

Egypt faces significant environmental challenges due to the widespread use of SUPBs, which contribute to pollution in waterways, marine environments, and landfills. The country's plastic bag consumption was approximately 14 billion in 2019, highlighting the urgent need for intervention. The plan draws on lessons from international experiences, particularly in Europe, to implement effective measures that support a circular economy and reduce reliance on SUPBs. Key areas of focus include raising awareness about the environmental hazards of plastic bags, promoting eco-friendly alternatives, and fostering behavioral change across various sectors.

The Center for Environment and Development for the Arab Region and Europe (CEDARE)

CEDARE is an international inter-governmental organization established in 1992. It aims to promote sustainable development by integrating environmental considerations into policies and practices across five priority areas: water resources management, land resources management, information technologies, sustainable growth, and environmental governance. CEDARE emphasizes public participation and strives to implement the Global Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development.



Funded by the European Union



The UNEP and CEDARE partnership under the EU-funded SwitchMed Programme engaged in the development of the **Single-Use Plastic Bags (SUPBs) Awareness Action Plan in Egypt** which emphasizes public awareness, regulatory enforcement, and stakeholder engagement to facilitate a shift towards sustainable alternatives and behaviors.

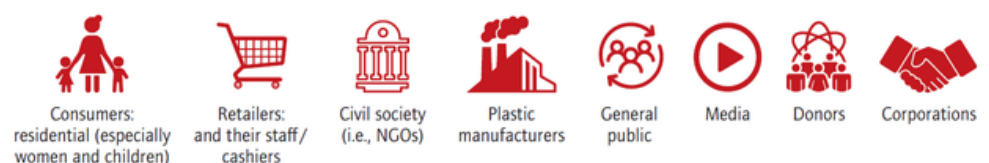
KEY CHALLENGES

- **Public Perception:** Many consumers view plastic bags as convenient and essential for daily use, making it difficult to shift towards alternatives.
- **Economic Factors:** The cost of biodegradable or reusable alternatives may be higher, posing challenges for widespread adoption, particularly in low-income communities.
- **Stakeholder Coordination:** Effective implementation requires the collaboration of numerous stakeholders, including government agencies, NGOs, retailers, and the public. Ensuring consistent communication and coordination among these groups is critical.
- **Enforcement:** Enforcing regulations, particularly in informal markets and rural areas, presents significant challenges.

OBJECTIVE

This plan aims at changing the culture of the consumers and achieving a behavioral shift through lobbying for reducing single-use nondegradable plastic bags consumption on both short and extended terms. At a later stage promoting the need of a levy to be enforced on plastic bags and charged by retailers at the point of sale.

AUDIENCES



ACTION PLAN OVERVIEW

The action plan is structured into three main stages, each with specific objectives and activities:

Stage 1: Preparation and Readiness (2024–2026):

Objective:

- Build a foundation for successful implementation through public awareness campaigns and stakeholder engagement.

Activities:

- Develop and launch a comprehensive media campaign to educate the public about the environmental and health impacts of SUPBs. Engage influencers and use modern media channels like TikTok to reach a broad audience. Implement economic incentives to support the production and adoption of alternatives.

Stage 2: Consolidation and Sustainability (2026–2028):

Objective:

- Ensure the sustainability of the reduction measures and expand the campaign's reach to different regions and target groups.

Activities:

- Strengthen the capacity of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) involved in recycling and alternative production. Conduct targeted outreach to agricultural and maritime sectors, highlighting the specific impacts of plastic pollution on these industries.

Stage 3: Expanding Engagement (2028–2030):

Objective:

- Broaden the scope of the campaign to include key economic sectors such as agriculture and tourism.

Activities:

- Tailor messages to resonate with the interests of these sectors, emphasizing the economic and environmental benefits of reducing SUPB use. Collaborate with local NGOs and community leaders to ensure the campaign reaches all demographic groups.

CONCLUSION

The SUPBs Awareness Action Plan in Egypt is a critical step towards reducing plastic pollution and fostering a culture of sustainability. By addressing the challenges associated with SUPB use through targeted awareness campaigns, regulatory enforcement, and stakeholder collaboration, Egypt aims to significantly reduce its reliance on single-use plastics and move towards a more sustainable future. The plan's success will depend on continued commitment from all stakeholders, as well as the effective implementation of the outlined strategies and actions.

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United Nations Environment Programme

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) is the leading environmental authority in the United Nations system. UNEP uses its expertise to strengthen environmental standards and practices while helping implement environmental obligations at the country, regional and global levels. UNEP's mission is to provide leadership and encourage partnership in caring for the environment by inspiring, informing, and enabling nations and peoples to improve their quality of life without compromising that of future generations.



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The SwitchMed programme is funded by the European Union (EU) and implemented by UNEP. It aims at achieving a Circular Economy in the southern Mediterranean by changing the way goods and services are produced and consumed. To achieve this, the SwitchMed provides tools and services directly to the private sector, supports an enabling policy environment, and facilitates exchange of information among partners and key stakeholders. www.switchmed.eu