



Egyptian Youth and State Institutions



Policy Paper

Edited By:

Abu Taleb Fattouh

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Summary

Egypt pays great attention to the youth; they are the nucleus of the state on which the framework of the new republic is built. The youth are the basis of a renaissance, young people participate in building the state, making decisions and supervising projects and implementing them. The greatest representation of youth is witnessed in the Egyptian parliament through huge efforts made by state institutions to support young people.

The study aims to identify the efforts of Egypt in supporting young people and the problems and challenges facing young people. The study used the descriptive-analytical approach.

Introduction

"Egypt lives with the power of its youth", a slogan launched by President al-Sisi. In January 2017, it turned from a mere fantasy in the past to a reality experienced by young people and seen by the enemy before the friend. Egypt has witnessed, in the past years, a great political, economic and social movement;

Egypt is a youthful country, and President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi realized that young people are the pillars of Egypt and its path towards advancement and progress. He is keen on supporting them in all possible ways. Egypt has implemented several projects under his reign supporting young people, such as the project giving 10 acres for every young Egyptian, easy loans for young people, micro-projects, and youth housing projects. State institutions have provided a lot to young people and opened the doors of the future. We have already started the first steps of the path of hope, but we still have a long way to go.

The Objectives of the Study

The study aims to find out the most prominent Egyptian efforts in supporting young people and seeks to reveal the challenges that await young people and Egypt alike in the next phase.

The Methodology

The study is based on a descriptive-analytical approach by describing the current situation of Egyptian youth and by analysing the role of the state in supporting young people.

Based on the above mentioned, the study tries to answer the following questions.

What are the most important efforts of Egypt in supporting young people?

What are the problems and challenges facing Egyptian youth at this stage?

Egypt's Efforts to Support and Empower Young People

Paying attention to the youth is a key pillar of the state's plan and strategy. Egypt's demographics are young. According to population estimates in 2020, the number of young people ^[1] is approximately 20.6 million, 21% of the total population (51.5% male, 48.5% female). Young people express a clear expression of the will for change in society, where the growth, progress and prosperity of societies depend on the youth as one of the most important, energetic and effective human resources for society. Egypt and its leadership realized the importance of the role of youth; thus, it launched an extensive dialogue with Egyptian youth to find out about their dreams and problems, and the dialogue continues. The government called to implement small and micro-projects, in addition to launching many initiatives, such as the initiative to support small and medium-sized enterprises. Egypt attaches great importance to young people for many considerations, the most important of which is the importance of the role of young people in building the future and promoting development, and that they are one of the competitive advantages of the Egyptian economy. ^[2]

Empowering young people has a comprehensive meaning that not only allows participation in national projects but also extends to a climate of creating opportunities for the future, opening the doors to transparent competition between young people. The state must prepare for this climate and promote equal opportunities and equality.

Statistics show that Egypt's population under the age of 40 exceeds two thirds in total, including about 30 million of them of working age, which demonstrates the importance of the role of young people in society and the need to participate in all areas of comprehensive development in Egypt.

The Egyptian government has provided many privileges to young people represented by many loans, grants and facilities. In 2016, the state announced the introduction of half a million acres, and every young Egyptian had the opportunity to get 10 acres in instalments at a reduced interest rate of 5% with short procedures and obtaining title deeds. Additionally, President al-Sisi announced in his speech in 2016 that Egyptian banks will provide soft loans to young people at an interest rate of 5% for young people in order to help them start projects small for them and encourage them on entrepreneurship, and to provide jobs for nearly 4 million young people.

The youth has never been the focus of concern as during the era of President al-Sisi. The Egyptian government decided in January 2018 to contribute to the construction of 4,000 small and micro-industrial factories within a year at most, to create more than 40,000 jobs for young people. ^[3] The youth housing project is one of the most important projects presented by the Egyptian government to young people as part of the construction and social housing plan for low-income people to eliminate the housing problem, which is the biggest problem facing many citizens, especially young people.

Residential apartments have become available to all. President al-Sisi has announced that "all those who will apply for apartments will receive one", as part of the project of 500 thousand housing units in new cities in all governorates of Egypt, which cost 2 billion pounds, for low-income people.

As part of the mechanisms for the training and empowerment of Egyptian youth, the state adopted the theory of training before empowerment. The process of qualifying young people began with the launch of the presidential program to qualify young people for leadership from (20 to 30) years. After the success of the experiment, work was done to expand the targeted age group and the Executive Presidential Leadership Program was announced providing the opportunity for young people in the age group from 30 to 45 years to enrol in the program.

The establishment of the National Academy for Youth Training was announced by presidential decision No. 434 in 2017.

Youth forums have also contributed to supporting the efforts of state institutions and promoting development and volunteering for one of the main aspects of sustainable development. The first youth conference was held in Sharm el-Sheikh in October 2016 with the participation of more than 3,000 young people from different governorates of the Republic in the presence of President al-Sisi and a number of ministers and officials. The most recent one was the third World Youth

Forum in Sharm el-Sheikh in December 2019 with the participation of President Sisi and more than 5,000 young people from around the world.

Youth Political Participation

Egyptian youth got a historic opportunity to form parties in parliament after their role was marginalized in the recent past. Egypt has given a real opportunity for 8 young members of the presidential program, while women received the highest representation in the position of the deputy governor, by 30%, and appointed 7 deputies to the new governors.

After June 30th, Egypt succeeded in bringing together the broad sector of pioneers and university youth and young graduates interested in the political issue.

Coordination of Parties Youth and Politicians, founded by a youth group in mid-June 2018, was not limited to being a youth entity only; rather, the role extended to being a focal point for a political movement between the Egyptian parties and university youth and graduates at home and abroad. The matter evolved to become the focus of the president's interest in empowering Egyptian youth with the National Academy for Training and the Presidential Leadership Program. ^[4]

The governors movement in 2019 included the largest effective representation of young people, comprising 39 new leaderships between a governor and a deputy governor, including 60% of young people, with 16 governors and 23 deputies, 25 of whom were young, including two governors, and 23 deputy governors, all young.

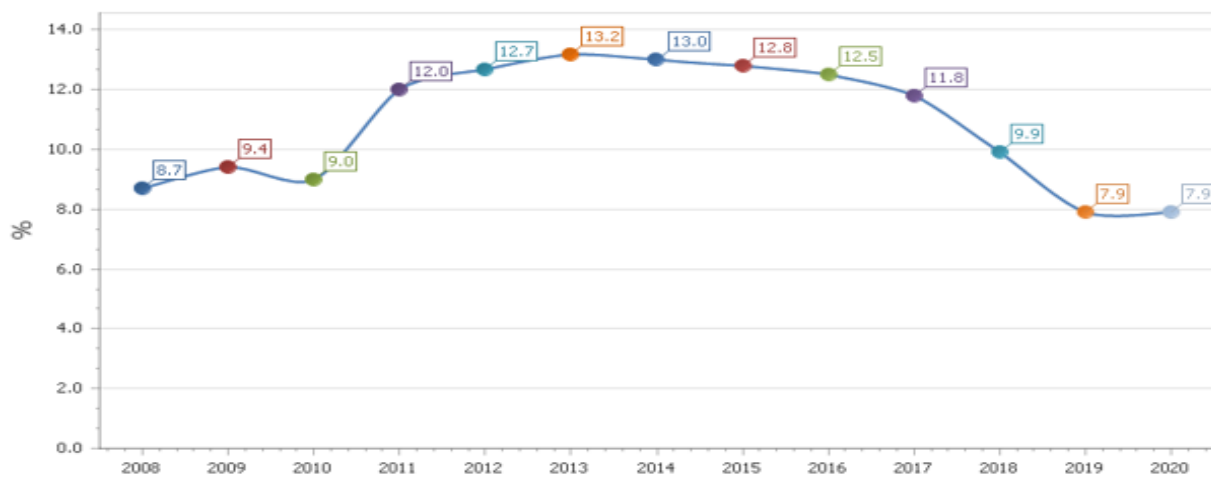
Youth entities were founded Under Egypt's 2030 vision, which works to support and empower Egyptian youth in all sectors and represent the political and social aspect and allow them to play the voluntary role in its new form to integrate with Egyptian parties in shaping Egyptian political affairs ^[6]. In 2021, the New Republic Youth Federation began to work on unifying all youth efforts at the level of the Republic under one umbrella to promote awareness of national and community work, prepare national youth cadres, refine community and political practical experiences, provide more opportunities for public work and promote a culture of volunteer work and active participation. The number of volunteers reached 21 thousand volunteers to bring change and development to community life.

Unemployment and Egyptian Youth

Life is not rosy, Egyptian youth are facing many problems and challenges, and despite all the

efforts made by state institutions, the crises facing young people remain many and varied, but the issue of unemployment remains the scariest. Eliminating unemployment and the employment of young people is the main concern of Egypt, and state institutions are doing their best to provide jobs by expanding the establishment of labour-intensive enterprises and factories as well as supporting small, medium and micro-enterprises.

Youth crises and complaints have been increasing recently, as a culture of dependence on the homeland, which spends, supports, employs and guarantees, has become far from possible in all economies of the world especially in the countries that spend more than they produce.



The unemployment rate in Egypt until 2020

According to 2020 Labor Force Survey data:

- The youth (18-29) contribution ratio to the labour force is 39.5%.
- The number of young people in permanent employment is 52.9%, compared to 21.0% working on a legal contract.
- The unemployment rate among young people with a university qualification is 36.1%, compared to 15.6% (for those with a technical intermediate qualification.)^[6]

We need more effort from young people and state institutions alike to meet all the challenges to hope for a better tomorrow.

Recommendations

- Managing youth and sports projects and programs scientifically and economically, and working to provide new innovative mechanisms that contribute to the good management of assets from youth and sports facilities, to increase the efficiency of the services they provide, and to provide new resources to finance the development of these facilities.
- Giving Egyptian youth new experiences, which will enable them in the future to contribute to productive economic employment in a way that deals with economic problems such as unemployment and low level of education and training.
- Launching an international initiative to train 10,000 young Egyptians and Africans as developers of games and electronic applications over the next three years, in addition to supporting the establishment of 100 companies specialized in these fields in Egypt and Africa.
- Discovering the youth cadres able to lead the future in all fields in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, the families and the media.
- Having a holistic vision to deal with young people, and a well-defined content of how to create a modern civil state recognized by the country's constitution in which young people enjoy equal opportunities regardless of their political, religious or intellectual affiliations.
- Increasing the number of modern sports facilities that provide the environment conducive to sports activities, and contributing to the discovery and refinement of the talents that Egypt has in various sports, which was evident during the Tokyo Olympic Games.

- Enable the country's youth to reach their full mental, physical and spiritual potential and through them enable Egypt to achieve its development vision.
- Planting positive values defined in the conscience of young people as well as belonging to the Egyptian homeland.
- Facilitating the participation of young people in voluntary civil work and non-governmental organisations at all levels of the country's administration.
- Supporting young people with disabilities or at risk of health risks, integrating them into society and making sure that they are not marginalized.
- Involving young people in politics and governance and respecting the principles of equal opportunities, based on competence, merit and positive work values.

[1] In general, the World Bank, the International Labor Organization and other international organizations define the "youth" age group as that age group between 15 and 24 years. Nevertheless, we define the age of youth as the age group between 15 and 29 years, to be able to define the complete transitional stage from youth to adulthood, including the transition from study to work and the transition from work to forming a family

[2] Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics, 2020.

[3] Cabinet Media Center October 2019

Egypt's unemployment rate reached its lowest level in 30 years, reaching 7.5% in 2019, compared with 9.9% in 2018, 8.8% in 1991 and 8% in 1990.

[4] Hala Fouda, Youth Preparation Strategy in Egypt, Nasser Higher Military Academy, 2018.

[5] General Information Authority, President al-Sisi's six-year efforts to empower young people, June 2020.

[6] Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics, 2020.