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Information and Decision Support Center
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SURVEY OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN EGYPT

Preliminary Report

February 2010



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SURVEY OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN EGYPT

Preliminary Report

February 2010

The Population Council conducted the Survey on Young People in Egypt (SYPE) in collaboration with the Egyptian Cabinet, Information and Decision Support Center. The survey was supported by the Ford Foundation; Canadian International Development Agency; the Embassy of the Netherlands; the World Bank; UNFPA; UNDP; UNICEF; UNIFEM; and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency. The opinions expressed herein are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the initiative's supporters.

Additional information about SYPE may be obtained from the Population Council at the address below



The Population Council conducts research worldwide to improve policies, programs, and products in three areas: HIV and AIDS; poverty, gender, and youth; and reproductive health.

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List of Abbreviations

ASCE	Adolescence and Social Change in Egypt Survey
CAPMAS	Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
Dutch	Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands
EDHS	Egypt Demographic and Health Survey
FF	Ford Foundation
IDSC	The Egyptian Cabinet, Information and Decision Support Center
IRB	Institutional Review Board
LF	Labor Force
NCEEE	National Center for Examinations and Educational Evaluation
PC	Population Council
PSU	Primary Sampling Unit
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SYPE	Survey of Young People in Egypt
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children Fund
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
WB	World Bank
WQ	Wealth Quintile

Preface

In every society, young people carry the promise of a better future. They are the building blocks of a country's economy and society and most essential human resource. In Egypt, young people are not only its most important capital, but they also constitute the largest segment of the population. According to the 2006 census, approximately 40% of Egyptians are between the ages of 10 and 29. With the right investments, this youth bulge will represent a demographic opportunity that will positively shape the country's future. Once Egypt's young people reach working age, given a relatively low proportion of older and younger non-working populations to support, they will present a "demographic gift" of low economic dependency. However, the large size of this cohort places enormous pressures on social services and the labor market and creates a major challenge for development planning. Failures in these institutions could result in the social and economic marginalization of a large proportion of youth that will be unable to compete in an increasingly globalized economy, hence turning the 'gift' to demographic 'burden'.

Effective planning relies on high-quality research. The Population Council seeks to build the evidence base for better policies and programs with the view of generating research that makes a difference. Young people have been a primary focus for the Council for decades, seeking to understand their conditions and contexts, and providing evidence for decision-makers. In 1998, the Population Council published *Transitions to Adulthood*, a comprehensive profile of youth based on the Council's 1997 *Adolescence and Social Change in Egypt (ASCE)* survey. The results of ASCE have been an important resource for adolescents programming in Egypt.

The 2009 *Survey of Young People in Egypt* builds upon the ASCE survey from the previous decade, focusing on a larger age group of young people ages 10 to 29. SYPE focuses on the five key life transitions for youth: health, education, employment and livelihood, family formation, and civic participation.

This report presents preliminary findings of SYPE, constituting a snapshot of the profile of young people in Egypt. It gives a flavor of the issues that face this important segment of the population. A more comprehensive report is planned for later in the year and will provide greater analysis of the data.

The Population Council encourages research and the public sharing of data. The SYPE dataset will become publically available in May, 2010. Researchers are invited to use this rich resource to further investigate the status and conditions of young people in Egypt which would provide valuable information for decision-makers and development practitioners.

Safaa El-Kogali
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The National Center for Examinations and Educational Evaluation (NCEEE) played a pivotal role in designing and pretesting the aptitude tests included in the survey tool. We would like to thank Dr. Naguib Khouzam, Director, and Dr. Naima Hassan Ahmed, Head of the Research Department. Over many years and many surveys, the Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS) has honed its sampling methodology, and we were fortunate to benefit from their expertise in sample design. We would like to thank Ms. Rawia Elbatrawi, Head of the Population Studies and Research Centre, and Ms. Awatef Gendy, Head of the Central Department of Statistics and the Sampling Unit. SYPE would not have been possible without the generous financial support of the Ford Foundation; Canadian International Development Agency; the Embassy of the Netherlands; the World Bank; UNFPA; UNDP; UNICEF; UNIFEM; and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency.

Special thanks go to Dr. Mohamed Abd-ElGhany Ramadan for his extensive efforts in this survey. Dr. Ramadan worked closely on questionnaire design and layout and was primarily responsible for sample design, data cleaning and analysis. He also coordinated the work between the Population Council and IDSC in an excellent smooth manner.

This report benefited from comments and insights from Council staff including Safaa El Kogali, Nahla Abdel Tawab, Rania Roushdy, Asmaa Elbadawy, Catherine Harbour, and Ali Rashed. Abeer Salem played an important role in fundraising and in the dissemination of findings. Ola Hosny provided excellent administrative and logistical support. A number of previous employees at the Population Council have played an important role in this study. The idea for a survey of young people was initiated by Ragui Assaad, former Regional Director of the Population Council's West Asia and North Africa office. Dr. Assaad continued to provide technical guidance at the different stages of this study. The Population Council would like to thank Nihal Elwan, Natalie Forcier BeVille and Miral Breebart for their contributions during the conceptualization and questionnaire design stages. We also received research assistance from Sarah Ismail and Marianne Ekram during the preparatory phases of the survey.

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Most of all, we would like to extend our sincere thanks to the young people who responded to the survey. Without their trust and participation, this survey would not have been possible.

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I. Background

Egypt is at a stage in its demographic transition with a marked youth bulge, a period in which the proportion of youth in the population increases significantly compared to other age groups. In the coming decade, Egypt's largest demographic cohort ever will make its way to adulthood. Young people are important catalysts for development and change. Investment in this crucial age group provides an unprecedented opportunity to accelerate growth and reduce poverty. Success or failure of policies in the areas of education, employment, or health will have a decisive impact on this cohort of young people.

Due to the dearth of data on youth in Egypt, the Population Council embarked on a project to conduct a comprehensive situation analysis of adolescents and youth in Egypt: the Survey of Young People in Egypt (SYPE). The survey covers a nationally representative sample of 15,029 young people aged 10-29. SYPE seeks to provide a comprehensive situation analysis of young people in Egypt. The survey collected data on the five key life transitions of education; work; family formation; health; and civic and political participation.

SYPE is a follow up to an earlier survey conducted by the Council in 1997, The Adolescence and Social Change in Egypt (ASCE) survey. With focus on young people aged 10 to 19, analysis of ASCE identified tobacco use, female circumcision, anemia, growth stunting and delayed sexual maturation, poor management of menstruation, and underutilization of health insurance as six priority issues for youth in Egypt. SYPE updates the results provided by the earlier survey and expands its scope.

This preliminary report presents initial findings related to the principal issues covered in the survey. This report provides some of the preliminary findings from SYPE on young people's health-related issues, education experience and attainment, employment status and livelihood options, migration, family formation, and civic participation. A more detailed report will be issued in the latter half of 2010. Although we do not anticipate that the results and figures included here will differ from those that will be presented in the final report, the results included in this preliminary report should be considered as provisional and subject to modification.

II. Survey Design

1. Survey Sample

The SYPE sample is a nationally representative sample covering all governorates in Egypt, including the five border governorates. This is a relatively unusual practice in Egypt as most surveys exclude these five governorates because of their relatively small population size and high cost of data collection.

The SYPE sample is designed to allow national representation as well as the representation of the major six administrative regions (metropolitan governorates, urban Lower Egypt, rural Lower Egypt, urban Upper Egypt, rural Upper Egypt, and the border governorates). The sample included young people from all governorates in these regions.

The SYPE sample is a stratified, cluster and multi-stages random sample. The unit of selection is the primary sampling units (PSUs), which are selected from the master sample of the Central Agency of Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS). The master sample is based on the 2006 census. The SYPE sample had 455 primary sampling units (PSUs). These are divided between urban and rural localities, with 239 in rural areas and 216 in urban areas. The urban PSUs are divided into 44 PSUs in squatter (slum) areas and 172 in non-slum urban areas. This is an innovative sample design, allowing for the a priori inclusion of slum areas in the sample. The slum localities were selected from a list of slum localities identified by IDSC as part of an earlier study (IDSC, 2008). Households in these localities were listed by IDSC field staff in order to reach a sampling frame of households. The Rural PSUs are divided equally between relatively large and relatively small villages to account for peri-urban localities, which have a large population size.

As Table 1 shows, out of the 11,372 households included in the SYPE sample, a total number of 20,200 young people were in the eligible age group. These were all the male and female young people in the age group 10-29 that were members of these households. However, not all people in this age group were selected. Selection of eligible young people in the household was based on the Kish grid technique. The objective of the selection process is to eliminate sample bias by randomly selecting young people from the household to be interviewed. The selection rules were to randomly select the following individuals from the households for interviewing:

- One young person (either male or female) from those in the age group 10-14;
- One female young person from females aged 15-21;
- One male young person from males aged 15-21;
- One female young person from females aged 22-29;
- One male young person from males aged 22-29.

Table 1: SYPE Sample Description.

	Residence			Total
	Urban	Rural	Slum	
PSUs in the Sample	172	239	44	455 PSUs
Households in the Sample	4,300	5,972	1,100	11,372 HHs
Total Eligible Young People	6,860	11,578	1,762	20,200 Individuals
Total Selected Young People	5,525	9,073	1,463	16,061 Individuals
Total Interviewed Young People	5,337	8,342	1,350	15,029 Individuals

A total of 16,061 young people were selected to be interviewed as part of this survey. Out of this group, 15,029 young people were actually interviewed. Attrition was due to the individual's rejection or unavailability during the data collectors' visit or their subsequent two revisits to the same household as per instructions.

2. Questionnaire Design

The questionnaire design was built on a qualitative data collection stage that lasted for one year. This stage included focus group discussions and interviews with young people. The major objective of this stage was to identify issues that young people believe are important to them. The tool design also benefited from a sequence of consultative meetings with different partners and research experts in each of the areas covered in the survey and an extensive review of the literature. In the last stage of tool design, the questionnaire was reviewed by the World Bank's "Questionnaire Clinic" based in its Washington, DC headquarters.

The research instruments included three separate questionnaires: a household-level questionnaire; an individual instrument that was administered to eligible young people; and a community-level questionnaire, which aimed at providing a profile of the localities in which young people live, including access to services and opportunities.

The household questionnaire focused on the general demographic and socio-economic characteristics of young people's households. This tool also included the table for Kish grid random selection of eligible young people. Data for this questionnaire were collected from the head of the household or any other responsible adult.

Six versions of the individual questionnaire were used based on the respondents' gender and age: males aged 10-14; females 10-14 years of age; males 15-21 years of age; females 15-21 years old; males 22-29 years of age; and females 22-29 years old.

The Population Council requires that studies involving human subjects be reviewed by its Institutional Review Board (IRB) before research begins. The IRB is an oversight committee, whose mandate is to protect the rights and safety of the subjects of the Council's research. The Board aims to ensure that research produced by the Council adheres to ethical standards, particularly when that study includes minors. All SYPE survey questionnaires were approved by the Council's IRB prior to fielding.

Questionnaires were pre-tested between March 14th and March 26th 2009 in five rural PSUs in Qaliobia governorate, two urban PSUs in Cairo governorate, and three urban PSUs in Giza governorate. Based on the pre-test, some questions were eliminated to reduce the duration of the interview.

A community-level data collection tool has been developed. Due to delays in funding, data collection for this component was postponed for six months after the household data collection process and is currently underway.

3. Aptitude Tests

Aptitude tests were self-administered by young people aged 10-17. The tests were prepared by the National Center for Exams and Educational Evaluation, an affiliate of Egypt's Ministry of Education. Two separate tests were designed: one for those aged 10-14 and another for those aged 15-17. Tests included multiple choice questions and were not content-specific. In other words, these tests were not based on a specific school-year curriculum. Tests sought to measure skills in three domains: Arabic literacy; numeracy; and critical thinking.

4. Field Staff Training

Field staff training was conducted between March 29th and April 8th 2009. IDSC implemented the training in close collaboration with Population Council staff. Training involved 150 interviewers, field reviewers, field supervisors and data coders from different governorates in Egypt.

The two-week training program included four days of field training, which provided interviewers with real-life survey interview experience in preparation for the actual data collection stage.

5. Data Collection and Processing

Data collection was undertaken under the direct management of IDSC. Sixteen data collection teams were responsible for collecting data in all governorates of Egypt. Each team consisted of:

1. A supervisor,
2. A field editor,
3. Three or four female interviewers
4. Two male interviewers.

In addition, four data quality inspection teams were formed. These quality inspection teams administered a short version of the SYPE questionnaire to a random sample of the respondents to ensure that field interviewers were visiting all eligible households and were collecting accurate information, as these short questionnaires were compared to the questionnaires that were submitted by the data collection teams. This comparison enables the inspection team to identify problems in understanding definitions among data collectors or cases of negligence or fraud.

The research team provided token thank-you gifts to young people participating in the survey. Gifts included small watches, stationery packs, wallets, and clocks. The average cost per gift was LE 5 (less than \$1). Gifts were presented at the end of the interview as a way of thanking young participants for their time in completing the survey.

The general rule was for female interviewers to administer the questionnaire to female respondents and for male interviewers to interview male respondents. The head of the household could be interviewed by either a male or a female interviewer.

Questionnaires were transported to IDSC's office in Cairo for office review and data entry during the data collection stage. Office review focused on checking the consistency of questionnaire sections and identifying definitional problems. Office review started a few days after the beginning of data collection. Feedback reports highlighting common mistakes were sent to the field so that the data collectors could re-visit the household and avoid repeating the same mistakes.

Data entry was undertaken at IDSC premises in Cairo. IDSC staff prepared the data entry program which included consistency and range checks along with validation rules. The latter were prepared by the Population Council's team. Data was first entered by May 23rd, and a re-entry process ensued to ensure data quality.

The final data set was submitted to the Population Council on July 22nd, 2009.

III. Preliminary Findings of SYPE

1. Young People’s Background Characteristics

Table 2 provides some background characteristics on the young people included in the SYPE sample before and after using weights. The table shows that the sample is almost equally distributed between male and female respondents. In terms of age categories, the 10-14 age group had the smallest number of respondents, which reflects the interviewing eligibility rule of only including one young person per household in this age category, regardless of gender. In the other two age categories, both a male and a female young person were eligible for interviewing.

Table 2: Background Characteristics of Interviewed Young People

		Unweighted number	Unweighted percent	Weighted number	Weighted percent
Gender	Male	6,949	46%	7,665	51%
	Female	8,080	54%	7,364	49%
Age	10-14	4,053	27%	4,358	29%
	15-21	5,436	36%	5,561	37%
	22-29	5,540	37%	5,110	34%
Residence	Urban	5,337	36%	4,208	28%
	Rural	8,342	56%	9,468	63%
	Slum	1,350	9%	1,353	9%
Region	Urban governorates	2,676	18%	2,104	14%
	Lower Egypt governorates	6,126	41%	6,913	46%
	Upper Egypt governorates	5,024	33%	5,861	39%
	Border governorates	1,203	8%	150	1%
Total		15,029	100%	15,029	100%

The analysis in the following sections is based on the weighted sample to reflect actual population distribution. Some of the numbers provided in this report reflect actual population size based on expanded sample figures. The expansion process was designed to retrieve the actual size of the population for each sampling weight. Population parameters used for expansion were based on the population projections of CAPMAS as of the first quarter of 2009 (survey data collection time).

Results in the following sections are disaggregated by gender, age, residence, region and wealth quintile as relevant. The wealth score is constructed using factor analysis based on household asset ownership and housing characteristics.

2. Health and Wellbeing

SYPE data provides rich detail on young people’s health issues. The health module includes questions on young people’s general sense of well-being; access to health services; prevalence of disability and chronic diseases; hygiene practices such as washing hands and brushing teeth; sense of exposure to environmental pollution; road safety and accidents; sexual harassment; nutrition and diet; tobacco, alcohol and drug use; mental and psychological health; and reproductive health. The following are some highlights from the SYPE findings:

Disability and Chronic Diseases

- **About 400,000 young people are disabled.**

The prevalence of disability among male and female youth aged 10-29 is 1.6% and 0.9% respectively. There is little explanation for the gender difference in disability distribution. One culture-specific explanation is that families fear that if their daughters are labeled as disabled, this might hamper their marriage potential. SYPE data shows that the majority of disabilities are physical (44%) and mental (36%). The prevalence of disability is highly correlated with socio-economic background, with about 32% of those who are disabled in the lowest wealth quintile and 13% among the wealthiest group. This is confirmed in the international literature on disability, which shows the strong association between poverty and disability, with disabled children from a young age facing challenges to acquire the necessary medical services (Groce, 2004). The prevalence of cases of youth with disability is strikingly correlated with region of residence, with 64% of the disabled being located in rural areas.

- **Another 400,000 young people suffered from chronic health conditions.** Young people with chronic health conditions (diabetes, heart problems, respiratory and kidney related diseases) constitute 1.3% of those interviewed. Similar to the geographic distribution of disability, rural areas show the highest level of incidence (58%). However, data shows no gender differences in the prevalence of such chronic diseases.

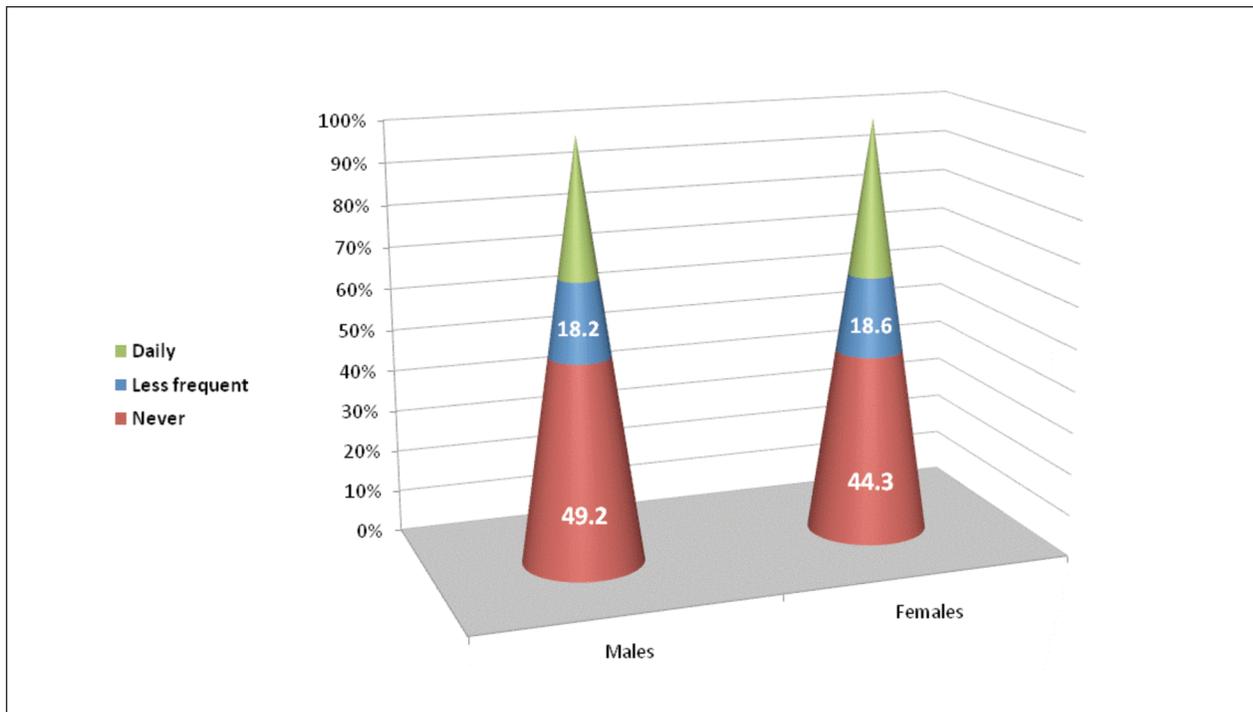
Table 3: Distribution of Young People with Disabilities

	Disabled %	Able-bodied %
Sex		
Males	65.9	50.8
Females	34.1	49.2
Age		
10-14	22.4	28.7
15-17	12.4	16.1
18-24	37.5	36.0
25-29	27.6	19.2
WQ		
Lowest	31.6	20.6
Second	21.3	21.2
Middle	22.6	22.1
Fourth	12.3	19.6
Highest	12.3	16.4
Residence		
Urban	27.1	28.4
Rural	66.1	62.9
Slum	6.8	8.7
Total	100.0	100.0

Hygienic Habits, Physical Activity, and Obesity

• **Young People in Egypt exercise poor oral hygiene.** About half of the young people in Egypt never brush their teeth. Only 35% of those interviewed reported brushing their teeth on a daily basis, with 47% noting that they never do. As Figure 1 shows, females are more likely to brush their teeth. The prevalence of brushing teeth increases with the socio-economic status. While 73% of young people in the lowest wealth quintile never brush their teeth, only 12% of those in the highest wealth quintile never do.

Figure 1: Tooth Brushing Habit by Gender Among Young People Aged 10-29.



• **Young People are doing very little physical activity.** Data on physical activity shows that 28.3% of young people reported doing no physical activities either for leisure or as part of their daily tasks. Table 4 shows that females have a very low incidence of physical activities either for leisure or as part of their work. SYPE data shows no significant differences across wealth quintiles.

• **Young people in Egypt are unconcerned about obesity.** While the Egypt Demographic Health Survey (EDHS) of 2008 has shown alarming signs of obesity and overweight among married females aged 25-29 (66%) and even among never married adolescents aged 10-19 (around 20%), data from SYPE shows that young people are not concerned about this issue. About 75% of young females and 84% of young males believed that they had the right weight for their height. Socio-economic status correlates with the awareness about weight issues, with those in the highest wealth quintile having the highest level of awareness about their weight issues.

Table 4: Distribution of Young People’s Level of Physical Activity.

	No physical activity %	Regular physical activity %	Very Frequent physical activity %	Work involves physical activity %	Total %
All	28.3	28.8	8.7	34.3	100.0
Sex					
Males	14.5	23.3	16.3	46.0	100.0
Females	42.7	34.5	0.8	22.1	100.0
Age					
10-14	16.6	0.0	0.7	82.7	100.0
15-17	18.3	50.9	24.8	6.0	100.0
18-24	35.8	37.7	10.3	16.3	100.0
25-29	39.9	36.4	4.0	19.7	100.0
WQ					
Lowest	30.5	24.0	7.0	38.5	100.0
Second	31.0	27.3	7.0	34.7	100.0
Middle	26.9	28.9	8.4	35.7	100.0
Fourth	26.6	30.8	9.9	32.7	100.0
Highest	25.8	34.3	11.8	28.2	100.0

Smoking, Alcohol and Drug Abuse

- **About one quarter of male young people in Egypt smoke.** SYPE data shows that 26% of young males aged 10-29 smoke. Incidence of smoking among female youth is negligible, which can be taken as a sign of under-reporting, given the social stigma associated with female smoking. The majority of those who smoke are males in the age category 18-29. Among young people aged 10-14, 0.8% of males reported smoking cigarettes. Young male smokers primarily come from the lowest wealth quintile. In terms of urban/rural distribution, these young smokers are mostly urban.

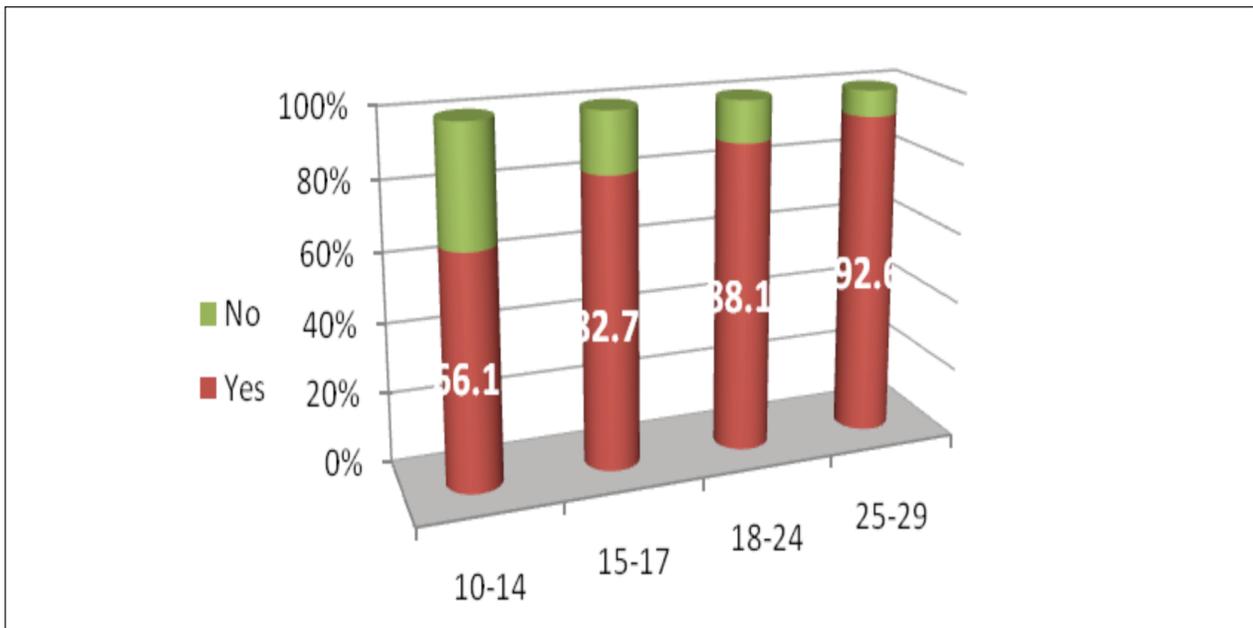
- **Three percent of young males reported having tried illicit drugs.** Similar to data on smoking, males in the age group of 22-24 showed the highest level of incidence compared to others. Also similar to smoking, the data from female respondents showed very little incidence of drug use. Most of those who admitted using drugs were from a lower socio-economic background.

- **One percent of young people reported drinking alcohol (0.9%).** More than half of them were in the age group 18-24 (52%). Similar to the use of illicit drugs, most of those who admitted drinking alcohol were from a lower socio-economic background.

Reproductive Health and Sexuality

- **Four in five girls still undergo female genital mutilation/cutting in Egypt.** Data from SYPE shows that 82% of females aged 10-29 are circumcised. FGM is more prevalent in the older cohorts. Among females aged 22-29, 93% are circumcised. However, among girls aged 10-14, the prevalence rate is 66%. Given the fact that FGM is generally practiced in Egypt around age 9, these figures suggest the positive impact of the recent government efforts to eliminate this practice. FGM is at its highest rate of prevalence in poorest households, with 91% of females in the poorest wealth quintile being circumcised compared to 57% of females in the highest wealth quintile.

Figure 2: Female Circumcision among Young Women by Age Group.



- **Young females are unprepared for menarche, regardless of wealth and place of residence.** Young females' recollections of their first reaction to menarche shows little preparedness and lack of life skills education. One third of young women noted that their reaction to menarche was shock/fear (67%) and about 11% noted that they did not know what to do. There were insignificant differences between urban and rural girls (67% vs. 66%) and nor did groups differ in their response according to socio-economic status.

- **Parents do not discuss reproductive health and sexuality issues with their children, especially their sons.** More than 73% of young people noted that they never talked to their families about pubertal changes. This is higher among males (93%) than among females (56%). The socio-economic background makes a difference, with more than 80% of those in the poorest wealth income not receiving information, compared to 65% among the wealthiest group.

- **One in two females has heard sexual innuendos from a stranger.** More than 42% of females reported hearing inappropriate comments about sex from a stranger. The prevalence is highest among females aged 15-24, at 53%. In the younger age group 10-14, about 23% reported experiencing this problem.

- **Knowledge about HIV/AIDS is at its lowest among females in rural areas.** More than 34% of females aged 10-29 have never heard about HIV/AIDS; the majority of these are in the youngest age category 10-14. However, 14% of females in the age category 25-29 have never heard of HIV/AIDS. Among rural young people, 34% of youth have never heard of HIV/AIDS. Among those who noted that they had heard of HIV/AIDS, females in rural areas showed the highest prevalence of incorrect information about its transmission.

- **Marriage means motherhood.** Among the 2,496 married females aged 15-29 interviewed in SYPE, all but one had at least one child. Family size increases with age, as young women have greater exposure to the “risk” of childbearing the longer that they are married. Among married females aged 15-21, 63% have one child and 29% have two. Among married females 22-29, 21% have one child, 36% have two children, and 25% have three children.

- **Fertility among young women is highest in rural areas.** The mean number of children ever born for married women in the age group 15-17 is one child. The mean increases in rural areas to reach 1.3 children and this concentrates in the two lowest wealth quintiles. The mean number of children increases by age, to reach 1.7 children for females aged 18-24 in urban areas and two children for women in rural areas. For the age group 25-29, the mean number of children is 2.4 in urban areas and 2.9 in rural areas.

Table 5: Did You or Your Husband Ever Use a Family Planning Method?

Age	Used a family planning method %	Did not use a family planning method %
15-17	28.2	71.8
18-24	64.6	35.4
25-29	83.6	16.4

- **Three quarters of deliveries by young women were attended by a doctor.** Among the women aged 15-29 who had children, 76% had delivered with a doctor’s assistance and about 16% had delivered with a midwife (daya). This is similar to results from the DHS, in which 74% of women delivered with a doctor and 20% with a daya.

- **Wealth level is a major determinant of fertility.** Across the different age groups, women in the lowest wealth quintiles had the largest number of children.

- **Newlyweds do not use family planning.** Table 5 shows that 72% of married women aged 15-17 never used family planning methods. This is reversed in the age category 25-29. Use of family planning increases by age and generally takes place after the first child.

These results show that youth health risks and outcomes in Egypt are highly gendered. While male youth are at highest risk of smoking, substance and alcohol abuse, female youth have their gender-specific issues. Females carry the heavy burden of female genital cutting/mutilation, a serious health-related social practice. Females also carry the burden of early marriage and childbearing in certain pockets in the country.

3. Education

Egypt has made great strides in achieving the Millennium Development Goal of universal basic education enrollment. SYPE data on education provides a wealth of information on young people's education including level of educational attainment, reasons for school dropout or non-enrollment, type of school and a description of the school environment, student-teacher communication and private tutoring. Following are some highlights of SYPE findings on young people's education.

- **Despite decades of investments in education, about 2 million young people in Egypt have never been to school.** Thirteen percent of females and 3% of males aged 10 to 29 have never been to school. These figures are consistent with the results from the 2006 national census.
- **Disparities by gender, residence and region persist.** Females constitute 82% of those who never enrolled in school, and 80% reside in rural areas. More than 57% of those who never enrolled in school are in the region of Upper Egypt.
- **An additional 2.5 million young people dropped out of school without completing basic education.** These constitute 13% of male and female young people in Egypt. This confirms research that there is little gender gap in school dropout rates (Assaad and El Badawy, 2004).

Table 6: Basic Education Status of Young People Ages 10-29 in Egypt by Age group and Gender.

Age Group	Gender	Never been to school %	Dropped out before basic education %	Basic education or above %	Total %
14 – 10	Males	1.2	3.7	95.2	100.0
	Females	3.5	2.8	93.6	100.0
17 – 15	Males	1.2	12.6	86.2	100.0
	Females	7.4	10.7	81.9	100.0
24 – 18	Males	5.1	17.6	77.3	100.0
	Females	16.6	15.6	67.8	100.0
29 – 25	Males	7.1	30.4	62.5	100.0
	Females	27.1	23.4	49.5	100.0
Total	Males	3.4	13.9	82.7	100.0
	Females	13.5	12.8	73.7	100.0

- **Government efforts are paying off in increasing school enrollment among children.** As Table 6 shows, school non-enrollment and dropout rates are highest among young men and women ages 25 to 29. Among those aged 10-14, only 1% of boys and 4% of girls have never been to school. This shows that more recent government efforts to address the Millennium goal of universal school enrollment have been successful in increasing school enrollment.

- **School non-enrollment and early drop-out are highly correlated with poverty.** About one third of those in the poorest households have never been to school and another 24% of them dropped out before finishing basic education. Among those in the second lowest wealth quintile, 15% have never enrolled in school and more than 24% have dropped out before finishing basic education. The highest wealth quintiles show very few cases of school non-enrollment. Only 1% of females in the age group 22-29 in the highest wealth quintile have never been to school. This has been repeatedly documented in the literature. El-Kogali and Suliman (2001) show that in Egypt, the poor are consistently worse off than the rich in terms of school enrollment and retention. They note that students from poor households are more than 3 times as likely to drop out at the end of grades 6 and 9 as are students from rich households.

- **Vocational secondary education is the option of the poor.** The majority of those who are or were in vocational secondary education group fall within the lowest wealth quintiles. Only 3% of those who are tracked into vocational education come from households in the highest wealth quintile. In terms of residence, 69% of those in vocational schooling are in rural areas. Females constitute only 34% of those in vocational secondary education. However, in rural areas, vocational schooling is the predominant education path for females who continue in the education system after the basic education stage.

- **The gender gap in post-secondary enrollment has been closed in favor of females in Egypt.** Females constitute 56% of those who completed university. They also constitute 53.8% of those who completed their education in two-year higher education institutions, which provide credentials at the rank of a diploma.

- **Higher education is a privilege to the richer segments of society and the urban population.** Only 4.3% of those who are currently enrolled in universities come from the lowest wealth quintile. Those in university predominately come from the highest fourth (27.1%) and highest fifth (46.5%) wealth quintiles. The poor are more represented among students in two-year institutions, constituting 11% of the student body. Among those who completed university education, 52% come from the highest wealth quintile, showing the strong connection between schooling achievement and the socio-economic background of students. Urban students constitute more than 63% of young people who have finished university education.

4. Employment and Livelihood Opportunities

Starting a productive working life is one of the most important markers of the transition to adulthood and independence. SYPE data provides rich information on young people’s economic activities and labor market participation, job history and characteristics of current and first jobs, unemployment duration and job search methods, earnings, financial literacy and saving behaviors. This section highlights some of the major indicators of young people’s work experience.

- **The unemployment rate among young people aged 15-29 is 16%.** The unemployment rate is the proportion of the unemployed to the total labor force. The unemployed are defined as those who are not working for at least one hour during the week before the interview, and are willing and ready to work.

- **The unemployment rate among female young people is almost triple that of their male counterparts.** The unemployment rate among female young people is 32%, compared to 12% among males.

- **The unemployment rate is highest among those aged 18-24.** The unemployment rate is 19% among those aged 18-24. These are primarily new entrants to the labor market. The unemployment rate among the older age group is 12%.

- **Most females are out of the labor force.** About 87% of female young people are out of the labor force, compared to 39% of male young people. Some of these young people are still in school, however the data confirms the gender disparity highlighted by research in this area. Egypt has one of the lowest female labor participation rates in the world. This has been long documented in the literature (e.g. Assaad and Roushdy, 2007; Barsoum et al, 2009). A recent report by the World Economic Forum ranks Egypt 120th out of 128 countries in terms of gender gap, with Egypt achieving one of its worst rankings in women’s economic participation (Hausmann et al., 2008:18).

Table 7: Young People’s Labor Force Participation.

	Unemployment Rate %	Labor Force Participation Rate %
All	15.8	37.9
Sex		
Males	12.5	61.4
Females	31.7	13.4
Age		
15-17	16.3	13.3
18-24	18.7	40.0
25-29	11.8	54.6
WQ		
Lowest	11.9	36.6
Second	14.4	39.7
Middle	15.5	40.0
Fourth	19.5	39.2
Highest	18.4	32.8
Residence		
Urban	16.9	38.1
Rural	14.8	37.4
Slum	18.8	41.0

- **Vocational secondary education graduates constitute half of the unemployed.** Table 8 shows that 48% of the unemployed are vocational secondary school graduates. This group is followed by university graduates, who constitute 25% of the unemployed.

Table 8: Labor Force Participation of Young People Aged 15-29 in Egypt by Education Attainment.

Educational Attainment	Employment Status			Total %
	Employed %	Unemployed %	Out of LF %	
Illiterate	14.0	6.4	14.8	14.0
Reads & Writes	4.8	1.5	2.7	3.3
Elementary School	11.7	7.0	14.4	13.1
Preparatory School	8.3	4.7	24.6	18.2
General Secondary School	2.1	1.8	15.3	10.3
Technical Secondary School	39.8	47.5	21.8	29.1
Post-Secondary Institute	3.5	6.0	1.3	2.3
University & Above	15.8	25.0	5.1	9.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

- **Almost three quarters of employed young people work in the private sector.** About 8.5% work in formal private institutions and 63% work in the informal sector. Fourteen percent of young people work in the public sector. Nine percent are unpaid family workers and 4% are self-employed

- **Despite a growing private sector, young people predominantly prefer working in the government.** About 72% of young people noted that working in the government is better than working for the private sector. The preference to a government job is inversely correlated with the socio-economic status, as young people in poor households are more likely to prefer a government job.

- **A very low proportion of young people showed interest in entrepreneurship or having their own business.** Entrepreneurship is lowest among female young people, where only 8% noted that they have ever considered starting their own business. Among male young people, the incidence increases to 23%.

- **Three percent of young people aged 10-14 work.** These constitute about 170,000 young people in this age category. Among those who work in the age category 10-14, 53% are in agriculture and 28% are in construction. The majority of working children (81%) are in rural areas. They are also concentrated in households in the two lowest wealth quintiles, which have 65% of all working children.

5. International Migration

Migration can potentially broaden young people's opportunities and offer them a way to earn higher income and gain skills. SYPE data provides information on young people's intention to migrate abroad and their migration experience. Preliminary analysis of this module shows that:

- **One in three young men in the age group 15-29 in Egypt expressed willingness/intention to migrate.** More than 28% of male youth expressed an intention to migrate. The intention to migrate is skewed by gender, as only 5.9% of females expressed their intention to migrate. This yields a total of 17% of youth of both genders having the intention to migrate.
- **The intention to migrate decreases by age.** The intention to migrate is highest in the age category 18-24, at 19%, and decreases as young people get older.
- **Young Egyptian men mainly aspire to migrate to the Gulf countries.** More than two third of them (69%) would like to migrate to Gulf countries including Saudi Arabia (33%), Kuwait (19%) and United Arab Emirates (17%). A smaller proportion is interested in migrating to other Arab countries (Libya 5%, Jordan 4%). Another 12% showed interest in migrating to Europe (Italy 7%, France 3%, Germany 2%); and 4% showed interest in migrating to the United States.
- **Socio-economic background is positively correlated with the intention to migrate.** Most of those who showed intention to migrate primarily come from the highest three wealth quintiles.

6. Family Formation

The Family Formation Module provides information on young people's marriage experience, if they are married, including consanguinity, living arrangements upon marriage and gender dynamics within the household. For unmarried young people, the module provides information on young people's views on marriage and what they look for in their future marriage partners.

- **More than two fifths of females in the age group 18-24 are married.** As the following table shows, 40% of females aged 18-24 are married. Among females in the age group 25-29, 81% are married.

- **Male youth marry at a later age. Less than 6% of males are married in the age group 18-24.** In the age group 25-29, approximately half the males are married.

- **About 3% of females in the age 15-17 are married before the current legal age of marriage.** The following table shows that 3% of females in the age group 15-17 are married before age 18, which is the legal age of marriage as stipulated in the Child Law of 2007.

- **Early marriage is primarily a rural phenomenon.** More than 70% of females that are married in the age group 15-21 are in rural areas. Similarly, 93% of males married in the same age group are living in rural areas.

- **Early marriage is also inversely correlated with wealth.** None of the cases that were married in the age group 15-21 come from the highest wealth quintile.

Table 9: Marital Status of Young People in Egypt.

Age	Gender	Married %	Widowed/er %	Divorced %	Separated %	Katb-Kitab %	Engaged %	Never been Married %	Total %
17 - 15	Males	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.9	99.2	100.0
	Females	2.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	13.1	84.3	100.0
24 - 18	Males	5.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.6	6.9	86.5	100.0
	Females	39.7	0.2	0.7	0.2	1.8	13.7	43.7	100.0
29 - 25	Males	46.9	0.0	0.2	0.1	1.2	11.7	39.9	100.0
	Females	81.0	0.5	1.7	0.3	0.3	2.8	13.5	100.0
Total	Males	15.3	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.6	6.9	77.1	100.0
	Females	44.8	0.3	0.8	0.2	1.0	10.2	42.8	100.0

- **More than one third of married young people live with their parents upon marriage.** Data on the living arrangements for married young people shows that 38% of married young people lived with their families upon marriage, primarily with the husband's family.

- **Half of the extended family living arrangements are in the poorest households.** About 53% of the extended living arrangements occur in households in the lowest wealth quintile.

- **One third of married young people are in consanguineous marriages.** Data on marriages show that more than 34% of marriages by young people are consanguineous. Consanguine marriages are defined as marrying a cousin or another relative. About 59% of consanguine marriages are between cousins and the rest are between other relatives. The majority of these consanguineous marriages (75%) take place in rural settings. Consanguinity and extended family living arrangements are interrelated phenomena.

Table 10: Living Arrangements upon Marriage for Young People Ages 15 to 29 in Egypt by Gender, Age group, Wealth Quintile and Residence.

	Respondent's family %	Spouse's family %	Someone else's house %	Lived alone %
Sex				
Males	94.2	1.2	15.5	23.4
Females	5.8	98.8	84.5	76.6
Age				
15-17	0.0	1.9	0.0	0.7
18-24	21.8	48.8	63.6	34.3
25-29	78.2	49.3	36.4	65
WQ				
Lowest	23.7	30.0	59.2	15.3
Second	27.6	27.3	17.9	22.8
Middle	28.0	24.3	0.0	19.8
Fourth	17.8	14.1	22.9	23.1
Highest	2.9	4.3	0.0	19.1
Residence				
Urban	11.0	12.8	5.7	27.2
Rural	81.0	80.7	63.5	59.2
Slum	8.0	6.5	30.9	13.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

7. Civic Participation

SYPE collected information on young people’s volunteering activities and group membership. The Civic Participation module also included questions on group socialization, views about priority issues in the country and voting participation.

- **Young people in Egypt are socially disengaged.** Only 2% of young people are participating in volunteer work. As Table 11 shows, the participation level is highest in the age category 18-24, yet the incidence of voluntary work is less than 4% of young people in this group. This confirms earlier research on youth exclusion and marginalization (e.g., Assaad and Barsoum, 2009).

- **Charitable activities represent two thirds of the activities undertaken by young people.**

About 64% of all voluntary work undertaken by this small group of youth is charity work by religious organizations. These include providing clothes and meals to the poor along with providing tutorial and training assistance to others.

- **Group membership by young people is also very limited.** SYPE data provided information on young people’s participation in youth centers and sports clubs, political parties, unions and associations, and housing and school boards. Only 5% of young people reported participating in any of these groups.

- **Females are particularly disengaged.** Only 3% of females showed some group membership compared to 6% of male young people.

- **Young people are also politically disengaged.**

Only 16% of all eligible young people voted in a previous election. Similar to data on group membership and volunteer work, male young people are twice as likely to exercise their right to vote as female young people. The incidence of voting among young males is 20% compared to 11% among females. The incidence of voting is highest among youth from middle income households at 19% compared to 13% among the poorest quintile and 17% among the richest. A third of young people from middle income households reported their intention to vote in upcoming elections compared to a quarter of those from the poorest households and 27% of those in the richest households.

Table 11: Young People’s Participation in Voluntary Activities.

	No %	Yes %	Total %
All	97.8	2.2	100.0
Sex			
Males	96.7	3.3	100.0
Females	99.0	1.0	100.0
Age			
10-14	99.4	0.6	100.0
15-17	98.0	2.0	100.0
18-24	96.8	3.2	100.0
25-29	97.1	2.9	100.0
WQ			
Lowest	97.8	2.2	100.0
Second	98.2	1.8	100.0
Middle	97.9	2.1	100.0
Fourth	97.8	2.2	100.0
Highest	97.2	2.8	100.0
Residence			
Urban	97.5	2.5	100.0
Rural	98.0	2.0	100.0

8. Time Use

The SYPE data collection tool included questions on how much time young people spent on self-care activities, school-related activities, housework, paid work and training, leisure time, and volunteer work. The following is a preliminary analysis of this data:

- **Housework is the burden of females of all age groups.** The older group of females interviewed (25-29) had the largest share of housework. The median number of hours spent by women 22-29 on housework is three hours per day, compared to thirty minutes by their male counterparts.
- **Care for the elderly or for children is another activity that is generally shouldered by females.** Female young people spend almost double the time that male young people spend in this activity on average.
- **Young men have the largest share of leisure time.** On average, they spend double the time spent by females in meeting friends or playing sports (two hours compared to one hour on average).
- **Young people of both genders watch television for an average of two hours daily.** Preliminary analysis of data does not suggest a gender difference in the time spent watching television.
- **Young people spend an average of 40 minutes per day in religious activities.** There is little gender difference in the average time spent in religious activities.
- **Only 5% of females in the age group of 18-29 use the internet.** These young women use the internet for an average of an hour and half per day. Among male young people of the same age group, 15% use the internet and spend an average of two hours daily using it.

In general, both young men and women spend the bulk of their time on average working (7-8 hours), in school (6 hours) or sleeping (8 hours). While men spend on average more time in leisure activities, women spend disproportionately more time in household chores. However, on average, girls spend more time than boys studying or doing homework.

9. Young People's Attitudes and Values

Gender role attitudes and views related to wife battering, girls' education, women's work, and women's empowerment were central to SYPE's focus. The research tool also included questions on views about religiosity, priority issues in the country, and views on ethics in the society. The following are some highlights of the results pertaining to these issues:

• **Young people in Egypt have patriarchal views towards gender roles.** Table 12 shows the views of young people aged 15-29 on some gender role related statements. The table shows:

- While the majority does not agree, one in three young males believed that educating boys is more important than educating girls.
- The majority do not agree that boys should do equal amounts of domestic work as girls. Even among young women, 58% do not believe that boys should do as much domestic work as girls.
- More than 70% of the young men and 41% of young women agree that a girl must obey her brother's opinion even if he's younger than she is.
- Even though the Islamic laws grant women rights to inheritance, 8% of males and 14% of females agreed to the statement that in some cases, the female should not take her share to keep the inheritance in her parental family.
- While 62% of young men believe that the husband alone should decide on household expenditures, 61% of young women disagree.
- Three quarters of young women and 86% of young men agree that a married woman should obtain her husband's permission for most things.
- Half of young women and two thirds of young men disagree that work improves a girl's marriage opportunities.

Table 12: Gender Role Attitudes.

Statement		Agree %	Disagree %	Don't Know %	Total %
Educating boys is more important than educating girls	Males	35.0	64.3	0.7	100.0
	Females	13.9	85.4	0.6	100.0
Boys should do as much domestic work as girls	Males	27.2	72.3	0.4	100.0
	Females	41.0	57.9	1.1	100.0
A girl must obey her brother's opinion even if he's younger than she is	Males	71.1	28.4	0.5	100.0
	Females	49.1	49.8	1.1	100.0
The husband alone/mainly should decide on how household money is to be spent	Males	61.5	38.1	0.4	100.0
	Females	37.3	61.4	1.3	100.0
A woman should obtain her husband's permission for most things	Males	86.0	13.7	0.4	100.0
	Females	74.7	24.4	0.9	100.0
Girls/women who are harassed deserve it if they are dressed provocatively	Males	79.6	19.9	0.5	100.0
	Females	72.9	26.3	0.8	100.0
Even though Sharia (Islamic Laws) grants girls/women the right to inheritance, in some cases girls should not get their share so as to keep the money in the family	Males	8.4	88.3	3.3	100.0
	Females	14.2	84.0	1.8	100.0
When the girl works, she will get better marriage opportunities	Males	31.8	65.6	2.5	100.0
	Females	46.8	49.8	3.5	100.0

• **About 86% of Young people believed that wife battering is justified in certain conditions.**

Table 13 shows the following:

- Nearly all young people disagreed that a husband would be justified in beating his wife if she burned the food. About 8% of males and 6% of females agreed that burning the food was justification for wife beating.
- Male and female youth also had similar views about whether a husband would be justified in beating his wife if she refused to have sex with him. About 38% of males and 34% of females agreed that the husband would be justified in beating his wife if she refused to have sex with him.

- When asked about other hypothetical situations in which a husband might beat his wife, more males agreed that the husband would be justified in beating the wife than did females. If a wife neglects the children, 39% of males agreed that the husband would be justified in beating the wife, as opposed to 18% of females who agreed with this assertion.
- If a wife argues with her husband, 34% of males felt the husband would be justified in beating his wife, and 16% of females agreed with this response. If a wife wastes the husband's money, 42% of males agreed that the husband would be justified in beating his wife, and 24% of women agreed with this response.
- The majority of both male and female youth agreed that a husband would be justified in beating his wife if she talks to other men. About 80% of male youth agreed with this response and 67% of females agreed with this response.

Further analysis of this data shows that about one-quarter of young people agreed on half the justifications for wife battering and that 2% agreed on all reasons justifying wife battering.

Table 13: Young People's Views on Wife Battering.

In your opinion, is a husband justified in beating his wife in each of the following situations:		Agree %	Disagree %	Don't Know %	Total %
When she burns the food?	Males	8.0	92.0	0.0	100.0
	Females	6.4	93.5	0.1	100.0
When she neglects the children?	Males	38.7	61.3	0.0	100.0
	Females	17.5	82.4	0.1	100.0
When she argues with him?	Males	34.4	65.6	0.0	100.0
	Females	16.3	83.6	0.1	100.0
When she talks to other men?	Males	80.4	19.6	0.0	100.0
	Females	66.7	33.2	0.1	100.0
When she wastes his money?	Males	42.0	58.0	0.0	100.0
	Females	24.1	75.9	0.1	100.0
When she refuses to have sex with him?	Males	37.8	62.2	0.0	100.0
	Females	34.4	65.5	0.1	100.0

IV. Conclusion

The preparedness of young people for their future and their successful transition to adulthood is contingent on a number of issues that the analysis in this report highlights. Primarily, household socio-economic status is a major determinant of a successful transition to adulthood. Young people from poor households are faced by a constraining environment that restricts their health, education and employment potentials. The limited labor market and education potentials of young people from poor households perpetuate an intergenerational cycle of poverty. Place of residence is another major determinant, with those in rural settings consistently performing poorly in terms of health, education, and labor market outcomes. Gender is also a major determinant with female youth at a higher risk of harmful health-related practices, earlier marriage and fewer opportunities at schooling and employment. They bear a heavier burden in the household and are exposed to strong patriarchal gender roles.

In terms of health, the analysis shows that while young people are a healthy population in general, risk factors persist. One major risk factor is obesity among youth. Despite the prevalence of obesity and excess weight, young people are generally satisfied with their weight and seem to be unaware of its harmful impact. Analysis shows that the prevalence of disability is mainly among the poor, showing the impact of the limited health services available to this group. Findings highlight the gendered nature of health outcomes, with male youth suffering the impact of harmful habits such as smoking, substance and alcohol abuse, and with female youth suffering from the harmful practice of female genital mutilation (FGM). While the data show a decline in the prevalence of FGM, comparing younger females to earlier cohorts, more efforts are needed to combat this harmful practice that still affects almost two thirds of girls aged 10 to 14.

The opportunity structure for youth in Egypt is highly gendered. Gender is central to schooling and labor market outcomes. Females constitute the majority of those who do not enroll in the education system or drop out early. Despite their low enrollment rates, females have a very high enrollment rate in higher education institutions, to the extent that the gender gap has been reversed in these institutions in Egypt. This interesting finding shows that once they enter the education system, female young people are likely to continue their education. In terms of labor market participation, females represent a majority of those who are out of the labor force or among the unemployed.

Young people do not escape the traditional practices of early marriage, extended family living arrangements and consanguineous marriages. These practices persist mainly in rural settings and among the poorest households. Early marriage is particularly relevant to hampering successful transitions to adulthood. It is largely connected with limited education and limited female labor market participation.

In terms of civic participation, a disquieting finding is that young people seem to be extremely disengaged. The proportion of youth who actively participate in their communities or in the political process, or even exercise their right to vote, is alarmingly low. Youth, as data on time use show, spend most of their time either working or socializing, with television playing a prime role in their pastime activities. Females spend disproportionately longer hours in household chores and childcare compared to males, who enjoy more time on leisure activities.

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This report highlights the findings from a nationally representative survey of young people in Egypt aged 10-29. The Survey of Young People in Egypt (SYPE) was fielded in 2009. The survey seeks to update the state of knowledge about young people in Egypt and to inform policy makers on matters relating to this group. Main topics include health, education, employment, migration, marriage, and civic participation. The results have wide-reaching applications for the government, the donor community, and the civil society organizations working with youth.

