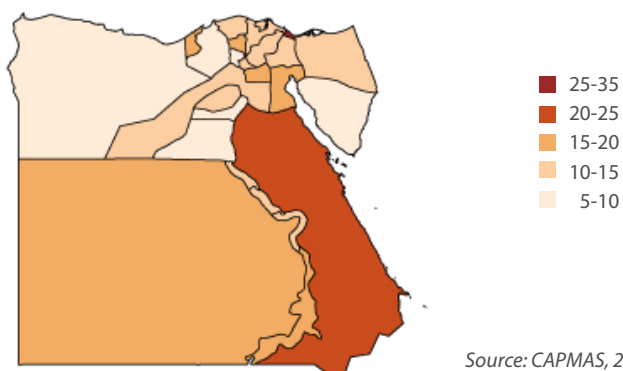


THE RIGHT TO WORK

In its last Universal Periodic Review in 2010, Egypt accepted one recommendation on addressing unemployment, and three related to the right to work for youth, women and people with disabilities respectively. Nevertheless, soaring levels of unemployment and underemployment, especially among young people, continues to be a driver of social unrest and Egypt has so far failed to effectively implement a national plan to promote job creation.

SOARING UNEMPLOYMENT DEPRIVES MILLIONS OF EGYPTIANS OF THE RIGHT TO WORK. The unemployment rate climbed to 13.3% in the second quarter of 2014 (CAPMAS, 2014a). By comparison, it averaged 9.1% between 2006 and 2010 (CAPMAS, 2012). There are also stark regional disparities, as shown in the map below. Unemployment is higher in urban areas, reaching 17% in 2012, compared to just under 10% in rural areas (CAPMAS, 2014c).

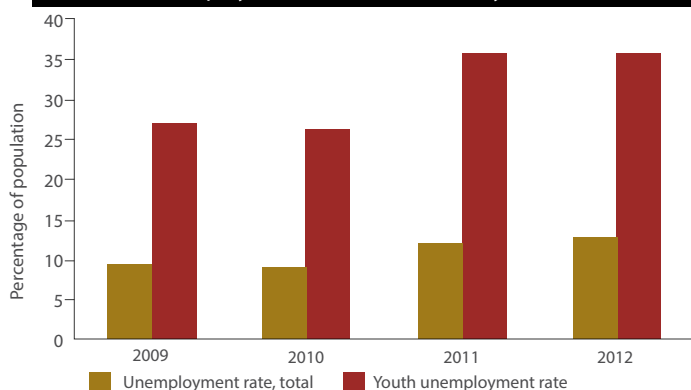
Unemployment rates in 2012 (% of population above 15)



Source: CAPMAS, 2014c

EGYPT'S INTERGENERATIONAL INEQUALITIES IN RELATION TO UNEMPLOYMENT ARE AMONG THE STARKEST IN THE REGION. One in three young people are unemployed, almost three times the national unemployment rate. There is a notable youth bulge in Egypt—young people between the ages of

Official unemployment rates, total and for youth 2009-2012



Source: CAPMAS, 2014c

20-29 make up a fifth of the population according to estimates as at January 2014 (CAPMAS, 2014c). The economic costs of this situation are enormous, a fact played a major role in the Revolution.

Unemployment figures, although high, do not really capture the full problem of joblessness in Egypt. International definitions consider the unemployed to be those who are not working for at least one hour a week and actively searching for a job. Statistics on joblessness include people who have given up searching. The 2009 Survey of Young People estimated that the joblessness rate among Egyptians aged 15-19 was 60% (Population Council, 2009).

Suggested Question: Please provide up-to-date, disaggregated statistics that illustrate the full picture of joblessness in Egypt.

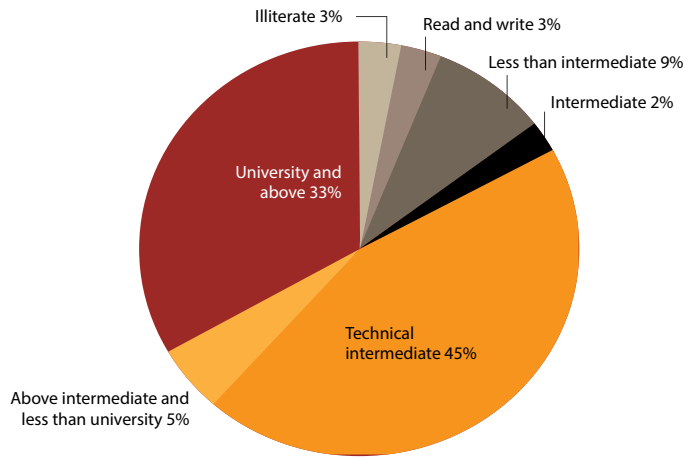
DISCRIMINATION IN EMPLOYMENT PREVENTS MANY WOMEN FROM ENJOYING THEIR ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL RIGHTS. The ratio of women-to-men in the labor force remains skewed. The 2013-14 Global Competitiveness Report ranked Egypt 143 (out of 148) on “women in labor force, ratio to men” (World Economic Forum, 2013). In the second quarter of 2014, women constituted 23% of Egypt’s labor force (CAPMAS, 2014a). Women also make up a large percentage of Egypt’s unemployed; 25.1% of women were unemployed in 2013, compared to 10% of men (CAPMAS, 2013a). Again, the rate is much higher for young women; almost half (49.7%) are unemployed, compared to 21.3% of young men. In rural areas, 62.6% of women were involved in unpaid family work in 2012 (CAPMAS, 2013b).

THE CONTRACTION OF THE PUBLIC SECTOR HAS HAD A MAJOR IMPACT ON UNEMPLOYMENT. Egypt has historically had a large public workforce, with a significant proportion of jobs being created in this sector. According to one study, 68.1% of employment in Egypt is reported to be in the public sector and about 45% of all new formal jobs (about 260,000) created between 1998 and 2006 were in the public sector. As shown in the following graph, unemployment rates are strikingly high among secondary and university graduates, a sector of the workforce that would have traditionally gone into the public sector. The unemployment rate for university



(and higher education) graduates was 22% in 2013, compared to an average unemployment rate of 13.2% in the same year (CAPMAS, 2014c).

Distribution of unemployed persons by education status, 2012



Source: CAPMAS, 2014c

Suggested Question: How has the contraction of the public sector affected the level and quality of employment in the country?

EFFECTIVE POLICIES TO GENERATE JOB GROWTH ARE LACKING. Jobs in both the public and private sectors have been threatened with many factories and companies closing; 4600 public and private factories have closed in the past 3 years, resulting in the lay-off of thousands (Sahoo, 2013). The state’s failure to implement effective employment programs and policies for job-generation, as recommended during its 2010 review, combined with a worsening economic crisis, has resulted in a significant decrease in job creation. Job vacancies, as advertised in newspapers, decreased by 61.4% between December 2012 and December 2013 (CAPMAS, 2014b).

In this regard, it is noteworthy that the job opportunities made available by the Fund for Local Development, which supports small and medium enterprises, as well as providing production-oriented jobs to the unemployed in order to increase the standard of living in rural areas, decreased by almost a third (28.5%) from March 2012 to March 2013.

Suggested Question: Please provide updated information on measures taken to promote job creation, and their impact.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Combat unemployment, particularly among women, young people and in rural areas as a matter of priority, by taking steps to facilitate equal access to the labor market and implementing a national plan and associated policies for the generation of decent work.

Adopt temporary special measures aimed at reducing women’s low representation in the workforce, their high prevalence in the informal sector, and the wage gap between men and women. Introduce penalties for gender discrimination in the workplace.

ABOUT THIS FACTSHEET SERIES

This Factsheet was prepared by the Egyptian Center for Economic and Social Rights (ECESR) and the Center for Economic and Social Rights (CESR) in light of Egypt’s appearance before the Human Rights Council’s Universal Periodic Review in 2014. The 11 factsheets in this series accompany the joint submission on economic, social, and cultural rights in Egypt endorsed by 130 non-governmental organizations and labor unions.

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