

## **EGP 47 billion allocated to Upper Egypt development in 2020/21: Planning Minister**

Egypt's Minister of Planning and Economic Development, Dr. Hala El Said asserted that the government prioritizes the localization of the sustainable development goals in the Egyptian governorates with the aim of achieving the concept of inclusive growth and balanced regional development, as one of the main pillars of Egypt's Vision 2030.

This came during a meeting between H.E. Dr. Hala El Said, minister of planning and Dr. Heba Handousa, economic expert and executive director of the Egypt Network for Integrated Development (ENID/El Nidaa).

The meeting took place recently at the headquarters of the Ministry's general.

In this regard, El Said indicated that the governorates of Upper Egypt enjoy government investments amounting to EGP 47 billion in the 20-2021 year plan, which constitutes 25% of the total distributed government investments, with a 50% increase over the 19-2020 plan.

On the local development program in Upper Egypt, El Said stressed that within the framework of the efforts exerted to accelerate the implementation rates in the local development program in Upper Egypt; the sustainable development plan 20-2021 includes government investments of about EGP 2.9 billion directed to development programs in the governorates of Qena and Sohag.

The total budget directed from the state's plan for this program reached about EGP 7.9 billion in 4 years starting from 17-2018, in addition to directing EGP 19.2 billion to the border governorates (North and South Sinai, Matrouh, and New Valley) with a growth rate that exceeded 60%.

During the meeting, Dr. Heba Handousa, the economic expert and director of the Egypt Network for Integrated Development (ENID/El Nidaa) gave a presentation on the development of economic blocs in Upper Egypt, explaining that there are 145 natural blocs in Egypt that include 77,654 establishments, about 79% of which are small and medium enterprises.

She further noted that these blocs are the ones that were created without any government intervention or planning, and employ approximately 580,000 workers, a third of them women, according to the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency (MSMEDA).

Rami Galal, the Ministry's official spokesperson, said that the meeting had touched on the executive position of the local development program in Upper Egypt.

He added that some countries' experiences in the field of economic blocs were presented, such as the Moroccan experience, the Marrakech project for cultural activities, the India experience, the China experience, and the measures taken to develop the Kashmir bloc.