

# **Needs Assessment of the Education Sector in Egypt**

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## List of Acronyms

AHDR	Arab Human Development Report
AUC	American University in Cairo
CAPMAS	Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics.
CCIMD	Curriculum Center for Instructional Materials Development
CDA	Community Development Association
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
DECODE	Development Cooperation Database Egypt
EEP	Education Enhancement Program
EHDR	Egypt Human Development Report
ETCP	Technical Colleges Project
FEPS	Faculty of Economics & Political Science
FLDP	Faculty and Leadership Development Project
FOEP	Faculties of Education Project
GALAE	General Authority for Literacy and Adult Education
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education
GUC	German University in Cairo
HDI	Human Development Index
HEEPF	Higher Education Enhancement Project Fund
ICDL	International Computer Driving License
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
ICTP	Information and Communication Technology Project
IGCSE	International General Certificate of Secondary Education
INHEA	International Network of Higher Education in Africa
INP	Institute of National Planning
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
MKI	Mubarak Kohl Initiative
MOC	Ministry of Communication
MOE	Ministry of Education
MOHE	Ministry of Higher Education
NDP	National Democratic Party
NER	Net Enrolment Rate
NGO	Non Governmental Education
NSE	National Standards of Education
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
PARC	Public Administration Research and Consultation Center
QAAP	Quality Assurance and Accreditation Project
SAR/EEP	Staff Appraisal Report/Education Enhancement Program
SCU	Supreme Council of Universities
TORs	Terms of Reference
TS	Teachers' Syndicate
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WB	World Bank
WDI	World Development Indicators

## INTRODUCTION

Educational reform is an issue of concern to the Egyptian government, and has been on the top of the government's agenda since the beginning of the 1990s. Despite the efforts exerted, the increasing amounts of resources devoted to the process of educational reform, and despite the progress achieved, still a lot needs to be done.

Over the past fifteen years, reform efforts have been met by numerous challenges and obstacles, foremost among which are the increasing rate of population growth, the resulting demand for greater quantities of educational services and educational opportunities, the heavy burden of accumulated problems inherited from previous generations, the low rate of return to education, and the resistance to change from the Egyptian bureaucracy. As a result, up to the present day, and as recently proclaimed by the President of Egypt in his latest speeches paralleling the change of cabinet in July 2004; the outputs of the educational process are not yet satisfactory and need a great deal of reform (Al Ahram, 1 Sept.2004).

Consequently, during the past six months Egypt has witnessed a new surge of intensive reform discourse. There is a strong need to sit back and assess progress achieved so far, and find out how to go forward.

The German Development Cooperation Agencies have partnered with Egypt in the educational reform process, and wishes to continue its support to the education sector in Egypt. Through the current study assessing educational needs in Egypt, two main goals are pursued: the evaluation of the needs and requirements of education, and the identification of the appropriate areas and mechanisms for German development cooperation. To achieve those two goals, several research questions are tackled:

- What was the impact of the second Arab Human Development Report on the reform agenda and how was it received by scholars and experts?
- What is the policy process for educational reform in Egypt, and who are the main actors?
- What is the current discourse on educational needs and what are the main influential studies and reports influencing the discourse?
- What needs to be done to solve problems of basic, secondary, vocational and higher education in Egypt?
- What is the assessment of the main stakeholders regarding bi-lateral and multi-lateral cooperation in educational programs?
- What are the views of the main stakeholders regarding most appropriate mechanisms of cooperation with German development agencies?

## I. RECEPTION OF THE ARAB HUMAN DEVELOPMENT REPORT II (AHDR):

The Arab Human Development Report 2002 was issued by the UNDP in the summer of that year. It was received differently by different scholars around Egypt and in the Arab world. In Egypt scholars identified both positive and negative aspects in the report.

In a published article by the resident representative of the UNDP in Egypt, Antonio Vigilante, under the title of "Education should be the drive for development in Egypt", he emphasizes the main message of the report in pointing out to the slow pace adopted by Arab countries on the road to knowledge (Vigilante, 2003). According to Vigilante, the AHDR represents an alarm bell to the Egyptian society and its leaders, as it includes a detailed analysis of the situation of knowledge production and dissemination, in addition to a description of how 'the

shortage in knowledge' represents an obstacle to Egyptians inhibiting their ability to fully achieve their potential as individuals, and as a society as a whole. For example, the slow pace of eradicating illiteracy is one of the main factors for the slow progress of the nation in all sectors. Although Egypt has been concentrating for a long while on developing its physical infrastructure, the AHDR shows clearly that the time has come for heavily and urgently investing in the best development advantage of any country, and that is its human capital. President Mubarak has declared education to be the national project of Egypt since ten years or more, but –according to Vigilante- no tangible improvements have taken place in the quality of education in the Egyptian society as a whole. Most education development efforts focused on extending the quantitative coverage, mainly increasing the number of schools and teachers, but this was not paralleled with a matching improvement in quality. However, only recently there is a new trend evident to divert attention to quality issues. Two important initiatives in that regard are those supported by UN organizations, one dealing with developing a plan for girls education, and implemented by the National Council for Childhood and Motherhood, aiming at reaching full enrolment for both girls and boys in basic education, and the other initiative dealing with Egypt's National Program for Eradicating Illiteracy. Both those two initiatives tackle some of the fundamental problems specified in the AHDR. However, the effectiveness of both those two initiatives will depend on the speed and quality of their implementation. According to Vigilante, the AHDR clarifies the fact that the shortages in education and in knowledge have a dire effect on the social, economic and political development in Egypt, and in other Arab countries. Therefore, Arab countries should deal with the issue of knowledge as a tool towards overcoming deficiencies in the two other areas delineated in the AHDR, namely freedom and women empowerment. Arab leaders should lose no more time, but should initiate a giant project for education and knowledge to avoid the repercussions of a heavy burden being thrown on the shoulders of coming generations in Egypt.

In a workshop organized by the Center for the Study of Developing Countries, Faculty of Economics and Political Sciences, Cairo University, to discuss the report, and attended by a group of professors and experts, there were many controversial opinions raised. Among the **main positive points** mentioned by supporters for the Report were:

**The overall message:** The report presents an excellent analysis for the reasons of degradation and slow progress in the Arab world; the Report provides the Arabs with a mirror to view themselves for real and this will put them on the right path; it represents a credible alarm bell and call for action to advance forward; it is the output of joint Arab research and presents the Arab perspective in overcoming the main problems they face,

**The focus on knowledge:** It emphasizes the important role of knowledge in all societies and the need to rely on self reform as the only acceptable alternative for re-structuring the Arab region, it presents a comprehensive strategy for improving the Arab situation based on knowledge, it did well in focusing on the education system and exposing its shortcomings, the Report emphasized knowledge and its being an important pre-requisite for achieving development, and its being related to the competitive capacity of nations in today's world, the Report showed that knowledge dissemination does not depend only on the effectiveness of scientific institutions, but also on their coordinative and networking capacity to sources of knowledge production, it emphasized the role of the state in establishing the needed links between scientific institutions, it focused on the Arab education system, and raised two important points regarding the teaching of foreign languages, and the plurality in the education system, whereby there are Arabic sections in parallel to English sections in many faculties. (Center for the Study of Developing Countries, 2003).

**Opponents** to the AHDR raised the following points:

**Methodology and Analysis:** The Report suffers from a measurement problem as it discusses the whole Arab World without getting into the details of the picture. The Report is not actually a report in the scientific sense, but rather a book divided into various chapters; a report should signify a survey of renewable facts over time, which did not happen in this case, that it is generally weaker than the first report, that the information used in the Report was selectively biased to support the needed messages, that the Report presented several value judgments as givens, which detracted from its scientific value

The Report includes faulty misuses of figures and includes a large number of meaningless clichés. The Report also relies more on statements and descriptions more than analysis and interpretations. Moreover, an important verity that seems to have completely escaped the Report developers is that Human Development does not have one single measure suitable for all cultures, but that it is a must to use different measures to suit the different value systems. Different values lead to different sources of luxury and different sources for feelings of human dignity and its violation. In that sense development may be more related to a society's ability to realize the values believed in by that specific society. The Report also intentionally excludes per capita income as one of the measures of development, which evidently opposes the definition of the internationally renowned Human Development Index. The purpose once more is to emphasize the deficiency of many Arab nations in human capacities and skills.

**Issues Missed:** The Report pointed to the deficiencies in basic research, yet it did not point out the Arab priorities in that regard. It did not pay sufficient attention to the issue of human resources and its availability in the Arab region, although not adequately utilized. It should have given more attention to the issue of brain drain from the Arab countries. Although it devoted a lot of attention and space to the discussion of culture components, it did not point out the targeted contents of the culture the Arabs should aspire to. It did not discuss the developments already achieved in the education systems or any positive achievements in the Arab nations, which is in itself a major shortcoming. It did not give enough attention to the lack of access of the poor to education (Center for the Study of Developing Countries, 2003).

Meanwhile, in a published work by Dr. Galal Amin, the famous Egyptian economist, he presented a detailed critical analysis of the message, contents and methodology of the AHDR. Among the points mentioned in his critique were the following:

**Bleak Picture:** Dr. Amin was astounded by the welcoming reception awarded to the AHDR report in the western media; a welcome that can only be explained by the fact that the report degrades both Arabs and Moslems in its basic message, and that this currently is the shortest route to fame in the West. The Report presents a very dark picture of the current Arab economic situation and Arab economic performance during the past few decades. The figures and information contained in the Report are not necessarily new, but what is new is the figurative language used to emphasize the degree of degradation. The conclusions reached by the Report are indeed surprising, and even more surprising is the absolute support for these conclusions by the Economist magazine. In the Report three main reasons are provided for the poor Arab economic performance, namely: lack of political freedom, neglect of knowledge and scientific research, and poor treatment of women. As for "knowledge and scientific research" the Report and the Economist magazine complain from the deteriorating condition of education, the spread of illiteracy and the retardation of Arabs the in the fields of scientific research and information technology. According to Dr. Amin, despite the fact that the spread of illiteracy may indeed be considered a disgrace, yet there are great variations between Arab nations in that respect. Moreover, the causal relationship here may be the opposite of what the Report claims, meaning that improvement in economic

performance leads to both quantitative and qualitative improvements in education. Finally, Dr. Amin concludes that the lack of depth in the Report is not surprising, but what is incomprehensible is the unfamiliar severity in discussing the performance of Arab governments during the past twenty five years, especially by an international organization like the UNDP that has always been known to be mindful of diplomacy and courtesy in discussing any nation worldwide.

**Bias:** In analyzing the different elements of “Human Capital Efficiency”, the Report randomly and non-objectively chose the one element of Education. Accordingly, all the relative low level of growth and productivity, in the Arab nation as a whole, was attributed to education. This occurred despite the great variations between Arab nations in the level of progress achieved; despite the great diversity in the types of education provided and the relationship and impact of these various types to the growth rates, and despite the deficiency in the measure used by the Report for the status of education, which is the “average years of education” regardless of type, efficiency or suitability. Proposed changes to the Report to present a more true picture of the Arab Economic performance include: first, pointing to the variations between Arab nations, and second, distinguishing clearly, in the factors influencing economic performance, between the external factors that are difficult to control, and the factors related to the economic policies of nations (Amin,2004).

In **personal interviews** held with a number of ministers and public officials, opinions were mostly skeptical about the AHDR. The general response was that the report presented a somewhat pessimistic picture, was understating the current status and achievements, and that the statistics relied upon were misinterpreted. For example, the overall assessment of the Report by the **Minister of Planning** was very negative. According to him the message was unclear, and therefore was misunderstood, plus there was an intentional distortion of facts and figures. He mentioned that the Report does not rely on official governmental data, but on other secondary sources, and that it includes generalizations regarding the Arab World, which may in the most part be inapplicable, and that we cannot for example compare between the population of Egypt, 70 million, with other populations that do not exceed half a million in number (Osman, 2004).

Meanwhile, another **public official in the MOE** , repeated that the report focused only on negative aspects, and that it lacked qualitative analysis, but despite the many faults, it led to increased awareness with the issues raised, and contributed to a general awakening (El Bilawy, 2004). Similarly, according to the **Ex-Minister of Youth and Ex-Dean of FEPS**, Dr. Aly El Din Hilal, the importance of the report emanates from its use by foreign countries to pressure Egypt to reform its education and knowledge production and dissemination infrastructure. Although the education reform process has started in Egypt since the nineties, yet the AHDR gave the supporters of the Education Reform process a greater momentum (Hilal, 2004).

To complement the previous review of the reception of the AHDR, as evident in scholarly writings, discussions and select interviews, an **opinion survey** was also conducted to solicit the opinions of a sample of academicians and mass communication experts. Questionnaires were distributed to a representative sample of faculty members belonging to the Faculty of Economics and Political Science (FEPS), Cairo University; 33 members in total belonging to the various departments of economics, political science, statistics, public administration and computer science applications. The choice of FEPS was based on the fact that it is the faculty most interested in public policy analysis, including educational policies, and it is where the workshop for discussing the AHDR was held, with a large audience from among the faculty’s staff. Furthermore, another set of questionnaires was distributed to a sample of journalists representing the assortment of daily and weekly highly read newspapers and magazines in Egypt, to find out about their opinion of the AHDR; namely 19 economic and



political researchers working in Al-Ahram, Akher-Saah, Akhbar-el-Yom, Al-Ahali, Al-Allam-Al-Yom, Al-Ahram Weekly, The Middle East, Al-Ahram el-Iqtisadi (see table 1).

An analysis of table (1) results shows that more awareness of the AHDR seems to exist among journalists as compared to university staff (100% awareness among journalists, as compared to 66% among university staff), although FEPS is the most concerned faculty within Cairo University, being the premise for the study of political science, economics and development, and wherein a seminar for the discussion of the AHDR was held. Moreover, the most effective tool for the dissemination of knowledge about the report was seminars and workshops (26% for journalists, and 18% for university staff), followed by access through libraries, while the mass media played a limited role. Those who read the report mostly read parts of it, but not all, (86% for journalists, and 18% for university staff), with the chapters on knowledge dissemination and production acquiring the highest relative ranking. In the opinion of the majority of the respondents, the coverage of the report in the mass media was limited, (40% for journalists and 33% for university staff), and it is perceived to have had a lesser impact on the policy making process, as compared to its impact on the public discourse. Moreover, a large group of respondents perceive that other documents are more widespread (42% among professors, and 80% among journalists) with specific mention of the UNDP Human Development Reports, the Arab Strategic Report and the World Bank reports.

Perhaps, the AHDR was not welcomed by the Arab intellectuals everywhere, and maybe in Egypt in particular it did not get a warm reception; the criticisms tackled its message, contents, methodology and validity. Nevertheless, one thing can be conceded about the Report; it managed to heat up the discussions about the need for educational reform. It was one of the main incentives for continuing the discussions that had already started years ago about the need for reforming education.

**Table 1: The Main Results of The AHDR Opinion Poll**

	<b>Question</b>	<b>University Staff</b>	<b>Journalists</b>
<b>1</b>	Have you seen, heard, or read about the AHDR		
	Seen or heard	Yes: 66%	Yes: 100%
	Read	Yes: 30%	Yes: 73%
	Do not know anything about it	24%	Nil
<b>2</b>	If you have seen the AHDR or heard about it,		
	Through the mass media	15%	13%
	Through the internet	3%	13%
	Through attending seminars	18%	26%
	Through libraries	-	33%
	Got a copy of the report	3%	-
	Unspecified	51%	-
	Cannot remember	9%	-
<b>3</b>	If you have read the report, what did you read		
	All the Chapters	18%	13%
	Some of the Chapters:	18%	86%
	Please specify:		
	Knowledge production & dissemination	3%	26%
	The annexes	-	13%
	The Summaries	-	6.6%
	Women Issues	-	6.6%
	Technology Gap	3%	-
	Human Development	3%	-
	Do not remember	3%	-
<b>4</b>	For whom do you think the AHDR is directed?		
	Policy Makers	36%	46.6%
	Teachers, Professors and Practitioners	12%	40%
	Students and pupils	-	40%
	Non-Governmental Organizations	9%	53.3%
<b>5</b>	What is your opinion of the coverage of media?		
	Wide spread	12%	33.3%
	Limited	33%	40%
	Positive	15%	33.3%
	Negative	18%	6.6%
<b>6</b>	Do you think that the AHDR had an impact on:		
	Public Policy making	Yes: 3% No: 51.5%	Yes: 26% No: 33.3%
	Public Discourse	Yes: 13% No: 12%	Yes: 73% No: 20%
<b>7</b>	Are there other documents more widespread?		
	Yes	42%	80%
	No	21%	20%
	What are these documents?		
	UNDP Human Development Report	11%	46.6%
	The Arab Strategic Report	3%	26%
	World Bank Reports	9%	-
	International Competitiveness Reports	3%	-
	Millennium Development Goals Report	3%	-

## II. POLICY PROCESS FOR EDUCATIONAL REFORM:

### II.1 The Structure of the Egyptian Education System

Egypt's education system has been classified by the World Bank as the largest in the MENA region. In 2002/2003, the number of students enrolled in primary, preparatory and secondary education reached approximately 15.5 million for whom 807 thousand teachers are responsible. The total number of schools amounts to approximately 37 thousand (World Bank, 2002; Interview El Bilawy, 2004; MOE, 2003; UNESCO, 2003).

Egyptian students attend three types of schools: publicly funded and publicly managed schools, privately funded and privately managed schools, and publicly funded and privately managed schools, Al Azhar, offering Islamic religious instruction beside the main curriculum set by the MOE. Al Azhar schools offer free education, and have their own teaching staff and employees who report to the Ministry of Awqaf. Over 90% of students are enrolled in public schools at all levels (World Bank, 2002).

In addition, several international education systems are allowed to operate – IGCSE, GCSE, American Diploma, International French Lycee, German Abitur- in parallel to the governmental system, but governed by agreements signed between Egypt and the concerned countries.

Higher education in Egypt consists of university and non-university education. University education includes 13 public universities (within which Al-Azhar university has a specific status), 3 foreign universities (the American university, the German University and the French University), and 4 private universities. The American University in Cairo has a non-profit status, and was established by virtue of a special agreement with the GOE in the 1919, while all the other private and foreign universities were established in 1996 and afterwards. In May 2004, the Private Universities Board reviewed several further requests for opening private universities, approved the request for Al-Ahram Canadian Egyptian University, and agreed on terms of principle on the request presented for the establishment of both the British University and El-Nile University.

Although the actual number of students in private universities still represents quite an insignificant percent of the total number of university students, yet the GOE in its new policy, aiming at increasing the rate of students attending higher education, is opting for an enhanced role to be played by the private sector and civil society organizations (see tables 2 & 3). According to the Minister of Planning, the new cabinet is planning to increase the absorptive rate of higher education universities and institutes from the current level of 30.5% to reach a target level of 50%, so that the total number of university students increases from approximately 1.5 million students to 5 million students by the year 2015 (Osman, 2004). Meanwhile, the number of students enrolled at the Azhar university reached 182,378 students in 1998/99 (INHEA, 2004).

Non-university higher education includes private and technical institutes under the direct supervision of the Ministry of Higher Education, in addition to specialized higher education in some academies, faculties and institutes affiliated to other ministries, for example the Ministry of Defense, the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Communication. The total number affiliated to the MOHE amounted to 144 in the academic year 2002/2003. The higher institutes offer degrees equivalent to the undergraduate degrees conferred by universities, while the intermediate two year post-secondary institutes lead to a technical education diploma. Holders of the technical diploma who score 75% and above may be admitted to Higher Institutes of similar specializations (table 4).

**Table 2: Number of Registered Students in Egyptian Public Universities During the Academic Year 2003/2004:**

	University	Total Registered Students		
		Regular Atte	Affiliate Student	Total
1	Cairo	163,247	58,042	221,289
2	Alexandria	23,950	29,242	53,192
3	Ein –Shams	117,239	53,174	170,413
4	Assyout	50,232	14,268	64,500
5	Tanta	81,581	27,452	109,033
6	El- Mansoura	83,987	24,378	108,365
7	El- Zagazig	116,311	34,877	151,188
8	Helwan	73,380	20,467	93,847
9	El-Minia	33,193	5,167	38,360
10	El-Menoufia	52,278	18,021	70,299
11	Suez-Canal	38,032	10,899	48,931
12	South Valley	47,250	11,613	58,863
<b>Total</b>		<b>880,680</b>	<b>307,600</b>	<b>1,188,280</b>

Source: Egypt's Ministry of Higher Education Website, [www.egv-mhe.gov.eg/charts.asp](http://www.egv-mhe.gov.eg/charts.asp) Retrieved on: 21 Nov.,2004.

**Table 3: Number of Registered Students in Private Universities in Egypt during the academic year 2002/2003**

#	University	Students
1	Sixth October	16,747
2	Misr Science and Technology	9,753
3	Misr International	2,270
4	October for Modern Science and Arts	1,511
5	French University	42
6	German University in Cairo (GUC)	Not Available*
7	American University in Cairo (AUC)	3,963
<b>Total</b>		<b>34,286</b>

Source: Egypt's Ministry of Higher Education Website, [www.egv-mhe.gov.eg/charts.asp](http://www.egv-mhe.gov.eg/charts.asp) Retrieved on: 21 Nov.,2004; The American University in Cairo Website: About AUC: Facts and Figures, [www.aucegypt.edu/about/facts.html](http://www.aucegypt.edu/about/facts.html) ; \* The GUC founded by the presidential decree number 27/2002 started operations during the academic year 2003/2004.

**Table 4: the Number of Non-University Faculties and Institutes Affiliated to the Ministry of Higher Education & Student Enrollment: Academic Year 2002/2003:**

Description	Number	Number of Students
Faculties of Industrial Education in Cairo and Beni-Suef	2	
Higher Institutes:		
Higher Institute for Technology in Benha	3	13,954
Higher Institute for Energy in Aswan		
Higher Institute for Management and Computers in Port-Said		
Private Higher Institutes	81	275,741
Technical Industrial Institutes (Intermediate)	23	40,621
Technical Commercial and Tourism Institutes (Intermediate)	23	88,340
The Intermediate Institute for Social Service in Qena	1	1,384
Private Intermediate Institutes	11	42,017
<b>Total Non-University Higher Education Institutes</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>462,057</b>

Source: Adapted from: Egypt's Ministry of Higher Education Website, [www.egv-mhe.gov.eg/charts.asp](http://www.egv-mhe.gov.eg/charts.asp) Retrieved on: 21 Nov., 2004.

## II.2 The Regulatory & Institutional Framework

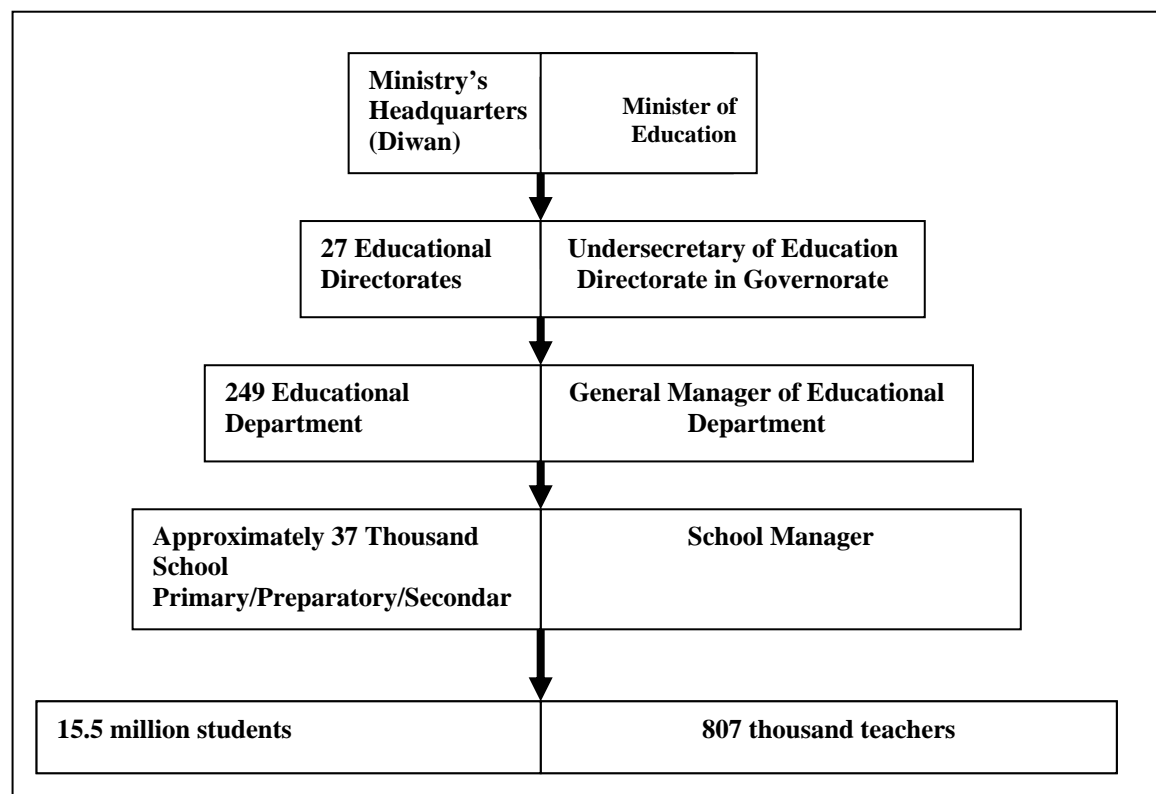
According to the **1971 constitution of Egypt**, education is a right that fulfills the two basic principles of equity and equal opportunities. Articles 18, 20 and 21 state that education as a basic right, that the state is responsible for and supervises education to ensure equity, that basic education is compulsory (primary and preparatory), that education in the institutions of the state is free in all its different stages, and that literacy is a national responsibility.

Basic education was extended to include preparatory education by virtue of **law number 139 for 1981**, and although the primary stage was reduced to eight years in 1988, **law number 23 for 1999** stipulated that the duration of compulsory education is nine years, through returning year six to primary education.

Law number 139 for 1981, as amended by Act number 233, defines that the **Ministry of Education MoE** is responsible for undertaking planning, follow up, evaluation, development and provision of educational materials, besides determining standards and qualifications for teachers. For Primary, Preparatory and Secondary Education, the most influential decisions are retained by the MoE including:

- Developing curricula
- Determining national evaluation criteria
- Offering the degree for the culmination of the high school exam – *thanaweya amma*.
- Developing plans for reforming the education system
- Deciding budgets for educational directorates
- Determining salaries and incentives for teachers and administrators
- Deciding on training needs and programs and others (Mina, 2001; UNESCO, 2004).

**Figure 1: The Organizational Structure for the Ministry of Education**



Source: Adapted From: Emad Siam, *Ministry of Education: Egyptian Ministries Series* (Cairo: Al Ahram Center for Political and Strategic Studies, 2003,p.21.

In planning and formulating educational policies, the Minister of Education makes use of central consultancy boards and committees, national specialized scientific centers and various specialized agencies. The central consultancy boards are headed by the minister himself and staffed by representatives of different educational sectors and departments; examples for such boards include: the board for the sector and central department heads, the board for the education managers, the supreme board for pre-university education, and the specialized boards for different educational levels. As for the national specialized scientific centers, although independent from the MOE headquarters (diwan), yet they report directly to the Minister of Education, and include: the National Center for Pedagogical Research and Development, the National Center for Examinations and Educational Assessment, the Curricula Development Center, and the Sers El Layan Center for Adult Education. As for the specialized agencies, they are also outside the Ministry's headquarters but fall under the direct supervision of the Minister of Education. Each of these specialized agencies tackle a specific educational problem or issue; examples include: the Educational Buildings Agency, the General Agency for Eradicating Illiteracy and Adult Education, and the Educational Projects Support Fund (Siam, 2003).

The **Ministry of Higher Education** is responsible for managing and supervising all university and non-university higher education. The **Supreme Council for Universities** (SCU) chaired by the Minister of Higher Education, who is also the Minister of State for Scientific Research Affairs, is responsible for making all decisions concerning: admission, allocation of resources, establishment of academic standards, definition of programs and curricula, and creating new academic positions for the recruitment and appointment of faculty. Several laws and decrees govern higher education decisions, including: law number 49/1972 for Universities, law number 52/1970 for Higher Institutes, and law number 101/1992 for private universities.

### II.3 Reform Committees at the MOE

Currently there are four main committees responsible for reform efforts at the MOE: The High Level Committee for Studying Education Reform Issues, the High Level Committee for Evaluating the Information Technology and Electronic Government Work, the Committee for Studying the National Institutes Status, and the Committee for Supervising the Evaluation and Development of the Secondary Level Curricula (Wise-men Committee) (see figure 2 below).

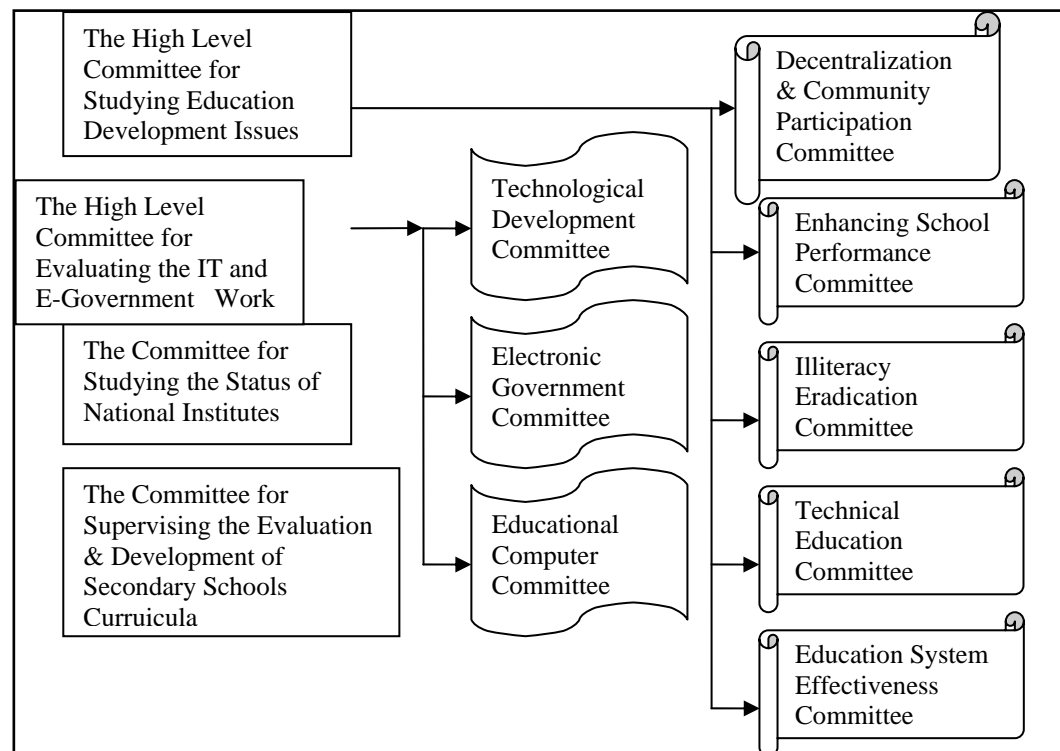
### II.4 The MOE's Stated Policy Regarding Decentralization

The Decentralization and Community Participation Committee recently established at the MOE, includes members from the business community, NGOs representatives, university professors, deans, and law experts, to discuss the broad lines determining feasible options and strategies for decentralization of education in Egypt. The main principles agreed to include:

- the MOE is the national entity responsible for reforming and developing education. It has a role to play in protecting national identity, social peace, national security, implementing the constitution and the law without pressures from the local communities, achieving equity and developing feelings of national identity and national integrity. the need for expanding decentralization through delegating authority to a more efficient party, or at least of the same level of efficiency
- distributing responsibilities gradually between the central level, the governorate and local administration level and school level,
- expanding the implementation of successful cases of decentralization, like the Alexandria project, the board of trustees, and the education committees in villages,

- building institutional capacities at the local level to guarantee that the transfer or delegation of authority will be to a more efficient party,
- developing and training local leaders to enable them to carry out their role in providing educational services (MOE, 2003a).

**Figure 2: Committees Currently Responsible for Reform at the MOE**



Source: MOE, Pre-University Education Programs, September 2004, p.87.

Moreover, the MOE's future plan for a greater degree of community participation includes the following elements:

- establishing a pedagogical information center
- establishing a new unit within each governorate to enhance the link between schools and the community
- building a network composed of different local, regional, and national levels and including politicians, teachers, parents to work on raising awareness regarding the relation between schools, parents and the community.
- Training teachers.
- Issuing legislation enforcing parental and family participation
- Integrating the concept of community participation in school curricula
- Informing policy makers of the different available tools for community participation.

#### ***II.4.1 Positive steps towards a greater degree of educational decentralization on the national level***

Recently the MOE has delegated some authorities to both the governorate level and the school level. Delegation to the governorate level can be exemplified by the case of Alexandria governorate and the protocol for delegating decision making authorities to its governor to enable the success of the education reform pilot project, under implementation

within its premises. Similar delegation is expected with the expanded implementation of the project in six other governorates.

Delegation to the school level can also be exemplified by the **Ministerial Decree number 262 dated 4<sup>th</sup> November 2003** concerning the determination of responsibilities and tasks of school management within governorates and educational administrations. A main feature of that decree is the establishment of three new units within schools; responsible for total quality, productive activities, and training and evaluation. This indicates that schools would be expected to play a greater role in self assessment, determination of training needs, deciding on productive activities, and self improvement needs (MOE, 2003 c).

The administrative system in the governorates has been reinforced by appointing an undersecretary in charge of education in each governorate. The undersecretaries are assisted by deputies and managers in each district, and all have been trained to have a clear understanding of the reform efforts. (UNESCO,2003)

#### ***II.4.2 Positive steps towards community participation***

Some progress has been achieved regarding the involvement of stakeholders over the past few years. Various **ministerial decrees have been issued, such as number 5 concerning parental involvement, and number 30 for 2000 concerning involvement of non-governmental organizations**, which are examples of the recognition of the importance of stakeholders' participation especially at the grassroots level. (World Bank, 2002). According to the decree number 30 for 2000, NGOs are allowed to establish schools, like the community schools, one class schools, or small sized schools.

Pursuant to the Minister of Education decree in May 1999, and the Minister of Administrative Development Decree number 411 for 2000, a **general department for NGOs was established within the MOE** organizational structure. The main objective of the department is to enhance the partnership relationship between the MOE and NGOs and establish a database about educational NGOs.

#### ***II.4.3 Organized & non-organized pressure groups influencing the educational policy making process:***

Beside the governmental actors as the dominant actors in the educational policy making process other parties include:

- The Teachers' Syndicate
- Education NGOs
- The Private School Owners' Society
- The National Democratic Party
- Professional private tutors
- Authors and publishers of non-governmental school books
- Members of the People's Assembly and Shura Council.

**The Teachers' Syndicate TS:** The TS is considered one of the largest professional syndicates in Egypt in terms of number of members. However, despite the large membership, it is one of the least independent and least influential syndicates, as regards the impact on the teaching profession, or as regards the ability to fulfill the direct demands by teachers. According to the **TS law, article number 2**, the main objectives of the syndicate include: contributing to community service through the mobilization of efforts of syndicate's members, working on upgrading the quality of the teaching profession; improving teachers' situation, and contributing to the development and reform of education,



its systems, and curricula; and finally providing economic, social and cultural services to members.

The weak impact of the TS may be attributed to several factors, foremost among which is the relative novelty of the syndicate as compared to other more established and influential ones, like the Lawyers' Syndicate for example. Although The TS was established in 1951, it did not function except in 1955, three years after the July 1952 Revolution, and the ensuing thriving of the one party political system. Consequently, ever since that point in time, the syndicate was taken over by the MOE bureaucracy and was virtually considered one of its agencies. An extreme incident denoting the syndicate's lack of independence was the precedent of having the Minister of Education acting simultaneously as the head of the syndicate for a period extending over ten years.

Furthermore, the lack of financial and administrative ability of any group of stakeholders marks their degree of independence, and in the case of the teachers, they have very little of either ability. The majority of the members are public employees, and their salaries are quite low. Even the private school teachers are supervised technically by the MOE and its directorates. Another factor adding to the diminishing impact of the teachers syndicate is the diversity of its members, among various specializations, and levels, which diluted their level of active participation in the syndicate's affairs. Accordingly, the elite members in the TS always expressed their support of governmental policies, and concentrated their syndicate's activities on providing social services to members. Issues, like the syndicate's pension, work related incentives, and exam bonuses were always on the top of their priorities, and represented the demands of the large group of underpaid teachers (Siam, 2003).

**Education NGOs:** The number of NGOs working in the field of education in Egypt is estimated to be approximately 1,310. A coordinating Committee for NGOs was established in 2002 including members from both the MOE and NGOs to coordinate jointly implemented projects, handle obstacles facing such projects and propose new avenues for cooperation. The Education NGOs committee directs its main attention on poor and random household areas, due to the increase in the illiteracy rates within these areas. Examples of projects implemented through the coordinating committee include providing assistance to poor students (Kandil,2004).

**The Private Schools Owners Society:** This is a non-governmental organization established by owners of private schools in Egypt and which has as its main objectives:

- developing the quality of private schooling in Egypt,
- contributing and participating in education planning, and the reform of educational systems and curricula,
- acting as a liaison between the MOE and private school owners,
- representing private school owners versus governmental bodies, as regards private schooling decisions, and rights of private schools employees.

The society is managed by a board of directors composed of twenty private school owners, elected by a general assembly. As some of the members are also members in legislative bodies, political parties and syndicate organizations, they represent an important pressure group in the educational reform policy making process. The main pressures exerted by this group basically aim at maximizing profits out of their investments in private schools. This is manifested in the resistance to the implementation of rules and restrictions imposed by the MOE according to the private education law, which allows it to interfere in decisions pertaining to private school fees, rate of change of school uniform, teachers' qualifications and specifications, teachers' salaries, and mandate the payment of 1% of school fees to the MOE, and 2% to the TS. During recent years, tens of law suits were issued by private school owners against the TS, objecting to the right of the syndicate in acquiring a percentage of their money. The increasing rate of establishment of private schools is an evidence for the

high profits realized through the private schooling business. The number of private schools in 2001/2002 reached 3921 in number, representing a 33% increase compared to 1991/1992 (Siam,2003).

### **The National Democratic Party (NDP):**

The National Democratic Party, which is the political party of the majority and the government, has recently begun actively developing policy papers tackling various policy reform issues, including pre-university and university education. The NDP's policy papers now constitute an important element of the ongoing discourse about educational reform.

The NDP's proposed policies for the reform of pre-university education focus on three pillars:

- expanding the base for community participation through enhancing decentralization, and promoting a more active role for the private sector and civil society organizations,
- implementing total quality principles in education through: establishing an accreditation and quality assurance agency, setting national standards for education to enable the assessment of the education outputs, developing curricula and fostering the role of the national assessment institutions, like the national center for examinations, and the national center for pedagogical studies.
- Completing the basic infrastructure for knowledge including: developing pilot projects supporting the reform programs, developing technical education, enhancing the quality of education in Al-Azhar schools and institutes, maximizing the benefits from early childhood education, greatly reducing school drop-outs, minimizing the tension associated with exams, eradicating illiteracy.

In the policy papers prepared by the Policy Committee of the NDP in 2004, proposals for higher education reform included:

- Developing an accreditation and quality assurance agency for higher education
- Improving universities' management
- Expanding higher education
- Establishing numerous small sized universities
- Developing students' finance institutions
- Enhancing the role of university faculty members in the reform process
- Boosting the link between higher education institutions and the outside world
- Encouraging private sector higher education institutions

In a separate 2004 policy paper for the reform of graduate studies, three facets of reform were proposed, covering institutional, technical and financial issues.

- Institutional reforms suggested include: setting a national strategy for graduate studies enabling international competition, granting more freedom to universities in developing and reforming their graduate studies systems, capitalizing on human resources available and opening new channels of cooperation with international centers for graduate studies and research,
- Technical reforms include: the implementation of a credit hour system to ensure more flexibility, encouraging joint scientific partnerships and links between faculties and universities, developing the admission system, and the system of supervision for theses and dissertations, developing long term plans that establish a link between the number of graduate students admitted and the community needs,
- Financial reforms include: accentuating the financial independence of faculties and universities through permitting greater discretion in resource

mobilization and expenditure, transforming graduate studies in general from a free service to a cost service that has to be paid for either by the student, a granting body, or otherwise, developing new creative systems for financing graduate studies, expanding the use of long distance education

**Professional Private Tutors:** This non-organized group of professional private tutors, may be considered quite an influential pressure group on the educational reform policy making process. The peril posed by this group on the reform process is represented in the volume of financial resources directed by Egyptian households to pay for private lessons, and which seriously violates the government's free education and equal opportunities policies. The government's efforts to curtail the phenomenon of private tutoring, has simply failed, mainly because of the pervasiveness of private lessons at all stages of the educational process. Moreover, the reason students resort to private lessons is not only a function of the poor quality of education, but also related to the examinations system which emphasizes the importance of high grades as a means to move from one educational level to another. As soon as students complete their basic education, their grades determine whether they may be accepted in general secondary schools, or in technical schools. Similarly, the grades attained in the *Thanaweya Amma* exams at the end of the secondary stage determine which university and which faculty they may be accepted in. Accordingly, parents are more than willing to do whatever it takes to guarantee that their offspring will get higher grades, and if private tutoring will help them, then they are willing to go for it.

**Authors and Publishers of Non-Governmental School Books:** Although fewer in number compared to private tutors, this non-organized group is quite influential on the educational reform policy process. It includes the senior teachers, education directors, and consultants to various educational subjects who are in the business of producing extra-curricular books to complement or replace the MOE books. The main demands of this group is to maintain the system of relying on the school book as the main source of information, and on rote learning as the main method of education, as they are the pillars upon which the extra-curricular books are based, trying to summarize the information in the most appropriate form for the students to memorize and pass the examinations. This group also works on pressuring the responsible MOE departments to issue the needed permits for publishing the extra-curricular books, which require the MOE authorization, and pressuring for rapid renewal of the permits with each modification in the texts(Siam, 2003).

**The Education Committee at the People's Assembly:** Within the People's Assembly, the Egyptian Parliament, there is a specialized education committee currently headed by a prominent university professor from the faculty of medicine, who is also an active member in the policy committee of the National Democratic Party. The committee is responsible for reviewing new proposed legislation pertaining to the field of education. In general, the Committee is strongly in support of the NDP policies of reform.

**The Shura Council:** Specialized education committees within the Shura Council occasionally prepare studies and documents analyzing various hot debatable educational issues, the main purpose of which are to assist the People's Assembly and top level decision makers in their policy decisions.

Table (5) below, summarizes some of the main stakeholders, actors, beneficiaries, or groups influencing, or being influenced by, the reform efforts in the field of education. The statement of needs and the position of the stakeholders, whether in support or against reform, are purely hypothetical.

**Table 5: Stakeholders Analysis of Educational Reform in Egypt**

	<b>Stakeholders</b>	<b>Interests/Needs</b>	<b>Supporter/Opponent Of Reform Efforts</b>
1	<b>Political Leadership</b>	True commitment towards achieving better quality of education, higher efficiency, eradicating illiteracy, improving access to education, better link between education and labor market requirements, improving unemployment rates, education for all (early childhood, basic, out of school children and young people, and adults), education for excellence and excellence for all, ranking of Egypt in HDI, and in international organizations assessments.	Supporter
2	<b>National Democratic Party</b>	Better quality of education, Well sounding and citizen convincing reform papers, winning more constituency support especially as education is a critical strategic issue impacting all citizens	Supporter
3	<b>The Ministry of Education</b>	Political concerns, quality, equity and efficiency of education	Supporter
4	<b>The Local Administration Units</b>	Better quality and efficiency; as for decentralization trends, some groups may favor more managerial authority and independence, and other groups may be reluctant to pass on authority to lower levels in the administration	Supporters of General reform, but potential mixed responses rege decentralization
5	<b>Public Schools</b>	More independence and more resources	Supporter
6	<b>Teachers Syndicate</b>	More economic benefits to members: higher syndicate pensions, higher salaries, more incentives, more exam bonuses.	Supporter
7	<b>Private Tutors</b>	Continuing with private tutoring, less control from school management, less hostility from MOE officials, no dramatic or quick changes in curricula and exam systems that would need more preparations on their part, no diversion from exam systems that give great importance to grades obtained, so as to continue being of great value as tutors	Opponents
8	<b>Parents</b>	Better quality of education, less expenditure on schooling : (fees, private lessons, stationery, uniforms, etc.), better performance and achievement for students translated into high grades, greater rate of success, higher rate of return on education	Mixed: supporters of reform efforts that reduce overall costs and increase rate or return, opponents of sudden changes in curricula & education systems that may result in greater dependence on private lessons in the short run
9	<b>Students/ Students Unions</b>	Better quality of education, more interesting material, recreational activities, less stressful schooling and exam systems	Mixed: supporters of reform that satisfy their interests & opponents of reforms that lead to more stress

10	<b>Educational NGOs</b>	Opportunity for greater participation in curricula development and educational system design	Mixed
11	<b>Private Schools Owners Society</b>	Greater opportunities for maximization of profits as a result of their investment in the private schooling business, less control interference by the MOE in their affairs, less resources deducted from their school fees to be paid to the MOE and the teachers' syndicate	Supporter of reforms that allow them more discretion and opponents of reforms that lead to more stringent controls on their performance
12	<b>Business Community</b>	More congruence between curricula and labor market needs, better qualified school and university graduates with the needed skills	Supporter
13	<b>Publishers /Authors of Non-Governmental school books</b>	Opportunity for competing with public sector publishers, need for maintaining the rote system in education so as to open up the market for their extra-curricular books mainly focusing on providing summaries in a palatable form.	Supporters of more decentralization efforts that may give them an opportunity to produce books and implement curricula / Opponents to rapid rates of change in curricula that may lead to rising publishing costs/
14	<b>MOHE/Higher Education Institutes</b>	Need for better quality school graduates to be admitted to their universities and institutes, greater role for the private sector and civil society organizations,	Supporter
15	<b>Donors to the field of Education</b>	Contribution to the implementation of the MDGs, tangible outputs, sustainability of cooperation programs, ownership of projects and programs by GOE, policy and institutional reforms to achieve sustainability, greater role played by civil society and private sector organizations at all phases of the reform process.	Supporters

### III. DISCOURSE ON EDUCATIONAL NEEDS & REFORM

Discourse about educational reform is a continuing process through which various actors and stakeholders participate; the main actors being the MOE, MOHE, NGOs, teachers, students, parents, international development agencies, education and pedagogy experts. Moreover, over the past decade, several national conferences for educational reform were organized.

#### III.1 Main Documents often Cited by Ministries, Intellectuals, NGOs

There are multiple documents often cited by ministries, intellectuals and NGOs interested in education. Following is an analysis of the main issues discussed in those documents and their impact on the reform agenda.

According to the MOE Report, Mubarak and Education 2003, the national objective for pre-university education is "*Education for Excellence and Excellence for All*". This national objective is translated into eleven policy directives:

- national standards for education
- international partnership
- advanced technology
- eradication of illiteracy
- superior technical education
- positive community participation
- modern curricula and education materials
- sustainable professional development
- capable and committed teachers
- outstanding pedagogical management
- effective school

#### The National Standards of Education in Egypt

In October 2002, the Minister of Education issued a decree to form two committees, namely the Higher Committee for Setting the National Standards of Education in Egypt, and the Accreditation Committee. Each committee was formed of education experts, university professors, representatives of different economic sectors, businessmen and NGOs. After lengthy meetings, retreats and workshops, extending over ten months, finally in 2003, the MOE issued the National Standards of Education in Egypt. This ambitious national project aims at realizing comprehensive quality education in Egypt. The standards cover five major domains which represent the essential pillars of the education process. They are:

1. The Effective and Child Friendly School: including standards for the school's vision and mission, the social environment, sustainable self-development, the teaching and learning environment, quality and accountability.
2. The Educator: including standards for planning, learning strategies and classroom management, the subject matter, assessment, and teacher professionalism.
3. Management Excellence: including standards for institutional culture, participation, professionalism, and management of change.
4. Community Participation: including standards for partnership with the family, serving the community, mobilization of local resources, voluntary work and public relations and contact with the society.
5. Curriculum and learning Outcome: including learner standards for basic skills, thinking skills, ability to interact, personal traits and characteristics; curriculum standards, including basic philosophy, curriculum objectives, curriculum contents, teaching and learning methods, sources of knowledge and technology and assessment; in addition to standards for separate subjects, Islamic religion, Christian

religion, Arabic language, English language, French language, Social Studies, Mathematics and Science.

As for **the Accreditation Committee**, it was formed alongside the General Committee for the preparation of the National Standards. It is concerned with providing accreditation to agencies and NGOs, which use the National Standards of Education in evaluating schools. Accreditation in its essence is the process of evaluating the quality of education of the school according to national standards. The General Committee for Accreditation is part of the structure of the National Center for Examination and Educational Evaluation affiliated to the MOE. Progress so far has culminated in setting the criteria for accreditation agencies, and upon the announcement of the MOE of the National Standards for Education and Accreditation, seven NGOs and independent professional institutions have applied for the right to provide accreditation to Egyptian schools.

Overall Egypt is still in the piloting stage as regards education decentralization and is following a pattern of implementation, which focuses on doing and trying out new models of decentralization in some limited governorates based on individual agreements between the governors and the MOE, prior to introducing legislative changes on the national level. Such an implementation model is a worthwhile model that recognizes the importance of flexibility in implementation, and that a system needs to be modified regularly through learning by doing. The scope of the experience includes, some minor adjustments in organizational structures of schools to create new departments, for quality, for productive activities, and for evaluation, and therefore allowing the schools a greater role in determining their needs. The experience also includes capacity building and training for teachers and administrators, includes as mentioned pilot projects and programs in selected governorates, trying out models of community participation and school based management, and includes the development of the National Standards for Education to act as the framework for assessing and evaluating schools' performance. Theoretically, the set-up for a greater degree of education decentralization is being prepared, but what remains, and what will be the most important challenge is the result of the empirical implementation of those efforts.

### ***III.1.1 UNESCO 2003 Educational Reform in Egypt***

Meanwhile the *UNESCO's 2003 report on Educational Reform in Egypt*, praised the great achievements of the GOE at the pre-university level education. It specifically mentioned that: "the vision of the Egyptian Educational reform has become a reality". However, this does not mean that we have overcome our problems. There are still a lot of challenges. The basic challenge cited for the coming decade is: how to continue to develop an educational management system that continually adapts to a revitalized and continually improving education reform process. In the report five areas of reform policies were emphasized, including:

- the use of information & communication technology ICT in education
- setting national standards for quality education
- broadening the focus of reform management
- inclusion of secondary education in the reform
- increasing social participation by involving parents and the community.

### ***III.1.2 National Plan for Education for All***

In February 2003, the National Plan for Education for All (2002/2003-2015/2016) was prepared by the MOE in accordance with the model proposed by UNESCO Regional Office in Asia and the Pacific. The plan adopts the goal of 'education for all' and translates it into 24

programs addressed to the four target groups of 'education for all'- which are the early childhood & pre-school education, the formal basic education, the out of school children and young people, and the adults below reading levels- with a total cost of more than 117 billion Egyptian pounds for the time period involved, 15 years (table 6).

**Table 6: Programs of the National Plan for Education for All & their Costs**

Sector	No. of Programs	Cost in Billion L.E.)
Early Childhood & Pre-School Education	4	8.5
Formal Basic Education	6	103.5
Out-of-School Children And Young People	6	2.8
Adults below reading Levels	7	2.5
Follow-up & Plan Evaluation	1	0.1
Total	24	117.4

Source: Adapted from : MOE, National Plan for Education for All, p.5.

### ***III.1.3 The Egyptian Human Development Report 2004***

The theme of *Egypt Human Development Report EHDR 2004* is "Choosing Decentralization for Good Governance". Within the Chapter devoted to education decentralization, a strong recommendation is made for utilizing and implementing some forms of administrative, fiscal and political decentralization in the education sector as a tool towards increasing efficiency and improving quality of educational services delivery. After an examination of various international experiences, several potential forms of educational decentralization are proposed for application in Egypt. Decentralization is not perceived as a panacea for all problems, but as a step in the right direction. It is considered as one of the tools that may lead to a better quality of education, and several decentralization options are recommended for piloting.

EHDR which was launched on the 12<sup>th</sup> of October, 2004 was very well received and the decentralization theme encouraged by governmental officials, academicians, politicians, and members of the civil society. The launching celebration was attended by the Egyptian Prime Minister, 7 ministers and nearly 6 governors. Prime Minister Ahmed Nazif praised the report and stressed on the need for more decentralization. Similarly representatives of both the National Democratic Party and opposition parties called for more decentralization in the education sector as in all other sectors. Among the forms of decentralization proposed were administrative decentralization and more decision making powers transferred to lower levels in the educational hierarchy, more encouragement for the private sector to build, operate and manage schools and universities, more resource mobilization from the local communities to fund the educational process, greater role for parents and community members in monitoring the quality of education in schools, and gradual withdrawal of the government from providing free university education, and more concentration of governmental support on basic education where there is a greater need and more effective pro-poor resource allocation.

Ministry of Education officials perceive the greater focus on decentralization to be the main feature of change especially since the change in Cabinet in July 2004.



### **III.1.4 Ministry of Education Document on Reforming Pre-University Education Programs**

The *Ministry of Education Document on Reforming Pre-University Education Programs* dated September 2004 outlines the latest plans for reform. Five main pillars for reform are clearly outlined:

- Decentralization And Enhancing Community Participation
- Assuring Education Quality
- Developing Curricula And Evaluation Methods
- Training and improving teachers' conditions
- Increasing the absorptive capacity of schools and decreasing class density.

The document then outlines the main efforts already undertaken by the MOE in achieving each of the five pillars of pre-university education reform, challenges faced and targeted actions to go further.

For Decentralization, the document lists the successful experiences of Alexandria, the community schools, the one-class schools, and the girl friendly schools. It also points out to resistance from leaders in central positions to delegate and transfer authorities and responsibilities to lower levels, as a main obstacle towards decentralizing efforts. Main targeted plans regarding decentralization include: expanding the implementation of the education development experience (Alexandria experience) to other governorates in the following order: Cairo, El-Minia, Fayoum, Beni-Suef, Qena, Aswan, Dakahlia, Sharqia, Luxor and then other governorates; expanding the development of community schools, one class schools and the girl friendly schools; delegating authorities and responsibilities to the lowest level possible, focusing on school based development; training leaders and administrators, enhancing communication and information exchange between the central and local levels, developing continuous performance appraisal systems for leaders at all levels.

Regarding the second pillar of reform which is assuring Education Quality, the MOE outlines five main strategies: enhancing the use of information technology, developing pilot schools and technical education, developing schools' performance, caring for talented students and students with special needs, and following up on schools accreditation.

For supporting the use of Information Technology (IT) in the educational process, the MOE plans to gradually expand the use of computer equipment in all schools with special focus on the preparatory level, in cooperation with the Ministry of Communication (MOC). There are also plans to develop IT skills for preparatory level students to enable them to acquire the International Computer Driving License ICDL.

As for expanding pilot schools, currently there are 852 pilot schools, representing 2.5% of total students in public education, and the plan is to develop 100 regular public schools annually and transform them into pilot schools providing non-traditional models of management and teaching, to meet the rising demand for their services especially in Cairo where only 18% of the applicants were accepted.

For developing Technical Education, the plan is to support the successful experiences, like the Mubark-Kohl Schools, the Ismailiya School for Information Technology, and the Madinet Nasr School for Maintenance Technology, and develop 10 technical schools in industrial, agricultural and hotel management.

For Quality Assurance & School Accreditation, the MOE has developed the national standards for education and started on their implementation through pilot projects. The MOE

has also participated with MOHE and the Education Committee at the National Democratic Party (NDP) in developing the law proposal for the development of the National Agency for Quality and Accreditation, expected to be presented to parliament during the next term.

Regarding the third pillar of reform which is the Development of Curricula and Evaluation Methods, the MOE relied on the recommendations of the National Conferences for Curricula Development. The curricula of the primary and preparatory levels were developed according to the recommendations of the national conferences held in 1993 and 1994, respectively. As for the secondary level of education, the curricula have not been developed as yet. Twenty six workshops were held during the past two years and various studies were performed in preparation for the organization of a national conference for developing secondary level education. The target for completing the curricula development of all subjects at the secondary level is March 2005, so as to start implementation during the academic year 2005/2006. The long term target is to review and develop curricula at all levels on a continuous basis, and to develop the education system itself for the secondary level. Plans currently under study for developing the secondary education system include introducing a number of obligatory core subjects for all students (four or five in number), plus specialized subjects for university admission (2-3), plus elective subjects fitting the diverse needs of students, plus a number of activities focusing on empirical talents (handicrafts-sports-art-computers and programming).

As for the fourth pillar of reform, which is Training and Improving Teachers' Conditions, since 1996 there were 2.9 million training opportunities made available to teachers, 1.4 million in the form of direct training, and 1.5 in the form of interactive training using the video conferencing technology. The MOE is currently focusing on re-evaluating the training courses and re-formulating some to assure maximum returns from the experience.

The fifth pillar of reform deals with increasing the Absorptive Capacity of Schools and at the same time working on decreasing class density. From 1981 to 2004, the number of classes increased from 189,628 to 397,321 classes, and the number of schools increased from 18,668 to 37,912 schools. The five year plan extending from 2002-2007, and authorized by the new minister of education, included the construction of 8384 school and 132,144 class, with an estimated cost of 16.9 billion L.E. The aims of the five year plan were to decrease class densities, solve the problem of multiple study periods, prepare for the return of the sixth year at the primary level, re-furbishing downgraded schools, absorb the natural population increase, expand kindergarten classes, and help reduce the geographical distance between students' residence and schools. From 2002/2003 up till the present day only 30% of the estimated resources were made available through the state budget. The absorptive capacity of private pre-university education amounts to 7% of total number of students and 11% of total number of schools, mostly concentrated in Cairo, Giza, Alexandria and minimally in Qalyubia, while nearly non-existent in other governorates. The MOE is thus working on encouraging both the private sector & the NGO sector to participate more actively in building and managing schools.

### **III.2 Higher Education Reform Discourse**

The beginning of the current reform efforts in higher education started with the Higher Education Enhancement Program International Symposium in June 1999 and was followed by the National Conference for Higher Education in February 2000. Based on the discussions carried during both conferences, twenty five reform projects were identified, twelve of which were funded by the USAID.

### **Reform Concept of the Higher Education & Scientific Research in Egypt 2004:**

This document presents the latest plans for reform by the Ministry of Higher Education in Egypt as announced by Minister Amr Ezzat Salama, Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research. Interestingly, the document was recently presented at the German University in Cairo (see box 1).

The document clearly states the mission of higher education in Egypt, translates the mission into objectives, & further divides the objectives into detailed actions to be undertaken within a defined time frame. Although the Minister of Higher Education clearly stated that the Action Plan was translated into quantifiable targets with a set time frame, yet the team members could not get a hold of the detailed time frame.

Box (1): Reform Concept of the Higher Education & Scientific Research in Egypt:

The vision and overall objectives are:

- *Knowledge:* leading the knowledge society in knowledge production, dissemination and application.
- *Excellence and Competition:* Quality, efficiency and relevance in higher education and research.
- *Leading Development:* defining and creating new dimensions for development & improving economic and social growth.
- *Creativity and Innovation:* Centers of scientific and technological excellence in higher education and research institutions.

The Action Plan comprises:

- Increasing the enrollment capacity and the higher education opportunities in the higher education system.
- Quality assurance and performance based governance.
- Using ICT for improving the performance of the higher education and research institutions.
- Enhancement of the graduate studies and scientific research.
- Faculty, leadership and administration staff professional development and continuous training.
- Fostering and improving students' activities.

Currently there are a number of projects being implemented within the scope of the Higher Education strategic plan (phase I: 2003-2007). Among these implemented projects are the following:

- Quality Assurance & Accreditation Project (QAAP)
- Faculty & Leadership Development Project (FLDP)
- Higher Education Enhancement Project Fund (HEEPF)
- Information and Communication Technology Project (ICTP)
- Technical Colleges Project (ETCP)
- Faculties of Education Project (FOEP)
- Trans-European Mobility Program for University Studies (Tempus –Meda III)

### **III.3 Educational Reform Discourse in Egyptian Newspapers July – November 2004**

Ever since the change in cabinet in July 2004, and the appointment of two new ministers for education and for higher education, there has been a continuous flow of announcements, media conferences, articles, and statements by both ministers in the daily newspapers, describing their intentions and plans for reform of education in Egypt. Moreover, both the President and Prime Minister showed remarkable interest in education reform, a fact that points out to the top level position currently occupied by education reform on the government's comprehensive reform agenda.

The following is an attempt to summarize some of the main issues discussed, and highlight the main topics receiving increased attention in the overall discourse.

On the *1<sup>st</sup> of September*, President Mubarak during the inauguration of the Education Development Conference held in Alexandria at the Alexandria library premises, conceded that the final outputs of the education process in Egypt still requires a lot of reform. He pointed out to several main requirements: providing equal opportunities to persons with special needs, developing curricula, research and teaching methods, emphasizing the orientation towards a knowledge based society, and making available a more effective student environment in both schools and universities.

#### ***III.3.1 Pre-university education discourse***

- On the *23<sup>rd</sup> of September*, in the Prime Minister's speech during the Second Annual Conference for the National Democratic Party, he discussed the main future trends for the reform of education in Egypt, mainly: increasing the absorptive capacity of public education, achieving a minimum level of quality in free public education, providing better quality education at cost for those who can afford to pay, moving strongly towards decentralization, and developing the system of scientific research to accumulate knowledge and progress as a nation (Al Ahram, 23 Sept. 2004).

- On the *31<sup>st</sup> of October*, the Minister of Education announced that quality, decentralization, teachers' training and increasing the absorptive capacity of schools are his main concerns and priorities.

- On the *3<sup>rd</sup> of November*, the Minister of Education announced in a media conference that the Pre-University Education Development Paper to be presented shortly to President Mubarak will include the expansion in the experimental schools, and greater attention to technical education (Al-Ahram, 3 Nov.2004).

- On the *20<sup>th</sup> of November*, the Minister of Education announced that the teacher will be the focal point for the educational reform plans. The target is to provide continuous life long training to teachers, and to improve their financial status. A committee has been formed to discuss with the Ministry of Finance the methods by which the financial compensation of teachers can be enhanced. He also mentioned that the plans for the Thanaweya Amma system development need highly qualified and well trained teachers.(Al-Ahram Al-Taalymi, 20 Nov. 2004).

- On the *22<sup>nd</sup> of November*, the President held a meeting to discuss the reform plan for pre-university education. The meeting was attended by the Prime Minister and nine ministers: Defense, Finance, Military Production, Planning, Higher Education,

Education, Youth, Administrative Development, Communications and IT, in addition to the Head of the Presidential Office, and the Heads of the Education Committees at both the Shura Council & the People's Assembly. During the meeting seven main pillars for reform were discussed, namely:

1. Emphasizing decentralization and community participation
2. Emphasizing Education Quality through the enhanced use of information technology in the educational process, through developing the experimental schools, developing technical education, enhanced care for early childhood, talents, special children, and implementing school accreditation.
3. Developing Technical Education through solving the problems faced by this sector represented mainly in: high class densities, lack of capabilities available within schools, weak technological structure, lack of compatibility between the outputs of technical education and the labor market, and providing maximum support to the Mubarak-Kohl Initiative implemented with Germany as one of the successful pilot experiences.
4. Developing Curricula & Assessment Methods through implementing the strategies formerly authorized by the National Education Conferences for Developing Primary and Preparatory Education in 1993 and 1994. As for secondary education a clear strategy needs to be developed and presented to the ministerial cabinet, then to the President.
5. Developing Teachers Performance through training and continuous professional development, improving the financial compensation, considering the establishment of a teachers professional academy at Mubarak's Education City, and considering the best method for overcoming the current shortage in school teachers, amounting to 161 thousand teachers.
6. Increasing the Absorptive Capacity of schools and decreasing the class densities.
7. Eradicating Illiteracy the percentage of which is estimated at 27.7% of total population.

When comparing the above seven priorities presented to the President, with the 5 pillars of reform in the MOE's most recent document regarding the reform of pre-university education, we note that the one extra point emphasized, was 'the development of technical education', which was considered a separate pillar of reform in the newer presentation, denoting most probably heightened perception of its importance. The other main difference was the inclusion of 'illiteracy' in the discussion of pre-university education, one of the main targets of 'Education for All', but not in the MOE documents as it is the responsibility of a separate national agency reporting directly to the Prime Minister (Al-Ahram, 22 Nov. 2004)

- On the 24<sup>th</sup> of November, the Minister of Education announced the main proposed features for the new Secondary Education (Thanaweya Amma) System. The proposed system is inclined towards abolishment of the arts versus sciences and math classification, and the organization of subjects into new groupings compatible with the requirements of different faculties to which students wish to apply (Al-Ahram, 24 Nov. 2004).

- On the 29<sup>th</sup> of November, the Minister of Education in an interview with Al-Ahram newspaper, the specialized page on Youth and Education, discussed with more details the main features of reform for secondary education. Among the main features of reform for the first secondary school year, is unifying the curricula in both the general secondary schools and the technical schools, while allowing for choice between different subjects. However, the reform plans will not be implemented except after a period of three years during which it will be discussed intensively with parents, students, experts and various stakeholders.

The Minister pointed out as well to the general focus of the MOE on quality during the coming period, the enhanced role for the independent Quality Assurance Agency, the increase in the numbers of experimental schools due to the rising demand for their services, and to the general trend towards more decentralization and community participation.

As for technical education, it will receive increased attention as it currently represents the greatest share of absorptive capacity at the secondary level (36.7% for general secondary education, 30.2% for technical industrial education, 7.7% for technical agricultural education, and 25.4% for technical commercial education). There is an urgent need to tackle the many problems encountered by technical education, namely: the high class densities, the weak technical infrastructure, the shortage in resources, and the mismatch between the outputs of technical education and the societal needs on one hand, and the mismatch between technical and higher education on the other hand (Al Ahram, 29 Nov. 2004).

- *On the 22<sup>nd</sup> of December*, President Mubarak decided to refer the law draft for the establishment of an independent Agency for Education Accreditation and Quality Assurance to both the People's Assembly (Parliament) and the Shurah Council. (Al-Ahram, 22 December, 2004).

- *On the 23<sup>rd</sup> of December*, the Minister of Education in an interview with Al-Ahram newspaper discussed the shortage in financial resources required to spread the use of IT in schools. According to a report by the High Level Committee for Evaluating the IT and E-Government Work, one of the main recommendations was for the MOE to try intensifying computers usage in preparatory and experimental schools, due to the impossibility of covering all schools under the current limitation of resources. Another recommendation was to focus on the implementation of the productive school concept, and use the computer labs in schools for providing services to the community and generating revenues (Al Ahram, 22 Dec. 2004).

### ***III.3.2 Higher university education discourse***

- *On the 19<sup>th</sup> of September*, the Minister of Higher Education announced during a meeting with deans and students committees at Cairo University that the improvement of the financial compensation of faculty staff members and their assistants is among the priorities of the higher education reform plans (Al Ahram, 19 Sept.2004).

- *On the 1<sup>st</sup> of November*, President Mubarak held a meeting for the purpose of discussing the reform of Higher Education in Egypt. The meeting was held with the prime minister and attended by the same group responsible for discussing pre-university education, but in addition to the Minister of Health, who is technically responsible for the universities hospitals. Six main pillars of reform were discussed: increasing the absorptive capacity of higher education, performance evaluation and quality assurance, enhanced use of ICT, developing the graduate studies system, developing the capacity of university staff members, and supporting students' activities (Al-Ahram, 1 Nov.2004).

- *On the 8<sup>th</sup> of November*, in a discussion with the Minister of Higher Education in Al-Ahram Newspaper, he explained the main elements, or axes, of the Higher Education Strategy in Egypt.

1. Increasing the absorptive capacity of Higher education, through converting some public universities branches into independent universities; through establishing a distance learning university to be funded by the state for the three first years and then become self sustaining; and through establishing a number of non-profit universities to be managed by non-governmental organizations.

2. Establishing an institutional system for performance evaluation and quality assurance within the educational institutions, and also a similar national system outside the institutions in the form of an independent accreditation agency, the proposed law for which will be present to parliament during its coming cycle.
3. More use and access to ICT within the educational and research institutions, including new teaching, training and research methods.
4. Establishing a closer link between graduate studies and research and society's development needs.
5. Improving the status of university professors, and the teaching staff in general, through capacity building, and through improving their financial compensation
6. Better service to students through supporting students' activities, and working on developing their creative and innovative skills.(Al Ahram, 8 Nov. 2004)

Basically, these axes discussed in the newspapers are identical with the MOHE latest declared concept paper for reform.

## **IV. THE EGYPTIAN EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM: STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS**

To analyze the present status of the educational system in Egypt, the SWOT framework will be utilized, which lists the system's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. As in any strategic planning process, the aim will be to try balancing all available capabilities through maximizing strengths, minimizing weaknesses, avoiding or neutralizing threats, and capitalizing on opportunities.

### **IV. 1 Strengths**

- Long history and experience in the field of education, since the early 19th century
- The Egyptian educational experience was a corner stone in building educational systems in most Arab countries (consultancy work, curricula development, supply of teachers and professors).
- Free education granted for all levels of education since the sixties
- Impressive increase in public spending on education since the 1990s. Total public expenditure on education increased from 4.7 billion L.E. in 1990/91 to 18.1 billion L.E. in 2000/2001 (See Table 1 in Annex).
- Large expansion in the number of schools since 1952 and an unprecedented increase since the nineties. The number of schools built over the nineties decade is double the number of schools that were built in Egypt over the past 100 years. From 1882 to 1992, the total number of schools in Egypt amounted to 6,092 school, while from 1992-2003, the total number of schools amounted to 13,350 schools. By 2002, the pre-university education system in Egypt consists of 35,000 schools, 800,000 teachers and 15 million students (UNESCO, 2003; MOE, 2003).
- Developing new school models, such as the one class school, the community school, the rural schools, the quasi desert school, the kindergarten schools, the small school, the official pilot language schools, the productive schools
- Improvement in enrollment rates since the nineties according to official estimations. Total pre-university enrollment during the decade increased by 26.7 percent (UNESCO, 2003).

- Increased attention to girls' education including the Girls Education Initiative, and the One Class Schools.
- Continuous efforts at reforming the education system, including: new approaches to the training and utilization of teachers, the increased use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT), reformed student assessment and examination approaches, curriculum and teaching methods reform, and new approaches to the management of reform at all levels.
- Cooperation with several donor agencies to enhance educational reform and development.
- Greater emphasis on teachers training and community participation. An estimated 1,186,000 teachers have received in service training over the past decade, meaning that often times each teacher has had more than one training opportunity, and of these 311,649 teachers have been trained in service during 2002 (UNESCO, 2003).
- Establishing National Standards for Education.
- Decentralization Efforts in the form of a new school based approach.

## **IV.2. Weaknesses**

The poor performance of the Education system in Egypt may be attributed to several main factors; some related to problems inherited from past decades, and some related to current existing inefficiencies.

### ***IV.2.1 Financial problems***

#### **A) Shortage of Financial Resources:**

Despite the benefit of remarkable resources during the nineties, yet this does not cover the legacy of the past deterioration in the education system especially starting with the mid seventies to the end of the eighties, which also affected the quality and efficiency of the system. The inefficiency of the education system, both in terms of external or internal efficiency, has been a long time problem. Thus, for example, although budgetary allocations to pre-university education in the period 1981/82-1989/90 witnessed an increase of more than three times their value during the mentioned period, on the contrary real budgetary allocations (i.e. in constant prices) have witnessed a steady decrease, so that they only reached their 1981/82 level in 1989/90 (El Baradei, 1994).

This entailed a decrease in real public spending per student during the same period (Figure (1) annex)

#### **B) Shortage of Physical Facilities:**

This includes insufficient school buildings, inadequate school buildings and inadequate infrastructure. Despite the increasing supply of schools especially since the 1990s, the quantitative and qualitative shortage of schools is still the most acute problem of the Egyptian educational system. Data indicates that the requirements of schools to meet the prospective increase in demand for basic education by the year 2007 are estimated to be 3,730 primary and 1,729 preparatory schools (El Baradei, 2000 and MOE, 2001).

Furthermore, there is a problem of inadequate teachers' remuneration and insufficient incentives for attracting efficient qualified staff.



### **C) Inefficiency of resource utilization and allocation:**

There are various forms of inefficiencies, for example:

- Since the early 1990s the government has directed increasing resources to eliminate illiteracy. To this end, the General Authority for Literacy and Adult Education (GALAE) was established by law No. 8 (1991). Increasing budget resources have been allocated to GALAE, amounting to 148 million over the period (1991-1997), in addition to significant support from the Social Fund for Development (almost L.E. 105 million) (amounting to a total of L.E. 253 million) (INP, 1997/98). The effectiveness of government literacy programs is questioned, since the number of illiterates have increased during the same period. This raises concerns about the efficiency of government intervention in these efforts (INP, 1997/98).
- There is a waste of resources in school construction and designing; school designs have cost 5 to 20 percent more than the efficient cost of construction and space utilization (WB, 1996).
- There is an overstaffing of teachers In Egypt, the average number of students per teacher at the primary, preparatory, and secondary levels were 24, 20 and 13 respectively in 1997 (WDI, World Bank). International standards reveal that student – teacher ratios of 25 – 30 for primary and secondary levels would be sufficient for ensuring the delivery of good quality education services. However, in Egypt the student teacher ratio may be misleading since a significant number of teachers may be involved in administrative activities as shown earlier. The non-teaching staff rates are high (0.78:1 as compared to 0.58: 1 in OECD countries). Overstaffing has increased in recent years, the student-teacher ratio for primary and secondary school fell from 24 to 20 in 1990-1997. This was a result of the rapid expansion of pre-university teachers (42 percent) compared to the slower growth in enrolments (18 percent) (MOE estimates). The increase in the number of teachers is linked to the unemployment among university graduates. Teachers are hired from the pool of university graduates waiting for guaranteed government employment. Thus, in 1996/97 the number of pre-university teachers has increased by about 13 percent or 82,000 teachers (MOE data).
- Even at the university level, there is overstaffing in some universities and shortages in others, the same applies for faculties within each university. This is evidenced by the ratio of students to the teaching staff which ranges between 28: 1 in Cairo University to 78: 1 in South Valley University (Supreme Council of University data).
- There is also overstaffing in the non-teaching staff (administrative and support personnel) in public universities. Thus, salaries of the teaching staff constitute about 60 percent in Cairo University, 45 percent in Alexandria University and 39.3 percent only in Tanta University, which indicates an inflation of the non-teaching staff (table 1- annex).
- The actual spending in public universities is always higher than the budget. Actual spending during the period 1992/93 - 1996/97 was 11,438 million L.E. while the budget was 10,467 million L.E. (with an increase of about 9.3 percent). There was no increase over the budgeted salaries, there was an increase of about 12 percent over the budgeted supplies of goods and services, however the widest difference between actual spending and the budget was in the investment costs

(54.2 percent) (table 2- annex) below. This is an indication either of bad planning or of inefficient spending.

- The cost of students services (housing, food, subsidized meals, health services, transportation... etc.) is another issue to be considered. Those costs are quite high as can be seen from table (3) below, and also if compared to the number of students. The cost of students services is about L.E. 316 per student in Cairo University, L.E. 108 in Alexandria University, and L.E. 117 in Helwan University. Eligibility to university student housing is not based on affordability, per student government expenditure on university housing is about L.E. 150 per month which represents the difference between actual costs and the nominal fee charged to students (INP, 1997/98).
- The costs of MOE textbooks (about 600 million L.E.) are also questioned. There are a total of 1393 textbooks produced and a total of over 37 million copies printed (MOE, 1999). The question arises about improvement of efficiency through reducing the number, and improving the content. Moreover, introduction of the two-terms school year increased the copies printed a great deal (almost doubled in basic education).
- The Egyptian education system is highly centralized at both the Ministry of Education (MOE) and the Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE), which impedes initiatives, and also works against the efficient use of resources.

#### **D) Misallocation of financial resources:**

##### *Intra-sectoral allocation of public educational expenditures*

The pattern of educational expenditures in Egypt reveals a bias in favor of tertiary education and away from basic and secondary education. On average, pre-university education, including basic and secondary levels (comprising about 95 percent of total enrolment) received 69 percent of total government educational expenditures; basic education (primary and preparatory) accounting for 79 percent of enrolment) received 51 percent only of total government educational expenditures, compared to 31 percent for the university level (accounting about 6 percent only of total enrolment) during the period 1990/91 - 1995/96 (World Bank, SAR/EEP, 1996).

Furthermore, this resource allocation pattern favoring tertiary education is biased against the poor (since poor people mainly attend basic and secondary technical education), it also negatively affects the quality of education in those levels and their expected earnings (especially secondary education).

Moreover, there are biases even in the distribution of spending among different branches of the same educational level. Thus, technical secondary education (industrial and agriculture) receives almost the same spending as the general secondary education (see table A-6 in the Annex). While a technical school costs as much as 10 to 15 times a general secondary school. Also commercial secondary schools receive even less than the general secondary schools. This fact explains the low quality of technical schools' graduates and hence their low earnings.

### *Structural allocation of public educational expenditures:*

The composition of public educational expenditures in Egypt is characterized by a strong bias toward current spending. The period from 1980/81 to 1989/90 witnessed a very high and increasing share of current expenditures in comparison with total government expenditure on education (pre-university and university levels) with an average of 83 percent throughout the period. This situation improved slightly through the period 1991 – 1996 (the average was 81.3 percent) (El Baradei, 2000). It increased to 86.7 percent in 1999/2000 and to 87.0 percent in 2000/01 (Ministry of Finance Data). This bias against capital expenditures led to shortages in schools, high class densities and the prevalence of double and triple shifts. Those aspects are in fact aspects of low quality of education which negatively affects education earnings.

### *Regional allocation of public educational expenditures:*

Regional allocation of current public education expenditures (i.e. among governorates) in Egypt tends to favor some governorates at the expense of others. Comparing the governorates' shares of pupils enrolled in education in the age (6-18 years) to governorates' shares of current educational expenditures (figure 1) indicates that the most disadvantaged governorates are in Upper-Egypt (Fayoum, Menia, Assiut, Sohag), as well as rural Lower-Egypt governorates, while the most favored governorates are Metropolitan governorates. This pattern of allocation corresponds to the pattern of distribution of the rate of return to education observed earlier, where it is lower in rural Lower and Upper Egypt. The low educational spending in the less-favored governorates leads to low quality of education and hence low earnings for education.

### *Unequal allocation of public educational expenditures across income groups:*

The decreasing enrolment rates by poor children as they progress through the education system led to inequality of education spending across different quintiles (table 7 below). Thus, the poorest quintile is receiving 15 percent of total spending while the richest quintile is receiving 24 percent (World Bank, 2002b). This is reflected the on quality of education the poor receive as well as on their earnings.

**Table 7: Public Education Expenditures Received by Population Quintiles (Percent)**

Quintile	1	2	3	4	5	Total
Basic Secondary Education	20	23	20	20	16	100
Higher Education	3	13	16	23	45	100
Total	15	19	20	21	24	100

Source: World Bank, 2002b.

## **IV.2.2 Quality problems**

The problem of the education sector is mainly its **inefficiency**, or poor quality, which **adversely affected the retention capability** of the education system on one hand, and both the private costs of education (including the opportunity cost) and its rate of return, on the other hand.

This situation of deteriorating quality and the inefficiency of the system was mainly a **result of a long term shortage of financial resources** in the Egyptian education system,

combined with a misallocation of resources (in addition to several other social and economic factors) as proven by several studies.

The education system **focuses on the enforcement of rules and regulations**, rather than on improving student learning, which in itself represents a significant factor impeding acquisition of basic skills. Teachers do not organize their work according to their students' learning needs, but rather in accordance with national directives on curriculum and lesson planning. This reinforces mechanistic teaching and rote learning (WB, 1996).

The mastery of basic skills of **reading and writing and mathematics is low**. A wide field survey revealed that the mastery of those skills which are supposed to be acquired through elementary education is about 40% for reading and writing and 30% for mathematics (UNDP, AFESD, 2003).

Studies indicate the **low qualifications of teachers** especially at the primary level largely due to policies which allowed, until recently, the appointment of teachers with less than tertiary education. An important factor affecting the quality of the teaching force, is the policy of recruiting teachers from faculties other than education, who have not received any pre-service training. For example, in 1998 out of the 25,000 teachers hired, 13,000 had no pedagogical training (World Bank, 2002b).

**Private tutoring:** the most important educational expenditure item for both poor and non-poor households in 1999 to 2000 was private tutoring. According to some surveys, nearly 50% of students rely on private tutoring besides the regular school lessons. During the period 1995/96-1999/2000, the increase in the average cost of education to the household amounted to 70% for basic education (from L.E.122.86 to L.E.208.41), 196 % for secondary education (from L.E. 128.64 to L.E. 379.61), and 18% for university education (from L.E.246.90 to L.E.291.11). In terms of expenditure shares, the most important expenditure item, for both poor and non-poor, was private tutoring, and since private tutoring, private group tuition and non-ministerial books constitute together the most important expenditure item (about 37.5 percent of spending on education per child per year, for poor and non-poor), this means that achievement depends to a great extent on those extra-curricular activities (El Baradei, 2003).

**High Class density:** While the average number of pupils per class at the primary level decreased from 44 in 1990, to 42 in 2000, the average number of pupils per class at the preparatory levels increased during the same period from 43 to 44 students (PARC, 2002). While a targeted average of 40 students per class may be considered acceptable, in reality this average conceals great variations from very small classes to very crowded classes of 50 to 70 students in the more densely populated areas (UNESCO, 2003).

**High student/teacher ratio:** The official figures for the average number of students per teacher at the primary, preparatory and secondary levels were 24, 20 & 13, respectively, and were within the acceptable international standards in 1997 (WDI, World Bank, 1998). However, in Egypt these figures may be misleading since a significant number of teachers may be either involved in administrative services, or on leaves and absences.

**High dropout and repetition rates:** In Egypt, repetition and drop-out rates are shown as a single number in the data on education system performance. Although the figures do not show trends in repetition and drop out rates independently, they do show declining trends in the last several years for both of these variables combined at the pre-university levels (World Bank, 2002b).

**Textbooks and curricula:** Currently, the Curriculum Center for Instructional Materials Development (CCIMD) is responsible for the development of all student texts, workbooks, and teacher guides for all areas of the curriculum. Each year, the government distributes about 190 million textbooks to all children in MOE schools free of charge at a cost of L.E. 36.7 million (World Bank, 2002). However, one of the main reasons cited for the increasing cost of education to the household over the past decade was the reliance on non-ministerial books, due to the inadequacy of the official textbooks distributed for free (El Baradei, 2003).

**Higher education** in general suffers from similar problems to pre-university education: shortages of financial resources, inadequate facilities for students and faculty, overcrowded classes, and poor status of university libraries. Even at the university level, there is greater resort to private lessons and extra-curricular textbooks and materials particularly in applied faculties such as medicine and engineering. Graduates are unemployed, lacking in quantitative and numeric basic skills; they are unable to cope with the demands of a rapidly changing technology; unable to respond to market demands which is an indicator that universities are not responsive to labor market signals and demands (EHDR 1997/98). This is mainly due to the system's focus on mechanistic teaching and memorizing, rather than on the development of skills and on creativity. Universities also suffer from a lack of autonomy. Deans are no longer elected by faculty members but are appointed centrally. Increasing enrolment rates of students are forced upon faculties due to social and political pressures.

### ***IV.2.3 Access problems***

#### **The illiteracy rate:**

The illiteracy rate has been reduced from a high of 65 percent in 1975, to 49.6 percent in 1986, and 38.6 percent in 1996. However, the absolute number of illiterate population has increased from 15.9 million in 1986 to 17.3 million in 1996 (INP, 1996). Despite increased government efforts to eliminate illiteracy, significant gender, geographic and regional differentials still exist. In 1996, illiteracy among females was twice the rate for males (51 percent and 26 percent respectively). Rural/urban disparities in literacy attainment is highest in Upper Egypt, where the illiteracy rate in rural areas is almost 1.8 times that in urban areas, and the overall rate is twice that in Metropolitan governorates (INP, 1996).

#### **Enrolment gaps:**

- Enrolment in primary education is universal. Official statistics report a 100 percent gross enrolment rate in 2002; 101% for males and 97% for females. Net enrolment rates reached 94% for males and 91% for females in 2002 (MOE Statistics, 2002).
- In 2001 enrolment in preparatory education was 89.1% and for secondary education 69.2% (UNDP & INP, 2003).
- The dropout rates decreased from 16.11% for the cohort of pupils starting grade 1 in 1991/92 and reaching grade 8 in 1998/99, to 13.23% for the cohort of pupils starting grade 1 in 1992/1993 and reaching grade 8 in 1992/2000. The fall in the dropout rate for girls was faster (3.02%) than that for boys (2.75%) during the same period.
- On the other hand, enrolment in university education has increased steadily from 546.6 thousand students in 1990/91 to 811.1 thousand in 1997/98 to 1.3 million students in 1999/2000. It is worth noting that only 1.1 percent of the poor had a university education compared to 8.7 percent for the non-poor (World Bank, 2002a ), it is easy to conclude that education is biased towards the better off (a fact which will be discussed further).

- Moreover, indicators of enrolment reveal a bias towards secondary and university levels against basic education. While basic education is not yet universal, enrolment rates in secondary and tertiary are higher than those of other developing countries.

#### **Gender disparities:**

Gender disparities in education have narrowed rapidly in Egypt over the past two decades, however despite progress gender disparities still remain. Gross enrollment and net enrollment rates in primary education both witnessed an observed improvement, however there are more girls than boys out of school. The Net Enrollment Rate (NER) in primary education for girls was 89.4% in 1999, while it was 95.5% for boys, which means that there are still lots of girls with no access to schools (El Baradei, 2003). According to the latest MDG report for Egypt, the gender gap in net enrolment ratios has been fluctuating during the period 1992/3-1996/7. It has declined from 8.2 percentage points in 1992/93 to 5.2 percentage points in 1996/7, but jumped to 11.9 percentage points in 1997/98. Fluctuation in enrolment ratios, reflects the instability of the retention capacity of both primary and secondary education levels, and the weakness of the education system's measures and mechanisms to sustain its achievements in this area (PARC, 2003). Most of the time wealth interacts with gender to exacerbate gaps in education among the poor. The gender disadvantage is small among the rich but quite large among the poor (El Baradei, 2003).

#### **Income disparities:**

According to the latest data (World Bank, 2002) it has been evidenced that education was the factor that most affected poverty status. Illiteracy appears to be concentrated among the poor. Large inequalities in educational attainment emerge also among the literate, poverty was inversely correlated with educational attainment. Thus, the great majority of the poor had only basic education or no education at all (86.2% of the poor population had basic education or less, while only 1.1% had university education). In 1999/2000 enrolment was around 84.32% for children of basic education age (6-15 years), while only 77.06% among the poor (see tables (8) & (9) below).

#### **Regional disparities:**

The highest proportion of children not enrolled in basic education among the poor is in rural Upper Egypt (24.70%), followed by poor children in rural lower Egypt (20.97%) (World Bank, 2002a). Pockets of deprivation in the form of non-enrolment, early drop-out and very poor learning achievement are significant mostly in the 7 governorates of Behera, and six Upper Egypt governorates: Giza, Fayyoun, Beni Suef, Menya, Assuit and Sohag (UNESCO, 2003).

#### ***IV.2.4 Low economic returns on education***

In 1999/2000, private rates of return to Education in Egypt were extremely low, especially for basic and secondary education if compared to other countries whether developed or underdeveloped. In Egypt values for basic education, do not exceed 0.6 percent, and for secondary education range between 0.3 and 6.2 percent, while the average private rates of return in developed countries for similar levels of education, range between 15-50%. This low return is a function of both low earnings and high costs of education.

- The **low earnings of education** are the result of both the poor quality and the mismatch between the educational outcomes and labor market requirements.
- **High household costs of education** are also the result of several factors, among which imposition of user charges in public – so called free- schools, the widespread practice of private tutoring (& enhancement lessons in schools), the increasing costs of non-ministerial textbooks, stationery supplies, uniforms,

transportation and the high opportunity cost of education as a result of the work opportunities available for children in the labor market, or in households (girls).

Private rate of return to secondary education is lower than the private rate of return to basic education, which is quite unusual, as the normal scenario is that as the student completes more years of schooling, his/her private earnings tend to grow at a much faster rate than private costs, and hence the rate of return increases with more schooling (table 8).

**Table 8: Private Rate of Return to Education in Egypt 1999/2000**

	Metropolitan	Lower Urban	Lower Rural	Upper Urban	Upper Rural	All Egypt
Read & Write	+ve	+ve	12.65	+ve	+ve	+ve
Basic vs. Read & Write	-0.68	0.011	-	-	-	-0.11
Basic vs. Illiteracy	4.92	5.36	2.42	8.28	3.6	5.66
Secondary	-0.34	-3.32	-0.3	2.51	6.24	2
University & Above	8.07	4.46	6.0	7.22	4.65	8.0

Source: Calculated from CAPMAS, Household Income, Consumption and Expenditure Survey, 1999/2000, in Mona El Baradei, *The Private Rate of Return to Education, Educational Inequalities and Poverty in Egypt*, Background Paper to the World Bank Project on Egypt Poverty Reduction Strategy, June 2003.

The rate of return for secondary education was negative in all regions in 1999/2000, except surprisingly, for Upper Egypt region, whether urban or rural, and strangely enough it was the highest in Rural Upper Egypt. These relatively high returns to secondary education in Upper Egypt, which are at odds with the incidence of increasing poverty, could be explained by the phenomenon of 'over qualification' of labor. Because the secondary school graduates in Upper Egypt are poor and cannot afford to remain unemployed, they take whatever jobs they find and for which they may be overeducated, whether in the formal or informal sectors.

Private rates of return to basic education versus illiteracy improved in 1999/2000, compared to previous levels in 1995/96. However they remain to be low, less than 10 percent for all Egypt.

The highest rate of return to university education is in the Metropolitan region reaching 8.07 percent in 1999/2000.

#### **IV.2.5 Management problems**

**The absence of democracy and participation** which is featured in the following:

- The predominance of the bureaucratic style in most of the committees responsible for policy making and/or decision making, where the greatest percentage of the members are there by virtue of their positions; meaning that they are appointed and not elected. This includes the Supreme Council for Pre-University Education, and even the School Committees.
- The greatest percentage of the recommendations regarding reforming educational management are made without real interaction or participation by the real stakeholders, represented in parents, students and teachers. This is associated with the low effectiveness of elected committees in general ( parents and teachers committees, and students unions)

- Some organizational culture norms developed through ages of a non-democratic environment: like “showing obedience to an official so long as he is in office”, and then disregarding and attacking his/her policies as soon as he leaves. Another is taking “excessive precautions against corruption” which leads to lengthened bureaucratic procedures, and slow decision making.
- Voluntary foregoing of rights by teachers, students and parents on many occasions, like for example the department committee meetings in universities.

**The lack of scientific or rational decision making** in general, manifested in the fact that most of the pedagogical researches were conducted after the making of fundamental educational decisions and not before.

**The lack of effective systems and mechanisms for evaluating performance:** Most civil servants, and therefore the majority of employees in the Ministry of Education are compensated without there being any relationship between their pay and their performance (Mina, 2001).

**Over staffing of the public administration agencies and organizations** is yet another problem of mismanagement.

#### ***IV.2.6 Mismatch between the education system and the labour market***

Studies point out to the irrelevance of curricula and mismatch between educational outcomes and labor market requirements. Available data for 1996 indicate that the rates of unemployment according to educational level were as follows: 1.1% for illiterates, 1.3% for those who read and write, 4.4% for primary education graduates, 4.0% for less than intermediate certificate holders, 13.6% for above intermediate certificate holders, 8.9 for university graduates and 0.4% for higher degrees graduates. Prevailing rates of unemployment among ‘educated youth’ explain to a great extent the low and negative returns to secondary education in Egypt (Kamel, 1999). This fact is mainly attributable to the low quality of education. There is strong evidence for the low quality of technical schools due to irrelevant curricula, lack of materials and supplies, and poor quality teaching. Moreover, secondary technical education tends to produce workers with very specific technical skills that become outdated as technology advances, or as labor market demand change (World Bank, 2002).

According to the Ministry of Manpower, in general graduates have the basic skills required by the labor market, but there is more concentration on theoretical issues rather than practical issues in the educational process. There is a deficiency in the number of practical hours of study and in the time spent in workshops and in getting acquainted with advanced technology.

As for the relationship between the labor market and the educational process, there are several problems and obstacles encountered:

- First is the problem of lack of organization in the labor market. The private sector enterprises do not cooperate with the Ministry of Manpower. When there are work opportunities in the private sector, recruitment and appointment occur through random advertisements and recommendations. As a result the Ministry is incapable of preparing an accurate assessment of needs. As for the external labor market, it is more organized and disciplined with labor needs concentrated in doctors, professors, judges, engineers, and petroleum sector specializations, and usually there is a demand for persons with prior experience.



- There is a problem of inaccurate data whether as regards the supply or demand for certain labor skills.
- The growing informal sector is not registered and therefore it does not provide any data, or if it does provide data, it is sometimes misleading.
- Work values and behaviors have become negative in many cases. In Egypt, it is sometimes possible to receive compensation without exerting any effort, which leads to the lack of commitment to work, and the spread of apathy.
- Part of the dominant societal culture regards the educational certificate as a goal in itself, so it is overvalued in and of itself.
- Colleges and faculties are overburdened with increasing numbers of students above their absorptive capacity
- In many schools and institutes, success rate in exams is exaggerated so as to get rid of the increasing number of students who have to leave their places for others in the following years. This is especially true in the case of technical education, where there are limited resources, higher class densities, and a dire need for new investments in industrial schools. As a result, the outputs of technical education are totally unfit for the labor market.
- Technical education is especially yielding graduates with skills inappropriate for the labor market needs. This is a result of several factors:
  - the poor educational performance of students who choose to attend in the first place, technical education, and who are generally from among the pool who score lower in examinations compared to the students who continue general secondary education, have lower capabilities and are less committed to education,
  - most of the studies performed within the technical schools is theoretical in nature, and there are no sufficient training opportunities, and a lack in needed training tools and equipment,
  - the technology within the technical schools is not up to date.

### **IV.3. Opportunities**

Opportunities for education reform include:

- The human capital available in Egypt, and brainpower, if properly utilized.
- The international concern regarding the need for education reform manifested among other things in the Millennium Development Goals and the diversity of donor supported projects implemented in Egypt.
- The growing public discontent with the quality of education which may act as a strong driving force for reform.
- Possibility for cooperation and coordination between Egypt and other Arab countries in developing and implementing education reform efforts due to abundant similarities in education systems, curricula and teaching methods.

### **IV.4 Threats**

Threats facing the education sector in Egypt include:

- Increasing cost of educational services
- Increasing population growth, especially the percentage of school age children.
- New skills and capabilities required of graduates in our global competitive environment
- Rapid pace of change and innovation in technology, communication and science which requires a strong will and ability to adapt.

**Table 9: POVERTY PROFILE 1999-2000**

Educational Attainment of Individuals by Region and by Poverty Status, 1999/2000 (percent)

Region	Illitera	Read &	Ba	Seconda	Diplom	Univ	Post Ur
<b>Metropolitan</b>							
Non-poo	15.6	13.9	23.	24.50	3.90	17.5	0.8
Poor	34.6	20.2	27.	14.51	1.70	1.1	0.0
All	16.6	14.2	23.	23.99	3.79	16.6	0.7
<b>Lower Egypt Urban</b>							
Non-poo	18.4	16.0	23.	26.19	3.98	11.7	0.3
Poor	31.8	21.2	27.	16.40	1.68	1.6	0.0
All	19.3	16.3	23.	25.59	3.84	11.1	0.3
<b>Lower Egypt Rural</b>							
Non-poo	33.1	18.0	23.	19.49	1.99	4.2	0.0
Poor	42.4	19.9	24.	12.00	0.56	1.0	0.0
All	34.2	18.3	23.	18.59	1.82	3.8	0.0
<b>Upper Egypt Urban</b>							
Non-poo	21.1	13.6	22.	26.00	4.22	11.7	0.3
Poor	37.2	15.4	27.	17.02	1.33	1.3	0.0
All	24.1	13.9	23.	24.30	3.67	9.8	0.2
<b>Upper Egypt Rural</b>							
Non-poo	46.2	15.4	19.	14.64	1.62	2.8	0.0
Poor	52.0	15.3	21.	9.88	0.65	0.9	0.0
All	48.2	15.4	19.	13.04	1.29	2.1	0.0
<b>Total Egypt</b>							
Non-poo	28.3	15.8	22.	21.33	2.89	8.7	0.3
Poor	45.7	17.0	23.	11.92	0.84	1.0	0.0
All	31.1	16.0	22.	19.82	2.56	7.5	0.2

Source: The World Bank (2002a).

**Table 10: School Enrolment of Children Aged 6-15 Years by Region and by Poverty Status, 1999/2000 (percent)**

Region	Enroled	Not Enroled	Number of Child
<b>Metropolitan</b>			
Non-poor	85.67	14.33	7284
Poor	73.24	26.76	583
All	84.75	15.25	7867
<b>Lower Egypt Urban</b>			
Non-poor	88.27	11.73	5142
Poor	79.84	20.16	491
All	87.54	12.46	5633
<b>Lower Egypt Rural</b>			
Non-poor	87.07	12.93	14574
Poor	79.03	20.97	2689
All	85.81	14.19	17263
<b>Upper Egypt Urban</b>			
Non-poor	88.77	11.23	4409
Poor	81.11	18.89	1572

All	86.76	13.24	5981
<b>Upper Egypt Rural</b>			
Non-poor	84.00	16.00	9708
Poor	75.30	24.70	6911
All	80.38	19.62	16619
<b>Total Egypt</b>			
Non-poor	86.47	13.53	41820
Poor	77.06	22.94	12362
All	84.32	15.68	54182

Source: The World Bank (2002a).

## **V. WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE TO SOLVE THE PROBLEMS OF THE EGYPTIAN EDUCATION SYSTEM:**

There are several policy reform requirements, and measures to be taken, in order to solve the many problems and shortcomings of the Egyptian Education System. The following section points out briefly to some of those proposed policies and measures categorized by the type of problem encountered, whether related to financing, quality, access, the low economic returns to education, management problems, or the weak link between the outputs of the educational process and the labor market:

### **V. 1 What to Do about Financial Problems**

Options for reforming the financing problems of the education sector in Egypt comprise two groups of measures:

- 1- Policy Measures for Improving Efficiency of Spending in Education.
- 2- Policy Measures for Mobilizing Additional Resources to Education.

#### ***V.1.1 Policy measures for improving efficiency of spending in education***

Considerable savings can be achieved through improving efficiency of spending in the Egyptian education sector. Asian countries governments have achieved "breakthroughs" in education while spending less than governments in all other world regions. This paradox – high coverage despite relatively little fiscal effort – was explained by the sound public policies in the education sector (Tan & Mingat, 1992). This can be achieved in Egypt –which has the opposite paradox: high level of public spending and modest coverage – through the following measures:

- a) Improving the delivery systems.
- b) Improving resource utilization and allocation.

#### ***a) Improving the Delivery Systems:***

Considerable gains could be achieved through improving the delivery systems of education in Egypt and they could be achieved by spending well without spending more. "However spending well may be much harder than spending more, since improving spending implies taking privileges away from advantaged groups who have benefited from the inefficient spending of the past" (Shafik, 1996). Improving the

delivery systems of education in Egypt means eliminating the biases in those systems:

### **Increasing investment expenditures and eliminating the bias towards current expenditures**

Allocation of resources in the education sector must put greater emphasis on investment expenditure in the coming years given the shortage of schools especially in basic education. This can be achieved by reducing the proportion of current expenditure through reducing the ratio of administrative and non-teaching staff – whether in pre-university or university education – which absorbs a high proportion of the wage bill (which also constitutes most of the current expenditure).

Allocating public investment should also be based on economic analysis, assessments of learning achievements, learning and standard setting and to where returns would be the highest. In developing countries in general, returns are highest in basic education suggesting this should be the priority in allocating public educational investments in Egypt (EHDR, 1996/97). This last suggestion is linked to the following point.

### **Reallocation of resources in favor of basic education and away from higher education**

This suggestion is justified on several grounds:

- The higher social rate of return to basic education than to secondary and tertiary education, as proved by research and studies all over the world.
- When growth did take place in most education systems in developed countries, it was the elementary level that grew fastest toward universal provision and only when substantial progress had been made, did higher levels grow substantially (Lewin et al, 1982). In Egypt, as has been shown, there is a lot to be achieved whether in quantity or quality in basic education.
- University education financing could be diversified and supported from several sources of funding (private sector, contributions, donations, loans, vouchers... etc, as would be suggested further).
- Most importantly, public expenditures on higher education in Egypt benefit the affluent disproportionately in contrast to expenditures on primary and secondary schooling, as has been proved earlier. This feature ends up distorting the commendable record of the government at the pre-university level.

To redress this situation the government could channel more resources from university level to basic education while enhancing the access to higher education by introducing alternate methods of financing higher education, such as scholarships and student loans that eventually would help reduce the difference in rates of return (as will be discussed further).

It would also be prudent to target governmental resources to those fields of study where the demand in labor market is high.

Moreover, by allocating more resources to basic education the likelihood of transition to secondary and higher levels of schooling would be more equal as indicated by several studies.

The results of a regression analysis in China suggest that both income and educational spending tend to increase transition rates. But more importantly, the results indicate that keeping budgetary allocation to primary education at a high enough level will compensate for the negative effect of low income by making the likelihood of transition to secondary and higher levels of schooling more equal throughout the country (Hossain, 1997).

**Reallocating resources towards rural areas:**

Despite that the distribution of public primary schools proved to be fairly equal between rural and urban areas, this is not the case for preparatory schools and especially for secondary schools (El Baradei, 2001). This bias undermines a great deal the chances of transition from primary to preparatory and to secondary levels and eventually to higher education.

Achieving equality between urban and rural areas could be achieved at low fiscal impact by targeting the most disadvantaged governorates and areas. The government could use the data of surveys and studies already available about coverage of schools in different areas. In Egypt the most disadvantaged areas in general are Rural Upper Egypt governorates, followed by Urban Upper Egypt governorates, then Rural Lower Egypt Governorates.

***b) Improving resource utilization and allocation:***

There is a lot of waste that could be saved in government education spending (besides the waste of resources reflected in dropouts and repetition rates which could decrease a lot by improving the quality of education).

1.2.1. Efficient construction and space utilization of school building could save from 5 to 20 percent of costs.

A least – cost design of school – building was developed by the World Bank during the Education Enhancement Program project (WB, SAR/EEP, 1996) and will result, if implemented, in projected cost savings of approximately US\$ 70 million per year.

1.2.2. Reducing the ratio of administrative and non-teaching staff in all levels of education could also save a great proportion of the wage bill.

1.2.3. The efficiency of government intervention in literacy programs is questioned, as observed earlier. Thus, the resources devoted to those programs could be channeled to formal education, while leaving the responsibility of adult literacy to NGOs which proved to be very effective in this respect.

1.2.4. The same applies for all other forms of informal education (like the one-class school) which could be delegated to NGOs, which are more capable in this sort of programs that need a lot of effort and dedication. The resources devoted to those programs could be channeled to formal basic education.

1.2.5. At the university level, there are also various sources of inefficient spending which could be spared. Such as overstaffing of both teaching staff and administrative and support employees; also there are the high costs of students services (housing, food, subsidized meals...etc) which could be revised; moreover, as has been observed, actual spending is always above

budgeted resources, which is an indicative either of bad planning or inefficient spending.

- 1.2.6. The costs of MOE textbooks are very high and have increased due to the increase of copies after the introduction of the two – terms school – year. There could be a room for saving by improving efficiency and reducing the number. Also, may be MOE is not the best provider, books could be cheaper if printed by a private sector provider.
- 1.2.7. The government should seek every way or innovation to reduce costs. Several studies have reviewed educational innovations to reduce costs and increase efficiency. Three broad types can be identified; first, those that depend on new educational technologies, which include the use of radio, television and self-instructional materials. Second, there are innovations within non formal education; third, innovations in formal sector provision. For formal sector provision these can be classified into four main areas of initiative: organizational, administrative, materials production and teacher training. Relationships between the organization of delivery and cost savings are not simple. For example, it has been observed that the economies of scale do not necessarily apply to increasing school sizes. Larger buildings may require more sophisticated methods of construction and this will increase the unit cost of provision. The optimum school size in sparsely populated rural areas is therefore likely to be quite small at the primary level (Lewin, 1987). Among the most of ten discussed possibilities are those which reduce the unit costs of operations, by using teachers, capital plant and equipment more intensively and by thus spreading relatively fixed costs over a large number of units of output. The more economical use of teachers would take place through better time tabling to raise teacher outputs in terms of the number of students instructed over a period of time, and the use of classrooms and laboratories for a higher proportion of the school week or year (Lewin, 1987).

### ***V.1.2 Policy measures for mobilizing additional resources to education***

Improving efficiency of spending in the education sector – if the policy measures described in the preceding part were applied – could enhance the quality of education in Egypt, "by spending well, without spending more". However, a real reform of education in Egypt needs a lot more resources than those which could be saved by improving efficiency of spending. There are two main types of constraints which limit the educational resources allocated to governments. First, there are those that affect the overall level of public expenditure and therefore the size of the cake from which the educational budget is sliced; those determine the ability to resource. Second, there are those that affect the priority that is accorded to education in the national budget and which reflect internal decision on resource allocation, those determine the willingness to resource (Lewin, 1987).

In Egypt, the ability to resource is now far better than the beginnings of the 1990's which witnessed the implementation of the "Economic Reform and Structural Adjustment Program", through which Egypt resources were tight. However, the willingness to resource, or the priority that is accorded to education in the national budget has increased since the beginnings of the nineties – in spite of all difficulties – and is still increasing (reaching about 15 percent of the national budget and about 5.2 percent of GDP in 2002/2003). This is high by international standards.

Thus, **the first option** open for financing education is **resisting diminution** of resources (or even attempt to increase them) through arguments concerned with the value of educational investment. **The priority of Education** must be recognized at all levels (not only at MOE level) so that the "Education as the National Project of Egypt" becomes really a national project, felt by all the people. This needs great efforts and a public campaign, using government media system (television, radio, newspapers) to raise public awareness of the importance of education to both boys and girls, even using churches and mosques to this issue. Also, the responsibility of all sectors of the society in ensuring access to education must be stressed.

**The second option** for financing education is **increasing the available resources**. If there is a resistance to this issue, among the first questions which need to be answered are: Has the State reached the limit of its ability to generate revenues through taxation, duties on imported luxury goods, policies of investment and pension funds, exchange controls, etc.? Have any new methods been explored to increase revenues; levies on productive industries that utilize educated manpower, incentives to stimulate contributions to expenditure from companies and private benefactors, etc.? On what basis is investment in other sectors taking place at the expense of that available for educational provision? Only when these questions have been resolved satisfactorily should other options be explored.

By reviewing the above questions, we find that there are still venues to be explored **by the Government:**

- The first possibility open to the Egyptian government is reallocating resources in favor of education (at least for a targeted period) on the basis that education in the age of globalization has become a matter of "national security".
- The second mean of mobilizing resources is shifting between budgets. In most countries a proportion of educational expenditure, particularly that associated with training is spent by ministries, other than the ministry of education (e.g. ministries of labor, agriculture, industry... etc.). This means should be explored by the Ministry of Education.
- The third possibility is the reallocation of resources between levels of education (from higher education to basic education) as referred to before. Some countries have been successful at dealing with this politically difficult reform. Between 1980 and 1990, the share of recurrent higher education costs funded from tuition charges rose from 23 percent to 43 percent in Korea, from zero to 21 percent in Vietnam, from 13 percent to 25 percent in Mexico and from 8 percent to 16 percent in Costa Rica (Shafik, 1996).

In order to make university fees politically more feasible, the government can raise public awareness of the tradeoffs in public spending choices. This could be done by raising the issue of inequitable higher education spending in public forums and by encouraging a public discussion of this issue. It can build awareness among the population that a problem exists and that an effective higher education cannot be built on an inefficient pre-university level; it can also make it more prepared to accept changes by promoting the ideas of new ways of financing university education (scholarships, grants, students loans, vouchers, etc...).

Then, as a second step, the government should start making a selective increase in user fees. Private tuition and fee contribute only about 5 percent of total current university expenditures and cost - of living subsidies have captured an increasing share of total public higher education spending. Both areas could be improved by

reducing the burden of subsidization. Given the high private rate of returns to higher education, private spending that students and their parents want to make may be encouraged. However, setting tuition and fees according to cost per student, rather than in absolute amount would be desirable so that changes could be raised in accordance with inflation.

Also non-instructional subsidies should decrease. Such step can significantly alleviate the crowding – out problem, freeing – up government resources for expanding enrolments in other levels of education. Several theoretical considerations suggest that such a policy is most relevant at the level of higher education because:

- it is probably more feasible to implement administratively,
- its potentially adverse effect on equity within the subsection is blunted by the fact that most students at this level come from relatively advantaged social backgrounds (as in the case of Egypt), and most of the benefits of higher education are captured by those students (Tan and Mingat, 1992).

An argument in favor of private financing in higher education is that such a policy creates incentives for cost containment by promoting competition with the private sector and by sharpening cost-consciousness among students and school managers (Tan and Mingat, 1992). The government in Egypt should however start charging fees gradually in public universities, beginning by those who fail, and by graduate studies as a first step. Also, the increase in fees should be gradual, allowing for adjustment. It must be stressed that those fees cover only a proportion of the actual costs of a student since charging the total actual fees would be very high for a public university (as in the case in public universities all over the world), and that poor students are not to be denied university education but this will be through scholarships, grants, loans or any other student finance scheme.

A major step to reform university education in Egypt is through reforming vocational schools which would help decrease the demand for university education, while matching the market demand. The private sector could contribute a lot in this reform. A related issue which could be explored, is the transformation of the existing low quality technical secondary schools to general secondary schools, while financing high quality new technical schools in collaboration with foreign donors or grants or in collaboration with the production sector (like the Mubakak - Kohl Project).

Public or private enterprises are the first beneficiaries of the "outputs" of the educational system and it is only fair that they should contribute not only to the financing of training but also to the actual training process. The comparative degree of involvement of the state and of the firms varies considerably, depending on the country. Such a diversity is proof that there is no strict dividing line between state contribution and private participation but a sharing of responsibilities which makes the system flexible enough to counterbalance budgetary restrictions in time of austerity (Perrot, 1988).

A fourth option is the establishment of **a development fund of education**. This step needs launching of a national and international campaign to finance this fund, besides thinking of new sources of revenues like allocation of a percentage of oil revenues for example or an earmarked tax on private schools (and universities) or on cigarettes, on cinema and theaters' tickets, on passports issuing, to cite only a few examples.

However, while recognizing the responsibility of the government to guarantee high quality basic education for all and assuring access to higher stages of education, this



does not mean, that the government engages in direct provision of all educational services nor does it mean that the government should finance all educational services. **Seeking the contribution of all actors of the society** (private sector, household sector, non-governmental organizations, foreign donors, and private donations) for financing education in Egypt **is unavoidable** in the present situation considering the predicted high level of financial resources, due to the past deterioration on one hand, and to the great challenges ahead, in this age of globalization and technological revolution. **Diversifying the structure** of financing education is not only necessary but it is also safer in periods of austerity.

In this regard, we can cite Article 14 of the "World Declaration on Higher Education for the Twenty-First Century: Vision and Action" adopted by the UNESCO World Conference on Higher Education held in Paris in 9 October 1998:

The first option is the **Non-Governmental Sector**. This sector includes enterprises, mosques and churches, charitable foundations, which may help to finance schools. This could be achieved through contributions in labour and materials to the establishment of new institutions through building programmes. These could range from all the inputs to a scarce or expensive resource, to uniforms, meals and supplies or financing the health insurance for poor children or financing the private tuition fees for poor pupils.

A successful example of this type of financing where there are voluntary contributions from communities in which schools are located comes from Kenya (harambee contributions). The establishment of harambee secondary schools and the subsequent introduction of harambee streams in the government maintained secondary schools, saved the government from the pressure of investing more in education at a time of economic austerity (Olembo, 1986).

It is worth noting that the new USA aid policy has emphasized the role of NGOs, granting 40% of the aid to NGOs. Thus, NGOs could be a major source of financing education, if directed towards this goal. There are about 15000 NGOs in Egypt; if in the framework of "Education as the National Project of Egypt" – in the wider sense referred to earlier – those NGOs could concentrate their efforts and finance to Education only, for one year for example, this would achieve a great deal for education in Egypt.

The **Private Business Sector** can be a second source for financing education in Egypt. It is important to encourage the private sector to support education through tax exemptions. This support is in the best interest of this sector since the improvement of the education system will lead to the production of human-skills needed to maximize profits (Fergany, 1998). When education, especially professional education, becomes associated with increased earnings, the private sector might be expected to contribute in its financing. When a firm allocates student grants, it does not so much out of charity than out of a sense of how a dynamic firm must be run, while realizing its own needs in terms of skilled labour (Perrot, 1988). However, the most genuinely philanthropic foundations may not be insensitive to the tax-exemptions on donations or to the prestige that can be conferred by linking their name with that of a famous institution (Perrot, 1988). The financial participation of the private sector may take – as in many countries – different forms: building schools, contribution of supplies and materials or land or monetary contributions in the form of fellowships, student grants, loans, etc.

In Egypt, some efforts have already begun in Cairo, Giza, Alexandria, and other governorates in building schools and supplying of land and materials from the business sector. However, other schemes of monetary or technical contributions have not been explored yet. Those contributions can take the form of: Vocational Training, Apprenticeship Schemes, Grants, Scholarships, Financial Aid Schemes, Mortgage loans with income-dependent grant, Graduate Tax, Income-contingent loans, Vouchers.

**The Household Sector** is contributing a lot at the present time in financing education Egypt (about 50 percent of the governmental financing). However its contribution goes mostly to insidious out - of - pocket expenditures, mainly private lessons and non-ministerial textbooks (both in pre-university and university levels).

Hence, the household sector could be encouraged to finance education by channeling its resources from the "parallel education system" to the formal education system. However, this is conditioned by a real tangible reform of the education system. Its contribution can be in many forms: fees, grants, donations, scholarships.

Cairo University was founded as a non-profit private university, by private (individual) donations. The household sector could finance higher education if it is granted the confidence that its resources have been well utilized.

Another option for financing education is **Foreign Aid**: in the form of grants, soft loans or technical assistance could be a source of financing education.

The benefits of foreign contributions could be maximized if they are allocated within a framework that coordinates among different education sectors needs.

They also could help a lot if linked to specific projects like the Mubarak-Kohl project for vocational training.

## V.2 What to Do about Quality Problems

Following are a group of suggested measures for improving the quality of education in Egypt. Some of those measures have already been started on by the GOE. However, in most cases still a lot remains to be done.

First of all, access to quality teaching and learning must be a pre-eminent concern. There are various options to improve the quality of education such as (for details see Fuller & Habte, 1992; Hallak, 1991; WB, WDR, 2000/1):

- Raising the proportion of recurrent sector spending allocated to essential textbooks and instructional materials.
- Improving and consolidating curriculum and focusing instructional material expenditures on basic subjects (that are relevant to rural or urban needs).
- Introducing new learning technologies, including distance education programs for both pupils and teachers.
- Improving management information and accounting systems to track allocation of teachers, instructional materials and capital spending.
- Conducting research to identify those school inputs and classroom practices that effectively boost pupil achievement.
- Improving national examination systems to provide feedback to schools on educational quality, controlling for differences in pupil background.
- Decentralizing certain management functions to encourage local responsibility and accountability.
- Introducing more autonomy at the school level, for example by granting the school flexibility in allocating resources among different school activities.

- Increasing school choice for parents; good schools will be preferred to bad ones, and as a consequence, the revenues of bad schools will decline, encouraging the staff to offer better quality services.
- Increasing the ratio of teaching to non-teaching staff and tracking and reducing the number of “ghost” teachers who have no school assignment; this will free up resources to raise teachers’ salaries to improve the quality of teaching.
- Allocating teachers to equalize pupil/teacher ratios across schools and grade levels.
- Developing more effective teacher training programs that combine residential and more field teaching practice.
- Creating incentives for teachers and headmasters by: linking a portion of teacher salaries to performance in the classroom; linking a portion of teachers’ salaries to participation in in-service training; creating “master teacher” roles within schools to encourage professional achievement and development; changing the role of school inspectors and headmasters to encourage improvement in pedagogy and professional development activities.
- Establishing standards for what students should know and be able to do at various stages of the education system; participating in international evaluations of educational achievement and developing good national assessment systems. Pilot programs for the application of the National Standards of Education in Egypt are now in progress.
- Involving parents in the management of schools because they have the highest motivation for enhancing the quality of education received by their children. Selected projects for implementing a greater degree of decentralization have are now under implementation, but there is a need for more widespread implementation.
- Improving the quality of education – in the sense of school conditions – is not sufficient. For parents, quality encompasses more than simply a better school environment, more qualified teachers, and the adequate provision of textbooks. Educational quality to parents and pupils also assumes relevance to local needs, adaptability to local conditions (cultural, economic) special consideration for groups who are particularly marginal (handicapped) flexibility in addressing cultural obstacles (girls, women) (Hallak, 1991) which will be discussed at the meso and micro levels.

Regarding the external inefficiency of the Egyptian education system, the education policy must change to adapt the education system outputs to the labor market needs. Quality is the key to achieving the imperative for the new millennium – an educated, skilled population who can operate in democratic societies and meet changing labor market needs (WB, WDR, 2000/1). Thus, the government should target resources to those fields of study where the demand in labor market is high. It could also raise pupil admission standards in secondary schools and universities where supply of graduates exceeds labor demand.

A major problem in the educational system is the technical or vocational secondary schools which are mainly attended by poor students and which are of such bad quality that most of the graduates are unemployed despite the labor market needs of “efficient” technical labor. This problem needs special attention and needs an urgent solution, to redress the “mismatch” situation between the education system outputs and the labor market. It could also be a step to reform university education, since reforming technical schools would help decrease the demand for university education, while matching the market demand. The private sector could contribute a lot in this

reform. Related to this issue, the government should think of integrating “training” and “retraining” as major components of the educational policy.

Improving the quality of education, besides being an objective in itself, will also lead to improve the access of the poor (and girls) to education, since low quality of education is one of the major reasons behind the non-accessibility of the poor to education.

### **V:3 What to Do about Access Problems**

Access problems are mainly problems of the poor. To solve those problems education must be more affordable, more accessible to poor people.

#### ***V.3.1. Making education more affordable: reforming prices***

The second major reason of the inaccessibility of the poor to education is its rising cost, which reduce its economic benefits, and hence its rate of return. To reduce the private cost of education for poor students in Egypt in order to enhance their accessibility to education, the government must make education more affordable by adapting some pricing reforms. The main policy to attract poor children to education and to retain them in the education system as well, is to alleviate the poor families from the burden of education costs. The first step toward this goal (at the macro level) is the return to totally free education which means the elimination of all tuition and fees (declared or hidden) in basic education for all children. The second measure is providing textbooks and stationery as well as school uniforms free for all children in basic education (with a reduction in their costs).

The abolishment of “enhancement lessons” in schools and replacing them with a system of incentives to teachers for class performance will reduce the burden of education costs to poor families on one hand, and reestablish education quality on the other. The system of teachers’ incentives could also help MOE to track “private lessons” more effectively. Financing those new public educational costs could be done by channeling resources from higher education (as discussed earlier).

Eliminating tuition and school fees may not be sufficient to make education affordable for poor families’ children. They still have to bear other related educational costs, in addition to the opportunity costs forgone. Targeted transfer income in-cash, or in-kind programs, to poor households with children, based on observable criteria, such as children’s age and their attendance in schools, on their class achievement, constitute a policy instrument to make education affordable to the poor. This includes vouchers, subsidies (in cash or in kind), child allowances, and fee waivers for basic services. The Egyptian government should think of applying such measures which proved successful in other developing countries, not only in enhancing enrollment but also in enabling the poor to make the transition to the post primary level (making education sustainable).

In Asia, an "augmented subsidy" (covering fees, related costs for school attendance plus opportunity costs forgone) was first introduced in Sri Lanka by the government and later became popular in other countries. Recently, such a subsidy has been introduced in Bangladesh and Guatemala for girls only, while vouchers (covering fees plus costs related to school attendance) were introduced in Columbia and Pakistan. So far, these measures have proved successful at enhancing enrollment and

retention rates among poor as well as female students in those countries (Hossain, 1997). Evaluations of the Bangladesh Food for Education program found that the transfer of 100 kilograms of rice increased the probability of boys schooling by 17 percent, and that of girls by 160 percent. The Brazilian Bolsa Escola program targets scholarships at regions and communities with high levels of child labor. The objective is to keep the children in school by compensating parents for the lost income earned by children. Preliminary evaluation suggests that there have been significant improvements in school attendance. The Mexican PROGRESA scheme provided health and education benefits for 1.9 million households in 1998, three-quarters of which were in the bottom quintile of the income distribution. Evaluation of PROGRESA found that the program increased enrollment in grades 3 – 6 by 2.2 percentage points and enrollment in grades 7 – 8 by 4.9 percentage points (W.B., WDR 2000/1).

The provision of nutrition in basic education in Egypt could also be a major step toward achieving several related objectives to improve health and school performance and to encourage attendance among poor children. The MEO has already begun supplying a nutritional meal. However, there is a need for more efforts to realize the full implementation for this nutrition scheme; targeting is very important: poor areas and slums must be the first to benefit from this scheme.

Making schools affordable implies also lowering the opportunity cost of staying in school. This could be done (in addition to subsidies which compensate for forgone income) by adjusting the school calendar to avoid peak periods of labor demand (during the day or year) for example in some regions. Providing flexible school hours through non-formal and formal education could be a solution for girls who have household chores. It has proved effective in drawing girls into primary schools in different countries (El Baradei, 1996).

### ***V.3.2. Making education accessible to poor people***

Increasing investment expenditures (building more schools) and allocating more resources to rural areas are not sufficient to make education accessible to poor people. This requires targeting poor areas, or poor communities (it could be one or two villages in a governorate, or even parts of villages, or urban slums). Targeting those areas must be based on a schools' shortage map; it could be achieved then at low fiscal impact. It has been proved that by **targeting three governorates** (Assyout, Menia and Dakahlia) the government can reach out to about 30 percent of children who are not attending primary school. A program that can capture those children at risk of dropping out or never attending school will be fiscally more sustainable than a universal initiative. Targeting could also be for enrollment rates and not only schools. Net enrollment rates can be increased in primary education by introducing targeted programs to areas and schools with low enrollment rates. Targeted programs could also be introduced which would improve the chances of a child completing primary school. Steps that the government can take to establish such programs are: (i) pinpointing communities with low primary enrollment rate, (ii) identifying the schools with low performance (through exams); (iii) and targeting programs to address these special problems.

To increase access, the government should also seek innovative delivery: distance education, open learning and the use of new technologies. Existing and new technological possibilities (distance education using print and radio, TV and the

Internet) can increase access, reduce costs, expand the range and quantity of education and training options, open up new worlds in classrooms and communities, and make real the promises of lifelong learning (WB, WDR, 2000/1).

Making education accessible includes also making schools acceptable. This can be done through two channels:

- Enhancing the physical environment, especially for girls by providing more girls' schools in appropriate regions (sex-segregated schools may provide the only venue for girls to participate in the educational system in some regions) and by establishing appropriate facilities (a critical minimum of physical infrastructure appears to be needed to attract and retain girls at school).
- Improving the teaching/learning process by providing a relevant curriculum, textbooks and other basics, but especially adapting the schools to local conditions. Hiring more female teachers could enhance girls' enrollment (as in Upper Egypt where evidence suggests that recruitment of female teachers enhances girls' enrollment (El Baradei, 1995).

### ***V.3.3. Making education functional for poor people***

In addition to adapting schools to local needs (cultural, economic), adapting the curriculum (especially in basic education) to be functional for the student could improve the rate of return to education for poor people and hence, increase their access to education. This could be achieved by including some technical education in the curriculum so that it can enhance the graduate's chances for a job.

### ***V.3.4. Making education sustainable for poor people***

Enabling the poor to become educated requires not only that they have access to basic education, but also that they survive through primary education and make the transition to post-primary education. Improving the quality of education and making it affordable for poor people will lead to the sustainability of education for poor people. Results from several studies found that the elimination of fees in Bangladesh and Guatemala, and the introduction of vouchers in Colombia and Pakistan have increased students' participation and transition to the next cycle of education. Vouchers have enabled the poor to gain access to selected private schools that have excess capacity.

To retain these financial incentives throughout primary or secondary cycles, students were required to maintain grade point averages. Recently, simulations from survey data of Mongolia and Indonesia have shown that introduction of augmented subsidy that compensates families for fees, related costs for school attendance plus foregone opportunity costs would enhance enrollment prospects among the poorest groups the most (Hossain, 1997).

## **V.4 What to Do about Gender Disparities**

The investigation of women's educational status in Egypt revealed that gender disparities still persist as far as literacy, access, attainment, and training are concerned and that girls tend to perform as well as boys if not better, as far as achievement and completion are concerned (El Baradei, 2003a).

These persisting gender disparities in education prevent Egypt from reaping all the benefits that accrue in terms of development effects, from educating females. There is a great scope for policy to support the principle of gender equality in education, policy measures could include:

- **Revising compulsory education laws**  
The Egyptian government should review whether and how existing laws are enforced and make modifications to make them more responsive to current priorities (including promulgating a new law for dropping-out, for example).
- **Adopting gender – sensitive educational policies**  
Providing equal education opportunities for boys and girls – as is the case now – is not sufficient; girls need special attention because of the constraints – especially on the demand side – that hinders their full participation in education. Hence, attention must be paid to target girls in education policies, projects and programmes. Gender-targeted approaches have improved females' access to education in several countries. A national program that provides secondary scholarships to girls in Bangladesh and a project that subsidized the establishment of private schools with grants pegged to girls in Pakistan have successfully increased girls enrollment (WB, 2001).
- **Changing the negative gender image and stereotypes**  
The government can do a lot in promulgating a new image of the woman and in combating gender stereotypes that are still prevailing, specially by using the media in a positive way. The government could launch public information campaigns to emphasize the value of education and to convince the parents of the importance of girls' education and of its benefits to the individual, the family and the society (as with the successful campaign undertaken by the Egyptian government to promote oral re-hydration) in order to influence attitudes and behavior.
- **Diminishing the direct and indirect costs of schooling**  
Investigating girls' education barriers (El Baradei, 2003a) pointed to two factors: households' poverty, and the direct and indirect costs of schooling, as the most important factors hindering universal enrollment and that they constitute a more decisive element in the case of girls.  
Fostering economic development, increases in household income tend to reduce gender disparities, in education, health and nutrition (WB, 2001). However, if this is a long term approach, a shorter term approach will be to diminish all direct and indirect costs of schooling as observed earlier.
- **Improving the quality of education**  
Addressing the issue of quality in the Egyptian education system is a top priority, as demonstrated by several researches and studies and as discussed earlier. This issue is even more important for girls (as observed earlier). Hence, improving quality is a necessity in general, but improving "quality education for girls" is also important to bridge the existing gender gaps.  
This quality education for girls should contain elements like the following:
  - Locate schools near girls.
  - Staff schools with female teachers, especially at the secondary schools, where there is a shortage.
  - Providing single-sex schools or make existing schools more sensitive to community attitudes, for example schools might offer two shifts: one for girls in the morning and another for boys in the evening so that girls would not walk home after dark.

- Improving teacher quality: improving the quality of teachers must involve increasing the numbers of teachers and improving the skills and morale of those teachers already in the profession (Rihani, 1993).
- Develop and adopt curricula and teacher training that are more gender sensitive. Reforming a curriculum should involve: increase female role mode in the textbooks, portray active women in a wide variety of occupations, portray women working in scientific and technical fields and well-remunerated jobs and depict more frequently men in family-related, child-related activities. Teacher training programmes should include sessions that help teachers improve their teaching skills through gender—based awareness raising (Rihani, 1993).
- Enforcing girl-friendly regulations and ensuring a girl-friendly environment: policies made at the national level, regulations for an entire school, and teacher-made rules for a classroom can all contribute to a school that is friendly to girls (UNESCO, 2000).
- Regulations might include providing adequate basic services particularly sanitary for girls in schools, also doctors or nurses, good ventilation, lighting and cleanness (which are lacking in a great number of Egyptian schools as observed earlier). They also might include dismissing male teachers or students who harass, punish, denigrate or tease female students.
- Making curricula relevant to girls (like the one-classroom and the community schools curricula).

## **V.5 What to Do about Low Economic Returns to Education**

The education system in Egypt and the prevailing educational policies suffer from several shortcomings, which led to a low and distorted private internal rate of return to education, as well as great disparities in this rate among different regions of Egypt. Thus, the private internal rate of return to education in Egypt (which is an economic return) acted as a disincentive for education, especially for the poor.

In order to enhance the role of education in general and in reducing poverty especially, the private internal rate of return to education must be raised and equalized – as far as possible - among different regions. It also has to improve with higher levels of education as is normally the case all over the world.

These improvements in private internal rate of return to education depend to a great extent on a general reform in the Egyptian educational system – in quality, management, efficiency, access and equity – as well as in the labor market.

### ***V.5.1. Eradication of illiteracy***

High levels of illiteracy prevailing among Egyptians are unacceptable whether in principle, or in view of Egypt's stage of development. Since poverty is linked to education and since illiteracy is concentrated among the poor and especially among females – females illiteracy rate was 51 percent while that of male was 29 percent in 1996 – (CAPMAS, 1996), eradication of illiteracy or at least lowering its rate, could be a major step in reducing poverty. Thus, every effort should be exerted to eradicate illiteracy especially for women, which have been proved to be a strong and effective way to reduce poverty, to enhance growth and to generate intergenerational effects on children schooling, health and survival (for details see El Baradei, 2003a).



### ***V.5.2. Raising and equalizing the quality of learning outcomes across regions and population income groups***

One of the major reasons for low and distorted private rate of return to education is the low and deteriorating quality of education, as has been observed earlier. Moreover, raising quality of education is not the only issue, equalizing this quality across regions and income groups is also very important. As observed earlier, poor quality of education in rural regions of Egypt (especially Upper Egypt) is a determining factor for low earnings and hence poverty. Also, this low quality and low earnings work as a disincentive (especially when compared to rising cost of education) for the poor to access education. Equalizing quality could be achieved through the fair distribution of public educational expenditures (whether at the sectoral, regional or structural level) as well as through lowering private educational costs which reinforce the inequality of learning outcomes.

The Ministry of Education (MOE) should also rely on quality monitoring in measuring education outcomes across regions and population groups. Although quality monitoring is a difficult task, reliable and scientific methods of measuring education outcomes exist in the form of “criterion reference test” (Vietnam is one of the few countries that have started to build national capacity in these techniques). This will help in identifying which actions are paramount in addressing quality deficiencies (Swinkels and Turk, 2003). Raising and equalizing education outcomes is, also, one of the most important factors for matching educational outcomes to the labor market requirements, especially in secondary and university education.

### ***V.5.3. Eliminating disparities***

To improve the private rate of return to education, disparities must be eliminated, whether across income groups or across regions (as discussed earlier).

### ***V.5.4. Ensuring equality in public spending:***

Levels of public spending inevitably affect the quality of schools. The Ministry of Education should equalize public spending (according to the number of students) in order to equalize quality. Improving the quality and retention of public schools ought to be a fundamental component of Government’s educational policy.

## **V.6 What to Do about the Mismatch between Education and the Labour Market**

The mismatch between the educational system and the labor market is basically represented in the non-generation of the skills needed by the labor market through the education system, and also in the inability of the labor market to generate sufficient job opportunities for the education system graduates.

- There is a need for improving the outputs of the educational system and increasing training opportunities. The main reason for the current weakening performance of the Mubarak Kohl project is that the companies are not providing sufficient training opportunities.

- There is a need for learning foreign languages to enable competition in the market especially with the presence of multi-national organizations.
- There is a need for more multi-disciplinary learning and acquisition of multiple skills and developing broad minded graduates who can fit into different positions.
- There is a need for mastery of advanced technology
- There is a need for enhancing and supporting technical education
- There is a need for adjusting the percentage of technical versus general secondary education to become in the range of one third to two thirds, instead of the current situation of 65% technical education to 35% general secondary education, with more focus on the quality of outputs.
- There is a need for developing the industrial schools to become an integrated learning experience combining between general and technical education.
- There is a need for upgrading all technical secondary schools, emphasizing quality, developing curricula and increasing the opportunities for practical training
- There is also a need for enhancing cooperation between the Ministry of Manpower and the private sector enterprises to enable better planning and organization of the labor market. Business units can present their requirements of human resources and skills to the Ministry and its directorates, that are located in the various Egyptian governorates, and the latter can supply them with their needs from its databases, resulting hopefully in a better match between the supply and demand of labor.
- There is a need for better cooperation between the education institutions and industry, so that there is better identification of industry needs, better satisfaction of those needs through the educational process, and there are greater opportunities for providing access to technical training within the industrial enterprises.
- There is a need for establishing a link between educational institutions and labor unions and syndicates. Labor unions should play a more active role in the reform process because they are more aware of the empirical problems encountered in the labor market, and of the needed labor skills.
- There is a need for a more enhanced role by the private sector in the training process. The idea of community participation should be disseminated, and all citizens in all societal spheres, public, private and non-governmental sector, should perceive clearly the interrelationship between their interests. The private sector can resort to several practical mechanisms to secure its interests, like for example obligating the trainee to spend a fixed period of time at the work organization after receiving the training opportunity.

**Box (2): Reform Process Within the Faculty of Economics and Political Science to Achieve A Better Link With the Labor Market Needs:**

During the eighties, it was perceived that there is a dwindling demand in the labor market for the graduates of the Faculty of Economics and Political Science (FEPS) as compared with the graduates of the American University in Cairo (AUC). This happened despite the fact that graduates of FEPS cover a greater quantity of subjects, with more depth, and even sometimes the same professors teach at both FEPS and AUC the majority of subjects. A study revealed that the difference lies in the English language proficiency, and in the computer, research and presentation skills.

To remedy the situation, and achieve a better link with the labor market needs, several decisions were made, the most important being:

- establishment of the English Language Section within FEPS, wherein students study 60% of the subjects related to their Major, in English,
- teaching of English language as a separate subject to first year students, in all sections, to improve the standard of the English language; this took place during the first few years with the assistance of the British Council,
- establishment of various computer centers within FEPS,
- organization of an annual employment fair to facilitate the recruitment of both students and graduates to summer internships, training courses, and full time jobs (Hilal, 2004).

## **V.7 How to Redress Management Problems**

Several measures of reform are suggested for overcoming some of the managerial problems faced by the Egyptian Education system. Among those suggested measures are the following:

- Implementation of a greater degree of **decentralization**: Table 11 summarizes the actual and proposed levels for decentralization of different educational functions. It is believed that with a greater degree of decentralization of various functions whether to the local or to the school level, or in some cases the devolvement of tasks to external service providers, this will result, in many cases, in a greater degree of efficiency and effectiveness.

**Table 11: Selected Educational Functions By Level of Decentralization**  
**The Actual and Proposed Level of Decentralization in the Egyptian Educational System**

<p>■ <b>Actual</b>          ☺ <b>Proposed Level in addition to Actual</b></p>
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Function	Level				
	Central	Regional	Local	School	External
<b>Personnel:</b> - Salaries - Career Path - Time and task management - Training - Evaluation	■ ■ ■ ■ ■			☺ ☺ ☺	☺
<b>Curriculum:</b> - Content and standards - Development	■ ■		☺		
<b>Textbooks, equipment, instructional materials:</b> - Criteria and standards. - Production - Procurement and distribution	■ ■ ■		☺	☺	☺ ☺
<b>School infrastructure:</b> - Planning - Construction - Maintenance	■		■ ☺ ■ ☺ ■ ☺	☺	☺ ☺
<b>Student enrollment:</b> - regulations - selection criteria	■ ☺ ■ ☺				
<b>Quality Control:</b> - student assessment and monitoring - school assessment and monitoring	■ ☺ ■ ☺			☺	☺
<b>Financial Administration and Control:</b>	■		☺	☺	☺

**Source:** Mona El Baradei and Laila El Baradei, *Egypt Human Development Report, Education Sector Background Paper*, May 2004 (Unpublished), p. 35.

- Decentralization should also involve a greater degree of **community participation** and enhanced interaction by the real stakeholders –parents, teachers and students, to make sure that any recommendations for reform represent real needs.
- Efforts should be exerted to try to change the negative aspects of bureaucratic **organizational cultures** in schools and education administrative bodies. The aim is to enhance implementation of democratic values at all levels since this is the essence of improved and better quality service to citizens. Although organizational culture change may be a lengthy and complicated process, yet the starting point is a strong and effective human resources management system, with sound

recruitment, appointment, performance evaluation, compensation and motivation plans. The problem of inadequate teachers' salaries should be one of the starting points, as previously mentioned.

- Initiatives for the implementation of the **National Standards of Education**, and for the establishment of schools boards of trustees, should be encouraged, and if proven successful, widely disseminated to other areas.

- Effective **training** of teachers should continue, in addition to a candid evaluation of training value, especially in terms of applicability of acquired knowledge and skills to the classroom environment.

- Creative ideas for **modification of the large percentage of administrative versus technical staff** in schools should be implemented, among which the partial use of the excessive capacity of administrative personnel in covering the shortage in teaching staff in some schools.

-Successful experiences – in schools decentralized management, performance evaluation and monitoring, utilization of new teaching methods, universities creative resource mobilization, girl friendly education, and others- should be documented, and widely disseminated, to **exchange the knowledge gained**, and provide opportunities for replication making use of the lessons learnt.

## **VI. ASSESSMENT OF BILATERAL AND MULTILATERAL COOPERATION IN EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS**

Many of the educational reform initiatives in Egypt, at both the pre-university and higher education levels, are being supported by multiple bilateral and multilateral development cooperation organizations. The following section presents a select sample of donor supported activities, the opinions and views of a number of officials, interviewed for the purpose of the study, regarding the effectiveness of donor supported projects and programs in the field of education, and suggested areas of cooperation with Germany. Meanwhile, a more comprehensive list of donor activities in Egypt is provided in the study annex.

### **VI.1 Selected Examples of Donor Supported Pre-University Educational Reform Efforts in Egypt:**

#### **Alexandria's Experience in Educational Reform:**

In December 2001, the Ministry of Education, the Governorate of Alexandria, the Alexandria Development Center – an NGO- and the USAID, signed a memorandum of agreement for implementing a pilot program aiming at improving the quality of education in Alexandria schools based on a decentralized model. The objective was to achieve enhanced education quality through:

- forging a partnership between teachers, administrators and the community at large through three tiered committees to be responsible for providing support, follow-up and implementation;
- implementing an advanced decentralized management system through modifying policies and procedures and delegating both authority and responsibility to the school level;

- providing advanced training to employees in conformance with the most up to date pedagogical and educational international systems, for the purpose of improving the overall quality of education.

The Minister of Education delegated unprecedented authorities to the Governor of Alexandria to support the program's implementation. Moreover, internal financial regulations were formulated for the program to enable the mobilization of resources from the community and flexibility in disbursement. The financial resources mobilized will be used for providing incentives to employees, training, repairs and maintenance, equipment and furniture, reforming the educational process, media and awareness campaigns. Implementation of the program is scheduled to continue for four years, from 2002-2006. The first stage will cover 30 existing schools, representing a sample of primary, preparatory and secondary stages in poor areas, while the second stage is expected to cover 20 existing schools, and 20 new schools to be built through USAID funds.

In the original plans, the objective was to try out the program as a pilot, and upon successful completion, to use it as a model for other governorates. Nevertheless, despite the fact that the program has not been finalized, the Ministry of Education already agreed with the USAID in May 2003, to duplicate the program in six other governorates, namely, Cairo, Fayoum, Beni-Suef, El-Minia, Qena and Aswan. A conference was then held in Alexandria to disseminate the lessons learnt from Alexandria's experience in reforming education to the other governorates planning to implement similar programs.

### **The Community Schools:**

Community schools were established in cooperation with the UNICEF, the Canadian Agency for International Development (CIDA), and local communities in some of the most deprived areas, in terms of educational services. The project started with 4 schools in 1991, and reached 202 schools in 2003/2004. Community schools are distributed among three governorates in Upper Egypt, namely, Assiut, Sohag and Qena. In addition, the Childhood and Development Society, an NGO, established another 150 schools in El Menia. The educational program, focusing on girls provides material similar to the primary educational program in the context of guidelines assessed by the Ministry of Education. Girls are accepted from 6 to 12 years, with priority being given to older pupils, and with preference to girls.

### **The One Class Schools:**

The main objective of the one class schools is enhancing girls' education through establishing classes near their homes providing a flexible learning environment, and providing them with diverse skills that enable them to participate in the labor market. The project started with 213 schools in 1993/1994, and reached 2,791 schools in 2002/2003. These schools are for girls aged 8-14 years old who have no access to school or who are drop outs. The school consists of a building including one study room where all girls with different educational levels and different ages attend. The curricula of primary education are taught, in addition to vocational information.

Acceptance in both the One Class Schools and the Community Schools follows the quota of approximately 70% girls and 30% boys. Studying within both schools is based on multiplicity of levels within the same class.

### **Community Participation Component in the World Bank/European Union Education Enhancement Program (EEP)**

One of the main objectives of the EEP was to increase access to basic education, through improving general enrollment rates and removing gender disparities. Accomplishment of this goal depended on increasing both supply and demand for basic education. If supply was going to be worked on through increasing school construction and provision of needed equipment, especially in under served areas, and providing access to second chance education, when needed; increasing demand for basic education had to rely on awareness campaigns, and other forms of community based planning methods.

The first step within the community participation component of the program was how to identify the education departments within the targeted governorates with the lowest enrollment rates. No dependence on official data took place, but rather actual calculations of births and deaths from the Health Register offices, and comparison to actual school enrollment, in order to find out the real enrollment percentages. Preliminary results revealed that in many rural areas, both in rural and urban Egypt, some people do not register their offspring, and do not issue birth certificates for them, so in the government records, these children are non-existent. Accordingly, actual surveys of households were performed, and data was collected to calculate the number of school aged children, and actual enrollment.

The second step was holding a 'Low Enrollment Workshop' and concentrating efforts on areas with the lowest enrollment rates.

The third step was analyzing the reasons for low enrollment and school drop-outs, and trying to overcome them. Many challenges were faced, including:

- resistance from parents unwilling to send their kids to school,
- unemployment rates being higher among the educated than the illiterates,
- poverty status leading to inability of families, especially large sized families, to afford school fees and other associated costs of uniforms, transportation, etc.,
- Illiteracy of parents as a main hindrance to their understanding of the benefits of education to their children,
- Child labor, taking place in many different forms around Egyptian governorates, for example in harvesting cotton and jasmine in fields, in silk carpets manufacturing, in Damietta, boys working in their parents furniture workshops and girls in peeling shrimps,
- Lack of educational service available and lack of land allocated for building schools, plus lack of financial resources.

Most obstacles were overcome. The most difficult obstacle was the lack of availability of the educational service, in parallel to a lack of available land, and lack of financial resources. However, the governing realization was that it was not enough to build a school, but more importantly there was a need for developing a community sense of ownership of the school, and a conviction of the need for education, and for parents to send their children to learn.

The fourth step was organizing intensive awareness and community mobilization campaigns relying on diverse and creative mechanisms. Project management relied on local women groups to visit homes and encourage parents to send their children to school; relied on clergymen – imams in mosques and priests in churches – to talk to

people and convince them of the importance of education during their Friday speeches and Sunday sermons; made use of local and national election campaigns to induce candidates to donate land and money for schools; invoked religious fervor in people so that the haves support the have-nots; established networks with community development associations (CDAs), and actually trained them on contracting other CDAs –and writing TORs- to implement the awareness campaigns; and instilled in many NGOs the idea of developing an education improvement fund to assure the sustainability of the project.

Many success stories were accomplished through the community participation component of the EEP, in Fayoum, in Menia, in Beni-Soueif and in many other governorates. These community participation success stories were presented in several national and international conferences. The only drawback cited by the preliminary evaluation task force for the project component, still underway, was its need for more systematic planning and evaluation (Abdel Rassoul,2004).

Nevertheless, the main striking feature of the project successful community participation was its adaptability to the local culture needs and value system so as to serve the overall objectives of the program in a sustainable manner.

## **VI.2 Pilot Projects for the Implementation of the National Standards for Education:**

Although the National Standards of Education (NSEs) have not been implemented on a national scale as yet, but there are efforts for pilot implementation.

One of those NSE pilot implementation efforts is represented in the pilot project on **ten primary schools in Giza**. The project is implemented through joint collaboration between the National Center for Pedagogical and Development Research, and the National Center for Examinations and Pedagogical Evaluation. The main activities of the project is the implementation of the NSEs through: analyzing performance, establishing an incentive system, mobilizing resources to finance the payment of incentives, and implementing the principles of Total Quality Management though activating the Training & Evaluation unit and the Quality Management unit within the schools.

**Mainstreaming the Community School and One Class School Initiatives:** In cooperation with the UNICEF, and as a result of the success of both of the previously mentioned initiatives, it was decided that the lessons learnt and experience gained should be transferred to the mainstream of primary schools. The intention is to cover 90 primary schools over a three year implementation period starting in the academic year 2003/2004. The objective is to improve the quality of education and introduce mechanisms enabling the implementation of the NSEs, then later expanding the scale of implementation to cover all primary schools on a national level.

**Fifty Schools in Fayoum, Minia and Beni-Suef:** The project financed through USAID and CARE aims at improving education in 50 new schools in the aforementioned governorates, increasing girls opportunities for education, enhancing community participation, enabling self-assessment by schools and developing an



action plan for the achievement of the schools of the NSE, with special focus on the two domains of the effective school and community participation.

**100 schools in Qena and Minia:** The pilot initiative in both governorates is supported by the World Bank and aims at improving school performance through the implementation of the NSEs. Program activities include: awareness campaigns regarding the NSEs and the role of the various stakeholders in achieving a better quality of education, workshops for assessing schools weaknesses and strengths, and setting strategies for performance improvement. Continuous performance evaluation and assessment will represent a feedback to the National Standards Committees in order to revise and improve the standards based on empirical field experiments.

### **Box (3): Qena's Experience in Establishing Boards of Trustees for Schools:**

Over the past five years, Qena governorate in Upper Egypt, has witnessed unprecedented development efforts led by its governor Adel Labib, to the extent that it is now regarded a development model worthy of study for potential replication in other parts of the country. The Governor is said to have adopted a comprehensive strategic vision of sustainable development, and resorted to both 'business as usual' mechanisms, and creative, non-traditional mechanisms, in order to achieve his objectives. Friedrich Ebert Stiftung is currently supporting the effort of documenting Qena's Success Story (El Baradei, Laila, 2004).

In pursuit of the efforts of Qena governorate for improving the quality of education services, a greater degree of administrative and financial decentralization, plus enhanced community participation, were adopted at the school level.

Several procedures were undertaken to establish **boards of trustees** for schools, aiming at greater levels of decentralized decision making, plus enhanced community participation:

- Schools' boards of trustees were established within Qena educational department for 100 schools.
- Boards of trustees were formed of 18 members comprising: parents, teachers, business men, pedagogy and education experts, women from the community, members of the university graduates society, and members of local councils and syndicates. The chairpersons of the boards of trustees were selected from among public figures not employed at the school.
- The special accounts for parents' councils were abolished, and replaced by the special accounts for the boards of trustees. -A decree was issued to regulate the financial matters for the board of trustees including the right granted to the board in collecting fees and annual subscriptions and accepting donations and grants, and that each school represents an independent accounting unit.

The Boards of Trustees' **responsibilities and authorities** include:

- the authority to develop the school financial resources, collect revenues and be responsible for expenditures only according to the internal statutes of the school,
- the authority to fill the shortage in teachers by assigning the administrative staff within the school to teach the different subjects; the authority to appoint some university graduates to work as teachers on a temporary basis,
- the authority to appoint & pay service staff as well as undertake maintenance work.

All of the above projects and initiatives are still on a pilot level aiming at testing the NSE and presenting an opportunity for further development and fine tuning of the standards before nation wide implementation. It seems that focusing on performance management was the conclusion reached by the think tanks at the Egyptian Ministry of Education, and from here emanated the idea for establishing national standards for education in Egypt.

## VII SELECTED OFFICIALS' OPINION ON COOPERATION AREAS WITH GERMAN DEVELOPMENT AGENCIES

According to the **Minister of Manpower** the best model of cooperation is the Mubarak –Kohl program although it is somewhat limited, and the potential for its future expansion up till now is also limited because it is correlated with the business companies operating in the Egyptian market. His suggestions for cooperation with the German Development Cooperation Agencies include:

- The Centers for Production Sufficiency affiliated to the Ministry of Industry: There are already 54 centers in operation that provide theoretical studies in parallel with practical training.
- The Training Centers affiliated to the Ministry of Manpower wherein the private sector provides training to basically young boys, who have dropped out from the regular education track, or who have failed school, starting with twelve year olds as an age minimum. The work of the Centers simultaneously contributes to helping solve the problem of child labor.

According to the **Undersecretary of Ministry of Manpower**, areas of cooperation with the Germans should focus on providing support to technical education through:

- Continuing support to the existing Mubarak-Kohl project through provision of technical experts and advanced equipment and machinery similar in make and level of advancement to that located in work places outside the training centers.
- Support to Centers for Production Sufficiency: these centers graduate 12 thousands graduates yearly (three years of industrial apprenticeship after the preparatory level of regular schooling). The centers are similar to the Mubarak Kohl schools but the problem is the lack of availability of public companies to provide training, therefore studying has become mostly theoretical.
- Support to the Vocational Training Centers: the centers are affiliated to the Ministry of Manpower. They are 34 centers distributed all over Egypt. The centers provide free training courses adapted to the labor market needs as determined through requests by business proprietors. There are also 11 mobile training centers designed for remote areas.
- Establishing a Center for the Training of Trainers: There is a need for a model center for the training of trainers on the new skills and vocations needed currently by the labor market, such as maintenance of electrical, electronic and remote control equipment.

The same ideas were similarly mentioned by the **Director of the Productivity and Training Department affiliated to the Ministry of Industry and Technology (MOIT)**. Although he conceded that the Mubarak Kohl experience is a successful one, yet the numbers of graduates are relatively limited, approximately 800-900 graduates per year, compared to the much larger numbers graduating from the vocational training

centers affiliated to MOIT, ranging from 10,000 to 12,000 graduates per year. The centers are already receiving assistance through the BMZ and GTZ.

Various types of vocational training are provided including:

- Apprenticeship system where students enroll after the preparatory school level for three years and graduate with a diploma.
- Training for workers in various industrial activities, taking the form of short courses, covering 32 different activities and graduating nearly 2000 graduates per year,
- Transformative training to meet the needs of privatization and re-structuring efforts,
- Training of trainers,
- Technical specialized training for the duration of two years for holders of intermediate degrees.

The Productivity and Vocational Training Department, in cooperation with the GTZ, has established the first Technical Competency Center for Automation and Electronics (TCAE). The TCAE provides training to general secondary school graduates in the fields of automatic operation engineering and shoes manufacturing. The project started in 1996 and is expected to continue until 2006, and according to the Director, because of the project's success, and its representing a base for training trainers from MENA countries, there is a need for extension and this is considered the first suggested area for continuing cooperation with the German side. The second suggestion is to provide training experts for the printing facilities, and thirdly to provide technical assistance for the 'Computer Numerical Control' systems within the centers.

As for the **Minister of Education**, Dr. Ahmed Gamal El Din, he proposed three main areas of potential cooperation with the Germans. Like his peers he started with technical education, then he added to that the development of the Thanaweya Amma system (high school system), and finally building new schools.

- Regarding technical education, the minister pointed that it is in need of drastic change and improvements. First, quantity wise, there is a need to reduce the percentage of technical versus general secondary schools. At one point in time there was a plan to transform 150 technical schools to the general secondary system, but it did not work out because of the resistance from the community. People cannot afford general secondary schooling because of the associated high costs of private lessons and the university education afterwards. They prefer cheaper technical education that prepares them directly for the labor market. Second, quality wise, there is a need to improve the quality of technical education. What is needed is concentration on new skills development required by the labor market (tourism, equipment maintenance, information technology). Thus, it is not a matter of having a large number of non-effective technical schools, but a better option is concentrating on a fewer number of higher quality, better performing technical schools in the areas and specializations needed.
- Regarding the general secondary education system, there is a need for technical assistance to upgrade the system and overcome its many problems.
- Finally, the Germans can support the building of new schools to solve the still persistent problems of schools shortage and overcrowded

classes. KFW has supported the building of 500 new schools. More of the same is required.

As for the **first undersecretary of the Ministry of Education**, Dr. El Bilawy all donors' projects and programs in the field of education are very beneficial and are much welcomed by the government. He proposed three main priority areas for cooperation, namely: school building, technical education and teachers' training. Other potential areas for technical assistance, in Dr. El Bilawy's opinion, may include: curricula development, especially in science, math and languages, administrative development, quality monitoring and evaluation.

**The Minister of Planning** reiterated what was previously said and similarly emphasized the importance of German assistance and support to technical education schools which are in need of equipment, maintenance, curricula development, new teaching techniques and general quality upgrading.

**The Vice President for the Chemicals Syndicate** pointed out that Mubarak Kohl is one of the best cooperation models with donor agencies. Part of its success may be attributed to the stringent monitoring and follow-up performed by the German side. In general, she proposes that cooperation with the German side should best be targeted to identifiable projects, and should not be in the form of studies, or consultancies, that have no tangible, concrete value.




According to the **Ex-Minister of Youth**, suggested areas of cooperation with the Germans include assistance in the development of education infrastructure, such as establishment of labs, and libraries; institutional and management support, especially support to the management of universities, the management of the Quality Assurance Agency, training and exchange programs.



According to **Minister of International Cooperation**, Fayza Abu El-Naga, the Mubarak-Kohl project which started in 1991 focused on developing technical and vocational schools curricula through a private-public partnership. Students at the technical industrial schools spent two days per week at school, and four days at one of the industrial or technical enterprises for practical training, for the duration of three years. The first phase of the project was implemented in the Tenth of Ramadan City, while during the second phase of the project, from 1995-2000, the project extended to more than twenty different cities all over Egypt. Thus, according to Minister Abu El Naga it may be considered one of the most successful social and educational projects in Egypt.





Based on the previous analysis, table 12 presents a summary of some of the main problems faced by the different levels of the Egyptian Education System and the parallel proposed areas of cooperation with the German Development Agencies, in addition to an assessment of the degree of perceived priority and probable receptivity of the suggested cooperation by the stakeholders, plus type of cooperation suggested.

**Table 12: Recommended Areas of German Egyptian Cooperation In the Field of Education**

PROBLEM	AREA OF SUGGESTED COOPERATION	Priority of Intervention			Type of Assistance	
		✓✓ High Priority	✓ Priority	□ Open for more investigation	-\$-\$ <u>Financial</u>	📁 <u>Technical</u>
<b>First : Pre-University Education :</b>						
- Shortage of schools in basic education and schools inaccessible to poor people	- Financing schools building for basic education following a school shortage map.		✓		\$\$	
- Unequal distribution of preparatory and secondary schools between rural and urban areas	- Preparatory and secondary school buildings in disadvantaged areas, especially rural Upper Egypt, urban Upper Egypt, and rural Lower Egypt.		✓		\$\$	📁
- High ratio of administrative/teaching staff	- Institutional and Management Support		✓	□		📁
- High cost of service	- Teachers' training - Institutional and Management Support - Innovative Teaching Techniques and methods		✓			📁
- Shortage of resources	- Budgetary Support		✓	□	\$\$	📁

- Low Quality Technical Secondary Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Financing new technical schools in new fields like IT, equipment maintenance, and tourism</li> <li>- Continuing with the Mubarak –Kohl Initiative</li> <li>- Support to the Productivity and Vocational Training Department affiliated to the Ministry of Industry and Technology</li> </ul>	✓✓			\$\$	
- Low quality of educational service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Curricula Development especially for general secondary schools (Thanaweya Amma System)</li> <li>- More use of IT: establishing databases, long-distance learning, teaching aids, Management Information Systems (MIS)</li> <li>- Teachers' training</li> <li>-Institutional and Management Support (Evaluation Methods, Linking Pay to Performance)</li> </ul>		✓		\$\$	
- Low Access to Education in some areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Enhanced use of IT, Long distance learning</li> <li>- Curricula Development</li> <li>- Support to Decentralization efforts</li> <li>- Experimental project with voucher system</li> </ul>		✓		\$\$	

<p>- Gender Disparities (girls lower rates of access, literacy attainment and training)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Building sex segregated schools (example the German Girls only school in Cairo ( Bab el Louq)</li> <li>- Awareness campaigns targeting increased girls enrolment</li> <li>- Training and capacity building for female teachers for girls schools.</li> <li>- Establishing girls friendly schools: like the community and the one class schools.</li> <li>- support to massive illiteracy eradication campaigns, with a special focus on women</li> </ul>		✓		\$\$	
<p>- Mismatch between outputs of education system and labor market &amp; low rate of return to education</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Upgrading technical schools</li> <li>- More multi-disciplinary learning (curricula development)</li> <li>- enhanced use of IT in technical schools.</li> <li>- support to the teaching of foreign languages and curricula development (German language is one of the options of study offered to students at the secondary level)</li> <li>- Upgrading technical subjects taught to students in general schooling systems (agriculture, maintenance, carpentry, home economics, etc)</li> </ul>	✓✓			\$\$	

Management Problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Implementing decentralization (pilot projects)</li> <li>- Establishing more public /private partnerships</li> <li>- Training administrative and managerial staff at schools</li> <li>- enhancing community participation initiatives</li> <li>- Institutional and management support to implementing decentralization.</li> </ul>		✓			
<b>Second: University Education:</b>						
-Management Problems including High ratio administrative versus teaching staff	- Institutional and management support		✓			
- Less than targeted absorptive capacity of higher education	- Establishing new universities based on geographic and demographic needs assessment, or new departments/sections within existing universities (German sections within specialized faculties).		✓	□	\$\$	
- Low rate of return and mismatch with labor market	-Upgrading curricula and teaching methods.		✓			



From the previous analysis we can conclude that all the suggested reform measures will contribute to helping Egypt build the much sought after **knowledge-based society** which depends on improving the needed infrastructure for knowledge production and dissemination. This will be realized through the enhancement of education quality at pre-university and university levels; the increase in the numbers and absorptive capacities of schools and universities; the administrative and institutional development of education management ; the trend towards increased administrative, political and financial decentralization; the vocational development of teachers; and the increased reliance on IT.

The notion of a knowledge based society was declared as one of the main national goals by the President of the republic in the celebration of 'Science Day' on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of December, 2004. Moreover, education is now clearly perceived as one of the main options for poverty reduction. This was stated in the National Development Plan of 2002-2007, and was further re-iterated and elaborated in the Arab Republic of Egypt Poverty Reduction Strategy 2004, developed jointly by the Ministry of Planning and the Social and Economic Development Group for the MENA region at the World Bank.

Egypt is on the right track, but we have to follow through with the development and reform plans and jointly cooperate to help it achieve its objectives.

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## ANNEX

**Table (1): Wages and Salaries of the Teaching Staff and Employees of Selected Universities 1997/98**

*(in thousand L.E.)*

University	Teaching Staff	Administrative Body	Employees in Student Services	Employees in Supporting Services	Total
Cairo Univ.	244,705	97,882	48,941	16,313	407,841
	60%	24.4%	12%	4%	100.0%
Alexandria Univ.	113,061	113,312	13,818	11,054	251,247
	44.9%	45.8%	5.5%	4.6%	100.0%
Tanta Univ.	9,200	10,900	2,710	1,400	23,400
	39.3%	46.5%	11.5%	2.7%	100.0%

**Source:** Ministry of Higher Education Statistics.

**Table (2): Evolution of Public Universities Budget 1992/93 - 1996/97**

*Million L.E.*

	(1) Total Budgeted 1992/93-1996/97	(2) Total Spent 1992/93-1996/97	2/1 %
Wages & Salaries	6374	6108	95.8
Supplies of Goods and Services	2327	2606	111.9
Investment Expenditures	1766	2724	154.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>10467</b>	<b>11438</b>	<b>109.2</b>

**Source:** Ministry of Higher Education Statistics.

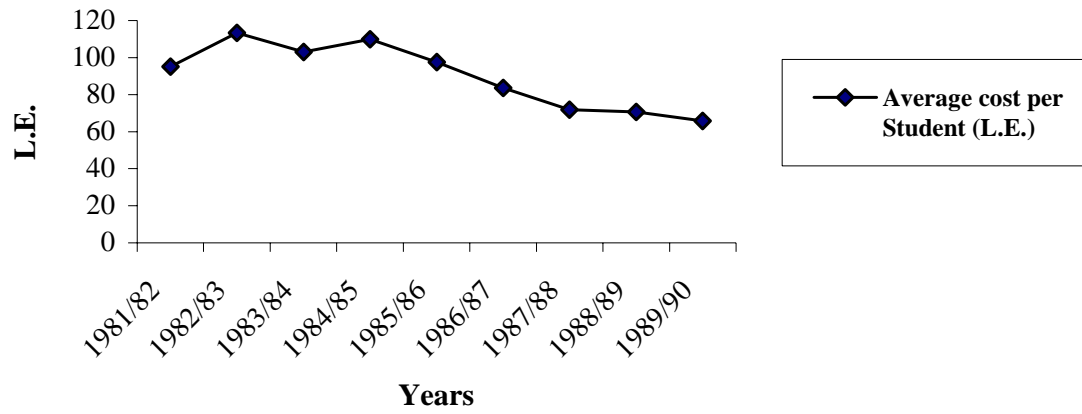
**Table (3): Costs of Students Services in Selected Egyptian Public Universities 1997/98**

*(Thousand L.E.)*

University	Housing	Food & Subsidized Meals	Health Services	Transportation	Achievement Donations	Other Contributions	Total
Cairo Univ.	11,194	26,531	-	-	2,836	-	40,561
Alexandria Univ.	1,668	4,042	9	1,758	1,834	18	9,329
Helwan Univ.	15	5,460	729	444	1,359	378	8,380

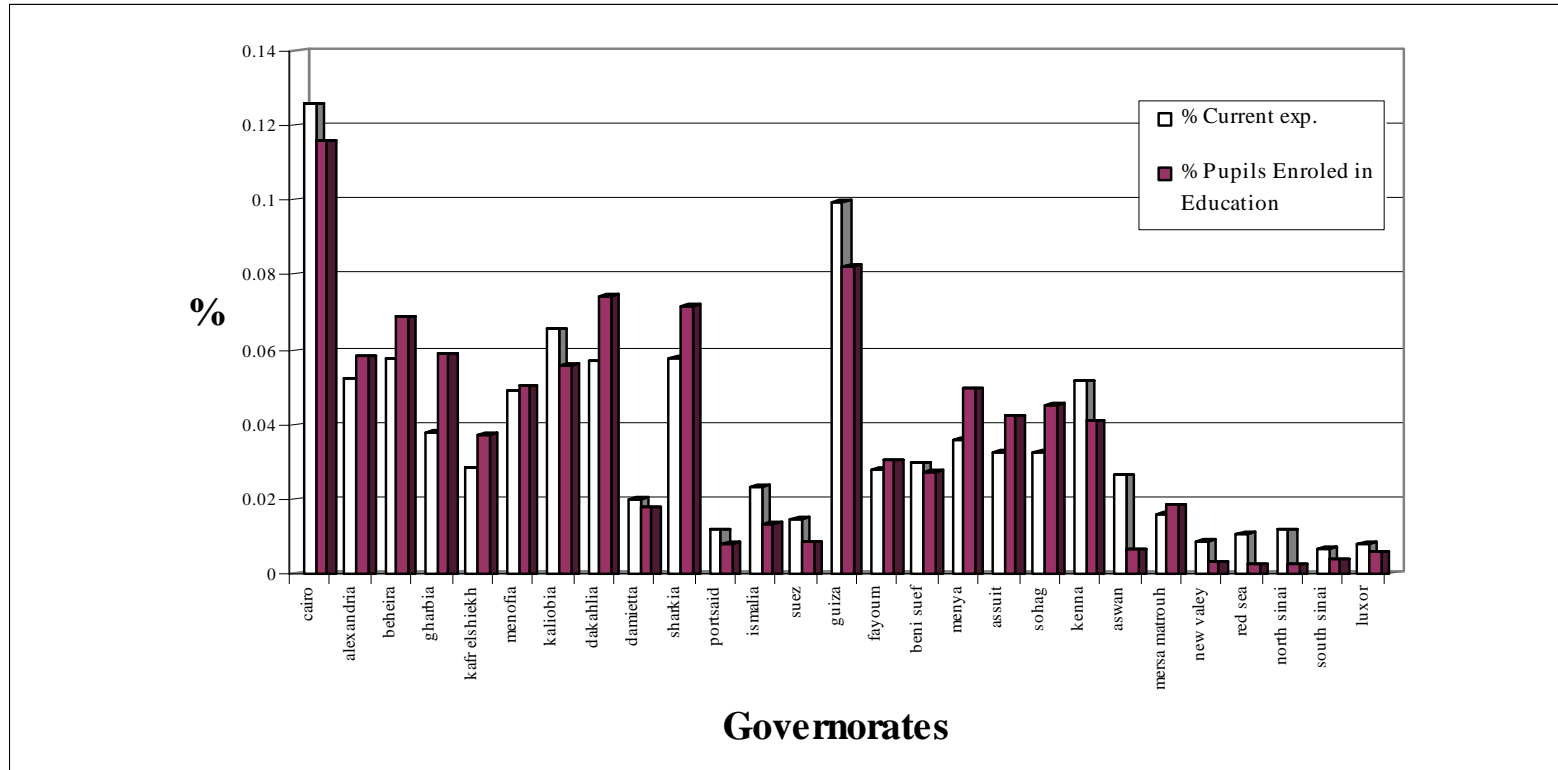
**Source:** Calculated from the Ministry of Higher Education Statistics.

**Annex: Figure (1): Evolution of Real Average Public Spending Per-Student in Pre-University Education**



**Source:** El Baradei, 1994.

**Annex : Figure (2): Education Current Expenditures Per Governorate Compared to Pupils enroled in Education in the Age (6-18) in Each Governorate (1996)**



**Source:** Shares of schools calculated from MOE statistics.  
Shares of population calculate from CAPMAS Population Census, 1996.



**Annex: Table (4)**

Nominal Expenditures, Primary &amp; Secondary Education, Higher Education, and Total (including other)

	1990/91		1991/92		1992/93		1993/94		1994/95		1995/96		1996/97		1997/98		1998/99		1999/2000		2000/01	
	Actual		Actual		Actual		Actual		Actual		Actual		Actual		Actual		Actual		Budget		Budget	
<b>Primary &amp; Secondary Education:</b>																						
<i>Wages, Salaries, Benefits (Chap.1)</i>	2,516	76.6%	2,564	76.2%	3,113	69.2%	3,680	76.3%	4,485	78.4%	5,559	80.3%	6,497	80.5%	6,403	77.8%	8,064	80.9%	8,640	82.4%	9,935	83.3%
<i>Other Current Expenditures (Chap.2)</i>	395	14.0%	504	15.0%	744	16.5%	843	17.5%	958	16.7%	1,090	15.8%	1,175	14.6%	1,280	15.6%	1,403	14.1%	1,459	13.9%	1,609	13.5%
<i>Investment Expenditures (Chap.3)</i>	250	8.9%	283	8.4%	588	13.1%	299	6.2%	273	4.8%	257	3.7%	348	4.3%	519	6.3%	483	4.8%	382	3.6%	386	3.1%
<i>Capital Expenditures (Chap.4)</i>	12	0.4%	12	0.4%	54	1.2%	1	0.0%	4	0.1%	14	0.2%	48	0.6%	23	0.3%	18	0.2%	8	0.1%	14	0.1%
<i>Total Expenditures /2</i>	2,813	100%	3,363	100%	4,499	100%	4,823	100%	5,720	100%	6,920	100%	8,068	100%	8,225	100%	9,968	100%	10,489	100%	11,926	100%
<b>Higher Education:</b>																						
<i>Wages, Salaries, Benefits (Chap.1)</i>	802	47.0%	898	42.2%	1,112	44.7%	1,318	47.3%	1,528	45.6%	1,783	47.2%	2,077	45.6%	2,361	47.0%	2,624	50.6%	2,649	63.2%	2,931	63.4%
<i>Other Current Expenditures (Chap.2)</i>	276	16.2%	401	18.8%	488	19.6%	569	20.4%	705	21.0%	855	22.7%	985	21.6%	1,367	27.2%	1,286	24.8%	891	21.3%	959	20.8%
<i>Investment Expenditures (Chap.3)</i>	500	29.3%	630	29.6%	716	28.8%	719	25.8%	920	27.4%	976	25.9%	1,257	27.6%	1,074	21.4%	1,168	22.5%	550	13.1%	705	15.3%
<i>Capital Expenditures (Chap.4)</i>	129	7.6%	199	9.4%	169	6.8%	183	6.6%	199	5.9%	160	4.2%	231	5.1%	218	4.3%	109	2.1%	99	2.4%	25	0.5%
<i>Total Expenditures /2</i>	1,707	100%	2,128	100%	2,485	100%	2,789	100%	3,352	100%	3,774	100%	4,550	100%	5,020	100%	5,187	100%	4,189	100%	4,620	100%
<b>Total (including other):</b>																						
<i>Wages, Salaries, Benefits (Chap.1)</i>	2,963	62.0%	3,470	62.1%	4,244	59.4%	5,031	56.7%	6,056	55.5%	7,414	57.3%	8,658	57.4%	8,851	58.9%	10,786	63.7%	11,409	70.7%	13,002	71.5%
<i>Other Current Expenditures (Chap.2)</i>	718	15.0%	966	17.3%	1,323	18.5%	1,517	17.1%	1,829	16.8%	2,164	16.7%	2,458	16.3%	2,647	17.6%	2,894	17.1%	2,579	16.0%	2,813	15.5%
<i>Investment Expenditures (Chap.3)</i>	938	19.6%	929	16.6%	1,332	18.7%	2,124	24.0%	2,611	23.9%	3,172	24.5%	3,395	22.5%	3,107	20.7%	3,087	18.2%	2,040	12.6%	2,326	12.8%
<i>Capital Expenditures (Chap.4)</i>	162	3.4%	222	4.0%	242	3.4%	196	2.2%	406	3.7%	189	1.5%	569	3.8%	415	2.8%	163	1.0%	112	0.7%	48	0.3%
<i>Total Expenditures /2</i>	4,781	100%	5,587	100%	7,141	100%	8,868	100%	10,902	100%	12,939	100%	15,080	100%	15,020	100%	16,930	100%	16,140	100%	18,189	100%
<i>As % of Total Public Expenditure</i>		9.5		11.0		13.7		15.8		18.7		20.3		22.6		21.2		19.7		17.0		18.1
<i>As % of GDP</i>		5.0		5.0		5.1		5.6		6.2		6.3		6.6		5.9		6.0		5.3		5.4

**Source:** Ministry of Finance.

**Annex Table (2): Summary of Main Ongoing Donors' Activities in Education in Egypt**

<b>Donor</b>	<b>Title of Program/Project</b>	<b>Approximate Budget (million \$)</b>	<b>Years of Implementation</b>
British Council	Adult Literacy		
British Council	Educational and Vocational Training		
British Council	Higher Education Links		
British Council	School Links		
British Council	Connecting Young People		
CARE	New School Program (NSP)		
CEDPA/Egypt	New Horizons		
CEDPA/Egypt	New Visions		
CEDPA/Egypt	Arab Women Speak Out		
CEDPA/Egypt	Literacy Program		
CEDPA/Egypt	Skills Program		
CEDPA/Egypt	Girls Scholarship Program		
CEDPA/Egypt	Advocacy & Communication		
CEDPA/Egypt	Advocacy & Strategic Communication Skills Program		
CEDPA/Egypt	FGM Task Force and FGM Abandonment Project		
CEDPA/Egypt	Capacity Building of Non-Governmental Organizations and Community Leaders		
CIDA	Community Schools		
CIDA	Support to Egyptian Primary Schooling		
CIDA	Canadian Partnership Branch Initiatives in Egypt		
EU	Technical and Vocational Training Reform	33 Euros	
EU	Higher Education - Tempus	11 Euros	
EU	Online School Management Community		
EU	iEarn		
EU	Center for International Basic Education		
EU	The Egypt New Schools Program		
EU	Egypt's Girls Education		
EU	Support to the Education Enhancement Program	100 Euros	1999-2006

France	Entrepreneurship & Vocational Training Centers Development		
France	Alexandria Library		
Germany	Primary School Construction ( successive implementation in five phases)		
Germany	Program for the introduction of a Cooperative (Dual) Technical Education & Vocational Training System in Egypt (Mubarak- Kohl Initiative MKI)		
Germany	Introduction of a Cooperative (Dual) Technical Education and Vocational Training System in the Building and Construction Sector in Egypt		
Italy	Expansion of the Medical Research Institute		
Japan	Upgrading Metal Processing Technical Project	-	2000-2004
Japan	Improvement of Science and Mathematics Education in Primary Schools	-	2003-2005
Japan	Provision of Desks for Primary Schools in Alexandria		
Kuwait	School Construction		
Spain	Scholarships & Lectorates 2001		
Switzerland	Low Cost Community Owned Schools		
Switzerland	Educational, Social & Economic Enhancement for School Students & Their Families		
Switzerland	Enhancement of Primary Education in 55 Primary Schools (Phases)		
Switzerland	Combating Illiteracy and Micro Credit Project		
Switzerland	Capacity Development Through Educational, Cultural & Professional Media		
Switzerland	Upgrading Training and Education Skills Project		
Switzerland	Global Project for Education and Development		
Switzerland	Better Education for Children in Remote Areas		
Switzerland	Improving the Quality of Education in 6 Governmental Schools in Minya		
UNDP	Pilot Project for Capacity Building in Human Rights	0.9	1999-2004
UNDP	Social Fund for Development	31	2001-2004
UNDP	Institutional Support and Strengthening Capacity of the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology	6	2001-2006
UNDP	ICT to Foster Egypt's Sustainable Human Development	10	2002-2005
UNDP	Enhancing Local Development and Governance Issues Using IT Support	1.1	2002-2005
UNDP	National Human Development Report	0.27	2003-2004
UNDP	Technical, Vocational Education and Training Reform Program (TVET)	0.2	202-2004
UNESCO	Agreement on Friendly Classrooms for Children in Difficult Circumstances		
UNESCO	Upgrading University Science & Engineering Education		
UNESCO	Short Term Fellowships in Plant Biotechnology		

UNESCO	Promoting Computer Literacy Through the International Computer Driving License (ICDL)		
UNICEF	Education/Basic Education		
UNICEF	Education /Literacy		
UNICEF	Education/ Early Childhood Development		
USAID	Improving Basic Education to Meet Market Demand	12.6	1994-2004
USAID	The Integrated English Language Program	43	1997-2004
USAID	New Schools Program	27	1999-2004
USAID	Workforce Development/Developing Skills for Competitiveness	25	2000-2004
USAID	Improved Basic Education	4.96 (until 2005)	2000-2009
USAID	Sesame Workshop	8.4	2001-2004
USAID	Education Reform Pilot	68	2001-2009
USAID	Girls Education		
USAID	IT in Schools Project	10	2003-2005
World Bank	Egypt Education Enhancement Project	835	1996-2004
World Bank	Higher Education Enhancement Project	60	2002-2007
World Bank	Secondary Education Enhancement Project	250	1999-2006
World Bank	Skills Development Project	12.5	2003-2008
World Bank	Social Fund for Development Project (03)	65	1999-2004

**Source:** Information derived from:UNDP, *Development Cooperation Database Egypt (DECODE)*, Cairo, August 2003; Sandy El Berr, *Mapping of Donor Activity in Education in Egypt*, Center for Development Research, University of Bonn, Germany.