Press Release

Sweden partners with UN Women and ILO to Promote Productive Employment and Decent Work for Women in Egypt, Jordan and Palestine

Date: 14 February 2019

The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), a long-standing partner of UN Women, announced a significant contribution of 70 million Swedish Krona (USD $7.64 million) to a regional programme on "Promoting Productive Employment and Decent Work for Women in Egypt, Jordan and Palestine". The programme seeks to support women to benefit from opportunities for better jobs, security at workplaces, equal access to professional development, social protection for families and better prospects for personal development and integration in society.

The joint four-year programme of UN Women and ILO adopts an integrated approach to addressing the structural causes of inequalities that women face in accessing decent work in the targeted countries. Together with national institutions, the programme will address discriminatory laws and foster gender-responsive policy environments. It will engage with private sector to promote equal and decent employment opportunities and will work closely with the civil society to challenge gender stereotypes at home and in the world of work.

The joint programme contributes to Sweden's new Strategy for development cooperation for global gender equality and women's and girls' rights 2018-2022; is fully aligned with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals 5 and 8 on gender equality and decent work and economic growth. It contributes to the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discriminations Against Women, international labour standards, as well as national development strategies and plans, including the Sustainable Development Strategy: Egypt Vision 2030, Jordan 2025 – A National Vision and Strategy as well as the Palestinian National Policy Agenda 2017-2022.

UN Women Regional Director for Arab States, Mr. Mohammad Naciri, stated: "Women contribute substantially to economic and social development but are discriminated against in the world of work. Promoting a culture of equality and shared responsibility between men and women in paid and unpaid care work is a priority globally and for the region. UN Women and its partners are committed to gender equality and women's economic empowerment because it is right and because it contributes to sustainable and equitable growth."

"Gender equality and women's empowerment are prerequisites for implementing the whole 2030 Agenda and fulfilling the Global Sustainable Goals. The Swedish development cooperation has a longstanding commitment to promoting gender equality globally and the full enjoyment of human rights by all women and girls. With the recent adoption of its Strategy for global gender equality and women's and girls' rights 2018-2022, this has been further manifested. We are confident the

investment in this programme will promote and adopt safe and decent working conditions for women, further contributing to the advancement of Women's Economic Empowerment in the Arab Region," said Ms Eva Gibson Smedberg, Head of the Middle East and North Africa Unit at Sida.

"This programme combines the strengths of both UN agencies in promoting gender equality. For the ILO, promoting gender equality in the world of work has been at the cornerstone of our work in the region. As we prepare to mark our Centenary next year and look toward to the future, we will continue to strive to effectively meet the needs of women, while benefiting employers, workers and the economy at large," said Ms Ruba Jaradat, ILO Regional Director for the Arab States.

About Sida:

Sida is a government agency working on behalf of the Swedish parliament and government, with the mission to reduce poverty in the world. Through our work and in cooperation with others, we contribute to implementing Sweden's Policy for Global Development (PGU).

About UN Women:

UN Women is the UN organization dedicated to gender equality and the empowerment of women. A global champion for women and girls, UN Women was established to accelerate progress on meeting their needs worldwide.

About ILO:

Since 1919, the ILO has been bringing together governments, employers and workers of 187 member States, to set labour standards, develop policies and devise programmes promoting decent work for all women and men. It is the only tripartite agency of the U.N.

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