

## UNICEF EDUCATION

### Reimagine Education Case Study

#### EGYPT

#### Education 2.0: skills-based education and digital learning

23 February 2021

With over 23 million students enrolled in pre-primary, primary and secondary education, the Egyptian education system is the biggest in the Middle East and North Africa. However, skills learned at school are often misaligned with skills needed to find decent jobs or engage positively in the development of the country. In late 2017, the Ministry of Education and Technical Education (MoETE) announced a full-scale transformation of the education system to be completed by 2030. The national reform marked a move to skills-based learning and an expansion of digital learning.

*The classic education system of Egypt had expired....  
We want students to learn for life, not for an exam.*

– Dr. Tarek Shawki, Minister of Education and Technical Education

Egypt has built up its [digital infrastructure](#). An estimated 2,500 public secondary schools now have fibre optic cable. The Government has purchased 100 smart classrooms to serve children in hard-to-reach and high-density areas. It has provided two million tablets to secondary school teachers and students and has rolled out digital examinations in Grades 10 to 12. Since 2016, Egypt has offered students access to a large digital library called the Egyptian Knowledge Bank (EKB), [which it used in 2020 to host all content for primary and secondary classes during COVID-19-related school closures](#).

Its long-term investments in digital learning likely softened the blow of the COVID-19 pandemic, making it easier to switch to home-based learning when schools were closed and enabling blended learning since school reopening in October 2020. Teachers can draw on multiple resources when balancing in-person and online learning, including:

- the online [Egyptian Knowledge Bank](#),
- the online [Study platform](#), aimed at primary students in Grade 4 and above,
- the online [learning management system](#) aimed at secondary students,
- [online lessons, Hesas Masr \(Our school\)](#), available for a fee,
- [recordings of Madrasetna \(Our School\)](#) lessons, available on for free YouTube and on two television channels, and
- the [Emodo platform](#), which provides a communication platform among teachers, students, and parents.

In addition, an e-books platform and an online teacher academy that will eventually replace in-person teacher trainings for the country's 1.3 million teachers are currently under construction. The e-books will use an e-pub format, making them accessible for learners with disabilities.

UNICEF has been one of the Government's key partners, successfully advocating for a skills-based approach to learning as the overarching vision of Education 2.0. It worked hand in hand with MoETE to develop and roll out a skills-based curriculum for pre-primary to Grade 3 by training MoETE curriculum experts in a partnership with France Education International. Subsequently, MoETE's Centre of Curricular and Instructional Material Development has rolled out the revised curriculum in Grades 4 to 6.

UNICEF's other main contribution is to ensure that skills-based learning is available to marginalized children, including those with disabilities and those who are out of school. UNICEF has helped MoETE to develop guidelines for the adaptation of learning materials for children with hearing and visual impairments as well as those with mild or moderate cognitive disabilities and has developed a Teachers' Guidebook on Inclusive Education. Since 2020, it began work on building a skills-based curriculum for community schools that serve out-of-school children.

**Cost effectiveness:** From 2017 to present, UNICEF has invested approximately US \$1.2 million to support national reforms on skills-based education, including valuable resources from the UK, EU, and education thematic funds. Once rollout is completed, the reformed curriculum will reach 23 million students from pre-primary through to secondary.

## LESSONS LEARNED

- Using national curriculum reform to embed skills-based education: UNICEF Egypt used the momentum of the large-scale reforms in Education 2.0 to collaborate with MoETE to integrate skills-based education nationwide across the biggest education system in the Middle East and North Africa.
- Building MoETE capacities to ensure sustainability: UNICEF trained national curriculum experts to ensure national ownership and longer-term sustainability.
- Leveraging investments: UNICEF's investment of US \$1.2 million positioned it at the heart of the biggest education reform in the region. It unlocked an additional funding of US \$16.5 million from the UK and the GPE to advance implementation of Education 2.0's skills-based premise.
- Acknowledging people's needs in the face of dramatic reforms: Moving forward, there will likely need to be greater emphasis on supporting teachers to adapt since technology, tools, and new textbooks are helpful but not enough to bring about transformational change. In addition, having had a communications strategy and community dialogue in the lead up to the launch of the reform may have also made it easier for the public to understand and, thus, potentially making the transition smoother.

## NEXT STEPS

UNICEF Egypt is currently conducting research on global best practices for skills-based education for Grades 7 to 12. Once completed, it will present a roadmap, policy advice, and strategy recommendations to education authorities to inform the rollout of Education 2.0 in these higher grades.

For more information, please contact:

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