



## Why measure education for social progress?

Education is a human right and a fundamental dimension of social progress. It plays a key role in reducing inequalities by increasing opportunities for improved livelihoods. Investing in an inclusive educational policy is therefore crucial to realizing human rights and meeting Egypt's commitments under the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Article 19 of the Egyptian Constitution enshrines the right to primary, preparatory and secondary education, and

Egypt's sustainable development strategy, Vision 2030, sets high standards to raise the quality of education for all. However, low public investment in educational infrastructure, materials, and human resources has led to high classroom density, lack of qualified teachers, and high dropout rates, negatively impacting access to quality education in Egypt. Drawing on diverse datasets and targets, ESPI's indicators measure multiple dimensions of Egypt's progress on education.

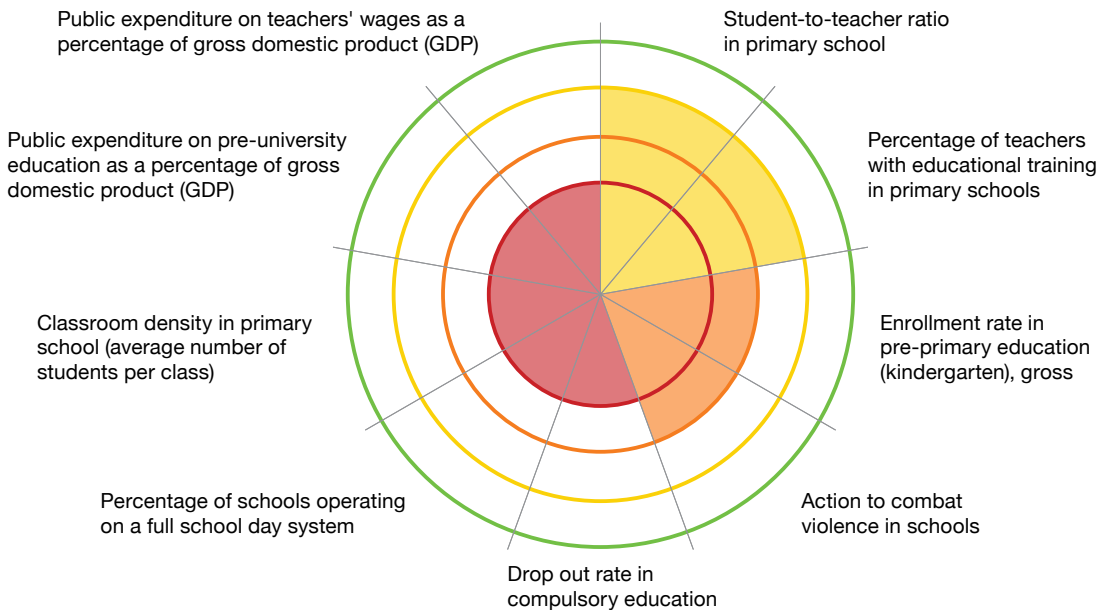
## What are the main findings of ESPI on EDUCATION?

ESPI's education indicators show that although Egypt's performance in some areas is relatively high compared to other lower middle-income countries (LMICs), in other areas it is very low. **Egypt's public expenditure on pre-university education** stood at only 1.4% of GNP in fiscal year 2018/2019, which is well below the constitutional obligation to allocate at least 4% of GNP annually, and from Egypt's Vision 2030 target of 5% of GDP by 2020. This figure demonstrates a worrying trend of declining public spending, given that spending amounted to 1.7% of GNP in FY 2017/2018. Low public resource allocation for education also affects the **percentage of public expenditure**

**allocated to teachers' salaries**, which comprised just over half of the 1.3% of GDP allocated to education salaries in 2017/2018. This is far below the 3% of GDP recommended by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

While the percentage of teachers with educational training in primary schools in Egypt is relatively high at 84.6%, other more holistic indicators on quality of education rate Egypt's performance less favorably. The student-to-teacher ratio in primary schools was 26:1 in 2017/2018; however, since the official number of teachers includes non-practicing teachers, this ratio is skewed to seem lower than it is. The number

FIG 1. Overall Progress of Education Indicators





of students per class reached approximately 47.5 in 2017/2018, much higher than rates prescribed by national urban planning authorities.

The drop-out rate in compulsory education was 7.3% according to the 2017 education census, far from Egypt's target of reaching 2% by 2020. The gross enrollment rate in pre-primary education was 26% in 2017/2018, representing a 31% decrease compared to the previous school year, and low in comparison to other LMICs. The percentage of schools operating on a full school day schedule is less than 40% of all schools in Egypt. Although there are some public efforts to combat peer-to-peer bullying at schools, sufficient action to combat violence in schools, including sexual violence, is lacking.

To improve performance on education, and the status of the right to education in Egypt, major shifts in public policy will be needed, including increased public investment in education infrastructure and teachers' salaries, strengthened legal and administrative measures to combat violence in schools, and efforts taken to prevent dropping out. It is also recommended that Egypt allocate at least 4% of GNP for pre-university education, and progressively increase allocations to education in order to meet international benchmarks.

"Good Progress" indicates Egypt's fulfilment of commitments made in the Egyptian Constitution and Egypt's Vision 2030, as well as its positive ranking in comparison to other Lower Middle Income Countries. Currently, there are no 'Good Progress' indicators in Education.

## Featured Indicators









A more in-depth look at several of the indicators is included below. For more information on all of the indicators, including the scales and how they were constructed, please see the website at [progressegypt.org](http://progressegypt.org).

### **Public expenditure on pre-university education as a percentage of gross domestic product (GDP) – No progress**

This indicator measures expenditure on pre-university education as a percentage of GDP. The Egyptian Constitution enshrines the right to education and obliges the government to allocate a minimum of 4% of GNP for pre-university education. Egypt's Vision 2030 also sets the goal to raise public expenditure on pre-university education to 5% of GDP by 2020, and 8% by 2030.

The scale is designed to measure progress and compares Egypt's

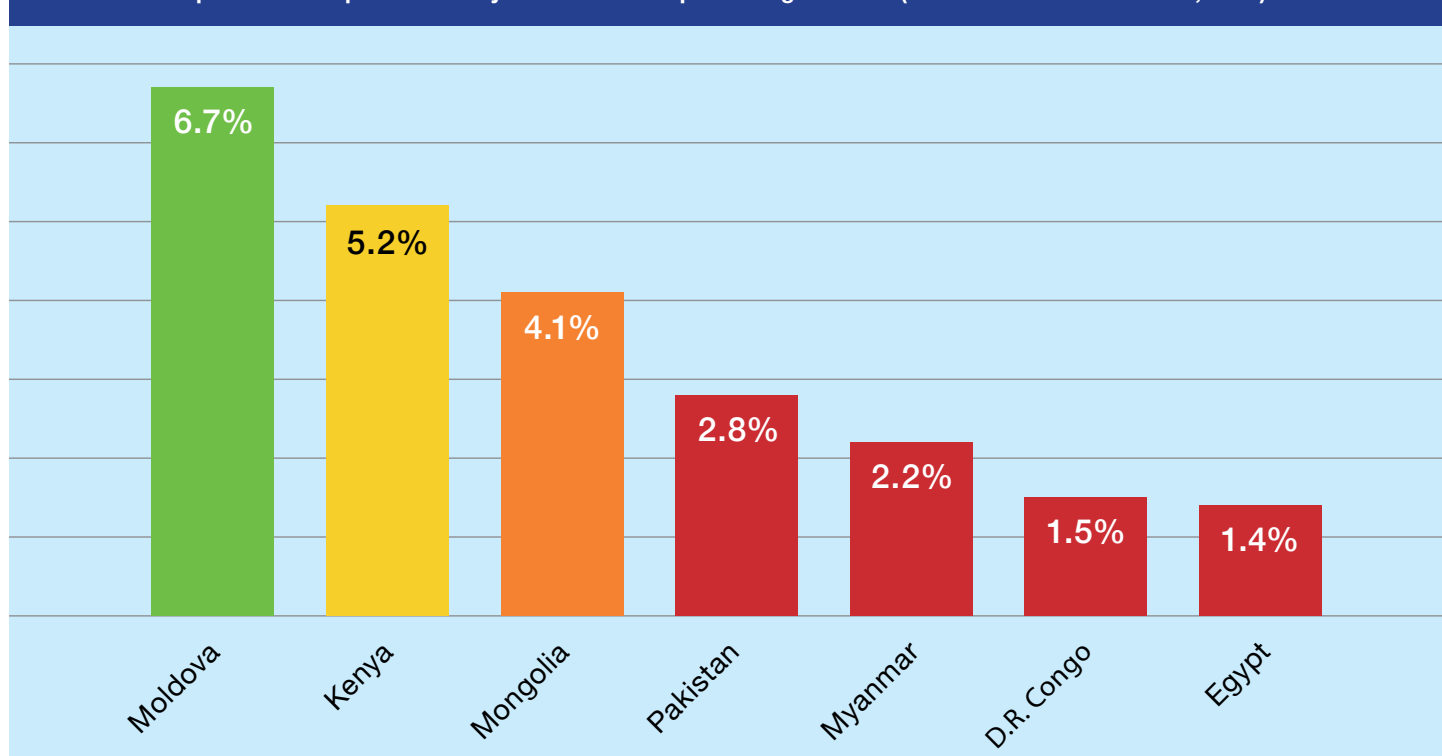
## Full List of Indicators

-  **Student-to-teacher ratio in primary school**
-  **Percentage of teachers with educational training in primary schools**
-  **Enrollment rate in pre-primary education (kindergarten), gross**
-  **Action to combat violence in schools**
-  **Drop out rate in compulsory education**
-  **Percentage of schools operating on a full school day system**
-  **Classroom density in primary school (average number of students per class)**
-  **Public expenditure on pre-university education as a percentage of gross domestic product (GDP)**
-  **Public expenditure on teachers' wages as a percentage of gross domestic product (GDP)**

performance to peer lower middle-income countries (LMICs) and against self-identified national commitments in the Egyptian Constitution. "Good Progress" is set at 6% of GDP, in line with the best performing LMICs. "No Progress" is set at less than 4% of GDP, inspired by Egypt's constitutional obligation.

In 2018/2019, Egypt's allocation to pre-university education amounted to about 1.4% of GNP, and 1.42% of GDP, according to Ministry of Finance and World Bank data, which is significantly less than the constitutionally required 4% of GNP. In 2017/2018, Egypt allocated 1.7% of GNP, meaning that public expenditure is regressing. Low expenditure particularly affects quality of education for poorer households that depend on government financing for public education, and that cannot afford private schools.<sup>1</sup>

**FIG 2. Public expenditure on pre-university education as a percentage of GDP (latest available data: 2017, 2018)**



Source: UNESCO (2017); World Bank (2017); Egyptian Ministry of Finance (2018)

### Dropout rate in compulsory education – No progress – No progress

This indicator measures the student dropout rate in pre-university compulsory education. The right to a quality education through secondary school or its equivalent is guaranteed in the Egyptian Constitution, and the government has affirmed that dropout rates are a pervasive challenge to this right and has committed to reducing them. Egypt's Vision 2030 has set the goals of reducing the dropout rate to 2% by 2020, and 1% by 2030.

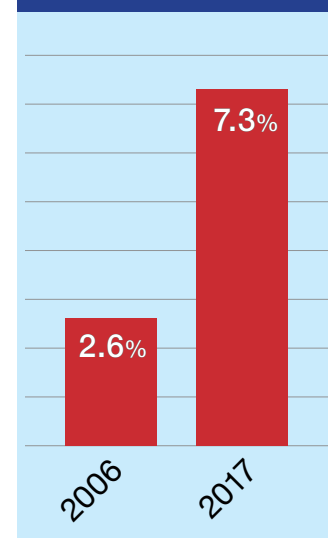
The scale for this indicator is based on Egypt's Vision 2030 targets, for which "Good Progress" represents a dropout rate of 2% or less, and "No Progress" a dropout rate more than 6% – the rate in 2016 when Egypt's Vision 2030 was developed. According to the results of the 2017 census, the dropout rate in pre-university compulsory education was 7.3%.

Dropping out occurs primarily among economically and socially disadvantaged Egyptians. Among the main causes for dropping out are poverty; child labor; lack of access due to insufficient infrastructure or transportation; unwillingness of the family or the children to be educated; repeated failure; disability; and early marriage, according to Egypt's Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS). While the number of males and females dropping out are close for some causes, they differ significantly for others, suggesting that dropping out can in some cases be attributed to traditional gender roles and dynamics. For example, due to the lack of desire on the part of the family, 50,134 male students dropped out compared to 161,808 female students; due to marriage, 6,000 male students dropped out

compared to 71,077 female students; and due to the need to work, 24,129 male students dropped out compared to 1,953 female students.

The government put in place some procedures to address the causes of dropping out, but these are limited in scope and coverage. It is recommended that the government prioritize allocation of public land to build schools and classrooms; ensure safe and affordable transportation is available; expand financial support to families unable to send their children to schools; better implement laws to combat child labor and prevent early marriage; and construct an education system that does not leave children with disabilities behind.

**FIG 3. Drop out rate for pre-university education (2006, 2016, 2017)**

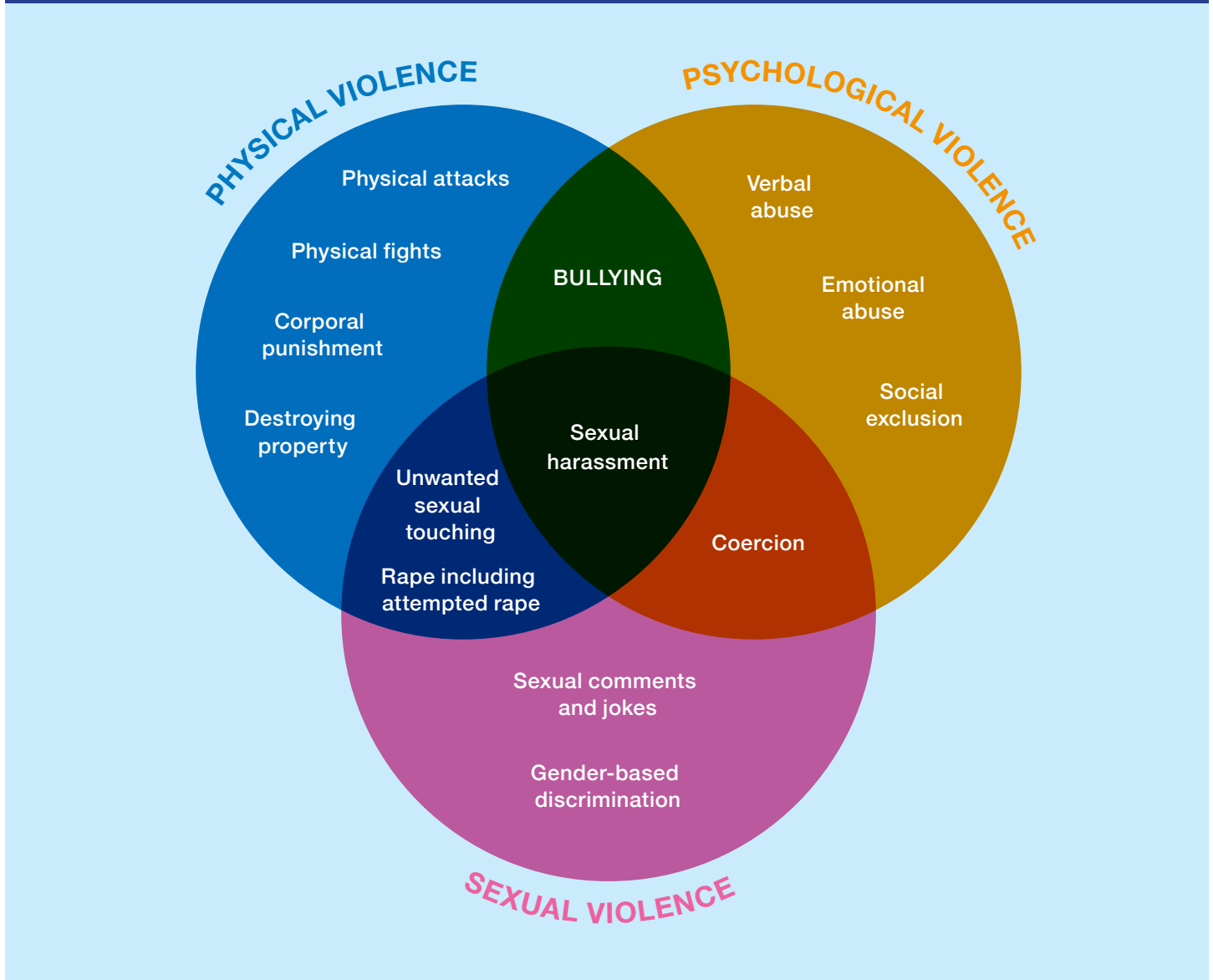


Source: CAPMAS (2006, 2017); Egypt's Vision 2030 (2016)

### References

1. The Social Justice Platform (2018), "Schools and Class Disparity: Who Spends on Education in Egypt?" (Arabic Only). At: <https://sjplatform.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Education-In-Egypt.pdf>

FIG 4. Conceptual framework of school violence and bullying



Source: UNESCO. *Behind the numbers: Ending school violence and bullying* (2019)

## Action to combat violence in schools – Weak progress

This indicator measures government efforts to combat violence in schools. According to the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC), there are three types of school violence: physical, psychological, and sexual. UNESCO has also identified bullying, including cyberbullying, as one of the most important forms of violence to be confronted.

The scale for this indicator is designed to assess whether legislation and implementing mechanisms are in place to combat violence in schools across these three dimensions. "Good Progress" means legislation and implementing mechanisms are in place that address all dimensions of school violence; "Partial" and "Weak Progress" signify different degrees of compliance though legislation and protection mechanisms; and "No Progress" signifies non-compliance.

The Egyptian Constitution and some legislation include articles and clauses to protect students from all types of violence, while several ministerial decrees prohibit violence and disciplinary abuse in schools. However, none explicitly protect against cyberbullying. In spite of these protections, there is no government body dedicated to receiving and investigating complaints of violence in schools, and issuing necessary penalties or sanctions. While some complaint mechanisms exist in schools and online, these are not dedicated to school violence, and there are concerns regarding the neutrality of these mechanisms, particularly regarding violence directed by adults and school staff towards students. Additionally, there are no programs to rehabilitate student victims of school violence. While the Ministry of Education launched a campaign against bullying in schools, it focused only on peer-to-peer violence, and excluded teacher and staff violence, and sexual violence.



To effectively address violence in schools, it is recommended that all ministerial decrees be consolidated into binding law with legal repercussions for committing violence in schools, including cyberbullying; that school anti-violence campaigns be expanded to include all forms of violence and all types of perpetrators; that the government establish a neutral body dedicated to investigate complaints of school violence; and that relevant authorities regularly disseminate information on the prevalence of violence in schools.

## 🕒 Student-to-teacher ratio in primary school – Partial progress

This indicator measures the number of students per teacher in primary education, an international standard for measuring quality of education. A challenge in measuring this indicator in Egypt, however, comes from the fact that the national census defines teachers to include non-practicing teachers, resulting

in inflated official numbers and an inaccurate, low student-to-teacher ratio.

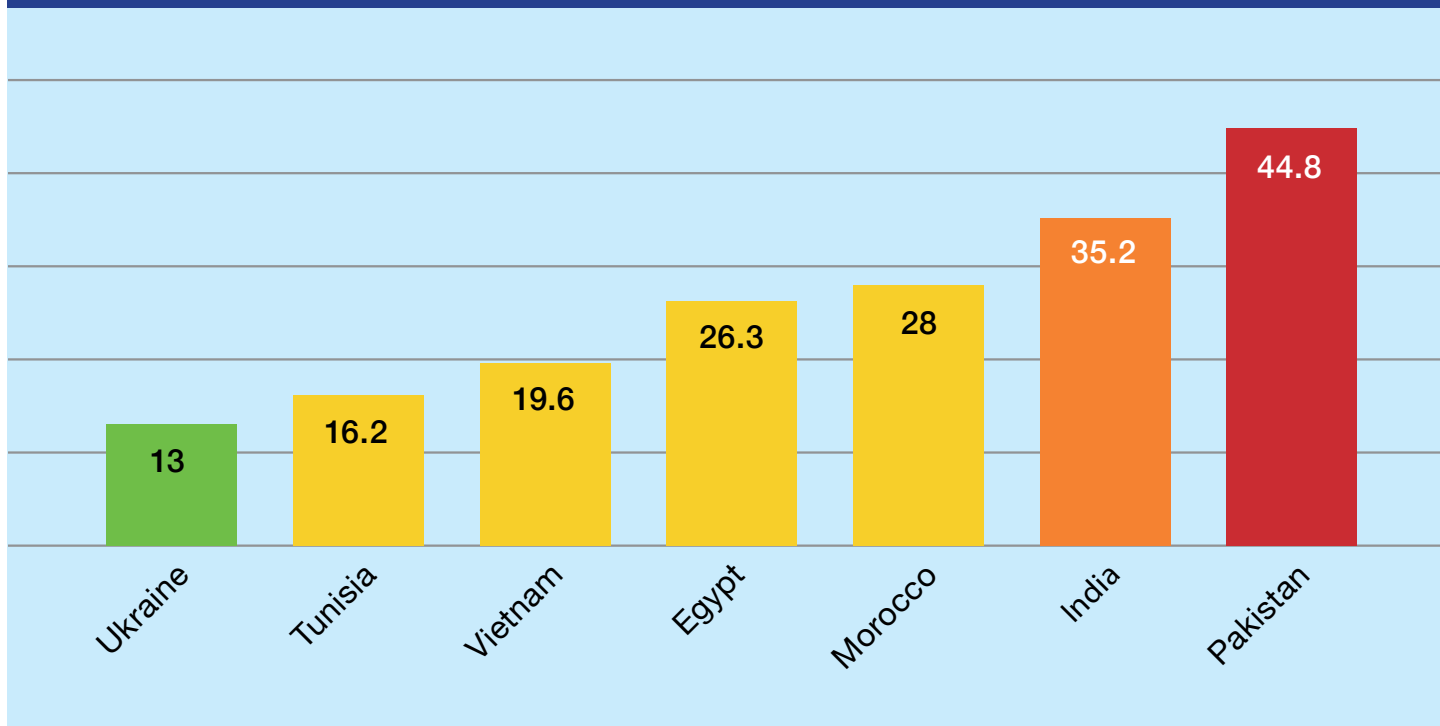
The scale for this indicator is based on a comparison of student-to-teacher ratios in LMICs. "Good Progress" reflects the average of the top five countries in this category with the lowest student-to-teacher ratios, while "No Progress" reflects the average of the bottom quarter of lowest-performing LMIC's, for which data is available.

According to Egypt's latest Statistical Yearbook 2017/2018, the ratio of students to teachers in primary education reached 26.3 to 1. However, according to the Ministry of Education, for every two practicing teachers in Egypt there is one non-practicing teacher, meaning that the actual student-to-teacher ratio is much higher. To achieve progress on this indicator, the government should collect and publish better disaggregated data on practicing and non-practicing teachers to realistically capture the challenges faced; hire more practicing teachers in the public school system; decentralize hiring authority to enable local administrators to meet the needs of different geographic regions; and better distribute teachers across governorates and education levels.



Photo: UNICEF/Egypt 2017/Ahmed Hayman

FIG 5. Ratio of students to teachers in primary school (latest available data: 2016-2018)



Source: Egypt Statistical Yearbook 2017/2018; World Bank (2016, 2017)



Photo: UNICEF Egypt/Giacomo Pirozzi/2017



## Percentage of schools operating on a full school day system – No progress

This indicator provides insight into the quality of the school system as a whole by measuring the percentage of schools that operate according to the full six-hour school day system. Schools that operate according to a reduced four-hour school day are known as *fatarat* or "shift" schools. Such schools include those with morning shifts only, and those with morning and afternoon shifts. The Egyptian government adopted the shift schooling system to address the problem of high classroom student densities. Four-hour school days are made possible through shortening the length of educational periods, reducing break times, and eliminating some educational, technical and sports activities.<sup>2</sup> All these changes diminish the quality of education students receive.

The scale for this indicator is based on the principle that all students should have the same quality of education. "Good Progress" means 100% of schools operate of a full school day system, and "No Progress" means less than 50% do.

The Ministry of Education reported that the percentage of schools operating according to the full school day system in 2017/2018 was 39.61% of all schools, meaning that more than

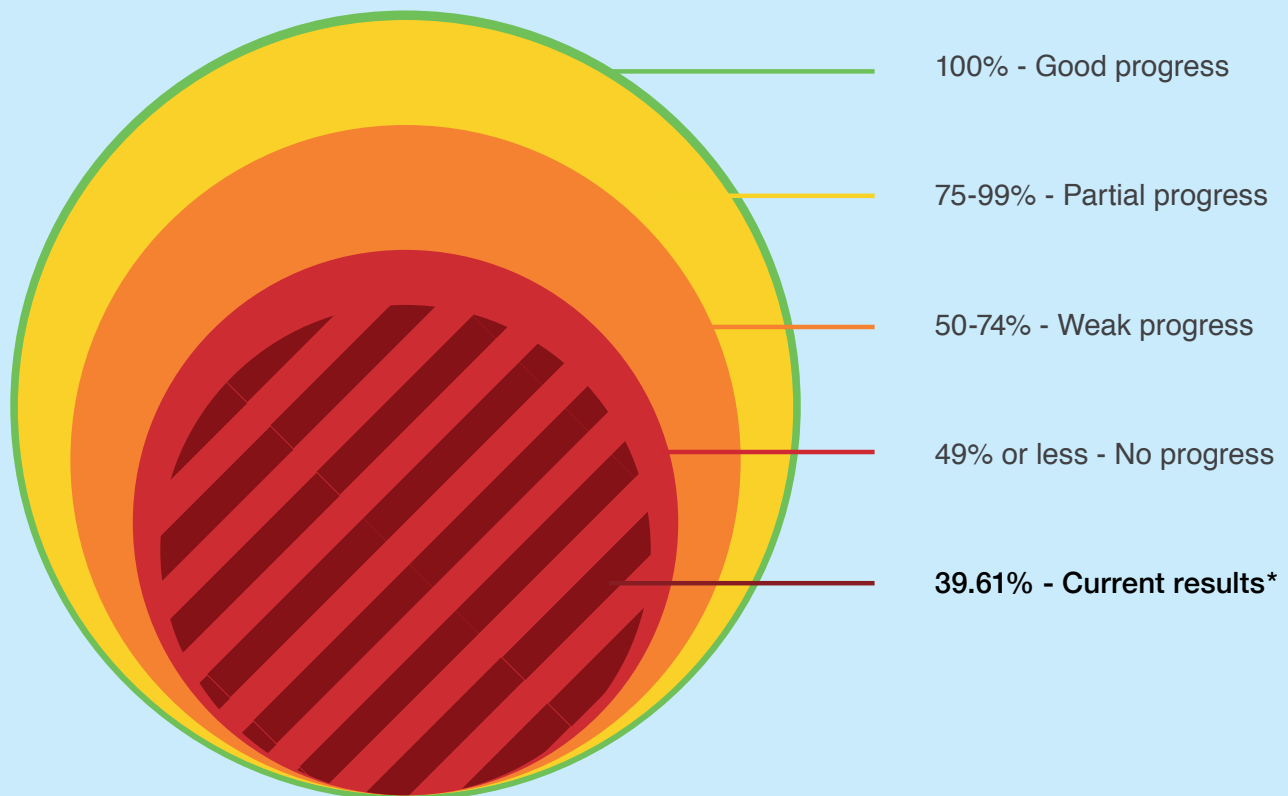
60% of schools did not provide a full school day. According to Egypt's Statistical Yearbook 2017/2018, this percentage remained relatively constant over the last three years. Ministry of Education data indicates that 30% of public schools operate on a full school day basis, as compared to 60% of private schools, suggesting an additional disparity in quality of education between public and private schools.

In order to offer improved and more equal education, the government must increase public spending on education, specifically to build more classrooms and hire the teachers needed to reduce shift-schooling. It is also recommended that the government collect disaggregated data to better understand disparities in quality of education; and as a medium-term solution, replace the extracurricular activities eliminated by shift schools, for example by ensuring access to sports in youth centers, public libraries, state theaters and other public recreational and educational spaces.

### References

2. Collected information based on ministry of education school schedules. and research in cooperation with the Independent Unions of Teachers.

FIG 6. Percentage of schools operating on a full school day system (2017/2018)



\* Source: Egyptian Ministry of Education (2018)

## What are the Egypt Social Progress Indicators?

ESPI is an innovative metric offering a unique set of multidimensional, action-oriented indicators. It uses a four-color scale to measure progress on socioeconomic wellbeing in Egypt across six topics:

- economic policy
- labor
- urbanization
- food, water, and agricultural land
- education
- health

incorporating a gender analysis across all topics. ESPI goes beyond traditional economic indicators used by international financial institutions and other economic actors to measure the health of the Egyptian economy, to provide a holistic assessment of the status of socioeconomic wellbeing for average Egyptians.

## How were the Egypt Social Progress Indicators Developed?

The idea for ESPI was born in 2015, when a number of academic researchers, independent field experts, and civil society groups started to explore the idea of creating a data-driven, interdisciplinary, and “homegrown” metric that translates recommendations from UN mechanisms into clear, measurable, and actionable indicators; tracks national implementation of SDG targets; and takes into account Egypt’s position as a Lower Middle Income Country.

ESPI was conceptualized and designed, through a multi-year collaborative process, by the Center for Economic and Social Rights, the Social Justice Platform, the Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights, the Egyptian Center for Economic and Social Rights, Aspiration Tech, and Backspace. Research and analysis for the indicators was conducted by numerous independent researchers and field experts.

## Methodology

Fundamental to the uniqueness of ESPI is its methodology, which was designed through a collective process, ensuring its relevance to the daily reality of everyday people.

## Indicator selection

ESPI aims to be action-oriented. For that reason, it measures both:

- **outcomes** of socioeconomic wellbeing; and
- the **drivers** of those outcomes, which include legal, policy, financial, human resource, and institutional inputs and outputs.

To achieve a balance in the indicators selected, ESPI is also guided by the OPERA framework developed by the Center for Economic and Social Rights, which centers on four levels of analysis: Outcomes, Policy Efforts, Resources, and Assessment. Within this framework, a mix of quantitative and qualitative, as well as fact-based and perception-based, indicators ensure that ESPI provides a holistic picture of social progress. Potential indicators were subjected to extensive internal review and external consultation with experts and stakeholders.

## Benchmarking and scaling

ESPI uses a four-color scale to measure Egypt’s progress on a specific indicator:



The methodology for constructing the scales varied, necessarily, between quantitative and qualitative indicators. Sources of benchmarks included Egypt’s own development targets, including those articulated in Vision 2030; international commitments, such as the SDGs; and recommendations and guidelines from international bodies. On the website, each indicator is accompanied by a detailed description of the scale and how it was developed.

Data was gathered largely from two sources: socioeconomic and administrative data produced by the Egyptian government and relevant international bodies for quantitative indicators, and objective, credible, and well-sourced expert analysis conducted by independent researchers for qualitative indicators. The combination of these sources ensures that ESPI is rigorous and reveals new insights about social progress.

All indicators – both quantitative and qualitative – are accompanied by comprehensive commentary that contextualizes and explains the data, making ESPI one of the most in-depth metrics of its kind.



# EGYPT SOCIAL PROGRESS INDICATORS

Measuring progress towards improving wellbeing in Egypt

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