

## **UNFPA Contribution to UPR Egypt (2014)**

### **1 - Situation analysis**

Sixty two per cent of the population of Egypt is below the age of 29. Young people were a driving force of the different waves of the revolution and have remained vocal in striving for social justice, economic opportunity and human rights. This is to some extent the result of public policies not reflecting the needs of young people, including their social, economic and sexual and reproductive health needs. The high unemployment rate among young people has led to delayed age of marriage. This leads to increased exposure to risky behaviors, especially in the context of young people's low awareness and lack of opportunity to seek and receive comprehensive health services.

Many challenges exist for young people, including regional disparity for school enrolment, especially for adolescent girls (the regional disparity is observed in Upper Egypt). The mindset of male dominance in the community has also led to negative attitudes. One in ten girls aged 15-17 have expressed their desire to migrate. This percentage decreases to half in older young females. 72.7 % of girls aged 15-17 agree that a man is justified to beat his wife if she argues with him. Other attitudes related to FGM, early marriage, sexual harassment and preference of education are well documented and point to the need to address the rights of adolescent and young girls. Indeed, adolescent girls represent a unique target group with a special character and needs.

The worst indicators among young people in terms of civic opportunity, employment, and hence freedom of choice would probably be the cohort of adolescent girls in rural Upper Egypt – in line with the highest poverty in the same geographic scope – as well as highest maternal mortality and some of the lowest health indicators and lowest family planning indicators.

Adolescent girls are at risk to FGM/C – 75.5% of girls and women aged 10-29 were subject to FGM/C. This figure increased to 85% in Upper Egypt (SYPE 2009). They are also at risk of teenage marriage and pregnancy (10% nationwide, DHS 2008).

Evidence for young people's lack of information regarding their Reproductive Health is available in SYPE 2009. Only 3% of young people know all 4 routes of transmission for HIV (only 20% knew HIV could be transmitted by needle sharing). More than 70% had a feeling of shock or fear during menarche. These indicators further relate to lack of awareness among the cohort of young people, where sources of information are limited.

Unmet for Family Planning remains at about 10%, while women in the lowest income bracket are having a fertility level that is one third above their desired fertility, putting a strain on the capacity of the households to deploy adequate resources and investments in human capital formation, which contributes to the perpetuation and pervasiveness of poverty.

As a result of the above, and given the young age structure of the Population, the speed at which population is growing is accelerating. At this point, Egypt is witnessing the incorporation of 2.7 million new children per year, for which education, health and opportunities will need to be provided.

## **2 – Recent developments**

Egypt has gone through a period of instability since July 2013 and even before, since January 2011. The country has yet to complete the current transitional phase, for which a Road Map has been put together.

This Roadmap contemplates the adoption of a new Constitution (December 2013), as well as Presidential (May 2014) and Parliamentary Elections (Date to be defined). The new Constitution, adopted in 2014, contains numerous references to Youth and Women as key social groups, with which the Government needs to engage and provide avenues for their participation and development. Over 30 articles in the Constitution address the situation of Women and provide for their rights.

The main challenge will remain in terms of its implementation, especially with regards to the capacity of the State and the Society at large to guarantee the fulfillment of these rights in the context of limited fiscal space, growing population and growing social demands.

The Government, through the National Population Council and the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation, has embarked in developing a National Population Strategy and a 2030 National Development Vision (Masterplan) whose purpose is to address the above challenges.

### **Sources/References:**

Survey of Young People in Egypt (SYPE), 2010

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<http://dhsprogram.com/pubs/pdf/FR220/FR220.pdf>

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Egypt in Figures 2014 (CAPMAS), March 2014