

The Forum for  
Development  
and Human  
Rights Dialogue



# COVID-19 and the Basic Rights in Egypt : Overcoming the Challenges

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# COVID-19 and the Basic Rights in Egypt

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## Overcoming the Challenges

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### **The Forum for Development and Human Rights Dialogue**

An Egyptian non-governmental organisation registered with No. 6337. The Forum for Development and Human Rights Dialogue (FDHRD) was founded in 2005 with the dedication to promote human rights, raise citizens' awareness of their rights and responsibilities and combat human trafficking and illegal immigration on a local and global level.

Our mission is to ensure that development is community-led and that it respects, protects and fulfils human rights. We do so by ensuring that communities and individuals have the information, power and resources to determine their development paths and priorities and to hold institutions, governments and other actors accountable for the actions. Thus, we aim to establish an open dialogue on development and human rights on a national and international level.

We believe that development and human rights go hand in hand; therefore, the Forum for Development and Human Rights Dialogue works to maintain peace, security and protect human rights on a national and international level.

Nationally, we strive to reach out to all forms of social and cultural backgrounds to educate and develop broader concepts of human rights, civil rights and social cohesion.

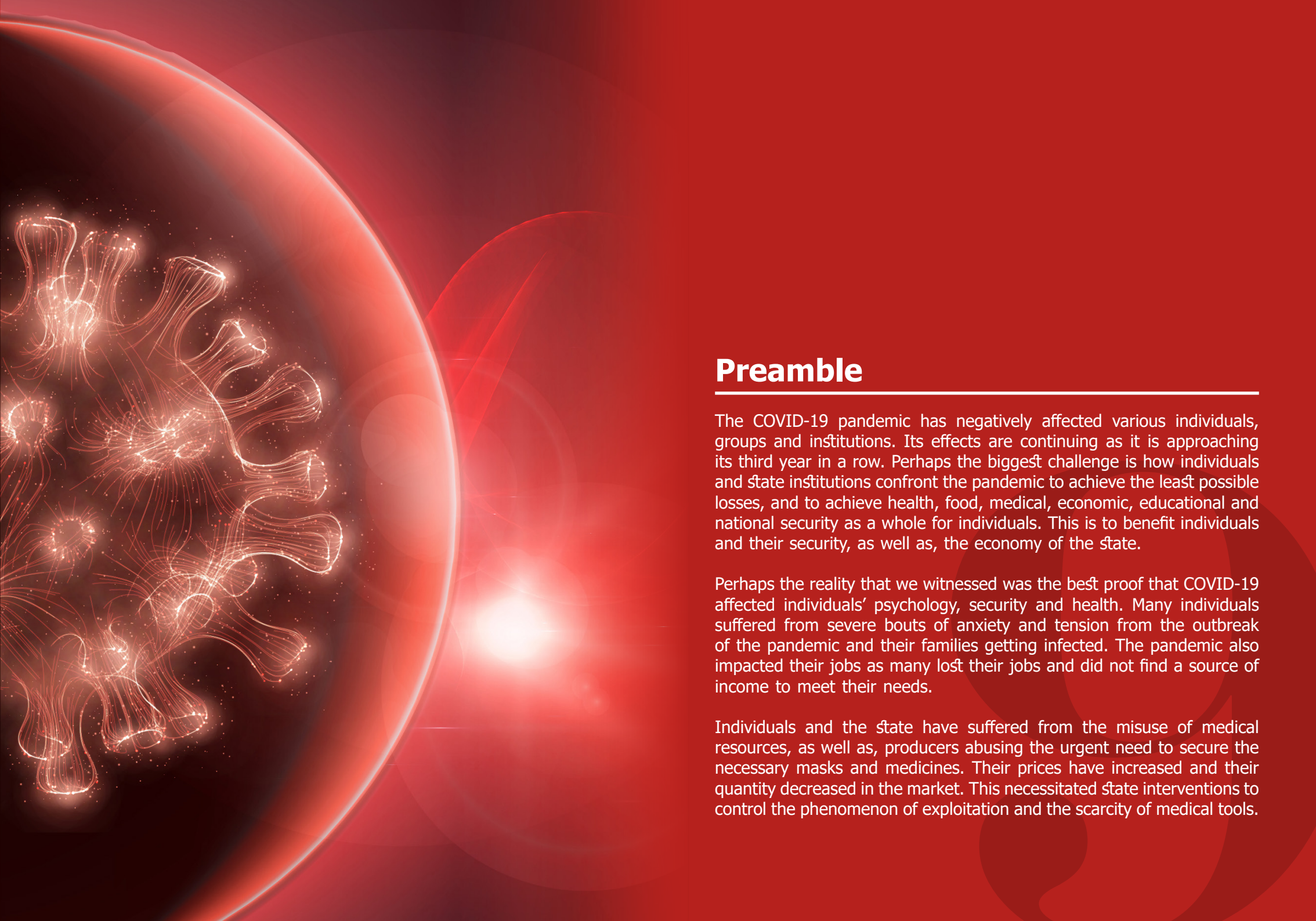
Internationally, we report on the massive violations of human rights that frequently occur during the interstate conflict and their implications for the development, safety and protection of local communities. We also seek to give a voice to Egyptians who have been subject to human rights violations.

Our organisation is built on integrity, transparency and the pursuit of freedom of expression across Egypt and around the world. Through this, we aim to monitor and report on incidents of corruption, human rights violations gross neglect of humanitarian needs and political conflict's impact on the development and safety of communities around the world.

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## Preamble

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The COVID-19 pandemic has negatively affected various individuals, groups and institutions. Its effects are continuing as it is approaching its third year in a row. Perhaps the biggest challenge is how individuals and state institutions confront the pandemic to achieve the least possible losses, and to achieve health, food, medical, economic, educational and national security as a whole for individuals. This is to benefit individuals and their security, as well as, the economy of the state.

Perhaps the reality that we witnessed was the best proof that COVID-19 affected individuals' psychology, security and health. Many individuals suffered from severe bouts of anxiety and tension from the outbreak of the pandemic and their families getting infected. The pandemic also impacted their jobs as many lost their jobs and did not find a source of income to meet their needs.

Individuals and the state have suffered from the misuse of medical resources, as well as, producers abusing the urgent need to secure the necessary masks and medicines. Their prices have increased and their quantity decreased in the market. This necessitated state interventions to control the phenomenon of exploitation and the scarcity of medical tools.

Perhaps the most severe negative impact, which had repercussions on the world as a whole, is the state of economic downturn. The closure of airspaces hindered the tourism sector, causing unprecedented losses leading to its collapse which resulted in the shrinkage of economic revenues. The losses of workers in the tourism sector were also evident. This prompted the state to search for solutions to contain the situation and overcome it.



In this regard, education has been affected by the repercussions of the pandemic due to the state of a quarantine imposed by the state to reduce the spread of the pandemic. This prompted the state to take some measures to guarantee the right to education for individuals even in light of the crisis. It also took precautionary measures to protect students at the same time.

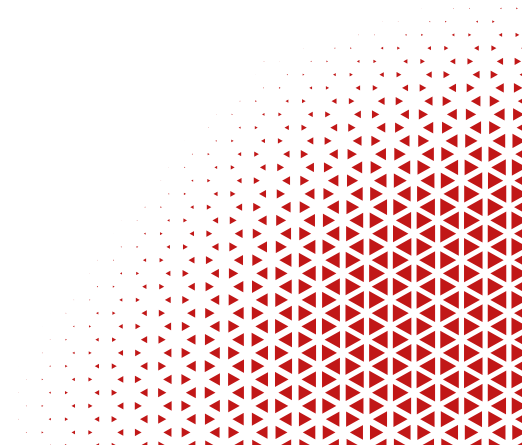
There is no room for doubt, that the medical and health sectors were the core and essence of the crisis not only in Egypt but the whole world. The medical sector was faced with pressure and confusion in regards

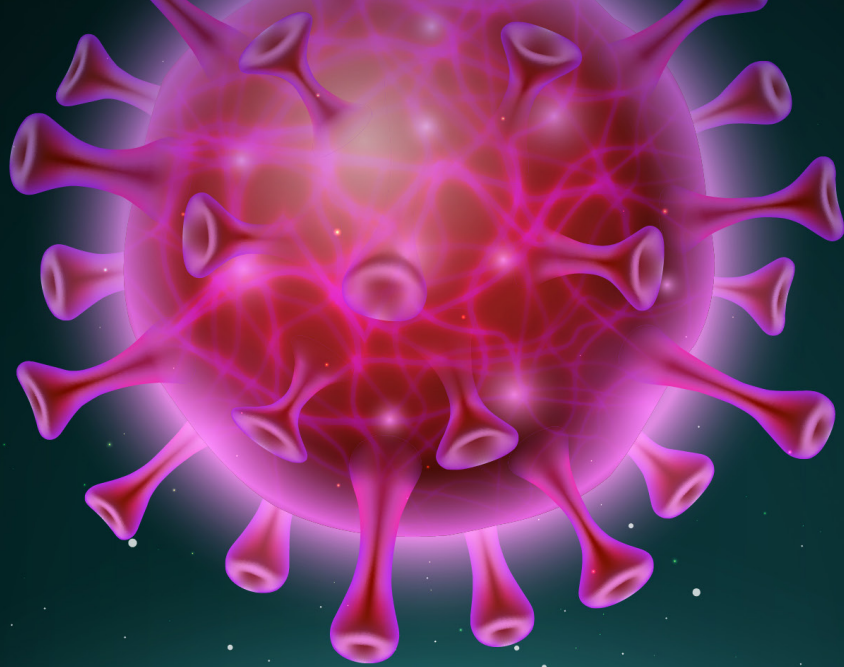
to receiving the huge numbers of infected people and providing them with beds and isolation rooms away from the rest of the patients. They also faced the challenge of determining the optimal treatment to reduce the risk ratios and raise the recovery rates for the infected. This has placed a burden on the state and the Ministry of Health to determine the optimal treatment protocol and to purchase vaccines as soon as they are available to ensure health security for citizens.

Socially, families faced challenges in adapting to the pandemic. We have witnessed many cases of domestic violence, especially against children and women. This prompted the Egyptian parliament to discuss how to legislate laws to protect all family members and guarantee their basic rights without violating them.

In this context, the studies and reports of the Forum for Development and Human Rights Dialogue (FDHRD) focused on studying and monitoring the challenges of COVID-19 on individuals, the repercussions of the crisis and the efforts of the state in mitigating them. FDHRD seeks to estimate the ratios of opportunities and risks in facing the crisis and to provide recommendations to adapt to the challenges.

This publication deals with several topics at the heart of the crisis: women and domestic violence during COVID-19, the challenges of the tourism sector in Egypt, the problems facing the medical sector and the problems of education during COVID-19. It also sheds light on the agricultural sector in Egypt and the obstacles that faced farmers. Additionally, this publication discusses the role of Egyptian trade unions in dealing with the crisis to ensure the rights of its members. Moreover, it sheds light on the efforts of the state in dealing with and facing all the challenges that the pandemic caused. Finally, it puts forward several recommendations to address some of the remaining challenges.





## The First Chapter

### Women during COVID-19

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#### **First: Problems Faced by Women because of COVID-19**

The Coronavirus affects men more than women, according to medical reports. However, with the spread of the virus globally, it seemed that women were the biggest losers, bearing the brunt of social and economic disruption double the rate of men.

A recent study conducted on about 44,600 patients with COVID-19 from the Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention showed that the death rate for men was 2.8%, compared to 1.7% for women. However, in other and perhaps less obvious ways, the virus appears to be affecting women in the healthcare sector more. According to the World Health Organization, women constitute the majority of workers in the health and social care sector by 70% in 104 countries. This puts them at risk of contracting the virus, even though women earn 11% less than men in the same field. Pregnant women also face an entirely different set of challenges, especially the stress of not knowing exactly how the coronavirus is affecting their babies.

#### **Unpaid Care**

According to the International Labor Organization, women and girls already perform most of the world's unpaid care work. Women perform 76.2% of all unpaid care work hours, three times more than men.

The vast majority of hosts, teachers and service industry workers are female which put them on the front lines of the outbreak. At home,



women are still doing more care. Thus, when the virus closes schools, limits travel and puts elderly relatives at risk, women have more to do. School closures also hurt women badly because the responsibility for childcare rests with them.

For mothers working in the health field, another unintended suffering awaits them as a result of school closures. They are unable to take leave to care for their children due to pressure on health systems. Many medical professionals struggle to find care for their children at present.

The outbreak could also have a disproportionate negative economic impact on women as they make up a large percentage of part-time and informal workers worldwide. These types of jobs are usually the first to be abandoned during crises like the one we are experiencing right now. During major crises, when women have to give up work and income to stay home, they often find it difficult to return to those jobs after the crisis. For example, while everyone's income has been affected by the Ebola outbreak in West Africa, men's income has returned to what it was before the outbreak more quickly than women.

### **Negative Impact on Women's Economic Participation**

Women suffer from severe weakness in their economic participation. The COVID-19 pandemic and the measures taken to eliminate it, exacerbate the weakness of their economic empowerment. This is especially as many of them work in unorganized jobs, and do not have any kind of social protection.

COVID-19 has also caused many couples to sit at home and men to continue their work online. This constitutes a burden on some women who are now trying to do housework and take care of children after school closures. This has forced some of them to leave work in exchange for maintaining the family until the "COVID-19" crisis ends.

In addition to the above, women face another type of violence in cyberspace. With the increase in restrictions on movement, there has been an increase in the number of Internet users, especially of social media, games and chat rooms. This opens a wider field for electronic harassment, which calls for the need to protect girls and women.

The pandemic could take a huge toll on women's livelihoods. With the mass closure of childcare centres and schools, many working women have been forced to take time off, or try to work from home while looking after their children, reducing their income.

However, the real danger, in this case, is for the women who cannot take paid leave, or the nature of the work they do does not allow them to work from homes, such as daily wage workers, domestic workers, small business owners, workers in the cleaning and food processing sectors and saleswomen. Women dominate the largest proportion of employment in the service sector and the informal economy in the world.

For example, women represent a large proportion of daily market traders in Egypt. When the restrictions on movement were imposed, commercial transactions were limited and perishable goods were affected, causing great damage to their livelihood and economic security.

The negative effects of the pandemic, which can last for years, on the level of what women earn from work. They must take care of children, and with the continued existence of COVID-19, there are fears that women will not be able to match the level of men in work again and succeed like them. In this way, society loses many of the gains it achieved for women, which benefited society.

### **Second: Domestic Violence during COVID-19 and The Problems Facing Women**

The COVID-19 pandemic has negatively affected the rights and lives of women around the world. The social and psychological burdens on women have increased due to the social, health and family roles that women play, as well as their important role on the front lines of combating the emerging virus. The spread of pandemics often creates threats that go beyond the risk of infection, such as that women may be at greater risk of domestic violence and other forms of gender-based violence during pandemics, as observed during previous outbreaks.

The presence of women and children in families that suffer from domestic violence, and the lack of food supplies and financial resources resulting



from the mandatory home quarantine, increases the possibility of exacerbating violence against women and children. In fact, psychological stress may make it possible to experience domestic violence in families that are usually safe.

Men, in similar cases, feel pressure because of the economic difficulties resulting from the spread of the virus, their inability to work and the length of the quarantine period. This causes family tensions and conflict within the household.

It is reported that violence against women, in general, is prevalent in all societies without exception. One in three women in the world has been subjected to domestic violence according to the World Health Organization. An average of 137 women are killed every day by a member of their family. The potential for exposure to domestic violence increases when families are placed under increasing pressure due to concerns related to security, health, money and difficult living conditions, which are the conditions under which many families reside in light of the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic.

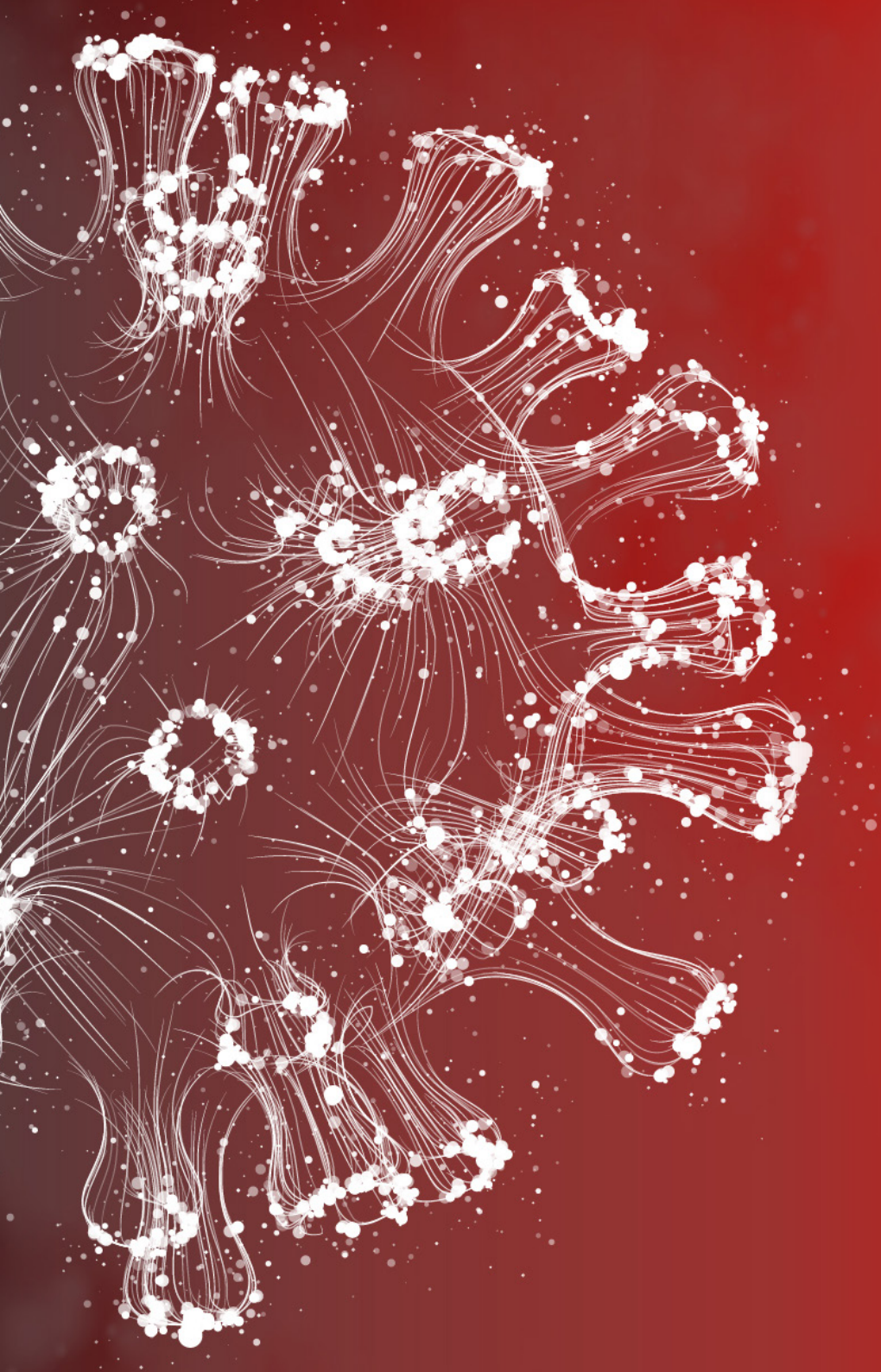
According to a statement issued by Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, the UN Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN Women, dated March 24, 2020, the number of reported cases of domestic violence against women has tripled recently in some countries practising social distancing to combat the coronavirus. For example, the police station in Jianli County, China, received 162 reports of domestic violence cases during February 2020. This is three times more than the 47 reported during the same month the previous year. Ninety per cent of these reports were related to the outbreak of COVID-19. The situation is not much different in other cities outside China.

Concerning the repercussions of the Coronavirus on the situation of Egyptian women, an increase in cases of domestic violence was monitored in Egypt due to the deteriorating economic



conditions and many women losing their jobs. This led to the deterioration of the economic and social conditions of many Egyptian families in which women are the only breadwinners for the family. According to the data, there was a 13% increase in the number of patients in domestic violence treatment centres, 2704 women received individual care and 9,278 family care.

In this context, Nihad Abu al-Qumsan, President of the Egyptian Centre for Women's Rights and a member of the National Council for Human Rights, stated that Egyptian women suffer from fragile economic conditions and are exposed to violence in large proportions before the COVID-19 crisis. She stressed that the rates of violence that women are exposed to, whether marital violence, domestic violence or violence resulting from the closure of the courts and the slowdown in litigation procedures, have increased due to the crisis of the pandemic which have imposed a quarantine for a long time, leading to an increase in the rates of domestic violence against women.



## The Second Chapter

### The Agricultural Sector and Farmers

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#### Farmers' Losses

The panic and confusion as a result of the fear of the transmission of the Coronavirus between countries confused the global markets, especially the Chinese markets. This has affected and will negatively affect most countries of the world, especially developing countries, with the local market inevitably affected. Also, the prices of some Egyptian agricultural products may decrease and some may increase as a result of the tendency of some countries to tighten import and export rules and sometimes stop them.

The agricultural product most affected is the Egyptian citrus, as China imported about 237,000 tons of citrus in 2019 season. If exports to China stop without opening new markets to export the surplus of Egyptian citrus, this may lead to the accumulation of citrus fruits in the Egyptian markets and the collapse of their prices, harming farmers.

The continued spread of this pandemic without control has led to the suspension of the freight movement by planes to and from China, which affects the export of grapes, dates, pomegranates and frozen strawberries from Egypt to China. Shipping takes a long time and slows down the arrival of shipments for these perishable agricultural products.

Although Egypt does not import agricultural products from China except for some quantities of garlic and rice sometimes, it imports most of the production requirements, raw materials, spare parts and agricultural machinery for most of the Egyptian industries, especially the textile and electronics industries. This negatively affects the development of the

digital agricultural sector and agricultural industrialization with Egypt's tendency to advance digital agriculture through greenhouse farming, mechanization of the agricultural sector, the use of the smart cards, the ambition to restore the spinning and weaving industry to its previous glory and to increase the economic value added by agricultural industrialization of Egyptian agricultural products.

The continuation of this pandemic may lead to an increase in the prices of red meat, especially since Egypt imports about 60% of its meat needs from abroad. It also imports most of the requirements of the feed industry. The shortage of which may lead to an increase in the prices of feed, and consequently a rise in the prices of livestock, poultry and fish.

Uncertainty about food availability could also trigger a wave of export restrictions, creating shortages in the global market. Such reactions can alter the balance between food supply and demand, leading to higher prices and increased volatility. We have learned from previous crises that such measures are particularly detrimental to low-income and food-deficit countries and to the efforts of humanitarian organisations to procure food for those most in need.

We must prevent the recurrence of such harmful actions. It is also very important to protect food producers and agricultural workers at the manufacturing and retail levels to minimize the spread of disease within the sector and to maintain food supply chains. Consumers, especially the most vulnerable among them, must still be able to access food within their communities under strict safety requirements.

The total number of workers in the agricultural sector is about 6,478 million workers, constituting about 25.6% of the total labour force. The labour force research issued by the Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics for the third quarter of 2017, stated that this activity is

one of the most important economic activities that attracted the largest percentage of entrants to the labour market, as this sector attracted about 312 thousand more workers than the second quarter of 2017. The agricultural sector contributes to the cost of factors of production (at current prices in 2016/2017) by about 354.9 billion pounds, compared to 318.8 billion pounds in 2015/2016, while the agricultural sector 40 years ago represented between 35-40% of Egypt's gross national product, and the value of support granted to farmers in 2016/2017 amounted to about 4712.5 million pounds.



However, the agricultural sector was absent from the incentives announced by the Council of Ministers to support the Egyptian economy in the face of the negative repercussions of the Coronavirus, despite the great losses suffered by the sector; because of climate change and the halting of exports.

The recent circumstances also caused the inability of some small farmers to sell vegetables, which may expose some to loss. In addition, work was suspended in livestock markets, which was also reflected in the lack of profit margin, and the reason for the high prices of some vegetables as a result of the inability to transport them to markets.

This prompted MP Raef Tamraz, a member of the Agriculture and Irrigation Committee in the House of Representatives, to submit a request for a briefing directed to the Prime Minister, regarding directly supporting farmers, small farmers and breeders. He pointed out that there are great efforts and a package of decisions taken by the state to support all segments of society that have been affected by the outbreak of the Coronavirus. It included companies operating in the field of agriculture, production and manufacturing, stressing the need for these decisions to include small farmers.

## Strategic Crops

Strategic and important crops, including, but not limited to, wheat and rice, face many problems, such as the process of determining the price of receiving the wheat crop from farmers as the government tends to price following international prices that fluctuate between high and low, in addition to the failure to implement the law of contract farming and announcing the price of wheat before planting, instead of relying on the international price as a standard.

Also, the main problem of the rice crop is the reduction of its cultivation area, which was more than three million acres and achieved self-sufficiency in its production before 2018. However, the Ministry of Agriculture reduced it this year to one million and 100 acres and prohibited many areas from cultivating it, even though they are lands that are only suitable for growing rice because of their high salinity. This means that its cultivation of an alternative crop, for example, the corn crop, will not bear fruit. If the problem is in the irrigation water, there must be a fair distribution of it.

During the wheat harvest season in Egypt, it is also necessary to ensure the protection and support of the workers who carry out the harvest process and to secure an adequate income for wheat farmers by raising the value of supplying the crop to granaries and barns. The state should facilitate the shipment of wheat to mills and barns, secure its provision for bread production, reduce waste in harvesting and transport operations,



and also ensure that farmers continue to produce wheat next year by giving them production incentives, and financial and technical support to avoid crises.

This does not seem far from the preventive measures taken by many countries to ensure local food security in light of real fears of a recurrence of a new food crisis, including Egypt, which stopped the export of legumes for three months. For example, Kazakhstan suspended its exports of wheat, sugar, potatoes, carrots, onions and cabbage until 15 April, 2020 at least, as Russia suspended exports of wheat, rice, oats and processed food in the period between 20-30 March, 2020. As for Vietnam, it stopped rice exports to ensure local food security.

Despite the Egyptian decision to stop the export of legumes, Egypt's real problem appears in the provision of wheat. Especially since Egypt, which is the largest importer of wheat in the world, mainly depends on Russia to provide its needs.

## The Incentives of the Central Bank Are Not Enough

The Central Bank of Egypt announced the addition of companies operating in the agricultural, production and industrial fields, including plants for the manufacture and packaging of agricultural commodities, livestock, fish and poultry, to the initiative to finance and support the industrial private sector at a declining interest of 8%. The decision includes companies whose turnover and annual revenues range from 50 million pounds to one billion pounds.

The Central Bank affirmed the continuation of the initiative to grant credit facilities at a five per cent declining interest rate to companies and small establishments working in the agricultural and industrial fields, whose turnover and annual revenues range from 250 thousand pounds to 50 million pounds.

However, this is not enough to support farmers, especially small farmers, as the agricultural sector also suffers from weak government investments, as only two per cent of them are allocated annually. It must be increased with special attention to small farmers.

The bad weather wave at the beginning of March 2020 also caused great losses to farmers, but it has not yet been announced how to deal with it. Potatoes, strawberries and onions are the most prominent crops that have been damaged in large areas, as the water was stopped in the lands in large quantities that the farmers could not get rid of easily, which will affect the production of the current seasons. The decline in production harms the local market more than exports in the current period, especially with most countries of the world halting the import and export movement with other countries. The most important thing now is to look at production for domestic consumption; in anticipation of the continuation of the COVID-19 crisis.

The Minister of Agriculture had met with Egyptian exporters, in the presence of the Chairman of the House of Representatives Agriculture Committee, to support exporters of crops. However, those who need support are farmers, not businessmen, to remove the barriers that impede their way to export their products, and obtain their rights in light of the many procedures.

## Cooperatives

It is not possible to talk about the protection of small farmers without addressing the crucial role of comprehensive and effective cooperatives and producer organisations in supporting small agricultural producers and marginalized groups such as youth and women. They empower their members economically and socially and create sustainable rural jobs through business models that are resilient to economic and environmental shocks.

The first cooperative company was established in Egypt in 1910, then the Egyptian Cooperative Law - Law No. 27 of 1923- was issued, and 135 cooperative societies were established within two years. In 1931, the Agricultural Credit Bank was established to lend to cooperative societies. The Agrarian reform law required the establishment of agricultural cooperative societies in the lands expropriated by law and distributed to small

farmers. Cooperatives lent farmers to guarantee the crop without being bound by the land guarantee. The contributions of cooperative societies in Egypt varied between housing, production and consumption cooperatives and others, although agriculture still represented about 80 per cent of the number of cooperative societies.

The legislative framework governing that sector was developed between 1975 and 1990. Each type of cooperative is affiliated with the ministry organizing its sector. Agriculture follows the Ministry of Agriculture, consumerism follows Supply, productivity follows localities, water wealth cooperatives follow Irrigation, and housing cooperatives follow Housing. They are brought together by the umbrella of the General Union of Cooperatives, except for educational cooperatives that follow the Ministry of Education.

By calculating the total volume of financial contributions in all types of cooperatives, we find that they exceed 40 billion pounds. More than half of them are in the field of agriculture and more than a quarter in the field of housing. The figures indicate that more than half of the Egyptian population has a relationship with cooperatives, and they run an economy with regular accounts and a financial controller, and the number doubles if the amount of its fixed assets is added to it. Add to that the operating banks that were established to support the cooperative movement, such as the commercial banks, the Development and Agricultural Credit Bank, the Industrial Development Bank and the Housing Bank.

Egyptian agriculture witnessed a liberation from government restrictions and launch according to market mechanisms. However, the agricultural cooperative organisations were left captive to ossified bureaucratic administrations clinging to rigid legislation, the strong hand of the authority and its employees was devoted to supervision and direction to achieve the siege and destruction.



As a logical result of all this, agricultural cooperatives have lost their status, their capabilities have receded, and the extent of their activities has diminished. They have been replaced by private institutions and organisations that have been able to adapt to the changes that have occurred in the institutional structure of the sector as a whole.



### **Lessons Learned from the COVID-19 Crisis**

Analysis of the lessons learned from the COVID-19 crisis calls for maximizing our agricultural production and working to achieve self-sufficiency in strategic crops, which cannot be dispensed with, such as wheat, corn, and others, by preparing a short-term and long-term plan to achieve self-sufficiency. It is worth noting that the state has already begun to achieve self-sufficiency in some crops, through projects of one and a half million acres and other land reclamation projects. However, there is a need to expedite these steps, especially since the country possesses the necessary resources for this.

The time has come to maximize the use of agricultural research centres at that time, as they can help in the vertical expansion of agriculture and achieve better results, faster and less costly.

Protecting the farmer has become a priority, as well as, discussing preparations for the wheat harvest season, and work mechanisms in light of the current conditions. There is also a need for an effective practical application of the measures taken by the state regarding the Coronavirus, during the approaching harvest period or with regard to the supply and the action plan to prevent backlogs in the supply and collection operations. Moreover, it is necessary to remove the obstacles facing the Egyptian farmer in terms of providing seeds, fertilizers and pesticides at reasonable prices, marketing and purchasing crops at prices that bring farmers appropriate profits.



## The Third Chapter

### The Medical Sector

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#### **First: Medical Corruption during COVID-19**

##### **Corruption in Medical Supplies and Devices**

In light of Egypt's fight against the Coronavirus, and taking all precautionary measures to prevent its spread, there are still many reasons that expose the health sector to the risk of corruption. As a result of the speed of procedures related to the provision and purchase of medical supplies and their transportation to the specified outlets to provide services, the mobilization of more healthcare workers, and the loss of some people's sources of income, many opportunities for corruption were available.

However, corruption still prevails despite all government agencies' attempts to confront the emerging Coronavirus, in all different ways and prevent it. The most important of which is the use of alcohol in disinfection and sterilization operations, as well as, the preventive and legal measures it is taking. The Ministry of Interior, in cooperation with the various state institutions, has taken the necessary measures to protect citizens, especially with regard to efforts made to combat supply crimes in all its forms, especially those related to the manufacture of medical supplies without a license and the exploitation of those conditions that the country is going through to achieve illegal gains and profits.

And in the context of fighting corruption in the health sector and those who take advantage of those opportunities who are unscrupulous and according to the cases discussed below, the Administrative Control Authority arrested the storekeeper of the medical supplies store of the Directorate of Health Affairs in Damietta Governorate, and also arrested

a health observer in that directorate. This storekeeper has embezzled medical supplies needed to combat infection in government hospitals (masks, gloves and other isolation tasks), then sold them on the black market at the expense of hospitals' needs and forged documents proving that they were disbursed to hospitals.

In addition, the storekeeper offered the health observer a plot of land he owned with a market value of about 120 thousand pounds as a bribe, in addition to the amount of 60 thousand pounds that the second seized for himself, to mediate for him with one of the members of the inventory committee formed by the Administrative Control Authority, which is concerned with inventorying the supplies in the store he is responsible, valued at about one million pounds, in exchange for the committee member handing him documents indicating that he embezzled medical supplies for infection control and sold them on the black market, in addition to fabricating forged documents that prove their disbursement to government hospitals in violation of the truth, and they were referred to the Public Prosecution.

Some have also exploited this crisis and monopolized some commodities from medical supplies such as gloves, masks and alcohol, in addition to the spread of unlicensed factories to manufacture those materials that do not conform to medical specifications and do not have a permit from the competent authorities. They store large quantities of disinfectant materials of unknown origin intending to put them on the market at high prices, as well as the possession by some pharmacies' owners and officials of medical supplies such as masks, gloves and alcohol of unknown source, and refraining from selling and storing them to achieve illegal profits.

## **Second: Health Justice and COVID-19 Vaccine Companies**

With the outbreak of the pandemic, heads of the state have found themselves forced to impose some precautionary measures that may reduce the spread of the virus, including imposing a curfew in different countries, closing shops, working to implement the rules of social distancing and making sure to wear a mask to limit the spread of the virus.

The spread of the Coronavirus led to the imposition of a new, different reality that requires each individual to adhere to wearing a mask and to take precautionary measures. The Coronavirus had an impact on various aspects of life. It led to the transformation of most human transactions into electronic transactions that do not require human interaction such as studying, going to work and even going to the doctors, where doctors are now providing their medical advice electronically "online" to avoid human interaction and to ensure the application of social distancing.

The emergence and spread of the virus have led scientists to start research and development to manufacture vaccines so that humanity would continue in light of the new reality and the number of human losses, which had reached thousands of deaths from the virus in many countries. Vaccines may reduce the symptoms of the virus when infected, but they do not prevent infection, which requires adherence to precautionary measures even in the presence of vaccines.

Among the repercussions left by COVID-19 is that differences have emerged in the fair distribution of COVID-19 vaccines between the peoples of developed and developing nations, despite international efforts to address this problem and achieve the World Health Organization's goal of vaccinating 40% of the population in low and lower-middle-income countries by the end of the year. The most prominent obstacle to achieving the desired goal is that the companies producing the vaccine are only concerned with financial profit. This distinction in the distribution of the vaccine is inconsistent with the right to life, i.e., with universal human rights.

## **The Right to Health is a Fundamental Human Right**

The right to health is closely related to the right to life. Any infringement of this right leads to inevitable death. Since the basis is the elimination of any disease that requires treatment and care, the arrival of any vaccine associated with any emerging disease - especially if it is widespread - requires its rapid distribution without discrimination. The World Health Organization explains that the right to health means that countries must create conditions in which everyone can be as healthy as possible. It does not mean the right to be healthy.



Residents of developing countries suffer from various degrees of diseases that are avoidable or treatable in developed countries, partly because many of their governments cannot guarantee an adequate level of healthcare and adequate living conditions for all their citizens.

It is worth noting that primary healthcare - as an item of the right to health - includes the right of the individual to obtain the following rights; good nutrition, health, education, clean and healthy water and access to essential medicines, surgical procedures and vaccinations. Therefore, the process of distributing the vaccine must take into account several basic principles to ensure the equitable distribution of vaccines in the world; that the vaccine is freely available to all peoples of the world, and that it be for medical personnel and groups most vulnerable to complications from the virus (such as the elderly, people with chronic diseases, immune diseases, heart and lung diseases, chronic kidney and liver diseases and other medical conditions) is an absolute priority, with an emphasis on justice for the most vulnerable groups in each country, and that there is no discrimination between citizens in accessing the vaccine based on financial ability or influence.

Therefore, the right to treatment and the availability of the vaccine must be guaranteed to all, as the survival of peoples without receiving the vaccine may lead to the formation of epidemiological foci that may return the pandemic to square one, and spoil the huge efforts that have been made. Therefore, it is wise to prevent the monopoly of the vaccine. The monopoly of vaccines is a clear violation of human rights, as the Human Rights Council resolution referred to the right of every person to enjoy the best level of physical and mental health, and this is done in more than one way, the most important of which is access to safe, effective, affordable and good quality medicines, especially essential medicines and vaccines and other medical products, and to health-care facilities and services, remains a distant goal, particularly, in many cases, for those living in poverty.

Access to medicines is one of the essential elements for achieving progressively the full realization of the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health. It is the responsibility of States to ensure that all, without discrimination, have access to affordable, safe, effective and of good quality, in particular essential medicines, and recognise the need for States, in cooperation with

international organisations and civil society, including non-governmental organisations and the private sector, to create favourable conditions at the national, regional and international levels to ensure the full and effective realization of the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health.

A report by Amnesty International said that out of the 5.76 billion doses given worldwide, just 0.3% went to low-income countries and over 79% to upper-middle-income and high-income countries. And AstraZeneca, BioNTech, Johnson & Johnson, Moderna, Novavax and Pfizer have refused to participate in initiatives to increase global volumes of vaccines.

“Vaccinating the world is our only pathway out of this crisis. It should be time to hail these companies, who created vaccines so quickly, as heroes. But instead, to their shame and our collective grief, Big Pharma’s intentional blocking of knowledge transfer and their wheeling and dealing in favor of wealthy states has brewed an utterly predictable and utterly devastating vaccine scarcity for so many others”

— Agnès Callamard, Amnesty International’s Secretary-General —

“It is plunging parts of Latin America, Africa and Asia into renewed crises, pushing weakened health systems to the very brink and causing tens of thousands of preventable deaths every week. In many low-income countries, not even health workers and people at-risk have received the vaccine.”

### **The Race to Produce an Anti-COVID-19 Vaccine**

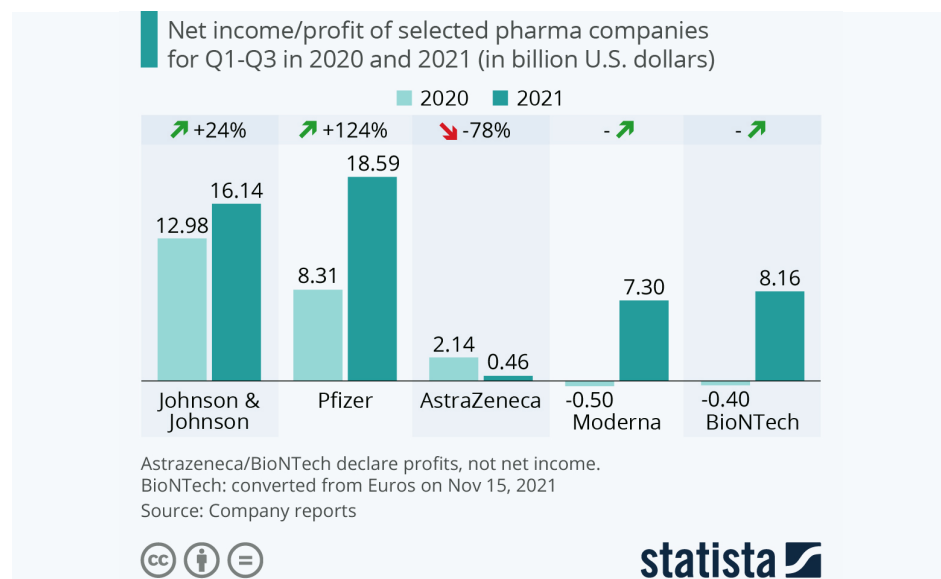
The spread of the new Coronavirus led to the competition of pharmaceutical companies to manufacture the vaccine against the Coronavirus, not only to limit the spread of the virus but also to achieve financial profits. The vaccine industry turned into a commercial industry through which companies aim to achieve the largest possible financial profits. Since the announcement of the pandemic, vaccine manufacturers have found themselves facing two options, the first is not to enter the race to develop the COVID-19 vaccine due to the huge financial costs required, in

addition to the bad reputation that will inevitably catch up to them if their attempts to provide the vaccine fail. The second is acknowledging the social responsibility of these companies, bearing the huge financial risks of producing the vaccine, and focusing on the expected profits in the event of a vaccine being reached. Several companies are racing to develop the first vaccine for COVID-19 with huge government funding, in an attempt to show influence, strength and confidence in the technological progress of these countries. As a result, the private companies that developed the vaccine made huge profits estimated at billions of dollars.

### The Major Companies Producing the Vaccine

Considering the huge profits made by companies such as Pfizer and Moderna, the debate has escalated over whether it is right for these companies to benefit enormously from the “pandemic,” and to achieve these gains, especially in light of the commitment of competitors, such as Johnson & Johnson and AstraZeneca, to sell their vaccines on a non-profit basis.

Few companies produce vaccines and relatively few buyers of vaccines. For example, four companies accounted for 90% of global vaccine revenue in 2019, but this situation is slightly different during the COVID-19 pandemic. The following figure shows the profits of the five major vaccine-producing companies in 2020 and 2021.



### Monopoly/Dominance of Companies in the Manufacture of Vaccines

The spread of the Coronavirus and its transformation into a global pandemic has led to a monopoly on vaccine distribution within the system of vaccine-manufacturing countries, especially the European Union countries, where calls and even decisions have emerged calling for preventing the exit of vaccines outside the countries of the Union before internal sufficiency, and the completion of the vaccination process within the Union. In return, few voices and limited initiatives have emerged, calling for the suspension of work on intellectual property agreements related to the production of the vaccine, and demanding the exchange of technology-related its manufacture. This is because there is a need for a vaccine for a pandemic that was not stopped by any human borders, spread to the whole world and affected all kinds of people.

The Doha Ministerial Declaration on the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights and Public Health indicates that the Agreement does not and should not prevent World Trade Organization (WTO) members from taking measures to protect public health. While the Declaration reiterates adherence to the Agreement, it affirms that the Agreement can and should be interpreted and implemented in a way that supports the rights of WTO members to protect public health, and in particular to promote universal access to medicines. It further recognizes, in this regard, the right of WTO members to make full use of the provisions of the above-mentioned Agreement that allow flexibility for this purpose.

In that context, the WTO tried to find a solution to achieve a fair distribution of COVID-19 vaccines. Among those attempts was what it called the “third way”, especially after the statements of Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director-General of the World Health Organization. In it, he renewed the call for vaccine manufacturers to share knowledge through the exchange of technology related to “Corona” (C-TAP), a mechanism for exchanging knowledge and data about the vaccine.

The crisis of monopolizing the manufacture of the COVID-19 vaccine comes due to the adherence of companies and countries that manufacture the vaccine to property rights and patents and their unwillingness to share that information with the rest of the countries or give them the

right to manufacture the vaccine. To solve the vaccine-manufacturing monopoly crisis, India and South Africa proposed in October 2020 to lift this obstacle, so that intellectual property does not serve as a barrier to timely access to medical products that can contribute to the fight against the pandemic. Although none of the COVID-19 vaccines had been approved at the time, those countries had previously expressed concerns about meeting the demand.

More than 115 countries are officially supporting the proposal to waive Intellectual Property protections, along with leading public health advocates and NGOs such as Doctors Without Borders, who are campaigning for COVID-19 vaccines to be treated as global public goods that are not under the control of any particular company or country.

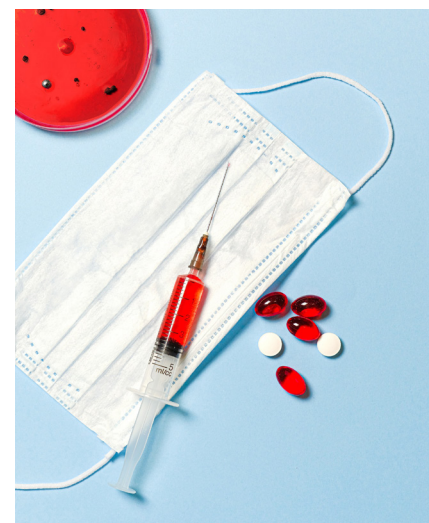
The vaccine crisis is exacerbated by the arbitrariness of vaccination manufacturers against other competing countries working to manufacture a different vaccine. For example, China has issued strict decisions that it will only allow visas for those who have received Chinese vaccines, which is not recognized in the European Union, alongside the Russian vaccine, although it has been proven effective. This shows that political disputes are interfering with scientific programs.

The monopoly on manufacturing the COVID-19 vaccine affects the vaccine's access to middle-income and poor developing countries. We find that many African countries have not been able to vaccinate even 10 per cent of their population due to the lack of sufficient doses for those countries. This is because the countries that manufactured the vaccine refrained from exporting it unless the process of vaccinating their citizens was completed.

### **COVAX Facility**

Since the announcement of the availability of vaccines, rich countries have acquired large quantities of them (more than their basic needs), leaving poor and developing countries to face the severe scarcity and high cost of obtaining vaccines, which is known as the phenomenon of "vaccine nationalism". About 22.6 per cent of the population of the developed world has received at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine, while about 0.9 per cent of the population of low-income countries has received

at least one dose. This is in addition to the challenges that poor and developing countries face in the event of a vaccine being available. The most important of these challenges are the lack of appropriate standards for storage and transportation, and the inefficiency of the medical service, as poor countries suffer from a lack of trained immunization service providers, as well as accurate follow-up of vaccination doses for vaccines that require more than one dose.



To ensure equitable access to vaccines and help developing and poor countries obtain them, nearly 190 countries have joined the COVAX Facility, a leading global framework for cooperation aimed at accelerating the development, production and equitable access of COVID-19 tests, treatments and vaccines to all countries of the world. The COVAX Facility is co-led by the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunology (GAVI), the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations, and the World Health Organization.

The refusal of the major pharmaceutical companies, located in European countries, to share the rights to manufacture the vaccine with the third world countries or the so-called countries of the South (also called poor and middle-income countries) led to the delay in the arrival of sufficient doses of the vaccine to these countries and their inability to achieve the goal set by the COVAX Facility, which is the vaccination of 10 per cent of the population in each country. COVAX was forced to postpone the deadline for achieving this goal to the beginning of 2022 due to the failure of most poor African countries to achieve it.

Pharmaceutical companies' adherence to their monopoly on the vaccine and their unwillingness to share property rights is due to their belief that this may weaken the quality of production and affect it, and the time taken for the new companies that cooperate with them to reach the required production speed. Pharmaceutical companies believe that the

solution to this crisis lies in increasing the volume of their production. They have called on rich countries to increase their vaccine donations to poor countries. However, some believe that the real reason behind these companies' adherence to the monopoly of vaccine manufacturing is their unwillingness to give up their control over patents and technologies, even if this is at the expense of millions of lives.

Unfairness in the distribution of vaccines will result in significant economic damage that will jeopardize decades of economic progress for all countries in the developed and developing world. In contrast, the equitable distribution of COVID-19 vaccines leads to economic benefits of at least 153 billion US dollars in the period 2020-2021 and about 466 billion dollars by 2025 in 10 of the major economies of the world.

### **The Impact of the Monopoly on Vaccination Rates around the World**

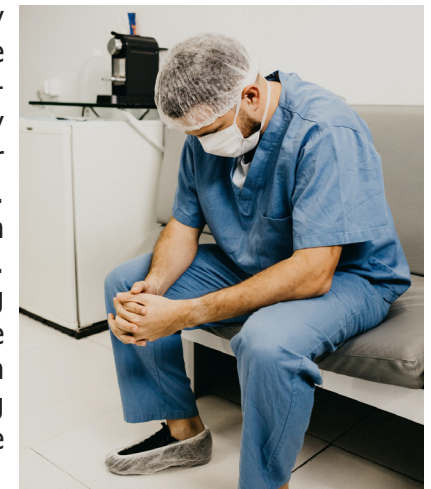
The companies' monopoly on the manufacture of vaccines and their desire not to disclose how it was manufactured or the information related to that process, which requires a lot of effort and financial and human resources, has led to the vaccine becoming a commercial commodity. The prices of which depend on the supply and demand with companies and vaccine-manufacturing countries seeking to benefit from the global pandemic and achieve various economic gains at the expense of the health of millions of people in different countries of the world.

We may find that there is a political aspect related to the distribution of the vaccine, as there are differences between some vaccine manufacturers and some international organisations. An example is the dispute that broke out between the British-Swedish company "AstraZeneca" and the European Union, which accused the company of not fulfilling its commitment to deliver the required doses on time. The disagreement escalated between the two parties, because Pascal Soriot, CEO of AstraZeneca, did not want to make any specific commitments.

The European Union continues to insist on getting its supply with the agreed quantities of the vaccine, even if this leads to the export of smaller quantities of the vaccine to Britain or other customers. The EU also urged the company to provide it with more doses of the vaccine, after AstraZeneca angered the bloc by saying that it could not provide

only a fraction of the doses it promised in the first quarter of 2021. It blames European factories for production problems, but the EU says doses made elsewhere must make up for the shortfall.

The EU Commission is now indirectly threatening to set restrictions on the export of vaccines through its so-called "transparency registry", whereby pharmaceutical companies must register exports of vaccines produced in the EU. This could lead to political tensions with other clients such as Britain or the USA. With the crisis of slowness in receiving the vaccine in the EU, we find in the other part of the globe that African countries have stumbled in achieving even the lowest rates required to be achieved by the end of 2021.



More than 50 countries have failed to achieve the goal set by the World Health Organization to fully vaccinate 10 per cent of their population against the COVID-19 by the end of September 2021. Most countries have failed to reach this goal. In Africa, only 15 out of 54 countries have achieved the desired goal. Half of the continent's countries have vaccinated less than two per cent of their population. The percentage of those who received the full vaccine was only 4.4% in the African continent, according to the World Health Organization.

The vast majority of countries are classified as poor countries and suffer from difficulties in obtaining vaccines and the structure of the health sector is fragile. Some of them suffer from conflicts or turmoil, such as Yemen, Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan and Myanmar, while others have suffered extensive destruction as a result of natural disasters such as Haiti. This makes the task of implementing vaccination programs very difficult



## The Fourth Chapter

### The Right to Education and the Education Sector

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Egypt has a huge and complex educational system, and the Internet infrastructure for many schools is still not good, and the COVID-19 crisis came to increase the suffering of Egyptian education, and the COVID-19 pandemic has shown our need for a new educational system directed to the future, and able to face challenges, disasters and crises.

The COVID-19 pandemic has imposed an interest in the right to education in a different way, and the right to digital transformation and bridging the digital gaps between individuals has become the most prominent variables imposed by the pandemic, and it has become necessary for countries and organisations to cooperate; to ensure that the right to education remains a fundamental right even in light of global crises.

The COVID-19 crisis has shed light on the flaws in the Egyptian education systems, and the teachers' inability to follow up current trends, making them depend on memorization rather than creativity. Parents have a conscious culture of the importance of education, but the speed and suddenness of the crisis were not matched by a response from teachers and understanding from parents.

The negative effects of education in light of the COVID-19 pandemic affected students of the middle and high school certificates and students in the countryside.

## The Right to Education between the United Nations and the Egyptian Constitution

The right to education is a foundational right to all the other human rights. It is the main tool by which everyone can lift themselves out of poverty and have the opportunity to participate fully in the various activities of the society.

The United Nations focused on education as one of the main goals of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda launched in 2015. In the fourth goal, the United Nations emphasized ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education for all, promoting lifelong learning opportunities and building educational facilities for both gender.

The United Nations sought to protect the right to education as a human right. Article (26) of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights affirmed the right to education as one of the basic rights - everyone has the right to education, and it must be provided free of charge at least in the basic stage.

The Egyptian Constitution of 2014 emphasized the importance of the right to education, as Article (19) states: "Education is the right of all citizens. The goals of education are to build the Egyptian character, preserve the national identity, root the scientific method of thinking, develop talents and promote innovation, establish cultural and spiritual values, and found the concepts of citizenship, tolerance and non-discrimination. The State shall observe the goals of education in the educational curricula and methods, and provide education in accordance with international quality standards. Education is compulsory until the end of the secondary stage or its equivalent. The State shall provide free education in various stages in the State's educational institutions according to the Law."

## The Right to Education During the Pandemic

The right to education in the post-Coronavirus world requires reformulation to include the right of individuals to digital transformation, and to overcome the challenges that impede this transformation, which can be summarized as follows:

- **The Internet connection gap:** This gap is related to ensuring that all students are connected to the Internet. Although technological solutions are the best way to accept learning losses due to the pandemic, they carry great risks of widening the gaps in education equality and if the digital gap in education increases while schools are closed, learning inequality and learning poverty will increase, with continuity of education being granted to some and denied from others.
- **The digital use gap:** This gap relates to the ability of students and their parents to interact with online content, making learning less effective for students from poorer socioeconomic backgrounds.
- **The digital divide in schools:** This relates to the capabilities and capabilities of each school to provide individual or equal and sequential digital learning to suit all students, to promote and monitor participation with these materials, and to provide feedback that helps in maximizing learning outcomes.
- **The stagnation of education systems:** in developing countries that focus more on certificates than skills, in addition to the increase in inequality among students in light of the variation in the spread and speed of the Internet, which led to an increase in the severity of the digital divide and its repercussions on the quality of distance education.

## COVID-19 Effects on Education Systems around the World

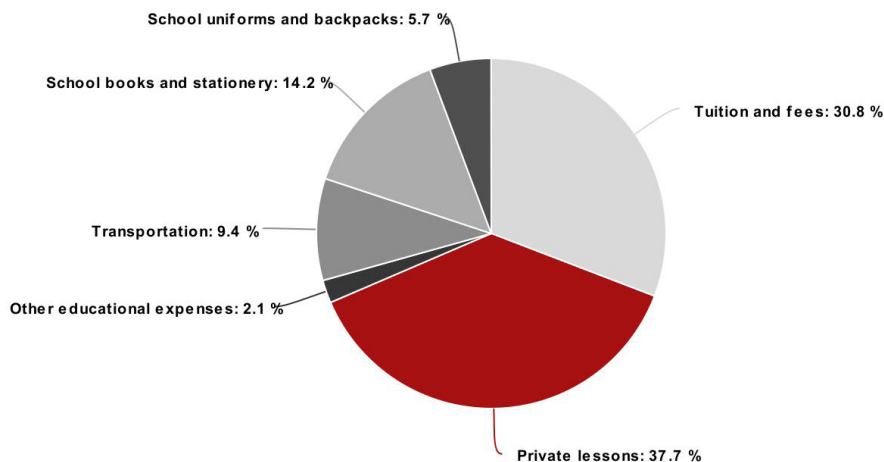
- Inequality in the possibility of benefiting from platforms in e-learning, where the suspension of the Internet connection is an obstacle to continuous learning, especially for students from poor families.
- Parents' unwillingness to help their children learn remotely, especially with limited education and resources.
- The high economic cost of education due to the decline in income and the closure of schools.
- Distance learning can only achieve its goals if the conditions are met for its success so that we can formulate appropriate scientific policies to deal with this future.

## Egyptian Family's Spendings on Education during COVID-19

The Egyptian education system is considered the largest education system in the Middle East. Egypt has made progress in providing international opportunities to ensure the realization of the right to education. Enrollment rates rose and approached global rates during the year 2018/2019. Allocations for education amounted to 256 billion pounds in all its stages, as spending on education represents 21% of the total general budget 2020/2021, which is equivalent to 6% of the Gross domestic product. Rural families spend half of what urban families spend on education due to private lessons and tuition fees.

The COVID-19 crisis has added more burdens to the Egyptian family, and the family's responsibility doubled as families became the direct supervisors on the student during their classes on distance learning channels. This is in addition to the difficulty of following up on the children's performance. The pandemic has revealed the weakness of the educational return from schools which makes them resort to private lessons. Furthermore, working mothers do not have enough time to follow up on their children's performance, in addition to the disparity in financial capabilities, as not everyone has the same facilities.

According to the report of the Central Agency for Mobilization and Statistics in 2020, the majority of household spending on education went to private lessons with 37.7%. The tuition fees represented 30.8%. Families also bear 14.2% on books costs, 9.4% on transportation expenses, and 5.7% on clothes. This is shown in the following figure:



The crisis urged us to step forward and adopt new teaching methodologies that we have not recognized before. The COVID-19 pandemic have highlighted the need of setting new standards to ensure the quality of teaching technologies and new educational platforms to be used during the times of crisis. The crisis made it clear that technology interventions in the field of education will continue to play a major role in educating future generations.

In light of the outbreak of COVID-19, and following the Prime Minister's decision 717 of 2020 to suspend the study in March 2020, which necessitated a fast shift in the education process with the State turning to digital education. The education sector benefited from the presence of modern technological infrastructure at all educational levels and the shift towards distance education to preserve the lives of citizens. The Ministry of Education has also launched a set of promotional platforms to ensure the completion of the curricula and the evaluation of students. These platforms have contributed to the completion of the academic year, although they were not as effective as hoped due to several factor such as the lack of the Internet in a large number of households of different social levels. The application of distance education also faced some important obstacles, most notably the weak digital awareness of teachers and the limited use of technological tools in education, the negative usage of

technology by some students, in addition to the poor health preparedness in schools and the weakness of the education system.

The Egyptian government, through its digital transformation policy, has achieved a major change in the education system. It has also provided many training programs for teachers to enhance their capabilities in dealing with digital platforms. Moreover, the Ministry of Education has launched several electronic platforms to facilitate communication between teachers and students, but the absence of government assessment for teachers' performance made students in online learning alone without teachers, which opened the way for private lessons.



The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the pace of the spread of e-learning. The pandemic has become a catalyst for the use of electronic devices and online studying as an alternative solution to education within schools, and therefore expectations await the increase in the e-learning market. However, the high cost of subscribing to Internet providers in

light of the decline in the growth of the economy globally, which makes families with daily incomes unable to bear the financial burdens required by e-learning.

Distance education provides many advantages such as easy access to educational content, breaking the border barrier, saving time and solving the student high density crisis. However, there are many disadvantages

for it, including poor information and communications technology infrastructure, high cost of Internet services, the limited interaction between the teacher and the student and the weak commitment of students to follow distance education programmes. This is in addition to the fact that the scientific material is limited to the theoretical parts of the curriculum and students do not usually enjoy this type of learning. Due to the lack of an interactive study environment, the role of the teacher was reduced to the educational aspect and their moral educational role ended.

The government's endeavour to develop education is undeniable. The state has made great efforts to implement the digital transformation policy as a means to develop education and improve the level of educational outcomes, but the reality has proven that the transformation policy includes several imbalances that the state must intervene to eliminate them before they cause a catastrophe leads to a real deterioration in education.





## The Fifth Chapter

### The Tourism Sector in the Shadow of COVID-19

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The tourism sector is the most affected sector by the repercussions of the pandemic crisis in Egypt. Tourism has been affected in all countries of the world and global air traffic has stopped, and as a result, major depression has occurred in the tourism movement. This has negatively affected millions of people working in this vital sector around the world.

Tourism contributes to a large share of Egypt's gross domestic product (GDP) and is the largest source of foreign exchange and job opportunities. The COVID-19 pandemic has caused a national economic crisis in many developing countries that depend heavily on tourism revenues for their GDP. Similarly, millions of people working in the tourism sector have lost their jobs.

The precautionary measures accompanying the spread of COVID-19 had severe negative effects on tourist facilities in Egypt and the world. The Egyptian tourism sector suffered a severe blow after it began to recover from the effects of the internal conflicts that Egypt has witnessed in 2011. The losses of the tourism sector in 2020 were estimated at one billion dollars per month, and tourist reservations recorded a decrease of about 80 per cent compared to the same period last year due to the Coronavirus.

This is not the first time that the tourism sector has experienced a severe blow. The January 2011 revolution and the subsequent events caused long-suffering to the sector, which contributes between 12 and 15 per cent of the country's GDP. It is worth noting that the tourism sector in the world will not be able to start recovery until after the medical emergency is controlled and travel bans are lifted safely.

## COVID-19 and Global Tourism

Tourism is one of the most important economic sectors, not only at the international level but also at the national and local levels due to its ability to achieve growth and economic and social development for local communities, given the overlap of its activities with many industries and other sectors.

According to the World Tourism Organization, the number of tourists in the world reached 1.33 billion in 2017, increased by 4% in 2018 to reach 1.4 billion tourists, and increased again by 4% in 2019 to reach 1.46 billion tourists. Concerning global tourism revenues, according to the World Tourism Organization, revenues rose from 1.3 trillion dollars in 2017 to 1.45 trillion dollars in 2018 and finally reached 1.48 trillion dollars in 2019.

Tourism supports one out of every 10 jobs and provides jobs for millions in both developing and developed countries. The World Tourism Organization confirmed in 2019 that the number of tourist arrivals reached 1.5 billion. However, the COVID-19 pandemic came in late 2019 and served as a severe blow to global tourism, causing heavy losses at all levels. The crisis is unprecedented in terms of size and breadth, as all parts of the global tourism sector have been affected.

### The Suffering of Workers in the Tourism Sector during the COVID-19 Crisis

The world is living today in an unusual situation, which it has not witnessed before, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. This situation is exceptional and will inevitably constitute a major turning point for all countries, not only because of its danger to human health, but also because of its consequences on the economic and social levels, which affected directly on all international transactions. The outbreak of the pandemic forced all countries of the world to take a set of precautionary measures and measures as isolation and quarantine, social distancing and travel bans, which have negatively affected the global economy. This led countries to live in a state of stagnation, and thus the emergence of a global economic crisis that affected everyone. Such economic crisis has obstructed production, supply and air transport across the world, weakened global demand and isolated countries and placed them under quarantine and others under curfews;

causing have losses to the financial, aviation, transport and tourism sectors in the world.

The impact of the repercussions was more serious and greater, especially on developing countries and the Arab region, where, as economists expected, the average per capita income will decrease by 3.6%, causing millions of people to fall into extreme poverty.

The tourism sector has witnessed many crises during the past years. Then the global crisis of COVID-19 came, which is the most insidious crisis ever, exhausting state institutions and destroying the global economy. However, despite the successive global crises, Egypt had the greatest share of suffering in the tourism sector. In recent years, the Egyptian government and people have endured many crises that have passed and are passing today on Egyptians in general and affecting the tourism sector in particular.

COVID-19 has pushed this vital sector again into a dark tunnel, after it caused the entire sector to stop, amid expectations of a real catastrophe that would lead to the displacement of about three million workers in the tourism field in Egypt, in addition to material losses estimated at billions of dollars if the closure period continues for many months, according to experts and officials.



The current situation has prompted companies to reduce the value of their employees' salaries by 40%, explaining that it is an attempt by the company to reduce the latest losses. The following is a presentation of the most prominent challenges and crises facing the tourism sector in Egypt in light of the outbreak of the pandemic:

1. Travco Tourism and Construction Company, owned by Hamid Al-Sheety, reduced the salaries of all company employees by 25%. The company also laid off all employees of the company's Jazz hotel chain, reduced the salaries of all administrative workers and construction engineers by 50% and gave unpaid leave to dozens of workers.
2. 25 workers at the Mercure Al-Haram Hote submitted a collective communication to the Al-Ahram Police Department, registered under No. 5930 of 2020, in which they reported that the hotel management had dismissed them from work in the light of the pandemic and arbitrarily dismissed them without right.
3. The employees of the Semiramis Intercontinental Hotel in Cairo filed a complaint with the Minister of Tourism and Antiquities against the hotel management for violating the President's decision regarding the current crisis, which is not to prejudice the salaries of the workers, as the hotel management reduced the salaries of workers for April 2020.
4. A complaint from the employees of the Amarina Abu Soma Safaga Hotel on May 5, whereby all the hotel employees were laid off under 3 months, the rest of the workers were given unpaid leave and the workers' dues for April were not paid. The management responded that they will be given their salaries when the subsidy is disbursed from the fund.
5. The workers and employees from of Jawharat Al-Ahram Hotel in Al Haram Street in Giza filed a complaint that the hotel management has forced the workers to take an unpaid leave a month, from March 24 to April 24.
6. The Radisson Blue Hotel in Cairo has forced employees to work 12 hours without vacations other than the weekly vacation, even though the number of working hours is only 8 hours, in addition to a 40% reduction to the basic salary.

7. A complaint from workers in a hotel in the Fifth Settlement area in New Cairo as a result of their threat to lose their jobs, as some of them were forced to resign, as the administration met with the workers and ordered them to submit their resignations even though their contracts expire the following December. On March 31, 2020, the administration contacted them to negotiate with them and told them to grant them a three day leave, but they were surprised after their return that they had been documented as absent, so they drafted another record of proof of the case on April 4, 2020, under the administrative number 2572.
8. A complaint from all employees of the Grand Hotel and Grand Makadi Group to its owner, Samir Abdel Fattah and his sons, Mohamed Samir Abdel Fattah, about not paying the employees' salaries. Subsequently, a decision was issued by the Public Prosecutor to the precautionary seizure of the residence of businessman Mohamed Samir Abdel-Fattah, his brother and his father, in implementation of the decision of the Public Prosecutor to pay the salaries and entitlements of workers in the hotels owned by them, which the workers demanded 3 months ago. The aforementioned also pledged to the Governor of the Red Sea to pay the workers' dues within 10 days.
9. Pyramisa Hotels Group has issued an administrative decision to be implemented on the first of May 2020, containing a reduction in the number of working days starting from the first of May by 25% until conditions are improved. And as for the workers whose vacation balance of 2020 has expired with no need for them to be present, they would take an unpaid leave until conditions are improved with the payment of his share and the employer's share in insurances. Workers whose contracts have expired, their contracts will not be renewed until conditions are improved.
10. A complaint from the employees of the Golden Five Hotel in Hurghada, where the management laid off the workers whose contracts are near the expiry date or at the beginning of their contract, as well as those who do not have vacation balances were forced to take leave unpaid leave. Workers received only 75% of the month's salary. During April, as a result of the administration's intransigence in not paying the salaries of its employees for three months, and the workers' filing of a report in the police department for non-payment of their salaries, the hotel's license was cancelled.

11. The employees of Long Beach Hotel Hurghada, which is affiliated with the Edit Tourism Company, filed a complaint as the administration laid off the employees for 3 months, with the employees being forced to sign the annual contract for only one month. The hotel management also reduced the salaries for April to 50% without prior notice, in addition to insurance deduction on the entire salary.
12. The employees of the "Labranda" tourist hotel group in the Makadi Bay area, south of Hurghada in the Red Sea, filed a complaint due to their dismissal by a decision of the hotel management to exclude them from the job permanently. Their rights are preserved during the crisis that the tourism sector is going through as a result of the spread of the new Coronavirus, and the hotel management has contacted them to find some solutions.
13. The employees of the Nubia Aqua Beach Hotel, El Gouna Road in Hurghada filed a complaint as the administration paid only a quarter of March's salary to the workers. It also forced the employees to take unpaid vacations, and the hotel management responded that the workers stopped working.
14. The employees of Samra Bay Hotel in Hurghada filed a complaint due to the non-disbursement of salaries to the employees for March.
15. The employees of the Grand Seas Hotel, Hostmark Hurghada, filed a complaint that their salaries were not paid during April.
16. The employees of the Hurghada Panorama Hotel filed a complaint to its owner, Dr Reda Rozeq, as a lot of workers did not receive their salaries for March, and therefore the salaries for April were not received.
17. The Sunrise Group, owned by Hossam El Shaer, paid a salary for April of 500 EGP only for three months.
18. A complaint from the employees of the Dreams Beach Sharm El-Sheikh Hotel for not paying their salaries for April 2020.
19. The Travel Choice Tourism Company has laid off more than 20 workers by not renewing their contracts and informed them that the last working day would be May 3, 2020.



20. The employees of the Hotelix (Marina Beach) Hurghada filed a complaint to the Governor of the Red Sea as the hotel management forced the employees to submit their resignations in April.
21. The employees of the Jolly Beach Hotel "formerly Nada" in Marsa Alam filed a complaint as they have not received their salaries for March.
22. The Jazz Hotels Group has laid off its employees for three months, in addition to deducting three days of March from salaries and forcing employees to take a week's unpaid leave in April.
23. The distress of 800 families of workers in tourist boats in the Red Sea, where the workers in the tourist boats in the Red Sea cities appealed to the President of the Republic to equalize them in the tourism sector, pointing out that the benefits approved by the Emergency Aid Fund for workers did not include them though they have included workers in tourist facilities, bazaars and workers in the diving room. The number of families benefiting from tourist boats ranges between 600 and 800.
24. The employees of the Four Seasons Hotel in Giza protested on Thursday, May 14, 2020, after deducting 12% of their salaries and forcing them to work without protection, as several hotel employees owned by Qatari Faisal bin Athem Al-Thani and managed by Tariq Al-Sayed after deducting about 12% of their salaries. The administration asked all employees to come to the hotel to return to work completely without taking into account the precautionary measures taken to confront the Coronavirus, and the hotel management has reversed its decision to return the workers after the pause that took place and gave the employees leave until Eid Al-Fitr.

# The Sixth Chapter

## Professional Syndicates

### (Lawyers - Physicians - Journalists)

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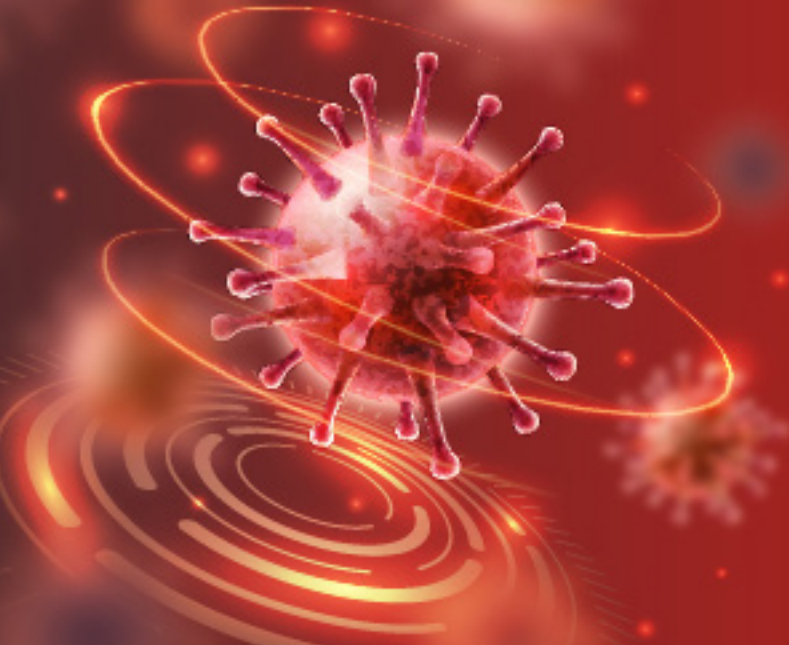
Egyptian unions have joined forces to take measures to confront the COVID-19 pandemic and provide protection and safety for their members, The following is a presentation of the most important measures taken by the Egyptian unions to protect their members.

#### **First: The Egyptian Bar Association**

#### **The measures taken by the union to confront COVID-19**

##### **Countermeasures**

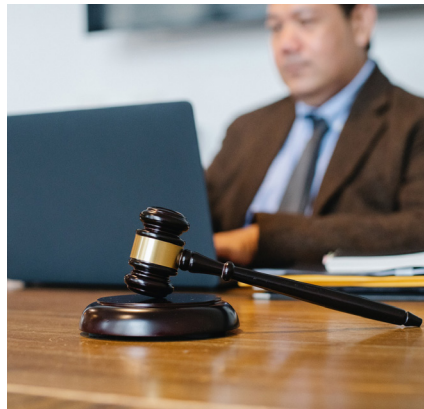
1. The formation of an emergency committee to combat COVID-19 pandemic by a decision of the President of the syndicate and the President of the Arab Lawyers Union.
2. Dedicating a hotline number (25750971) on May 21 to receive communications from lawyers about COVID cases or suspected infections.
3. Disinfection of the Bar Association headquarters in cooperation with the Ministry of Health and Population.
4. Two sterilization gates were installed at the headquarters of the General Syndicate in Ramses and the River Club for Lawyers in Maadi.
5. Conducting the initial tests to diagnose COVID-19, which are "CBC, ESR, CRP, D Dimer, Plain x-ray chest", in the analysis laboratories contracted under the union card only.



6. Negotiating a contract with a chest doctor to be present in the union during the three days in which the current doctor of the union is not present.
7. Dealing with letters of treatment via WhatsApp without the presence of colleagues requesting letters.
8. Allocating two buses to transport lawyers infected with COVID-19 in Greater Cairo to hospitals, while taking all preventive measures for drivers and escorts during the transportation.

### **Financial Measures and Benefits**

1. It was agreed with all the laboratories that the value of the initial COVID-19 tests would be discounted for lawyers, after obtaining an answer from the union.
2. Ain Shams University Specialized Hospital was contracted to do all COVID-19 tests instead of the swab, according to the new treatment protocols of the Ministry of Health, at a cost of a discounted price, with the lawyer bearing only 25% of its value.
3. Facilitating the procedures for receiving the dues of the deceased with the Coronavirus. The papers required to receive the funeral expenses are the death certificate, the deceased's card and the card of the beneficiary, have been identified at the headquarters of the General Syndicate.
4. The armed forces are supplying the association with the masks and disinfectants that it requested, 150 thousand masks at a discounted price, and alcohol packages for disinfection, and the union issued a decision to spend these masks at an amount of two pounds for the muzzle, provided that the union bears the difference in the price purchased from the armed forces.



5. A contract was made with Assiut University Hospital to admit COVID-19 cases at reduced prices.

### **Communicating with State Institutions**

1. Communicating with the Egyptian Ministry of Health to approve the sanitation of the bar association.
2. Communicating with the officials at the Ministry of Health, to indicate the extent of their preparations and what their requirements are to agree to equip the Lawyers Club in the Sixth of October City as an alternative to an isolation hospital.
3. The Syndicate sent a letter to the Ministry of Defense to supply 150,000 masks and alcohol cans for disinfection and the supply was approved.
4. The COVID-19 Virus Emergency Committee announced on June 12, 2020 that a contract is underway with the Egyptian Ambulance Authority to provide ambulances at the level of the Republic to transport colleagues in critical cases and provide them with oxygen tanks.

### **Members' Requests and Suggestions**

1. Preparing some lawyers' clubs as places for quarantine, especially the Lawyers Club in 6th of October, for an isolation hospital and appointing specialized doctors whose salaries are paid by the Syndicate instead of the Ministry of Health to relieve pressure on state hospitals.
2. Raising the amount allocated for tests and x-rays for lawyers to conduct the necessary medical COVID-19 tests.
3. Curfews do not apply to lawyers due to the nature of their work.
4. Disbursing the entire pension of the Corona deceased to his heirs. The entitlement to the full remuneration, and the entitlement of the heirs to the maximum pension for the maximum period of service.
5. The obituary of COVID-19 victims on the union's official website.

6. A proposal to convert some of the Syndicate's buses into ambulances, at a rate of two in each governorate, to transport infected lawyers to hospitals.

## **Second: Egyptian Medical Syndicate**

### **The measures taken by the union to support its members in the face of COVID-19.**

#### **Countermeasures taken by the Union**

1. Allocating the Syndicate's observatory to receive complaints from doctors from all over the Republic in the event of infection or suspicion.
2. The Syndicate organized an awareness and training campaign for citizens and doctors about the new COVID-19 pandemic through extensive workshops and lectures, which began with a workshop on COVID-19 in the presence of the Presidential Adviser for Health Affairs, Awad Taj El-Din and a group of working health, chest and analysis professors from Egyptian universities
3. The Continuing Medical Education Committee has made simulation videos to raise awareness and direct training for doctors on how to follow the correct control methods during their work, as well as to confront any possible scenarios in the crisis, in addition to educational videos to train young doctors on the use of a respirator.
4. The union continued to work after reducing the number of attendees according to the instructions of the Prime Minister, Mostafa Madbouly, regarding taking the necessary measures to prevent overcrowding, while taking all precautionary measures to preserve the health of its members.
5. The Syndicate established an observatory to track the chaos of medical malpractice during the crisis, such as publishing medical prescriptions on social media as a treatment for COVID-19. Two doctors have been referred for investigation for such a reason.



#### **Countermeasures taken by the government**

To protect the medical staff, the government had decided on several measures:

1. Allocating a floor in each isolation hospital with a capacity of 20 beds to treat the infected medical staff.
2. An analysis of the medical staff when they enter the hospital to carry out their work tasks, and when they leave after the end of their work, at a rate of 14 working days, and 14 days off.
3. Conducting immediate tests for anyone who shows any symptoms while performing his work; 19,578 tests have been conducted with the rapid detector and 8913 virus tests have been carried out.

#### **Communication with state institutions**

On May 28, 2020, a meeting was held between the President of the Doctors Syndicate and the Prime Minister to discuss ways to provide protection and support for doctors. After the meeting, the Prime Minister decided the following:



1. Treating doctors who died as a result of COVID-19 infection as martyrs like the army and police from a financial point of view.
2. Expanding the PCR tests for medical staff in contact with COVID-19 cases.
3. Implementation of the previous decision to allocate places to isolate members of the medical team from those infected with COVID-19 in all hospitals at the level of the Republic.
4. The necessity of completing the deficiencies of medical supplies, following up on the readiness of hospitals and training the medical staff that have been designated to work in the new isolation hospitals.
5. Opening channels of communication between the General Syndicate of Physicians, the Ministry and the government on an ongoing basis.

On May 31, Prof. Hussein Khairy, the head of the Syndicate of Doctors, met with Dr Hala Zayed, Minister of Health, at the Ministry's General Court. During the meeting, Dr Hala Zayed confirmed the keenness of the ministry and state agencies in applying the procedures to protect the medical teams.

The head of the Syndicate of Doctors also stressed all the demands of the previous union and the paramount importance of the state carrying out the national mission of protecting medical teams so that it can continue to carry out its national tasks towards society and all citizens. He also stressed the importance of overcoming the obstacles that stand in the way of implementing the state's decisions to protect the medical teams. It was also agreed to open a 24-hour communication channel between the Doctors Syndicate and the Minister of Health for the problems of the medical teams to be resolved as soon as possible.

## Union requests and suggestions

1. The necessity of taking different paths to separate patients suspected of being infected with COVID-19 from patients who are being treated from other diseases or to dispense treatment at the state's expense. If the design of the hospital does not allow this, they can be transferred to another place, to reduce the possibilities of transmission of infection between citizens and medical teams.
2. Taking measures to reduce the crowding of patients in the reception departments, through the multiplicity of patient reception rooms and not allowing the entry of more than one doctor with the patient.
3. The necessity of providing the highest standards of personal infection control supplies, as the medical staff in the triage hospitals, deal in one shift with dozens of patients infected with COVID-19, taking into account the performance test of the protective mask after wearing it to ensure that there is no leakage during work.
4. The elderly, patients with chronic diseases and pregnant women should be kept away from dealing with COVID-19 patients, as these groups are more vulnerable to infection and more serious complications. They can contribute to the follow-up of treatment of other cases.
5. Taking into account the housing conditions of doctors and nursing, so that safe distances are observed between family members. The housing is frequently disinfected so that it does not become a place to spread the infection among members of the medical staff.
6. The necessity of providing effective police insurance for hospitals, as anxiety and panic make organizing patients' entry for examination without crowding, and security companies that handle insurance often fail to act.
7. Increasing the carrying capacity of the laboratories entrusted with analyzing the swabs, to increase the daily capacity of the swabs analyzes, as the delay in the results of some swabs has been observed.



### Third: The Egyptian Journalists Syndicate



**The measures taken by the Union to confront the spread of COVID-19 among members and their families**

#### Countermeasures

1. A smart sterilization unit and thermal detection unit were purchased as a precautionary measure to protect the union's visitors and employees as soon as they enter the union building.
2. A committee was formed to confront the spread of COVID-19 to communicate with members of the press, headed by Daa Rashwan, the head of the Syndicate of Journalists. It includes Muhammad Shabana, the Secretary General, and Ayman Abdel Majid, the rapporteur of the Social and Health Care Committee. All members of the council consider themselves members of it to receive the calls of colleagues around the clock.

3. The Syndicate Council decided to issue a daily statement announcing the latest developments of COVID-19 among Syndicate members.
4. It was agreed with a group of specialized medical professors and consultants from among the finest cadres of fever hospitals, to communicate with the Syndicate in coordination with the Social and Health Care Committee by phone or electronically to advise them about any suspected case, and to express an opinion on the analyzes and rumours that should be carried out.
5. To facilitate the members' communication, they can contact via WhatsApp with the members of the competent committee when they feel COVID-19 symptoms or send a description of the symptoms on WhatsApp numbers. The message will be shown to one of the professors and specialized medical consultants with experience in fever hospitals, which the union agreed with them, to express an opinion on the tests and scans that should be carried out.
6. Cases that doctors recommend to perform tests or x-rays are directed to the service provider via a transfer letter sent via WhatsApp, to enjoy the prices and discounts set for the treatment project at this authority.
7. If a smear is needed, the case is directed by a letter from a project to Qasr Al-Aini Hospital to perform the smear, then immediate communication is made with officials of the Ministry of Health and the government complaints system, to take the required remedial measures for each case.

#### Financial Measures and Benefits

1. Opening the exceptional admission to the treatment project, for 15 days, starting from 1 to 15 June 2020, without penalty.
2. The treatment project, requires all the documents to confirm the infection, foremost of which is the CT scan of the chest through various partner parties, at reduced prices.

3. Having COVID-19 smears after taking medical advice and conducting rumours and previous analyzes, without charging journalists, members of the treatment project and their families any financial cost, at Qasr Al-Aini Hospitals affiliated with Cairo University.
4. Providing beds and rooms for isolation in Ministry of Health hospitals for journalists and their families who are proven to be infected, and their condition requires that, and the Ministry of Health provided treatment bags for those who are decided to be isolated at home, and those in contact with them.
5. Availability of surgical mask boxes with a capacity of 50 masks, produced by the "Qader" factory, in the Arab Organization for Industrialization, and protective face masks by the Investment Group of the Ministry of Endowments, while the committee continues to provide ethyl alcohol 70 per cent and N95 masks.
6. It was agreed with a medical centre to conduct medical analyzes for COVID-19, with discounts of up to 80% for journalists and their families from union members and trainees.

### **Contracts and Protocols**

The National Press Authority held medical protocols with the Egyptian Railways Medical Center and Ain Shams Specialized Hospital to provide medical services to people infected with COVID-19.

### **Syndicate Members' Requests**

Members of the General Assembly of the Union demanded the establishment of an isolation hospital inside or outside the union headquarters by allocating the river club on Al-Bahr Al-Adham Street or even allocating an isolation hospital for journalists only.





## The Seventh Chapter

### The State's Efforts in All Sectors

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#### **First: The State's Efforts to Guarantee Women's Rights at Work and Protect them from Domestic Violence**

The Egyptian state began coping with the COVID-19 pandemic with several measures and decisions that came from a human rights and gender-sensitive perspective.

In the forefront of which was the Prime Minister's decision to grant an employee who is pregnant or caring for a child under the age of twelve an exceptional leave as part of the state's precautionary measures to confront the COVID-19 for the duration of the validity period of his decision to reduce the number of workers in government interests and agencies within the package of precautionary measures taken by the state, to prevent the spread of the new Coronavirus.

This decision, which primarily takes into account the best interest of the Egyptian family, sends a message of reassurance to women and mothers, especially after the decision to suspend schools for two weeks. Article 9 of the decision stipulates that the exceptional leaves granted under this decision are paid and are not counted among the legally established leaves or affect any of the employee's financial entitlements.

The decision stems from and is consistent with the National Strategy for the Empowerment of Egyptian Women 2030, whose first lines of preamble began with a quote from the Egyptian President's speech on Egyptian Women's Day in 2017, "The national duty and responsibility before history necessitate us to speed up the pace in empowering women, preserving

their rights and placing them in the position that they worthy of its value, capabilities and sacrifice throughout history.”

In the same context, the Minister of Social Solidarity decided to increase the number of families benefiting from the social protection program “Solidarity and Dignity” during March to 3,400,000 families, equivalent to 15 million citizens, as part of the state’s keenness to expand the social protection umbrella.

## Second: The State’s Efforts in the Tourism Sector

### Decisions of the President of the Republic to support tourism

The country has lived through difficult times in light of the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic and the economic conditions of the Egyptian citizen were severely affected and tourism was the most affected sector. After tourism companies lost their sources of income and the presidential support came to support and preserve companies and workers in the tourism sector due to the global crisis.

The support of President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi were represented in the issuance of several decisions, all of which are in the interest of the tourism sector, the most prominent of which are:

- Continuing work on various projects related to tourism activity, as well as dropping the real estate tax on hotels and tourist establishments for six months.
- Directing the Central Bank to study the provision of bank financing for tourism and hotel facilities, so that it is allocated to finance the operational process to retain employment, provided that it is at a reduced interest.



- Raising the efficiency of the infrastructure of tourist facilities, so that they are fully prepared to receive visitors from the Egyptians and tourists as soon as the COVID-19 crisis subsides.
- The decision of President El-Sisi to launch the initiative to replace and renew tourist hotels and tourist transport fleets and raise the efficiency of the infrastructure of tourist facilities to be ready to receive visitors after the confinement of the COVID-19 crisis.
- Providing a supporting loan to the sector with a grace period of two years, in addition to considering the Ministry of Finance bearing some financial burdens on the civil aviation sector to support it in dealing with the repercussions of the current circumstances.
- Taking measures to support companies and establishments in the affected sectors, by paying the tax returns in instalments for these companies and establishments in three instalments ending on June 30th 2021, as well as postponing the payment and instalments of the real estate tax on these companies and establishments for three months, without calculating any fines or interests delay in deferred or instalment payments during that period.
- Disbursing financial support to workers in the tourism sector in monthly payments of a minimum of 500 pounds and the total first payment that was disbursed from the fund to the tourism sector amounted to 200 million and 761 thousand pounds to 192,558 workers in 2,764 tourist establishments.
- The second and third instalment that was disbursed from the fund for the tourism sector amounted to 371 million and 874 thousand and 382 pounds for about 175 thousand and 54 workers in 2,655 tourist establishments.
- The total amount disbursed to the tourism sector in five instalments as a result of the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic amounted to 878 million 121 thousand and 760 pounds.

This support reflects the extent of the state’s belief, led by the President of the Republic, in the importance of the tourism industry, its influential

contribution to the recovery of the national economy and it being the main source of foreign exchange and its link to more than 70 economic activities and other industries that are all reviving with the recovery of the tourism industry, making it the most capable of creating job opportunities, whether directly or indirectly. This is reflected in the unprecedented support from the state for the tourism sector during the era of President Sisi, relentlessly, given the continuing challenges facing the sector.

These decisions contribute to supporting the tourism sector's ability to face the major challenges it suffers from due to the continuation of the COVID-19 pandemic and preserve the basic components of the tourism sector to start the stage of return and launch as soon as the pandemic subsides.

### **The government and mechanisms to support Egyptian tourism**

Since the beginning of the pandemic, Egypt has sent a message of reassurance to the tourism sector on its continued support for President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi's directives. Egypt has issued several decisions during the first wave of COVID-19, the most important of which is postponing the payment of dues on companies and tourist and hotel facilities for electricity, gas and water consumption in addition to postponing the payment of government fees, services or usufruct fees owed by tourism and hotel companies and establishments and the payment of all debts owed by tourism and hotel companies and establishments for the periods before the COVID-19 crisis, so that the payment begins on a schedule.

The government also provided a subsidy for workers in the sector estimated at 100% of the basic wage of workers, and nearly 300,000 workers and employees in tourism companies, fixed and floating hotels, establishments and tourist restaurants benefited from this support.

Egypt provided loans at an interest rate of 5% to support workers and employees in the tourism sector, to pay salaries and rents, provided that the loan term is three months.

The great support that the government gives to the tourism sector, not only in the face of the repercussions of COVID-19 but in the face of all the crises that the sector is going through, stressed the state's keenness to stand

next to the tourism sector and support it with all the images until it recovers and returns stronger and better than it was.

### **Economic support measures for the tourism sector and related sectors**

- Providing a loan to support the civil aviation sector with a grace period of two years, in addition to considering the Ministry of Finance bearing some financial burdens on this sector to support it in dealing with the repercussions of the current circumstances.
- Conducting a study by the Central Bank to provide financing for tourism and hotels to transform the operational process to retain employment, provided that it is at a reduced interest.
- The Central Bank's decision to postpone the payment of all obligations and loan instalments, even personal, for six months.
- The payment of 41.8 million pounds, the value of the rest of the state proceeds from the profits of the Holding Company for Tourism and Hotels for 2020, has been postponed.
- Coordination between the Ministry of Tourism and the Egyptian Federation of Tourist Chambers to implement an initiative to support the simple groups in the tourism sector, such as the owners of boats and small boats, as well as the Ghafara in various tourist sites.
- Establishing a crisis fund to support workers in the tourism sector, aiming to support hotel workers, tour guides, workers in companies, tourist facilities and various bazaars, to save them in times of crisis.





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The Egyptian government presented economic decisions to mitigate the effects of precautionary measures on the tourism sector, which included:

- 1- Additional support for tourism financing initiative launched by President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi, with a value of 50 billion pounds, to continue operating hotels and financing their foreign banks, in addition to reducing the cost of lending in this initiative to only 8%.
- 2- Dr Khaled El-Anany, Minister of Tourism, stated that the state allocated three billion pounds as loans to investors in the tourism sector to pay salaries to workers and to restart hotels and tourist villages in light of the COVID-19 crisis.



3- A new initiative has been launched to support the labour-intensive tourism sector and hotels in the face of the negative repercussions of this pandemic which contributes to enabling tourism and hotel establishments, including small and medium-sized companies, to fulfil their obligations to cover the salaries and wages of workers and to meet the basic needs of their operation.

4- It was also decided to drop the real estate tax on hotel and tourist establishments for six months and to postpone the payment of all dues on tourist and hotel establishments for three months without fines or late interest.



- 5- The government stressed the owners of tourism projects to commit to paying the workers' salaries with procedures guaranteed by the Egyptian Federation of Tourist Chambers and its affiliated rooms, as well as buying 160,000 units for rapid medical examination for workers in the sector and reducing the daily presence to 15% in Cairo and Giza hotels. It has also partnered with two companies to monitor abiding by international standards in health and safety hotel establishments at the level of the Republic and the health awareness procedures that were made available to workers and to communicate with an international expert house to prepare a long-term strategy for the development of the sector.

The goal of these quick moves was the government's desire to preserve employment in the tourism sector, which amounts to 900,000 workers, who are trained and specialized workers in this field and to contain the harmful social effects of precautionary measures that negatively affected the tourism sector.

The Ministry of Manpower also paid subsidies to workers in the tourism sector, out of the total insured workers and it disbursed salaries for three months.

Furthermore, the requests of companies and tourist and hotel establishments revealed the number of their workers affected by the pandemic and submitted them to the General Federation of Tourist Chambers for review and submission to the Emergency Fund of the Ministry of Manpower, to obtain a grant estimated at 600 pounds, which is the minimum amount for social insurance.

The fund was reviewed with the social insurance, to work on the disbursement procedures for troubled establishments by checks or bank transfers on their account.

The number of applicants for the disbursement of subsidies provided by the Emergency Fund at the Ministry of Manpower has recently reached 250,000 workers, according to the fund's activity and what it currently provides.

### **Tourism promotion using modern technologies**

The Ministry of Tourism launched an initiative under the slogan "Explore Egypt From Home", and this initiative won the praise of the international press.

Launching virtual tours and guided trips to archaeological sites and museums through the official pages of the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities on the Internet, and on social networking sites (Facebook, Instagram and Twitter), which included virtual tours of the hierarchical group of King "Unas" and the tombs of "Maha" and "Wahiti" in Saqqara, and a presentation Masterpieces of Islamic Art in addition to a guided tour of the Grand Museum.

The launch of the health safety sign for hotels, which was approved by the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, and which must be available in all hotels wishing to operate, indicates their application of the controls and conditions approved by the Council of Ministers and per international health standards.

### **Coexistence with the Pandemic**

The decision of the Council of Ministers, through a tripartite meeting between the ministers of aviation, tourism and health, to allow the resumption of domestic tourism and the operation of hotel facilities at 25% of the hotel capacity as of May 15, 2020, rising to 50% as of June 1, 2020, with all taking precautionary measures inside hotels, maintaining disinfection and sterilization of all work areas and setting awareness guidelines in all workplaces for health safety and preventing the spread of infection.

The Egyptian Tourism Federation contacted an international expert house to prepare a long-term strategy for the development of the tourism sector.



### **Third: The State's Efforts in Education**

At the beginning of the new school year, the Ministry of Education, as well as the Ministry of Health, took several measures and decisions to deal with the pandemic during the school year and the most important of these decisions were as follows:

#### **Preparations for the academic year 2020/2021**

In a video message by Dr Tariq Shawky, dated October 17, 2020, he reviewed for students and parents, the state's preparations for the new school year 2021/2020 and the steps taken by the Ministry to manage the educational process while preserving the safety of all members of the

educational system, as well as explaining the various learning resources for all students and their equipment Ministry in anticipation of any exceptional circumstances. Dr Tariq Shawky said that the ministry has developed a plan to continue the learning process in light of the spread of COVID-19, by working to reduce the density by redistributing lessons and the multiplicity of learning sources without affecting the academic content that is supposed to be collected at the end of the academic year. Shawky added that thermal devices have been distributed to schools to measure students' temperatures daily, in addition to providing isolation places inside schools in case a student feels sick, in coordination with the Ministry of Health.

### **The Ministry's plan to continue the education process during COVID-19**

1. The learning resources that students will follow during the current academic year are as follows:

- Grades KG1 to Primary Three will have priority in attendance at the school because the new Education System 2.0 depends on communication with the teacher in the classroom.
- Grades from fourth to third preparatory stage; 3 educational TV stations will be provided, which will be the main source of learning, in addition to several other electronic platforms for those who have internet access.
- Grades from first to third secondary; the Ministry provided the students with many learning resources in addition to tablets, which will be delivered to the students during the first week of study.



2. The establishment of a new platform called the "Egyptian Education Platform", which is a platform directed to students, teachers and parents, noting that it aims to provide a guide for parents, students and teachers to deal with the many digital platforms made available by the Ministry and it includes information on all learning resources.

3. An electronic centre has been established to receive complaints and requests via the WhatsApp service and requests from 9 am to 5 pm and all complaints are responded to and interacted with by the ministry's leaders.
4. Launching educational channels under the name "Our School" and announcing the broadcast schedule for students, via the "Egyptian Education Platform" as well as printing and distributing it to students in schools.
5. It was agreed with Microsoft to provide a unified email for all students of educational levels to access all the platforms that will be made available by the ministry, in addition to providing free Microsoft office programs to 20 million students for training on labour market tools, which represents an important development on our way to transformation. The student can get the mail using his national number and the student code.
6. Establishment of the digital curriculum platform for the secondary stage LMS.EKB.EG, which is a platform that includes many digital learning resources for secondary school students, in addition to adding materials in French through the platform, and the platform is constantly updated, and it has been provided with textbooks.
7. An interactive electronic lessons library will be launched, as well as an educational TV channel for high school students and another for technical education students.
8. The various electronic platforms launched by the Ministry to serve students and help them learn in light of the spread of COVID-19, which are: "LMS.EKB.EG", with the availability of many aids such as: "Educational TV channels, a live broadcast platform for virtual classes, electronic library <http://study.ekb.eg>, Edmodo.org platform, e-lessons library, Ask the Teacher program and interactive e-books.



## Controls for the presence of parents of students during the school day

On October 19, 2020, the Ministry of Education and Technical Education sent a letter to the educational directorates regarding setting controls for the presence of parents of students during the school day, to preserve public health and in implementation of precautionary measures, and those controls were:

1. Allocate specific dates and places to receive parents to receive their requests and inquiries.
2. Assigning school principals to prepare awareness posters to be placed in a conspicuous place on the school's external doors regarding precautionary measures to prevent the spread of infectious diseases.
3. Opening the doors of schools to students and not crowding them to reduce gatherings.
4. Assigning a school employee to advise and advise parents not to gather to maintain public health.



## Organizing and managing the educational process in technical education schools

On October 6, the Ministry sent a letter to the educational directorates regarding the organization and management of the educational process in technical education schools during the academic year 2020/2021, in light of the emerging COVID-19 crisis, and it was as follows:

1. The Ministry stressed the need to implement all precautionary measures to deal with COVID-19.
2. The adoption of the hybrid education system as a basic system for educating students in technical education schools of all kinds, to ensure the combination of students' presence and the implementation of practical lessons at the school in their designated places and allocating sufficient time to discuss theoretical lessons and answer students' questions.

3. Taking advantage of Edmodo electronic platforms in communication between the teacher and students according to a schedule set by the school administration in cooperation with the competent technical guidance.
4. The Ministry has established permissions/powers for school principals under the supervision of the Director of Technical Education and his assistants in the educational directorates and departments, as well as the General Administration of Specialized Technical Education (industrial - commercial - agricultural - hotel - double education) in the technical education sector to set a system for students' attendance at the school as well as study schedules (showing the school's teaching schedule and a schedule distance teaching) in light of what has been determined in the study plans by the general directors of material development and specialized guidance, which shows the number of teaching hours in the school and the number of hours of distance teaching through the Edmodo platform and according to the density of students provided that a distance between students is achieved within classes at a rate of 1 - 1.5 meters (in if the density does not increase, attendance is carried out in the full traditional day system), as well as the institutional capacity represented in the space of classes, the availability of workshops, laboratories, and the actual available spaces.

## Organizing school reinforcement groups

On October 6, 2020, Dr Tariq Shawky, Minister of Education and Technical Education, issued a ministerial decision regarding the organization of school reinforcement groups during the school year 2021/2020 and the decision included the following:

1. The reinforcement groups will be optional in the academic subjects for students at the administration level for the preparatory and secondary certificates, and at the school level for the transfer classes, to improve the student's academic level in those subjects.
2. The period allocated for the group will be two hours per week, according to the specific educational plan for the study subjects, taking into account that the group consists of several students in proportion to the space of the allocated halls, with the need to take precautionary measures to preserve public health.

3. Reducing the percentage of 50% of the contributions specified for all classes of the children of martyrs and the sons of teachers in education and orphaned students, and reducing the percentage of 25% for the rest of the education workers, after submitting documents indicating that.
4. The competent director of the educational administration and the board of trustees of the administration determine the subscription fee for students of certificates (local/public) in one class, while the director of the school administration and the school board of trustees determines the subscription fee for students of transport classes, bearing in mind that the minimum amount is (10 pounds) and the maximum (85 pounds).
5. Some teachers who are not employed by the Ministry of Education and Technical Education may be sought after reviewing their qualifications through the concerned director-general of the educational administration, provided that their percentage does not exceed 25% of the total number of teachers participating in the groups.

### **Preventive controls and procedures regulating the closure of educational facilities as a preventive measure to deal with COVID-19 of the Ministry of Education.**

On October 4, 2020, the Ministry set several preventive controls and rules during the learning process, in conjunction with the application of precautionary measures, as follows:

- **Classes Closures:** Classes are closed if more than one confirmed case occurs in the same class within two weeks, the class is closed for 28 days starting from the date of the beginning of the implementation of the closure decision, and the decision is taken by the educational administration and the health administration.
- **School Closures:** Schools are closed when more than one class in the school is closed within two weeks. This is an indication of an increase in the rate of disease transmission in the school. Therefore, the school is closed for 28 days by the Directorate of Health and the Directorate of Education.

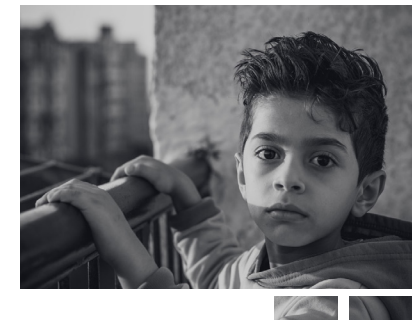
- **Closing a school complex:** After closing a school in a school complex, then the occurrence of an indicator of class closure in any of the schools in the same complex, and within two weeks of closing the first school, the entire school complex will be closed for 28 days by the Directorate of Health and the Directorate of Education.
- **Closure of village or city schools:** This is by a decision of the governorate when quarantine is imposed on a village or city, and the closure extends until the end of the prescribed quarantine period.
- **Closing governorate schools:** Depending on the recommendations of the Crisis Management Committee and the development of the epidemiological situation, a decision may be taken to close one of the governorate's schools for no less than 28 days and may extend according to what the committee decides, and this decision is implemented by the governorate office.

Provided that these procedures are applied to all types of public, private, international and other schools, a purification process is carried out for the classroom or facility, and the follow-up process of contacts is carried out by the Health Administration.

### **Cooperation of the Ministry of Health**

The Ministry of Health has developed a preventive plan that includes several measures to confront the emerging Coronavirus, coinciding with the start of going to schools and in preparation for the possibility of a second wave. The plan announced by the ministry included the following:

1. Reducing the attendance in school for studying for each semester to two days only, which helps to reduce the intensity significantly and if there is a specific activity that requires dividing students into groups, the individuals in each group are reduced by increasing the number of groups.



2. Schools have to provide temporary isolation rooms when a student or worker is suspected of being infected, with one of the supervisors sitting with the child until the competent doctor and parent attend and refer the case to the hospital.
3. The plan laid down the ten golden rules to prevent the spread of COVID-19 from washing hands well, natural ventilation, not touching other people's objects or surfaces, using personal tools only, leaving space for safety between individuals and speaking in a moderate voice while not shaking hands, hugging or kissing.
4. Waiting outside offices and bathrooms at safe distances while not approaching crowded places, eating healthy foods, sleeping well and exercising lightly at home.
5. The plan identified stages that represent the student's journey, starting from leaving home in the morning and going to school until returning and this included wearing a mask, washing hands and not crowding when boarding the school bus, as well as taking a temperature measurement before boarding and periodic cleaning of bus roofs and sitting at spaced distances on buses in a safe way and upon arrival at school, thermal screening is done for students with the need to organize the entry of students to the classroom, taking into account the lack of crowding when entering.
6. The Ministry has set a plan for sitting in the classroom so that each student sits on a separate desk, taking into account the social distancing, with teachers maintaining the social distance between him and the students.
7. The suspected cases are isolated in temporary isolation at the school until the doctor evaluates the case and informs the parent to attend and receive the child after his evaluation.
8. If the symptoms of the case are minor, the doctor decides the student goes home to isolation and follow-up at home for 14 days and he is allowed to return to school after three days from the disappearance of symptoms, but if the condition is moderate or severe, he is referred to the isolation hospital and followed up for 14 days and

he is allowed to return after symptoms end by three days permanently, but if symptoms persist, he will continue to be isolated and re-evaluated according to what the doctor deems.



9. Several measures are taken with minor cases before being transferred to the school, where the school nurse is responsible for explaining the rules of home isolation to the student and the parent before leaving school in the event of home isolation, with the parent handing over a copy of the home isolation instructions in addition to a copy of the signs of the development of disease symptoms and it completes the available data with the home presentation card and sends it to the director of the insurance clinic and the hospital director, who sends it to the director of the health administration and ensures that the case data is entered into the electronic program designated for reporting.
10. The Ministry of Health and Population announced the roles of (the health visitor in the school clinic, the doctor's role in the school clinic, the role of the comprehensive insurance clinic) to confront COVID-19 in schools.
11. The ministry clarified that there is complete coordination with all concerned ministries and the Crisis Committee in the Council of Ministers for all procedures for the safe return of schooling in schools.
12. An electronic link between the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health and Population to follow up the work of this plan in all schools to monitor and analyze student data and immediately report any suspected case.
13. Launching an awareness campaign aimed at raising awareness among children and their families about the right behaviours.

#### **Fourth: The State's efforts in the medical sector in the shadow of COVID-19**

In light of the Egyptian state's fight against COVID-19 and taking all precautionary measures and measures to prevent it. Many reasons expose the health sector to the risk of corruption. The fragile health care systems and some people's loss of income, present many opportunities for corruption.



Despite the circumstances, the country is going through and all government agencies' attempts to confront the emerging Coronavirus and all different ways to prevent it, the most important of which is the use of alcohol in disinfection and sterilization operations, as well as the preventive and legal measures it is taking and the Ministry of Interior in cooperation with various state institutions to take the necessary measures to protect citizens, especially with regard to the efforts made to combat ration crimes in all its forms, especially those related to the manufacture of medical supplies without a license and the exploitation of those conditions that the country is going through to achieve illegal gains and profits.

In the context of fighting corruption in the health sector and those who take advantage of those opportunities who are unscrupulous, the Administrative Control Authority arrested the secretary of the medical supplies store of the Directorate of Health Affairs in Damietta Governorate and also arrested a health observer in that directorate. Also, in the case of the storekeeper embezzling/stealing medical supplies needed to combat infection in government hospitals (masks, gloves and other isolation precautions), then selling them on the black market at the expense of hospitals' needs and forging documents proving that they were disbursed to hospitals.

In addition, the storekeeper offered a plot of land he owned with a market value of about 120 thousand pounds as a bribe, in addition to the amount of 60 thousand pounds that the second seized for himself, to mediate for him with one of the members of the inventory committee formed by the Administrative Control Authority, which is concerned with inventorying the custody of the storekeeper, from Medical supplies of masks, gloves and medical disinfectants, worth about one million pounds, in exchange

for a member of the committee handing him documents indicating that he embezzled medical supplies for infection control from his custody and selling them on the black market, in addition to fabricating false documents that prove their disbursement to government hospitals in violation of the truth, and they were referred to the Public Prosecution.

Some have also exploited this crisis and monopolized some commodities from medical supplies such as gloves, masks and alcohol, in addition to the spread of unlicensed factories to manufacture those materials that do not conform to medical specifications and do not have a permit from the competent authorities and store large quantities of disinfectant materials of unknown origin to put them on the market at prices also, some pharmacies owners and officials possess medical supplies such as masks, gloves and alcohol of unknown source and refrain from selling and storing them to achieve illegal profits.

#### **Fifth: The measures taken by the Egyptian government towards the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic**

As part of the state's efforts to combat COVID-19, Prime Minister Dr Mostafa Madbouly issued on April 16, 2020, Decision No. 17 of 2020 setting the selling prices of some products necessary to confront the emerging Coronavirus with the prohibition of locking it up from circulation, whether by concealing it, not offering it for sale or in any other way.

The decision also stipulated a set of penalties for anyone who violates this decision, with imprisonment for not less than a year and a fine of not less than 100,000 pounds and not more than two million pounds, or the equivalent of the value of the goods, in addition to punishing anyone who violates the advertisement and shows the prices of products to buyers with a fine of no less than 100,000 pounds, not exceeding five million pounds.

In the context of providing the needs of the Ministry of Health and the local market of the necessary protective tools to confront the Coronavirus, Dr Sherif Ezzat, Head of the Medical Supplies Division at the Federation of Industries, announced on April 21, 2020, that the market production volume of medical masks reached about two million masks per day, compared to 300 thousand masks at the beginning of the spread of COVID-19 in Egypt during March 2020, and that the local

market witnessed the entry of more than 20 new production line for the manufacture of ordered masks since the beginning of April 2020, with investments of about eight million pounds.

The Minister of Trade and Industry, Dr Nevin Jamea, also issued two decisions last March to stop the export of 18 products within three months, including masks and disinfectants, which contributed significantly to providing more quantities required for the markets during this period, provided that all quantities are supplied to the Unified Procurement Authority.

Also, the Egyptian Armed Forces had announced on March 30, 2020, the provision of medical devices and supplies to confront the emerging Coronavirus, in cooperation with the Ministry of Health, in implementation of President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi's directives to take all precautionary measures to confront the threat of the virus' spread.

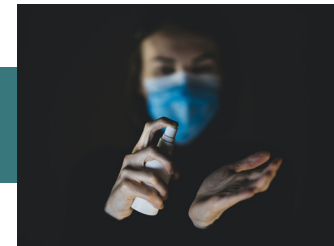
In March 2020, President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi directed the allocation of 100 billion pounds within the framework of the state's comprehensive plan to deal with any possible repercussions of the emerging Coronavirus and the Minister of Health and Population stated that medical supplies and intensive care are the most important aspects of that allocated amount.

The Council of Ministers (the Cabinet), headed by Dr Mostafa Madbouly, approved a draft decision of the Prime Minister regarding exempting medical equipment, supplies and medicines necessary to confront the spread of the new Coronavirus, from the legally established purchase fee, which is provided by the Egyptian Authority. For the unified procurement, medical supply and management of medical technology, for the benefit of the concerned parties, considering the COVID-19 as a pandemic and the condition of exemption applies to it in cases of disasters and pandemics.

Concerning the role of the Ministry of Health and Population, the ministry has announced phone numbers for complaints and inquiries about COVID-19 cases and has also provided respiratory devices in case there are any possible repercussions of the disease, while providing the necessary medicines and an amount of 150 million pounds has been allocated to purchase Medical devices that contribute to reducing and addressing COVID-19.

In January 2020, the Ministry of Health and Population increased the quarantine period at Cairo Airport to follow up on the precautionary medical insurance plan to confront the Coronavirus.

Undoubtedly, since the Ministry of Health announced the first COVID-19 case in February 2020, the Egyptian government has taken many measures to limit the spread of the disease, starting with periodic detection of arrivals in countries with COVID-19 cases, providing quarantine offices at airports and preparing isolation departments in hospitals, as well as its efforts in raising awareness on the virus and suspending flights to and from China since the first of February.



In March 2020, the Council of Ministers issued a decision to stop all sporting events that result in gatherings and to sterilize all government institutions, in cooperation with the Ministry of Health.

The Council of Ministers (The Cabinet) also issued a set of decisions, including imposing a night curfew, starting from 7 pm, then it was extended to start from 8 pm and during Ramadan, starting from 9 pm and returning to making it from 8 pm after the Eid Al-Fitr holiday, provided that the curfew begins during the Eid holiday from 5 pm. This comes within the framework of the state's efforts to limit the movement and spread of citizens in the streets, while not applying this to bakeries, grocery stores and supermarkets outside large shops, stopping mass transportation for the same period and punishing those who violate this with a fine of up to four thousand pounds.

On the other hand, the Egyptian government supported the sectors affected by the virus by providing social benefits, postponing the repayment of loans owed to the sectors that were affected and tax exemptions for them. Banks also reduced interest rates, as well as established a fund to support irregular and temporary workers who temporarily lost their

work, to provide for their needs. The number of people registered on the Ministry of Manpower website to benefit from the support has reached about 2.5 million workers so far.

The government also issued several decisions to support the economy and industry, including postponing the payment of the real estate tax due on factories and tourist establishments for three months and lifting administrative reservations for financiers who have payable tax in return for paying 10% of the tax due and providing one billion pounds to exporters during March and April with the reduction of electricity and gas prices for industrial facilities and postponing credit dues for institutional and individual customers for six months with no delay fines collected.

There is also a decision issued by the Ministry of Trade and Industry obligating Egyptian companies producing and importing medical products to supply their products and stocks to the Egyptian Authority for Unified Procurement and Medical Supply to provide the medical sector needs of medical supplies.

The government also suspended studying in all government institutions and air traffic in all Egyptian airports, sterilized all tourist facilities, reduced the number of workers in various state agencies and granted employees who have chronic diseases the opportunity to work from home.

There were other measures taken by the state, such as closing all museums and archaeological sites in all governorates of the Republic, closing funeral halls with any funeral being restricted to the family of the deceased only and suspending prayer in mosques and churches.

In addition, to suspend going to schools, the Ministry of Education has taken several other measures, such as supporting distance learning and providing various studying materials on the Egyptian Knowledge Bank website.

The Ministry of Social Solidarity has provided a new mechanism for disbursing pensions on days, aimed at reducing numbers and ensuring that there is no crowding.

## The role of regulatory and security agencies

The security and control agencies are carrying out their intensive campaigns in all governorates of the republic against pharmacies, shops selling medical supplies and beer unofficial factories, and directing proactive strikes to the manipulators in adulteration of those supplies of disinfectants, alcohol and masks and controlling those who exploit the demand of citizens and their need to buy these supplies to achieve huge profits unjustly.

We find that the Administrative Control Authority plays an important role in coordinating with the executive agencies in the governorates to prevent the exploitation of the sale of products, medical supplies and disinfectants on the black market and to control non-conforming ones. Its role is to carry out field campaigns in coordination with the directorates of health and supply affairs, the Consumer Protection Agency and all the executive agencies concerned with the governorates by passing through the places where medicines and other medical supplies are sold, imposing control over pharmacies and places where medicines are sold and detecting fraudulent disinfectants that are prohibited to be sold or stored, exploiting the needs of citizens in light of COVID-19.

We also find that the Consumer Protection Agency is prosecuting the sites of fraud and monopoly in all governorates as well and confronting any negative practices harmful to the consumer and the General Administration of the Supply Police had an important role in carrying out its ration campaigns to control commercial fraud crimes and take all necessary measures to preserve the health of citizens and monitor the markets to maintain the stability of prices, the availability of goods and the fight against fraud crimes in line with the efforts of the state due to the repercussions of the spread of the Coronavirus and the attempt of some to exploit these conditions to achieve material profits without considering the needs and health of citizens.





## Conclusion & Recommendations

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Through the previously presented problems and challenges faced by state institutions and individuals in dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic, there are still matters that need systematic solutions. Thus, the following are our recommendations:

### **A- Recommendations Related to Combating Domestic Violence and Ensuring Women's Rights**

- Women play an indispensable role in fighting the outbreak as health care workers, scientists, researchers, peacebuilders and caregivers. Thus, it is essential to ensure that women's voices and requests are heard, and their demands are considered.
- Including women's perspectives in crisis planning and decision-making, as well as the need for monitoring and response systems to include classification according to sex, age, gender, and pregnancy status, to understand the effect of COVID-19 more clearly.
- Involving more women in decision-making positions and ensuring their representation in any committees that are formed to confront COVID-19 at all levels, especially health and security ones.
- Obligating the private sector by the Prime Minister's decision to grant a female employee or worker who is pregnant or caring for a child under the age of twelve a leave, provided that the exceptional leaves granted under this decision are paid and are not counted among the legally established leaves or affect any of the employee's financial entitlements.

- Ensuring that all women, especially pregnant women, have access to clean and safe reproductive health services, ensuring that these needs are met in health facilities and at the hands of specialists, and the need to give pregnant women with respiratory diseases a top priority in treatment, due to their increased exposure to the risk of side effects, with the separation of health units for prenatal care, newborn care and mothers from other health units that contain cases infected with the emerging Coronavirus, with the importance of providing psychological support to women and girls affected by gender-based violence, as well as to health workers in general.
- Stop collecting insurance, taxes, electricity, water and gas bills from poor families headed by women and exempt their children from any educational expenses, whether pre-university or university.
- In the daily report submitted by the Ministry of Health regarding COVID-19 cases, the numbers must be detailed according to gender, age, and disability, to enable a broader understanding of how the virus spreads, and to know the best ways to prevent it accordingly.
- Continuing to provide social, health and psychological services and protection measures for survivors of domestic violence and announcing ways to communicate with them.
- Providing psychological support services to families to deal with the pressures arising from staying at home, promoting innovative ways and methods to spend time, and enhancing means of family cohesion.
- Civil society organizations and the media should start taking steps to address domestic violence by raising awareness through the media and social media to combat domestic violence during the outbreak of the pandemic.
- Disbursing cash aid and providing services, and material and moral assistance to women who head their families, and who are divorced, separated or in debt.



- Supporting families and raising their awareness of how to care for the elderly, and patients with chronic diseases, meet their special needs and raise their morale.
- Encouraging men and youth to share family responsibilities to lessen the heavy burdens that women carry while caring for family members.
- Providing instructions for the prevention of the Coronavirus for all segments of society, especially in remote areas, using all media, including radio, television stations and social media, and providing instructions in the languages of people with disabilities.
- Ensuring that domestic workers and daily agricultural workers receive their salaries and are protected with their work falling within decent work standards, and ensuring that working conditions provide them with protection from infection with the virus.
- Usually, in times of crises and disasters, countries take measures reviews of punitive policies and deal with male and female prisoners. Therefore, we see the necessity of releasing elderly women prisoners over the age of 60, who are among the group most at risk of contracting the Coronavirus, or who have chronic diseases or critical medical history. It makes them among the groups most at risk of infection, including women who suffer from diseases that promote infection with the virus, such as diabetes, blood vessels and respiratory diseases, pregnant women, women custodians of their children inside prison and women in debt for whom the state bears responsibility for their presence inside prisons because of their inability to provide their basic needs and those of their families.
- Approving an exceptional increase in cash support allocations through the social security pension and the "solidarity and dignity" pension to face the crisis that puts great pressure on the poorest groups.
- Supporting women beneficiaries of social housing in paying their premiums and supporting the women who are most vulnerable to the crisis, who are renting.



- Approving an exceptional increase in in-kind subsidies allocations on ration cards.
- Stopping any eviction procedures until the crisis ends and stopping reports of non-payment of rent, especially for the houses inhabited by poor families headed by women, especially those with low incomes, as well as women who own medium, small, and micro-enterprises and their workers during the current crisis, especially those who deal with the Medium and Small Enterprises Development Agency and are not covered by the law.

- Supporting female workers and workers in the health sector, including female doctors, nurses, support service providers and midwives, in terms of material and psychological, and building their capacities in dealing with cases of domestic violence, in particular, patients, and those infected with the Coronavirus.

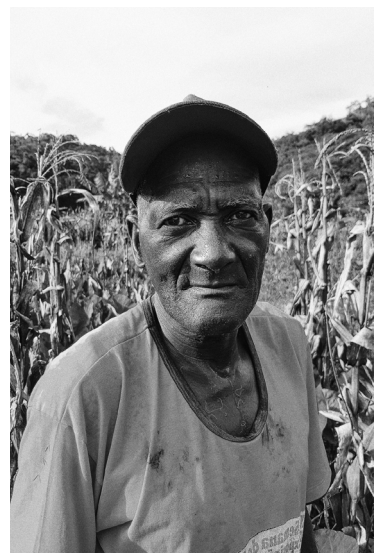


- Combining the efforts of civil society organisations and coordinating work between them to provide an integrated protection umbrella for the affected groups of the female breadwinners due to the pandemic, and to develop a map and database for beneficiaries to ensure that support and assistance reach those who deserve it.

#### **B- Recommendations relating to Small Farmers:**

- The necessity of stimulating and supporting the agricultural sector, whether it provides the needs of the local market for goods or the export sector, like the other 'industrial', 'real estate' and 'tourism' sectors.
- Granting the farmer small loans without interest, postponing the payments of farmers' instalments at the Egyptian Agricultural Bank and lifting customs on fodder to address the rise in prices, especially in light of the high prices of production requirements, as small farmers represent a large segment of Egyptian society.

- Reviewing the prices of subsidized fertilizers for farmers with the decline in international prices of fertilizers, and the decline in international gas prices to almost their lowest levels, at \$1.77 per million thermal units.
- Activating the agricultural insurance file on crops, which contributes a lot in several countries to compensate small farmers for the losses they suffered during the crisis.
- There must be a comprehensive review of the support operations, which do not benefit the agricultural sector or farmers.
- Establishing an agricultural solidarity fund, to compensate farmers for the losses that will be inflicted on them, as a result of the outbreak of the pandemic.
- Analyzing the lessons learned from the crisis, to maximize agricultural production, and work to achieve self-sufficiency in strategic crops, which cannot be dispensed with, such as wheat, corn, and others, by preparing a short-term and long-term plan to achieve self-sufficiency.
- Maximizing the use of agricultural research centres at that time, as they can assist in the vertical expansion of agriculture and achieve better, faster and lower costs.



- Preparing for the wheat harvest season, and for there to be an effective practical application of the measures taken by the state regarding the Coronavirus, during the approaching harvest period or regarding the supply and the action plan to prevent backlogs in the supply and collection operations.

- Removing the obstacles that Egyptian farmers face by providing seeds, fertilizers and pesticides at reasonable prices and marketing and purchasing crops at prices that achieve appropriate profits for farmers.

- Reconsidering the role of cooperatives, amending the law and establishing a cooperation bank to solve financing problems, protect small farmers and youth and encourage them to set up small projects and develop the Egyptian countryside.
- Supporting production requirements of fertilizers, selling diesel and gasoline at cheap prices in light of low oil prices and obligating farmers to grow grains every year and buy them at reasonable prices that will make a profit for the farmer, provided that the government controls the largest proportion of purchases.
- Provide small-scale farmers and pastoralists with seeds, tools, fodder, and other agricultural inputs, along with animal health support, so that they can continue to generate income and produce food for their families and communities.

### C- Recommendations related to Education:

- Upgrading the technological infrastructure in villages, rural areas and the poorest areas, and continuous training of teachers in poor villages on the use of modern technology.
- Issuing a free and simple educational application for use by the Ministry for all educational levels to help parents follow up on their children and for the school specialist to train parents to use the application easily.
- Injecting financial resources to develop educational programs and curricula for the school year 2021/2022 and using international expertise and international programs to support educational programs.
- Activating the role of the Monitoring and Evaluation Department in the Ministry of Education by training employees to use the Internet and dealing with electronic platforms so that they can follow up on teachers' performance in virtual classrooms.



- Requesting civil society organisations interested in education issues, in coordination with the school board of trustees, to assist parents by providing training courses for technological literacy; to keep pace with academic achievement, because the success of distance learning depends on the cooperation and follow-up of schools with parents.
- Increasing investments in the villages and governorates of Upper Egypt to modernize the technological infrastructure considering the state's inclination towards distance education to confront COVID-19 in the future.
- Paying attention to educational programs on television channels for students from poor and disadvantaged areas to ensure their inclusion in the distance learning process.
- Taking advantage of the parallel learning system to formally support the educational process and broadcast lessons on educational channels for a specified income.
- Benefiting from international grants and international organisations (UNICEF and the World Bank), which help to carry out the reforms concerned with controlling the virus.

## Conclusion

Since the outbreak of COVID-19 at the end of 2019, the humanitarian situation has deteriorated worldwide. The Egyptian society has been negatively affected by the precautionary restrictions, and the exercise of some basic rights such as movement has temporarily stopped. The COVID-19 pandemic is not only a public health emergency, it is much more than that. Although the virus does not discriminate in contagion, its consequences do. It is an economic, social, as well as a humanitarian crisis that is rapidly turning into a human rights crisis.

The pandemic has created significant weaknesses in the delivery of public services and left structural inequalities that impede access to these services. We must make sure that it is addressed appropriately as part of the pandemic response. The gender gap in economic participation and opportunity is widening. In Egypt, women represent the majority of workers in the informal sector and are often in more vulnerable situations than their male counterparts. Many women are also exposed to structural violence, the most common of which is domestic violence.

The disruption of the export of some Egyptian agricultural products harmed farmers, especially the small ones. This coincides with the development of the digital agricultural sector and agricultural industrialization after Egypt's inclination towards advanced and digital agriculture in greenhouse farming and mechanization of the agricultural sector and the start of using the smart card and the ambition to restore the textile industry to its previous glory and to increase the economic value added by agricultural industrialization of Egyptian agricultural products.

The pandemic has caused complete paralysis of the global tourism movement as a result of closing borders and suspending flights, which has affected the tourism sector in Egypt and incurred billions of losses, and nearly a million people lost their jobs.

The health sector in Egypt has faced some forms of administrative corruption by those responsible for medical stores, especially the requirements to combat the outbreak of COVID-19. The right to health is getting worse due to the monopoly of pharmaceutical companies manufacturing COVID-19

vaccines and its effect on the ratio of those vaccines reaching middle and low-income countries, such as most African countries. They were unable to achieve the goal set by the COVAX Initiative, which is to provide the vaccine to 10% of the population of each country. Health is a right and not a commodity, as we must work to end the monopoly of these companies to manufacture the vaccine, as these companies affect the decision-making process due to the weakness of economic diplomacy. It imposes leaving space for these companies to achieve their profits until the companies became part of the global pandemic and the cause of it.

The professional syndicates in Egypt realized the continuous danger of the spread of the pandemic, led by the Bar, the Doctors Syndicate and the Journalists Syndicate. They urgently worked to take extensive measures to protect their members and their families, given the vital nature of their work in society.

Finally, Egypt took notice of the crises that followed the outbreak of the pandemic, applied crisis management standards in many sectors and officially intervened technically, financially and socially, especially in the sectors highlighted by this publication. Thus, it avoided the collapse of the humanitarian, social and economic conditions in Egypt.





The restrictions imposed on the whole world as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic have affected all aspects of our lives; individuals, groups and organisations. We witnessed the economic, political and social consequences of the pandemic, as well as how the world was affected by its repercussions. We saw the entire world struggling to manage this crisis, as well as the transmission of these repercussions from one country to another as if the world was a small village.

With a narrower focus on Egypt in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, we have witnessed the negative effects that resulted from the pandemic in economic and political factors and their impact on social cohesion. This publication reviews the most prominent challenges faced by individuals and government institutions in confronting the health, social and economic crisis.

It sheds light on the most prominent problems that escalated with the beginning of the outbreak of the pandemic and the necessary recommendations to adapt and solve them. More broadly, the publication reviews the Egyptian experience in adapting to the COVID-19 pandemic.

