing the root causes of gender inequality.
- Since 2017, CEOSS has been implementing a comprehensive strategy for gender equality, with two main pillars: the first is mainstreaming gender as a cross-cutting issue in various development programs such as education, health, economy, housing, and rehabilitation of persons with disabilities; while the second focuses on implementing standalone programs targeting women's empowerment and bridging gender gaps in human rights, thereby strengthening



their active participation in society.

- In this regard, gender balance is considered one of the most crucial issues of citizenship. Therefore, the Forum on Intercultural Dialogue ensures its inclusion across its various programs at the local, Arab, and international levels. This includes discussing the issue among intellectuals, parliamentarians, and decision-makers, alongside implementing initiatives and projects that promote gender concepts within local communities, contributing to entrenching values of gender justice and equality.



Key Highlights

At the Community Level

- Contributing to building community awareness by disseminating gender equality concepts and entrenching values of gender justice and women's rights, while combating all forms of gender-based discrimination and violence as fundamental pillars of inclusive development and social justice.
- Promoting equality and empowerment at the community level through effective development projects that contributed to economic and social empowerment of women and girls. These projects also enhanced their access to rights, opportunities, and resources without discrimination, including balanced representation of both genders among project beneficiaries. Women's participation in decision-making and community leadership was also strengthened through their balanced representation in community and elected committees, as well as their inclusion in the membership of NGOs.



- Preparing community change leaders by building community cadres of young men and women, equipping them with the knowledge, skills, and tools necessary to address gender issues in their local communities, while supporting them in designing and implementing initiatives that raise awareness among women, youth, and children on citizenship, acceptance of differences, and women's roles.
- Training and empowering intermediate leaders (religious leaders, academics, media professionals, and civil society representatives) by providing them with knowledge and skills to spread aware-

ness and promote positive thinking toward women within their institutions and among the groups they work with, alongside implementing initiatives that reinforce these values at the local level.

- Highlighting women leadership models, such as female preachers and nuns, through specialized training programs that strengthen their roles as religious leaders and support their influential presence in their communities.
- **Achieving pioneering successes in community projects, including:**



- Integrating gender issues in many youth centers, sports clubs, cultural centers, and universities to ensure the inclusion of women and persons with disabilities, while adopting protection policies against harassment and mechanisms to address it in partnership with youth directorates in governorates.

- Establishing specialized centers for psychological and legal support for women in local communities, through trained female cadres and lawyers, thus providing an effective protection network.
- Activating the role of the private sector through a regional project (in Egypt, Tunisia, and Morocco) to build partnerships with companies to apply fair employment policies, provide safe working environments, and enable women to access decision-making positions.

At the Programming and Institutional Level

- A strategic transformation in the development approach: shifting from service provision to adopting a comprehensive strategy integrating gender as a cross-cutting issue across development programs, while implementing stand-alone programs targeting women's empowerment and bridging gender gaps in human rights.
- Contributing to the development of institutional capacities of NGOs and associations, thereby integrating gender into their structures, programs, and services.

- Building the capacities of civil society organizations, government institutions, and universities to adopt supportive policies for diversity and gender, and ensuring the application of these policies within their programs and action plans, thereby contributing to fostering a more inclusive and just institutional environment.

At the Level of National Policies and Strategies

- Building strategic partnerships with State institutions across various sectors (government, civil society, private sector), which contributed to strengthening national efforts in supporting gender issues, in alignment with the National Strategy for the Empowerment of Egyptian Women.
- Active participation in advocacy and lobbying efforts to adopt policies that support women's rights, address the root causes of the gender gap, and promote the economic, health, and educational rights of citizens (especially the marginalized), while rehabilitating them to ensure their social integration.

For more information, kindly refer to:

<https://ceoss-eg.org/annual-report/>

<https://ceoss-eg.org/annual-report/?lang=en>

“Gender” Movie:-

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kMC9HZooz8I&list=PLyvII1KGnpdZk-mgHrUVW75qLuruzE1dYR&index=6&pp=iAQB>

- [Activating the Private Sector's Role in Promoting Gender Equality in the MENA Region](#)

- [Pilot Project Experience in Egypt, Tunisia, and Morocco](#)

<https://ceoss-eg.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/MENA-project-Arabic-book-let.pdf>

<https://ceoss-eg.org/32971/>

- [CEOSS is organizing a graduation ceremony for 54 young “champions of change” from local communities in Minya.](#)

<https://ceoss-eg.org/33348/>

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Violence against women and girls is considered one of the most serious social and humanitarian challenges, encompassing harmful practices such as female genital mutilation, early marriage, and physical and psychological violence. These forms of violence represent a direct violation of women's rights and an obstacle to their effective participation in development.

CEOSS addresses the issue of combating violence against women and girls (VAWG) from its vision and mission, as it is an issue linked to justice, dignity, and empowerment- fundamental principles that CEOSS seeks to instill in all its programs without discrimination. CEOSS continues its efforts, viewing it as a societal and developmental issue closely connected to the concepts of social justice, human rights, and sustainable development.

The efforts of CEOSS in this area align with *Egypt Vision 2030*, which places social justice and empowerment of women among its priorities, through the *National Strategy for the Empowerment of Egyptian Women 2030*, which includes a main axis on protecting women from violence and discrimination and addressing phenomena such as female genital mutilation, early marriage, and domestic violence.

CEOSS efforts also align with international frameworks and SDGs, particularly SDG3 (Good Health and Well-Being), SDG5 (Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women and Girls), and SDG16 (Promoting Peaceful and Inclusive Societies and Providing Justice). In addition, they are consistent with international conventions such as the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)*, the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW - 1979)*, the *Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC- 1989)*, and the *Beijing Platform for Action (1995)*, among others supporting the rights of women and girls.

The Role of CEOSS Since its Establishment



-CEOSS began combating female genital mutilation (FGM) in the mid-1950s, tackling a sensitive issue in rural communities, at a time when FGM rates reached 100% in some villages. CEOSS relied on community dialogue and cultural approaches, being one of the first entities to directly confront this practice, making the organization a pioneer in adopting the issue at the community level.

-During the 1960s and 1970s, CEOSS strategy evolved from dialogue to empowerment through education and awareness-raising, focusing on individual awareness as a driver of change. It addressed FGM within the broader framework of issues

such as a form of VAWG, early marriage, and virginity testing. The “*Resalet El-Nour*” magazine provided a platform for these efforts by publishing bold articles that opened public debate, encouraged volunteerism, and promoted the participation of community leaders. Literacy classes also raised awareness of girls on their rights, enabling many of those girls to reject forced marriage.

- In the 1980s and 1990s, CEOSS adopted an integrated development approach that incorporated combating FGM into development projects. The *Deir El-Barsha* village experience stands as a prominent example, where women’s economic and social empowerment was integrated into enhancing leadership roles and organizing community awareness campaigns. This resulted in the signing of community declarations against FGM with the participation of

religious leaders and local families. CEOSS leveraged the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in Cairo to launch a broad national campaign with the participation of more than 250 NGOs, establishing its position as a key actor in the sustainable national effort.

- From the early 2000s until today, CEOSS moved to documentation and replication of successful models such as the *Deir El-Barsha* experience, producing documentation materials, organizing conferences, and highlighting stories of girls who rejected FGM as a source of inspiration to promote positive practices. CEOSS also expanded partnerships with national, religious, and media institutions, adopting a balanced rights-based and developmental approach, which enabled it to achieve effective and sustainable impact in target communities. A comprehensive campaign was launched in Minya Governorate to address FGM and harassment, in cooperation with official, religious, and educational bodies, including awareness camps for girls, activation of reporting mechanisms, and referral of cases to competent legal authorities.



-CEOSS has adopted a comprehensive and integrated approach in combating FGM, combining community empowerment, behavioral and practice change, advocacy for legislation, and integrated development intervention. This has included:

- Adopting a rights-based approach in all stages of intervention, with the aim of empowering women and girls to access their rights and protecting them from all forms of violence and discrimination. This approach included a set of practical mechanisms, most notably:



- **Community organization:** by



forming elected local committees, building their capacities, and providing them with the necessary knowledge and skills, qualifying them to play an active role in adopting the issue from a rights-based and developmental perspective.

-Advocacy: as a central mechanism for change, through

improving relevant policies and raising community awareness of the laws criminalizing FGM, such as Article 242 bis of the Penal Code, and promoting protection and reporting mechanisms such as the Child Helpline (16000). This included **using the media as a strategic tool** to build public opinion supportive of girls' protection issues.

- **Building partnerships and networking:** with all stakeholders, including governmental institutions, civil society, religious leaders, and media, aiming to mobilize efforts and enhance collective impact in combating FGM and eliminating all forms of VAWG. This included organizing consultative sessions involving local actors and experts to identify intervention priorities and formulate appropriate recommendations.

2- Enhancing the Role of Communities in Leading Change to Ensure Sustainability

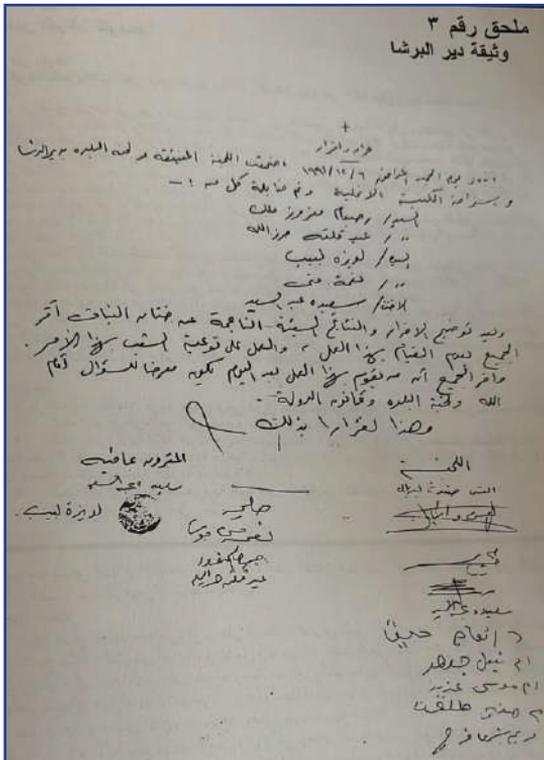
This was achieved through several practical components, including:

- Preparing trained women leaders within local communities to lead the process of change through direct awareness-raising and documentation of family responses, which enabled the tracking of families refraining from FGM and contributed effectively to changing community behavior.
- Empowering girls to lead campaigns of expression and rejection of FGM, using arts and community communication techniques, which enhanced their self-confidence and ability to influence their social environment.
- Raising community awareness among various groups of society by targeting families, men, youth preparing for marriage, mothers, grandmothers, in addition to organizing simple and interactive awareness sessions for young girls and adolescents.

- **Targeting groups associated with the harmful practice** and whose interests' conflict with the fight against FGM, such as traditional birth attendants, by training them on safe and economically viable alternatives, with the aim of reducing their professional connection to this harmful practice.
- Involving religious leaders from both Muslim and Christian communities, as well as physicians, and training them to confront cultural misbeliefs, in addition to training doctors to become active partners in addressing this practice within their communities.

Key Highlights

- Achieving tangible impact in reducing the prevalence of FGM in many villages, with families' attitudes gradually changing to the point where rejecting FGM became socially acceptable, and marriage to uncut women ceased to be stigmatized as it had been earlier.
- Signing of a historic document in 1991 in *Deir El-Barsha* village by residents, religious leaders, and community committees, in which they pledged to stop FGM. Although the document lacked legal force, it derived legitimacy



from collective awareness and included ethical clauses obligating violators to accountability before God, society, and the State. This experience became a model, documented in films, academic studies, and reports that contributed to shaping a new understanding of the issue.

- Announcement of new communities that had officially ceased the practice of FGM, with this commitment documented through collective declarations signed during public events in the presence of community and religious leaders and the me-

dia, which reinforced the legitimacy of this commitment.

- CEOSS led an extensive campaign against FGM in conjunction with the 1994 ICPD, in which 250 NGOs participated, marking the peak of coordination among civil society organizations, and affirming the ability of collective action to drive social change.
- These efforts directly influenced public policies, as many official entities were pushed to review their positions and effectively respond to combating the phenomenon.
- The experience of CEOSS represented a practical and influential model in the history of combating FGM, moving from theoretical confrontation to creating a new reality based on community empowerment, increased awareness, and reinforced self-commitment, making the model replicable in other communities.

For more information, kindly refer to:

<https://ceoss-eg.org/annual-report/>

<https://ceoss-eg.org/annual-report/?lang=en>

“Coffin Decolleté”, a movie about early marriage and its impact on girls’ lives.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6OAHGXetIu0>

No Retreat: An Egyptian Village’s Struggle to End Female Genital Mutilation
(The book addresses the experience of the Deir El-Bersha village, which resisted FGM)

<https://old.qadaya.net/node/808.html>

Media briefing on FGM

<https://www.almasryalyoum.com/news/details/1237502>

Decent Housing

Decent housing represents one of the fundamental pillars for achieving human dignity and ensuring a decent standard of living that guarantees psychological and physical health, social and family stability, and security. Housing serves as a nurturing environment for growth, education, and work, and as an effective tool for reducing poverty and promoting social inclusion. The right to decent housing is based on clear international standards, including Article 11 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), which places housing at the heart of the rights that guarantee the minimum level of dignity and safe living for human beings.

The issue of housing is essentially consistent with **the mission of the Coptic Evangelical Organization for Social Services (CEOSS)**, which places the concept of human dignity and comprehensive community development at the core of its vision. From this perspective, and since the 1980s, CEOSS has adopted the issue of improving the housing of the poor as a fundamental human right and a central entry point to improving the quality of life in marginalized communities. CEOSS launched its interventions in this area from a comprehensive developmental vision that the living environment is not merely as a place of residence but a deeply- influential factor in social and economic empowerment, with direct effects on public health, education, social relations, and human dignity. CEOSS work in developing safe and decent housing reflects its practical commitment to achieving social justice and building more just and equitable communities.

CEOSS efforts and interventions in decent housing align with the national orientations of the Egyptian state. Article 78 of the Egyptian 2014 Constitution stipulates that “The State shall guarantee citizens the right to decent, safe, and healthy housing in a manner that preserves human dignity and achieves social justice.” This commitment is also evident in Egypt Vision 2030, particularly in the axis of social justice and improving quality of life. In this context, CEOSS contributes through its community programs to supporting the goals of the presidential initiative “*Decent Life*,” which prioritizes rural housing development and infrastructure improvement. CEOSS efforts also complement national policies



aimed at eliminating informal settlements and developing unsafe areas, thereby strengthening the effective national role of civil society in achieving sustainable development.

In a related context, the issue of housing and CEOSS efforts in this regard are aligned with international orientations, particularly the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), namely SDG 11 which focuses on making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable. The focus is also linked to SDGs 1, 3, and 10, which focus on eradicating poverty and achieving health and justice. CEOSS approach also relies on UN indicators related to ensuring safe and affordable housing, reflecting therefore

the commitment by CEOSS towards international standards and the integrative role CEOSS plays with global efforts for the realization of fair and equitable development.

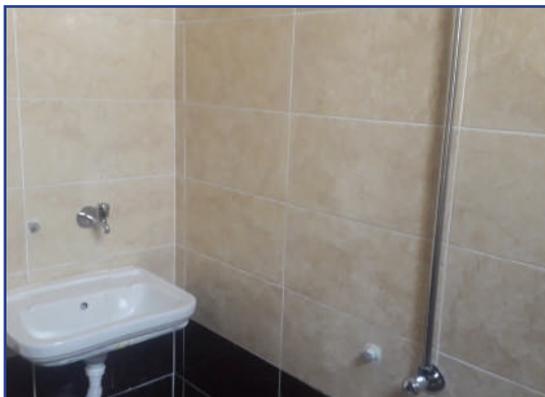
The Role of CEOSS Since its Establishment

CEOSS has evolved the roles played in improving the housing of the poor, transforming housing units into safe, healthy and environmentally suitable environments, meeting the needs of poor families. In its interventions, CEOSS has combined both the developmental and rights-based dimensions, including the following:

- In the early stages of its intervention during the 1980s, CEOSS focused on improving the conditions of existing housing of the poor by introducing essential modifications that enhanced the suitability of such units for daily living. These improvements included separating livestock and poultry areas from living rooms, providing sanitary toilets, clean potable water, and safe

sewage systems, as well as improving ventilation, wall painting, floor tiling, and providing basic furniture. CEOSS interventions extended to community awareness raising through programs of home economics addressing hygiene, house management, and daily health practices, recognizing that improving housing units could not be achieved without improving lifestyles.

- In the mid-1990s, there was a major turning point when CEOSS initiated its first international partnerships with *Habitat for Humanity International*, which enabled a pilot experience in several villages in Beni Suef and Giza. This pilot relied on providing interest-free loans to poor families to build or improve their homes, with community involvement in selection of beneficiaries and in ensuring repayment. Beneficiaries were also organized into collective groups for joint construction, which reduced costs, facilitated bulk purchasing of raw materials, and enhanced community solidarity and sense of ownership. The revolving loan mechanism allowed for reusing funds for new beneficiaries, ensuring the continuity and sustainability of the program.



- Building on this success, CEOSS worked in the following years to strengthen sustainability and expand:
 - By increasing the capital of the housing program through diversifying local and international funding sources, which helped expand the beneficiary base and ensure the continuity of the work.
 - CEOSS also dedicated special interventions targeting the poorest families who were unable to join the revolving loan system by implementing free housing improvement projects. These included: construction, demolition, installation

of utilities, basic finishings, and providing essential furniture without imposing financial burdens on them.



- In alignment with its humanitarian role, CEOSS actively responds to crises and emergencies affecting housing units of poor households by providing urgent assistance and reconstructing damaged houses, as in the case of Sanur village, Beni Suef Governorate which was affected by floods.

- Additionally, CEOSS played an active role in the presidential initiative “*Decent Life*” by implementing a project to build and improve 120 houses for targeted families in Egyptian villages, contributing to improving citizens’ quality of life and achieving national development.
- At another level, CEOSS played an important role participating in a study to develop a whole informal area in collaboration with Cairo Governorate, which included areas such as Zeinohm in Sayeda Zeinab, Hekr El-Sakakini, and Hekr Hashem Agha in ELsharabia. A joint committee was formed from Cairo Governorate and CEOSS for this purpose, where CEOSS carried out the field study in cooperation with the German Development Bank (KfW), EZE (Germany), and an Egyptian consulting office. The great trust of residents in CEOSS facilitated identifying the real reasons that needed to be addressed for the success of developing these areas. The comprehensive study was



- completed and handed over to the official authorities, which later developed the Zeinohm area based on the results of this study.

- In a related context, CEOSS continues to play a pivotal role in strengthening and supporting partnerships with line institutions to ac-

celerate infrastructure development and improve the surroundings of housings, based on its belief in housing as a basic right for every citizen.

Key Highlights:

- Improving the quality of life for thousands of poor families by transforming their homes into safe and healthy environments.
- Applying accessibility standards for people with disabilities in housing design, ensuring fairness in access and safe use.
- Integrating environmental and climate adaptation aspects in the housing design through the use of eco-friendly materials and climate-resilient designs.
- The success achieved by CEOSS in building effective partnerships with state institutions to maximize joint efforts in advocating for housing as a human right.
- Active participation in the presidential initiative “*Decent Life*” within the framework of achieving the State goals of improving citizens’ lives.
- Implementing a successful initiative to reconstruct 20 houses in Sanur village, Beni Suef, damaged by floods.

Launching an initiative to rehabilitate and develop 40 homes for the neediest families across three villages in Minya at a cost of EGP 23 million.

For more information, kindly refer to:

<https://ceoss-eg.org/annual-report/>
<https://ceoss-eg.org/annual-report/?lang=en>

- [A cooperation protocol with Minya to rehabilitate and develop 40 homes for most-in- need households.](#)

<https://www.almasryalyoum.com/news/details/3520754>

- [Channel 1: The 9 o’clock Newsletter | CEOSS launches a safe, healthy housing project initiative for groups most in need of care.](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jpd9xPIb6CI>

- [Al-Dostor Newspaper: CEOSS organizes a meeting on flexible housing in the face of climate change.](#)

<https://www.dostor.org/4231815>



Social Protection

Social protection is considered one of the most crucial issues, as it represents a tool to achieve social justice and inclusion, and to ensure that the most vulnerable groups receive the necessary protection. The importance of this issue is evident in light of current economic and social challenges, which require the combined efforts of government, civil society, and the private sector to ensure the provision of an effective and sustainable social safety net for all Egyptians.

The efforts of the Coptic Evangelical Organization for Social Services (CEOSS) in the area of social protection are deeply consistent with its vision and mission, which emphasize the value of human life, the enhancement of its quality, and the achievement of justice and equality. Since its establishment in 1950, CEOSS has adopted a developmental approach that places people at the center of its focus, with particular attention to empowering the most vulnerable and needy groups by providing them with economic, social, and health protection. This was clearly reflected in its various interventions, which combine immediate relief support with long-term community empowerment, aiming to build the capacities of individuals and communities for resilience and independence. CEOSS has also been keen to work in partnership with governmental institutions and civil society to strengthen social safety nets and expand the umbrella of protection, reflecting its deep commitment to its developmental and humanitarian mission, and making social protection a tool for achieving its vision of a more just, humane, and inclusive society.

CEOSS work in social protection is closely integrated with the Egyptian state directions, which place social protection among national priorities through strategies such as Egypt Vision 2030, and programs such as *Hayah Karima* and *Takaful and Karama*, which aim to empower the most vulnerable groups and reduce social and economic gaps. The efforts of CEOSS also align with international orientations, particularly the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), namely SDGs related to ending poverty, achieving equality, and enhancing social well-being.

Its interventions are also in line with the International Labour Organization (ILO) conventions and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, reflecting its commitment to applying international standards in building fair, inclusive, and sustainable social protection systems.

CEOSS Role in Social Protection/Relief Since its Establishment



– **1950–1970:** CEOSS began its work in the field of social protection by providing direct services and support to those in need, with a focus on health, education, economic, and environmental services.

– **1980–2000:** CEOSS expanded its services to include economic empowerment

programs, provision of food and in-kind support, and establishment of community committees to identify and classify needs, contributing to improved quality of life for poor citizens.

- **2000–present:** CEOSS has worked to strengthen partnerships with government institutions and civil society, adopting comprehensive methodologies for social protection, including rapid interventions in cases of crises and disasters, cash and in-kind support, and the implementation of economic and social empowerment programs to mitigate the negative impacts of crises and risks. It also moved towards mobilizing community resources and engaging and motivating young volunteers of both sexes to participate in crisis management. **The following section highlights the most important initiatives that demonstrate CEOSS efforts in this field:**

Response to COVID-19

CEOSS played a pioneering role as a model of effective community response, launching urgent emergency initiatives to address the repercussions of the pandemic. CEOSS also participated in national and presidential initiatives (such as *Netcharek Henaadi el-Azma* We Share, this crisis shall pass, *Ashan Bokra* For Tomorrow, *Ne'dar Nehmiha* Together we can). Through these, a package of direct interventions and services was provided to support poor and vulnerable families

most affected, such as persons with disabilities, informal workers, small farmers, and female breadwinners, to mitigate economic and social impacts. The Forum for Intercultural Dialogue at CEOSS also launched many community initiatives aimed at reinforcing values of belonging and citizenship and supporting society during this crisis. Groups of youth involved in the forum- including Muslim and Christian religious leaders, academia, media professionals, and civil society representatives- implemented initiatives targeting the least aware and most needy communities.

The social protection interventions in response to COVID-19 included:

- Forming local crisis management committees and building their capacities to flexibly respond according to the community context.



- Organizing public disinfection campaigns in streets, service centers, and public places.
- Distributing hygiene and sanitation kits to the most vulnerable families.
- Providing direct food and health assistance to vulnerable groups such as female breadwinners, the elderly, and persons with disabilities.
- Integrating citizens into the State social protection umbrella/cash and in-kind support for the poorest groups.
- Spreading awareness on virus prevention through diverse methods, including:
 - Establishing 70 information/ community hubs in 70 local communities to disseminate health information on COVID-19.
 - Organizing door-to-door campaigns and using art as a tool for awareness raising.



-Implementing community awareness campaigns through printed materials and social media platforms to spread preventive information and promote health awareness.

-Holding dialogue sessions via Zoom, with local and Arab intellectuals discussing the crisis, intervention mechanisms, social solidarity, and strategies to overcome the pandemic.

- Providing psychological support to children to help them overcome the impacts of social isolation by implementing recreational and educational programs that eased the crisis effects and provided safe alternatives for interaction and participation.

Response to Families Affected by Natural Disasters

- Launching a successful initiative to reconstruct 20 homes in Senour village, Beni Suef, damaged by floods.
- Providing urgent relief inputs to families affected by disasters such as floods, through mobilizing community resources and coordinating with government institutions and the private sector.
- Rapid intervention to protect small farmers whose crops were damaged by floods.

Response to the Economic Impacts on the Poorest Families

- Supporting youth returning from Libya: CEOSS quickly responded to the needs of young people who lost their jobs due to the events in Libya by pro-

viding temporary employment through the *Cash for Work* approach, alongside integrating them into economic empowerment programs to secure long-term sustainable job opportunities.

- CEOSS actively participated in national initiatives such as "New Beginning" and "One Hand", which included implementing comprehensive development interventions in various fields, in addition to significant efforts in social protection for the poorest families, including the distribution of relief aid and food boxes across governorates where CEOSS operates.
- CEOSS held several conferences and intellectual meetings to discuss economic problems and their implications of social justice, presenting a set of recommendations and proposals to executive bodies, including suggested mechanisms to address such challenges.



Response to the Impacts of Regional Wars

-As part of its humanitarian and regional commitments as an institution that believes in regional and social responsibility and works with a spirit of human solidarity with peoples in times of crisis, CEOSS, under the umbrella of the National Alliance for Civil Development Work (NAC-DW), participated strongly in supporting civilians in the humanitarian crisis in Gaza. In alignment with Egyptian position in supporting the



Palestinian cause, CEOSS joined humanitarian convoys by preparing trucks loaded with tens of tons of dry foodstuffs (Ex. flour, rice, sugar, and oil, in addition to nutritious canned goods.) Local volunteer networks were activated to assist in packaging of supplies in a way that respects the beneficiaries' dignity- a principle CEOSS adopts in all its relief efforts.

- In this context, CEOSS is also implementing several projects targeting the care of brothers and sisters arriving from other countries, aiming to integrate them into Egyptian society and alleviate the effects of shocks they have faced. This is done through a comprehensive development system that includes services in health, environment, and economy, alongside direct humanitarian support to meet immediate needs. Efforts also include psychological support and awareness-raising to ensure proper integration into society and to face the harsh challenges imposed by crises in their

home countries.

- Several community initiatives were also implemented to promote acceptance of refugees and embrace diversity, particularly in governorates with high

presence of refugees, such as Aswan, which hosts large numbers of Sudanese refugees.

- A series of dialogue sessions was organized to discuss issues related to wars and regional and international changes, with the participation of intellectuals, decision-makers, and institutional leaders at local, Arab, and international levels, through the Forum for Intercultural Dialogue, which focuses on analyzing the cultural dimensions of such issues, their impacts, and exploring effective mechanisms to manage diversity, counter hate speech, and foster inclusion.
- An online dialogue program targeting Arab youth was launched to enhance their role during conflicts, encourage them to adopt values of coexistence, and confront extremist ideologies.

Key Highlights

- The Ministry of Social Solidarity (MoSS) honored CEOSS as part of the



celebration events of honoring civil society organizations, winners of “People of Good 2025” competition, which was launched by the ministry in cooperation with the Fund for Supporting the Projects of Civil Organizations and Institutions, for the selection of the most im-

portant feeding campaigns during the Holy Month of Ramadan.

- **Reaching tens of thousands of the poorest and most vulnerable groups** in marginalized rural and urban communities.
- **Rapid crisis response**, which contributed to alleviating the economic, social, and health hardships of those affected during emergencies.
- **Strengthening partnerships** with government institutions, civil society, and



the private sector, which enhanced the effectiveness of social protection programs and interventions.

- **Providing pilots of community initiatives** that embody values of citizenship, belonging, and positive participation- not as theoretical concepts, but as practical actions and behaviors that contribute to building society, strengthening its cohesion, and supporting it, especially in times of crises and disasters.

For more information, kindly refer to:

<https://ceoss-eg.org/annual-report/>

<https://ceoss-eg.org/annual-report/?lang=en>

- [El-Watan Newspaper: “CEOSS” participates in the seventh National Alliance convoy to support Gaza.](#)

<https://www.elwatannews.com/news/details/7286452>

- [Al-Dostor Newspaper: “CEOSS” participates in the “Shoulder to Shoulder” initiative to support 150,000 households.](#)

<https://www.dostor.org/4344528>

- [“One Hand in Crises” Initiative in Assiut and Alexandria](#)

<https://ceoss-eg.org/tag/%D9%85%D8%A8%D8%A7%D8%AF%D8%B1%D8%A9/>

[Distribution of food cartons to households most-in-need in five governorates as part of the “One Hand” Initiative, organized by the Local Development Unit – CEOSS.](#)

<https://ceoss-eg.org/41269/>

Countering Hate Speech

The issue of countering hate speech is a crucial issue that receives considerable attention at international, regional, and local levels, especially in light of the spread of hate speech that incites rejection of the other and undermines their rights. Hate speech has led to more conflicts and tensions, caused the disintegration of many societies, and negatively affected efforts for peace and development.

Hate speech is defined as discourse that views human beings as unequal in characteristics, and therefore treats those other beings with double standards in terms of rights and duties, where some are granted opportunities and others are denied same. The aim of this discourse is abuse, contempt, and violence against the different “other” on the basis of identity, religion, skin color, gender, disability, and more. Hate speech takes multiple forms of expression, words, symbols, or behaviors. Indicators of hate range from superiority, refraining from interactions with to defaming others through social stigma, labeling, ridicule, slander, and stereotypical negative phrases, as well as using derogatory language to belittle others, culminating in incitement to violence in all its forms. Hate spreads due to various factors, including lack of cultural awareness, media that reinforces stereotypes, social media exploited by some to spread hate-provoking and divisive narratives, and socialization tools such as family and education, which instill stereotypes in children toward the “other.”

Since its establishment, the Coptic Evangelical Organization for Social Services (CEOSS) has been committed to a vision centered on enhancing the value of human life, improving its quality, achieving justice and equality, spreading enlightened thought, and consolidating common human ethics and values. Within this framework, the issue of countering hate speech aligns fundamentally with the mission and objectives of CEOSS, as this discourse contradicts values of equality, justice, and acceptance of others, and threatens the peaceful coexistence that CEOSS diligently strives to establish.

This commitment is clearly reflected in the Forum for Intercultural Dialogue of CEOSS, which seeks to build a pluralistic democratic society based on values of citizenship and principles of human rights, that respects diversity and accepts



differences. This goal directly corresponds to addressing hate speech, which seeks to deny these values and entrench discrimination and exclusion. Since its establishment in the 1990s, the Forum has emphasized its national role in promoting values of tolerance, citizenship, and co-existence, recognizing that these values represent a safety valve for development efforts and societal progress. Accordingly, the Forum adopted the issue of “Countering Hate Speech” in full alignment with the Egyptian national orientations to consolidate values of citizenship, coexistence, and rejection of discrimination- principles enshrined in the Egyptian Constitution and the laws regulating public life-

as well as with international efforts to support human rights and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 16: “Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions” and SDG10: “Reduced Inequalities.”

The Role of CEOSS in Countering Hate Speech

Since 2019, the Forum has adopted the issue of “Countering Hate Speech,” following a clear path and methodology for its work, which can be summarized in the following stages:

First stage: Studying the issue

- The Forum conducted a community study that engaged diverse groups of religious leaders, academia, media professionals, and civil society representatives from multiple geographical areas, with the aim of gaining a deeper understanding of the issue and its different dimensions.
- The study included identifying types of hate speech, causes of its spread, and manifestations of hate, as well as determining institutions that influence such

discourse positively or negatively. The study concluded with several important findings, most notably:

- The religious sphere plays an influential role in hate speech.
- The decline of hate speech depends on the presence of a social, educational, and cultural climate that respects others.
- The importance of having a legislative framework to counter hate speech and support tolerant discourse.

Second stage: Awareness raising and public enlightenment

- This stage focused on awareness and public enlightenment regarding the issue. The Forum organized many activities and events, ranging from roundtables with intellectuals and opinion leaders, to seminars across many governorates, and conferences covering different aspects of the issue. Discussions included mechanisms to confront hate speech, the need to build social capital and enhance community trust and strengthening people's capacity to live and



work together. They also addressed the role of religious institutions and the importance of renewing religious thought, the responsibility of the media and the necessity of professionalism, the role of culture, literature and arts, the role of civil society and its importance in shaping positive values, the responsibility of institutions of upbringing and education, reviewing curricula and learning environments, the need to create discourse of tolerance and solidarity, the impact of social media and the importance of using technology positively, and the need for a legislative framework that criminalizes hate speech.



- This stage also included intellectual and media outputs that contributed to raising public awareness, such as a short film about hate speech, a printed bulletin, and a youth-authored magazine entitled “*The Black Glasses*” that addressed models of hate and tolerance, as well as cartoons to raise children’s awareness on confronting hate-related values such as bullying and frail belonging.

- Numerous community initiatives were implemented in cooperation with universities and religious institutions to raise awareness among thousands of students and citizens and to

build tolerance using arts and sports. CEOSS social media platforms were also widely used to spread awareness, while prominent writers and intellectuals were encouraged to publish articles about hate speech and ways to confront it, with nearly 20 articles published in various newspapers and online platforms.

Third stage: Developing a draft law countering hate speech and supporting coexistence

- This stage began with a roundtable discussion of general frameworks and ideas to support the building of a tolerant society, followed by a specialized meeting on the legislative vision for supporting coexistence. The meeting addressed ethical standards that should underpin such support, reviewed opportunities and challenges in activating constitutional and legal provisions and gathered expert recommendations in this context.

- Based on broad consensus among Forum members, it was emphasized that preparing a draft law to confront and criminalize hate speech was crucial.

Accordingly, a draft law was prepared with the assistance of lawyers and specialized consultants.

Fourth stage: Networking with the National Council for Human Rights to submit the draft law to the House of Representatives



The Forum's concern on countering hate speech aligned with that of the National Council for Human Rights. Consequently, a discussion session was held between the cultural and legislative committee of the Council and members of the Forum to review and develop the draft law. The final proposal was submitted to the Parliament of Egypt.

Key Highlights

- **Creating change in societal awareness:** The Forum is one of the first entities to raise this issue for discussion at multiple levels and with different groups and institutional leaders in Egyptian society. This encouraged a large number of institutions to raise the issue in their awareness-raising meetings. An example is Hanager Arts Center, which held a number of intellectual and artistic events to address this issue.
- **Impact at the legislative level:** One of the most significant successes was an initiative by CEOSS to draft a law to confront hate speech and support coexistence. This initiative reached



the stage of networking with the National Council for Human Rights and was submitted to the Parliament of Egypt. This represents a direct and tangible impact at the level of public policies.

- **Activating the role of institutions in countering hate speech:** Through partnerships and events organized by the Forum, many institutions launched joint initiatives with the Forum to reinforce awareness of the culture of tolerance in the face of hate speech. Among partnerships: partnership with Aswan University, Assiut University, the General Authority for Cultural Palaces in several governorates, and a number of civil society organizations. These initiatives contributed to awareness raising among thousands of students and citizens, and to building tolerance in local communities.
- **Empowering youth and local communities:** Through capacity-building programs and equipping mid-level leaders from academia, media, and religious institutions with the knowledge, skills, and tools needed to confront hate, these efforts had a continuing effect in combating hate speech. Many of these leaders are disseminating what they learned through their institutions or platforms. One young academic even dedicated her doctoral dissertation to the topic of confronting hate speech, which also represents an academic and intellectual contribution to the issue.

For more information, kindly refer to:

<https://ceoss-eg.org/annual-report/>

<https://ceoss-eg.org/annual-report/?lang=en>

- [Members of the Forum of Intercultural Dialogue discuss the legislative vision and the importance of issuing laws to combat hate speech](#)

<https://is.gd/jY9dK8>

- [CEOSS discusses the concept of coexistence in the presence of parliamentarians and media professionals](#)

<https://is.gd/gFcAEF>

- [We are united with the organization by a common dream: to integrate all components of society - Dr. Amr El-Wardany, Secretary of Fatwa and Director of the Training Department at the Egyptian Dar Al-Iftaa](#)

<https://is.gd/tbfzGX>

- [CEOSS plays an important role in supporting dialogue and coexistence issues](#)

- [Dr. Abdel Moneim Saeed – Writer, political thinker, and member of the Senate](#)

<https://is.gd/4wq3Rd>

- [Together to combat hate speech, a special meeting with CEOSS to implement tolerance decisions and laws](#)

<https://is.gd/Rn0JgK>

Providing a system of cultural values that supports Development Issues

Within the framework of shaping *Egypt Vision 2030*, a set of fundamental requirements and tools were proposed to be adopted when implementing policies, initiatives, and programs in order to ensure effective and efficient implementation and achieve the vision smoothly and successfully. These requirements included the importance of providing the necessary funding, achieving technological progress and innovation, enhancing digital transformation, in addition to ensuring the availability of data, preparing a supportive legislative environment, controlling population growth rates, and finally, working on providing a system of cultural values that supports development issues, considering these elements as fundamental pillars to ensure the success of the vision on the ground.

Egyptian culture is characterized by the diversity of its elements and components, which include religion, arts, language, customs and traditions, heritage, national identity, and others. Religion occupies a central position in Egyptian culture, as it deeply influences the thoughts and behaviors of the majority of citizens, especially in local communities that hold great respect for religious leaders and consider them a primary reference in matters of daily life, such as children's marriages, inheritance, family disputes, and others.

Based on this understanding, the Forum for Intercultural Dialogue (FID) recognized the importance of working on providing a system of cultural values that supports sustainable development issues, drawing on the elements of Egyptian culture, foremost among them religion. This orientation coincided with regional and international calls to adopt a religious dialogue that supports sustainable development issues. From here, FID began to exert various efforts to research and recall religious texts and values that support certain sustainable development goals and issues, particularly those related to environmental conservation, equality, and gender. These texts and values were compiled in documents and brochures distributed on a wide scale, to be used by religious leaders in mosques and churches, as well as by young leaders and civil society organizations working in programs and projects related to these issues.

FID's role in addressing the issue since its establishment



- The FID was established in the 1990s, in a context marked by intellectual transformations and many ideological differences that led to the rise of religious extremism and confrontation with manifestations of civil culture. This contributed to increased social tensions and conflicts, and to a noticeable decline in development efforts. Faced with this scene, the urgent need became clear to strengthen dialogue between groups of different cultural and religious backgrounds, with the aim of expanding spaces of mutual understanding, reducing opportunities for conflict, building mutual trust, and enhancing coexistence.

tence.

- FID started from a firm conviction that Egyptians share one civilizational heritage, that they have a shared system of cultural values, and that they face similar development challenges. On this basis, FID affirmed that cultural diversity, including religious diversity, should be a source of integration and respect, not a cause for distance and division.
- In this framework, FID developed a number of programs in cooperation with religious institutions and religious leaders, ranging from capacity-building training programs, to conferences, discussion panels, and community initiatives. These activities contributed to building a wide network of relationships and strengthening mutual trust among the different parties. Over time, these programs evolved to include intellectual and cultural approaches addressing the relationship between religion and development issues and seeking to derive common religious values that support the achievement of SDGs.



awareness-raising through religious platforms and community initiatives.

- There are many other issues, such as confronting child marriage and supporting girls' education, in which the religious reference and participation of religious leaders were invested to create a values framework that contributes to advancing the developmental efforts exerted in these issues, and is based on joint work between Muslim and Christian leaders.



- Workshops and initiatives were organized that brought together male and female religious leaders to discuss issues such as climate change and the role of religious leaders in confronting it. Texts were recalled from the Holy Qur'an and the Bible, and essential religious and cultural values were extracted, such as preserving environmental resources (water, land), the role of human beings as stewards in caring for the environment, the ownership of environmental resources by future generations, and treating the environment as God's creation. These texts and values were documented in publications used in awareness-raising through religious platforms and community initiatives.

- FID efforts also included other social issues, such as child marriage and girls' education, where religious reference and the participation of religious leaders were invested to formulate a values framework that promotes the advancement of



developmental efforts exerted in these issues and is based on joint work between Muslim and Christian leaders.

Key highlights

- The integration of thousands of male and female religious leaders (sheikhs, pastors, priests, church servants, consecrated women and nuns, female preachers from Al-Azhar and the Ministry of Endowments) in mid-level leadership programs, which helped develop their knowledge and skills, and to work on common ground to serve communities, using modern tools such as social media, and addressing development issues related to sustainable development challenges.
- Preparing two documents on the issues of child marriage and girls' education, which include a religious vision and supportive values, and stress the need for commitment and societal solidarity from various actors (religious leaders, natural leaders, institutional officials...) to confront the negative phenomena associated with these two issues.



- Preparing a document compiling Islamic and Christian religious texts that urge the preservation of the environment and its resources and treating it as God's creation. The document was used in awareness campaigns in mosques and churches and was also presented at COP27.



·Participation in COP28 in Dubai, in the Blue Zone, where a paper on *Religion and Climate Issues* was presented, reviewing experiences and practical initiatives of religious leaders who are Forum partners, contributing to raising awareness of the religious role in protecting the environment as God’s creation.



·Implementing initiatives led by sheikhs who graduated from the religious leadership program, in cooperation with the Water Company in Sohag Governorate, to raise awareness of the importance of preserving water resources, in direct connection with SDG 6 and SDG 12.

·The initiative “*Blessed is the one who plants a tree*” launched by a Catholic nun

in the city of Isna, to preserve the environment and encourage children and youth to plant trees and care for and protect plants, in support of SDG 15.

- In the community of Al-Duwaina in Abu Tig District, Assiut Governorate, Muslim and Christian religious leaders cooperated to encourage Christian children and girls to enroll in community education classes, after there had been reluctance due to the classes being held in Muslim families’ homes. This contributed to everyone regularly pursuing education, in connection with SDG 4 and SDG 5.
- Organizing conferences and intellectual meetings attended by leaders of religious institutions such as the Minister of Endowments, the Grand Mufti, and the Head of the Evangelical Community, to discuss the role of religious discourse in various issues related to the sustainable development goals, with the dissemination of the recommendations resulting from these conferences

and their activation in the form of initiatives and action programs at the local community level.

For more information, kindly refer to:

<https://ceoss-eg.org/annual-report/>

<https://ceoss-eg.org/annual-report/?lang=en>

- [The role of the Forum of Intercultural Dialogue in spreading and operationalizing the concept of environmental citizenship](#)

<https://ceoss-eg.org/30129/>

- [Sada El Balad: Head of the Evangelical Community Participates in a Panel Discussion on Confronting Climate Change... Photos](#)

<https://www.elbalad.news/6455460>

- [Youm7: CEOSS: Religious Discourse Must Be Based on the Values of Coexistence](#)

<https://is.gd/SmBw10>

- [Al Masry Al Youm: In the presence of the Minister of Endowments, the “Community Peace... Religion and the Message of Peace” Conference Launches](#)

<https://www.dostor.org/4475622>

- [In the presence of the Minister of Endowments, CEOSS Organizes the “Human Being in the Modern Nation-State” Conference](#)

<https://youtu.be/cXU2tdtEd8>

Citizenship

The **issue of citizenship** is one of the central issues in building modern societies, as it constitutes the foundation of a reciprocal relationship between the individual and the state, where it is manifested in citizens enjoying full rights in return for their commitment to specific duties within a framework of justice, equality, and respect for the law. Citizenship is not only a geographical or legal affiliation, but also an actual practice of the values of participation, engagement in public affairs, respect for pluralism, and ensuring equal opportunities. This contributes to the consolidation of social justice, the strengthening of political stability, and the building of social cohesion based on a culture of coexistence, acceptance of others, tolerance, and belonging. Citizenship is also considered a fundamental tool in combating all forms of discrimination.

The issue of citizenship lies at the heart of **the vision and mission of the Coptic Evangelical Organization for Social Services (CEOSS)**, stemming from a deep belief that justice, equality, and human dignity represent the foundation of building a cohesive society that enables all citizens to play their roles and engage effectively in public life. Through its programs and initiatives, CEOSS seeks to empower marginalized groups, strengthen social cohesion, and promote a culture of coexistence, based on the conviction that true development can only be achieved under inclusive citizenship that upholds human rights and contributes to building a homeland that embraces everyone equally.

CEOSS efforts in adopting the issue of citizenship are consistent with the Egyptian State orientation toward building a society based on citizenship and equality, as stipulated in Article 4 of the 2019 Constitution: “Sovereignty belongs solely to the people, who exercise and protect it. The People is the source of authority and safeguard national unity, which is based on the principles of equality, justice, and equal opportunities among all citizens.” This also aligns with the National Human Rights Strategy launched in 2021 within the framework of Egypt Vision 2030, which emphasized the importance of consolidating the principles

of citizenship and enhancing civil, political, social, and cultural rights. At the international level, CEOSS efforts are consistent with international human rights treaties and conventions, foremost among them the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, both of which affirm the right of individuals to equality, non-discrimination, and equal participation in public life.



CEOSS Role since Its Establishment

The FID at CEOSS pays great attention to the issue of citizenship, considering it a fundamental pillar for achieving social cohesion and peace. This interest is reflected in an integrated set of roles, most notably:

1- Empowerment and Capacity Building

CEOSS gives strategic importance to capacity building and enhancing community empowerment by designing and implementing specialized training programs targeting diverse groups of youth, including academia, civil society leaders, media professionals, as well as





Muslim and Christian religious leaders. These programs focus on instilling values of active citizenship through knowledge- and practice-based content delivered by experts and specialists in citizenship and social justice issues.

2- Building Community Awareness of Citizenship

CEOSS implements systematic awareness campaigns and workshops aimed



at promoting a culture of citizenship among individuals by enabling them to know their civil and constitutional rights and duties. These efforts contribute to raising community awareness of the importance of active participation in public affairs and decision-making, as the essence of citizenship and the key to sustainable development.

3- Strengthening the Role of Media and Community Communication

CEOSS recognizes the importance of media as a key tool in shaping public awareness and thus works to support and empower media professionals in producing



purposeful content that promotes the concepts of citizenship and coexistence. This is reflected in educational media programs and the production of documentary materials highlighting values such as respect for the law, community engagement, and cultural diversity,

thereby contributing to the building of public opinion supportive of pluralism and social inclusion.

4- Launching Community Initiatives and Enhancing Civic Participation

CEOSS encourages the launch of innovative volunteer and community initiatives that entrench values of belonging and national loyalty and support the active participation of citizens in public life. These initiatives aim to motivate different groups to engage in political, social, and economic issues, starting from basic rights such as education, participation in voting during elections, and contributing to local development efforts.

5- Partnerships with Religious and Cultural Leaders and Institutions



CEOSS works on building strategic partnerships with Muslim and Christian religious leaders, such as the Ministry of Endowments, Al-Azhar Al-Sharif, and Egyptian churches, in addition to universities, the Ministry of Culture, and civil society institutions. These partnerships aim to develop and implement joint action plans to promote a

culture of tolerance and understanding, and to strengthen social cohesion among citizens regardless of their religious or cultural backgrounds

6- Enhancing Dialogue and Community Understanding



CEOSS believes that dialogue is a fundamental tool for building cohesive societies. Therefore, CEOSS organizes a series of seminars, public meetings, and consultative sessions that bring together different social groups and spectrums. These meetings aim to consolidate a culture of dialogue and

acceptance of others and enhance mutual respect, thereby contributing to the building of a community environment based on pluralism and creative diversity.

Key Highlights



– CEOSS contribution to supporting and consolidating the concept of citizenship has been one of the highlights of its history, where it played an active and influential role during the drafting of the Egyptian Constitution after the January 25, 2011, Revolution, particularly in pushing for citizenship to be a fundamental part of the new constitutional framework. CEOSS' FID played a pivotal role in this regard by organizing broad community dialogues across all governorates to spread awareness of the concept of citizenship and open societal debates on it.

– The Ministry of Social Solidarity (MoSS) honored CEOSS in appreciation of its efforts in producing media content that reinforces the values of

citizenship and national belonging. This recognition came within the “Champion from Our Country” competition, which aims to highlight models and institutions that play an active role in building national identity and instilling a spirit of belonging.

– Art and creativity were employed as effective tools to spread awareness of the values of citizenship and to enhance belonging and coexistence, particularly in marginalized communities most exposed to violence, especially among disadvantaged groups with limited access to education and culture. In this context, CEOSS produced diverse content that included awareness publications, colouring books and games for children, as well as films and songs.

– CEOSS participated in a national initiative in partnership with the Min-

istry of Social Solidarity titled “*Promoting Values and Practices of Citizenship in Minya Governorate,*” where work was adopted in 8 villages through the implementation of a package of diverse developmental interventions. These interventions focused on creating safe spaces and relationships for joint work among men and women, youth, and children from both Muslims and Christians. The initiative also included building the capacity of the local community to confront extremist thinking and to promote a culture of coexistence and acceptance of others.

For more information, you can see:

<https://ceoss-eg.org/annual-report/>

<https://ceoss-eg.org/annual-report/?lang=en>

- [Yous7: CEOSS launches the “Promoting Citizenship Values and Practices” project in Minya](#)

<https://is.gd/h9c8Dq>

- [“Omrek Sheft Warda” song - Saft El Laban Children](#)

<https://www.facebook.com/Yalla.Hewar/videos/968788037041540>

- [“Humanity Triumphs” movie](#)

https://youtu.be/s4hDb2i_q2Q?feature=shared

- [“We Are All One in Origin” movie](#)

<https://youtu.be/xC9ZHxB5hr0?feature=shared>

- [“Youssef and Youssef” movie](#)

<https://youtu.be/1SeClIK7BMs?feature=shared>

- [“To Egypt, I belong” cartoon](#)

<https://youtu.be/rSbROjaG7SE?feature=shared>

- [“Stop bullying” cartoon](#)

https://youtu.be/pkYjr_Y-tVw?feature=shared

Cultural Justice

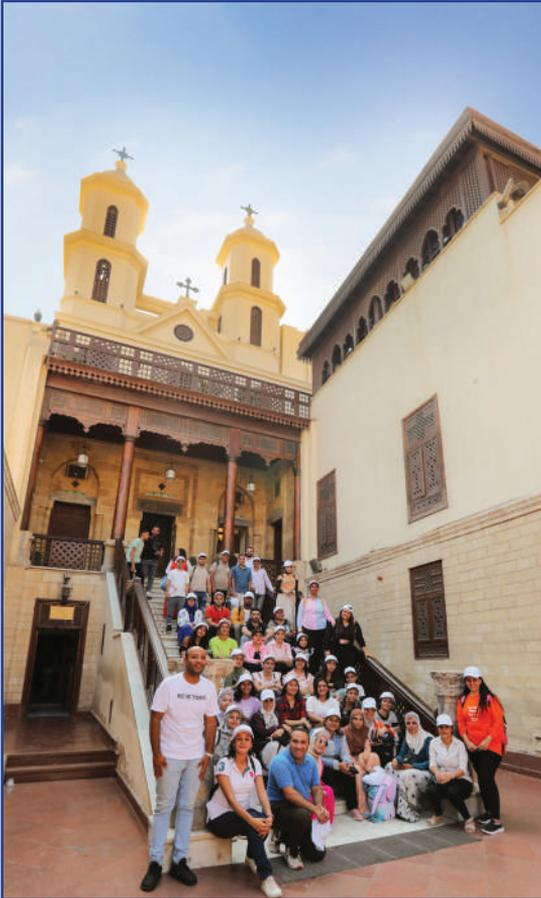
Cultural justice refers to ensuring the comprehensive empowerment of all segments of society for effective participation in cultural life, thereby enabling all citizens to enjoy their cultural rights. This concept acquires special significance among citizens in poor and marginalized underserved in all fields. Cultural justice contributes to reducing gaps among societal classes without discrimination.

This vision is consistent with the goals and mission of the Coptic Evangelical Organization for Social Services (CEOSS), which strives to improve the quality of life, affirm the value of human life, and enhance its standards in a way that consolidates the principles of justice and equality.

Further, social justice aligns with *Egypt Vision 2030* in the cultural field, which states: By 2030, there will be a system of positive cultural values in Egyptian society that respects diversity and difference, enables the Egyptian citizen to access means of acquiring knowledge, opens horizons for interaction with the givens of the contemporary world, and fosters awareness of history and civilizational heritage, while developing the individual capacity for free choice and securing their right to practice and produce culture. Positive elements in culture will be a source of strength for achieving development, an added value for the national economy, and a foundation for Egyptian soft power regionally and globally.

These efforts are also consistent with a number of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG4 on ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education, SDG5 on gender equality, SDG16 on peace, justice, and building effective and accountable institutions, and SDG17 on strengthening partnerships to achieve sustainable development.

Efforts of CEOSS' FID:



communication and interaction with relevant institutions.

- Ever since, FID has continued working on programs aimed at developing collaboration with representatives of cultural institutions, through groups that include mid-level leaders from target groups, seeking to build their capacities in line with the needs of individuals, institutions, and communities. The Unit also focused on improving the efficiency and effectiveness of these institutions, maximizing their impact, and expanding their outreach to different segments of society, in addition to developing the capacity of workers in the cultural system as a whole.
- Starting 2014, CEOSS adopted the methodology of comprehensive devel-

· Between 2005 and 2009, in the context of developing FID action programs, the “Capacity Building of Egyptian Civil and Cultural Institutions” program was established. It aimed to strengthen the role of representatives of these institutions in promoting a culture of dialogue and creating common ground, in addition to enabling them to read and analyze the cultural, social, and political structure of Egyptian society. FID issued a facilitator manual as a methodological tool for conducting dialogue, including main themes and elements, essential skills, and mechanisms for dealing with social media networks, thereby enhancing cultural



opment models, which combine cultural inputs and developmental services for groups of families in specific communities. This helped strengthen partnerships with cultural institutions, enabling families to access their cultural rights through coordination with libraries and cultural palaces, and by involving children, youth, and women in the activities of these institutions. Partner associations also succeeded in introducing cultural activities into deprived communities, as in the case of the “Sila” community in King Mariout, Alexandria, where art and cultural performances were presented in cooperation

with the General Authority for Cultural Palaces.

- Work is still ongoing with the comprehensive model methodology, in parallel with efforts to build the capacities of representatives of cultural institutions within groups that include diverse institutions such as cultural palaces, youth centers, and scouting leaders, covering geographical areas from Alexandria to Aswan. This diversity provides important spaces for networking and joint work, which was reflected in the strategic vision of the Dialogue Unit until 2025. The Unit included sustainable cultural development into “ongoing efforts: sustainable cultural development in relation to building human beings, social and economic justice, and the role of civil society.”
- In a related context, FID adopts the **methodology of community initiatives** as an effective approach to enhancing cultural participation. This methodology encourages all target groups within capacity-building programs to implement cultural initiatives in their communities in cooperation with local cultural



institutions. These initiatives include organization of seminars and cultural evenings in clubs, public libraries, and cultural salons, in addition to field visits aimed at enabling individuals to enjoy their cultural rights, particularly in marginalized areas. These initiatives resulted in the production of innovative educational materials based on arts, such as children's songs and booklets prepared by women from poor communities. In these booklets, they addressed negative proverbs and provided alternative positive ones that reflect the positive values the Forum seeks to promote. This methodology is an ef-

fective means of providing cultural opportunities and enhancing cultural and social justice in deprived communities.

Key Highlights

- CEOSS succeeded, through its partnerships and cooperation with the General Authority for Cultural Palaces, in motivating the Authority to adopt and implement policies supportive of cultural diversity and the dissemination of culture in society.
- Mechanisms for networking among grassroots institutions and cultural institutions were activated, with the aim of providing opportunities for citizens to participate in cultural activities and ensuring their full enjoyment of their cultural rights.
- The Unit signed a cooperation protocol with the Ministry of Culture, contributing to enhancing joint efforts to raise cultural awareness and expanding the base of beneficiaries of cultural services in local communities.

For more information, kindly refer to:

<https://ceoss-eg.org/annual-report/>

<https://ceoss-eg.org/annual-report/?lang=en>

- [El-Watan Newspaper: “Bridges of Peace”... A CEOSS Initiative to Support Cultural and Social Justice](#)

<https://www.elwatannews.com/news/details/7120624>

- [Youm7: CEOSS’s Forum of Intercultural Dialogue Concludes the “Supporting Democracy” Project](#)

<https://is.gd/A6JETb>



Human Development

Human development is a comprehensive process that aims at developing the individual in all intellectual, psychological, social, and physical dimensions. Amidst rapid transformations and increasing challenges, the issue of human development occupies a central position in the national policies of many countries, including Egypt.

Since the beginning of its work and for seventy-five years, CEOSS has been dedicated to serving the human being. Human service is embedded in its core mission- not only in meeting basic needs and securing rights for citizens from all segments, but also in supporting the development of an authentic, conscious Egyptian individual capable of securing their rights, fulfilling their responsibilities, and making a positive impact in their community to the fullest. Without investing in the human being- the human resource of any project or program and the nucleus of society- it is impossible to achieve true civilization, renaissance, and a cohesive Egyptian society. This has been a core mission of the Forum for Intercultural Dialogue since its inception.

CEOSS efforts in embracing the issue of human development align with the orientations of the Egyptian state as well as international agendas. The state seeks to improve the quality of life for the Egyptian citizen, and President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi launched the “*New Beginning for Human Development*” initiative in September 2024. The initiative aims at “investing in human capital through a work program that targets human development and works on consolidating Egyptian identity by enhancing efforts, coordination, and integration among all state entities across the republic.” At the international level, these efforts are aligned with sustainable development approaches that focus on investing in the human element as a cornerstone for achieving comprehensive development. These initiatives are consistent with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG16 on **promoting peaceful and inclusive societies**, and SDG10 on reducing inequalities.

From this perspective CEOSS' FID greatly emphasizes the concept of human development through several programs and activities, including:



1. The Capacity-Building Program for Middle Leaders, which aims at preparing young leaders in dialogue, including religious leaders, academia, media professionals, and representatives of civil society organizations.
2. Community Initiatives, which represent practical applications on the ground that enhance values of social

cohesion, citizenship, and democracy through active community participation.

3. Advocacy and Awareness Program, which focuses on countering hate speech within socialization institutions and works to make this issue a priority for public opinion and media.
4. The Integrated Development Model Program, which seeks to implement comprehensive development models in partnership with civil society organizations through initiatives that integrate cultural and social dimensions into awareness-raising, capacity-building, and empowerment of target groups.
5. The International Dialogue Program, which contributes to building trust and strengthening intercultural understanding by organizing Arab-Arab, Arab-European, and Egyptian-German dialogues.
6. Conferences and Dialogue Forums, aimed at strengthening human values and encouraging dialogue among different segments of society. One of the



most prominent was the conference *“The Human Being in the Modern Civil State,”* which addressed the role of educational and religious institutions in human development, with the participation of religious leaders, intellectuals, media figures, and parliamentarians.

Key Highlights

- FID continued to organize **cultural forums and dialogue sessions** that contribute to human development and promote values of diversity and coexistence. A prominent example was a session entitled “*A Cultural Vision for Human Development*” with the participation of intellectuals and opinion leaders to discuss current challenges and proposed mechanisms for advancing the Egyptian individual.

- FID concentrated its efforts on **investing in human capital** as the corner-



stone of any developmental process. This includes preparing individuals culturally, socially, and health-wise to become active and creative in their communities.

- FID believes in the role of moderate religious discourse as a pivotal tool in shaping human character and reinforcing values such as justice, compassion, and tolerance. It stresses the importance of distinguishing between religious belief and religious discourse, and of linking texts to their historical contexts to deepen understanding and enhance dialogue.

- Various **community initiatives** were implemented to:

- Invest in the Egyptian individual,
- Consolidate national identity,



- Build awareness and belonging,
- Expand areas of cooperation with state and civil society institutions.
- FID strengthened cooperation among religious, civil, media, and academic institutions, thereby consolidating institutional integration in building a citizen aware of values of citizenship and pluralism, and capable of addressing the intellectual and social challenges of the modern era.

For more information, kindly refer to:

<https://ceoss-eg.org/annual-report/>

<https://ceoss-eg.org/annual-report/?lang=en>

- [El-Watan Newspaper: The Evangelical Church holds a consultative session on human development as part of the presidential “Bedaya” initiative](https://www.elwatannews.com/news/details/7634442)

<https://www.elwatannews.com/news/details/7634442>

- [Al-Ahram Newspaper: The CEOSS’s Forum for Intercultural Dialogue holds a consultative session entitled “A Cultural Vision for Human Development” | Photos](https://gate.ahram.org.eg/News/5015338.aspx)

<https://gate.ahram.org.eg/News/5015338.aspx>

- [Final statement and recommendations of the conference: “Humans in the Modern Civil State”](https://www.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=962473839249346&id=100064602165324&_rdr)

https://www.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=962473839249346&id=100064602165324&_rdr

- [Youm7: The CEOSS organizes the “Students Without Discrimination” initiative at Aswan University](https://is.gd/dGTsrF)

<https://is.gd/dGTsrF>

- [El-Watan Newspaper: “Once Upon a Time, a Saidi”... a youth initiative to combat bullying against Upper Egyptians](https://www.elwatannews.com/news/details/6698019)

<https://www.elwatannews.com/news/details/6698019>

- [The President of Aswan University participated in the activities of the workshop held as part of the Young Academics Program at the Forum of Intercultural Dialogue](https://is.gd/Y9rj89)

<https://is.gd/Y9rj89>

Partners

Governmental Institutions

- Ministry of Social Solidarity (MoSS)
- Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation (MALR)
- Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation (MAWRI)
- Ministry of Health
- Ministry of Education
- Ministry of Environment
- Ministry of Manpower
- Ministry of Local Development
- Ministry of Culture
- Ministry of Youth and Sports
(Youth Centers – General Federation of Scouts and Guides)
- Ministry of Local Development

Local Councils

- The Holding Company for Water and Wastewater
- Ministry of Awqaf (Religious Endowments)
- General Diwan of the Governorates
- Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise Development Agency MSMEDA, affiliated with the Ministry of Trade and Industry
- General Authority for Literacy and Adult Education
- Graduate Employment Authority
- Financial Regulatory Authority (FRA)
- The General Authority for Culture Palaces
- The Egyptian National Library and Archives
- Child Protection Committees

Specialized National Councils

- National Council for Women (NCW)
- National Council for Childhood and Motherhood (NCCM)
- National Council for the Affairs of Persons with Disabilities
- National Population Council
- National Council for Persons with Disabilities (NCPWD)
- National Council for Culture
- National Council for Human Rights

Civil Society Institutions

- Regional Union for NGOs
- National Alliance for Civil Development Work (NACDW)
- Institutions and NGOs
- Agricultural Cooperatives

Universities and Research Centers

- Aswan University
- Minya University
- Beni Suef University
- Ain Shams University
- Alexandria University
- Assiut University
- Luxor University
- New Valley University
- Research Centers
- National Institute of Nutrition (NIN)
- Agricultural Research Institutes

Private Sector

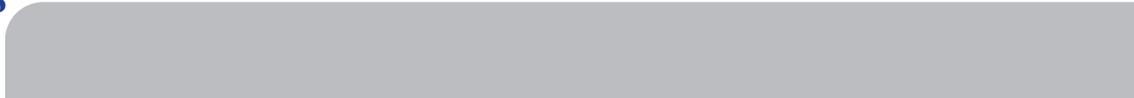
- Export companies and production input supply companies
- Specialized medical centers
- Electronic payment companies such as “Fawry,” “OPay,” and “Ahly Momken”
- Vodafone (for tablet SIM cards)
- Delta Insurance Company
- Mohandes Insurance Company
- Misr Insurance Company

Religious Institutions

- Al-Azhar Institution
- The three Egyptian Churches (Orthodox – Catholic – Evangelical)
- Islamic and Christian Religious Leaders
- The Egyptian Family House
- Dar Al-Ifta Al-Masriya (the Egyptian Fatwa Authority)
- Supreme Council for Islamic Research

Economic Institutions

- Egyptian Banks (National Bank of Egypt and Banque Misr)
- Central Bank of Egypt (I-SCORE Company)







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