

PRESS RELEASE

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Danone Ecosystem’s ALBAN BALADNA project wins the 2022 GEEIS-SDG Award for its solutions addressing social challenges in Egypt

Today, Danone Ecosystem announced that their ALBAN BALADNA project has won the renowned 2022 GEEIS-SDG (Gender Equality Diversity and Internal Standard - Sustainable Development Goal Award). This international award organized by the Arborus Fund positions gender equality as the driving force behind the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

Danone Ecosystem catalyzes and develops projects that advance the public interest in ecosystems where Danone operates. Since 2009, we’ve **co-created +90 projects** having a positive impact on-the-ground to foster inclusive growth for vulnerable partners across the world, including: family farmers, street vendors, waste pickers and caregivers.

ALBAN BALADNA: About the winning Project



Figure 1-Maha Akram, Community Leader

The ALBAN BALADNA initiative was co-created with Danone Egypt and Care International with the support of Danone Ecosystem. Its ultimate goal is to strengthen dairy farming in Egypt while fostering rural development.

As of today, the project has set up and renovated **7 milk collection centers and 23 milk collection points** offering a various number of services to farmers: from logistical support and agricultural services to trainings to develop the technical know-how crucial to earning a sustainable income. Delivering numerous positive economic, environmental, and social impacts.

ALBAN BALADNA has been rewarded, as it is a **true believer of women’s empowerment**. The project recruits and trains women as community leaders to secure access to education and services. Community leaders are key in this project as they share knowledge with local communities and recruit new farmers to benefit from the project – and since the launch of the project **24 women** became community leaders. Thanks to them, farmers were trained to deploy best practices that increase milk yield and quality, generate increased revenue and limit their environmental impact.

The project allowed to create 190 jobs among which **36** of them are held by women, addressing the chronically high unemployment rate in rural Egypt and deploying a significant role for women. ALBAN BALADANA also allowed to empower 8,500 farmers through sustainable revenue streams, **95% of those people empowered being women**

involved in the milk reception and delivery. Finally, +27,000 family members benefited from an increased or secured revenues of the project's smallholder farmers.

The success story of Sabra, an ALBAN BALADNA's beneficiary:

Sabra, a wife and mother of 3 children took a bank loan to start her own animal farm: *"I could not take a loan if I did not know that I will have a fixed income to pay the installments for my farm loan."* Indeed, she couldn't have done it without the sustainable income channel provided by the project. She shares: *"Before I owned two cows, but the income of the milk was not enough to pay for daily expenses and my children education fees".* Now, with the loans Sabra started her micro-farm of livestock and increased her milk production in Halabya.

Danone Ecosystem: a perspective on women empowerment

For Danone Ecosystem, Women Empowerment has been a key priority since its inception. As women are at the very center of local communities, we believe that they play a strategic role in the deployment of sustainable solutions as empowered women generate a virtuous circle by empowering their families, communities, economies, and environment. So far, we have empowered across all our projects **46,700** women, and more than **3000+** jobs job created are held by women among our Danone Ecosystem's projects.

About us:

Danone Ecosystem was established in 2009, when the financial crisis hit the global economy and impacted unemployment rates worldwide. Since then, our mission is to catalyze and develop projects that advance the public interest in ecosystems where Danone operates. Since 2009, we have co-created +90 projects that strengthen inclusion and environmental sustainability, providing organizational know-how, technical expertise and financing support.

We develop projects responding to local challenges linked to sustainable sourcing and regenerative agriculture; micro-distribution; circular economy; and promotion of healthy drinking and eating habits at key stages of life: First 1000 days, school-aged children and aging well!

During the past 12 years, Danone Ecosystem has empowered over +74,000 professionals and impacted +5.5M indirect beneficiaries to date from all types of geographical and socio-economic backgrounds to try and build a more sustainable and inclusive economy, from the ground up. We believe it is a testament to the power of co-creation, and an example of how companies, non-profits and civil society can work together for good.

